

MINISTRY *of* EDUCATION and CHILD CARE

Estimates

Spring 2025



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of Education
and Child Care

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NUMBER OF ACTIVE SCHOOLS

Public - **1,579** | Independent - **348** | Offshore - **36** 

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

614,869 students in BC public schools (**601,122** resident) 

FROM **601,122** → **12%** students are Indigenous (**70,065**)
14% students with disabilities/diverse abilities (**84,929**)
15% students are English Language Learners (**90,013**)

 In **2024/25** public school enrolment grew at a **LOWER RATE** than independent schools (**1.67% vs. 2.39%**)

→ **Highest # of students = Surrey 83,545** **Lowest # of students = Stikine 178**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

93,890 students in BC independent schools (**90,469** resident) 

FROM **90,469** → **6%** students are Indigenous (**5,472**)
13% students with disabilities/diverse abilities (**11,622**)

→ The **Vancouver School District area** holds the highest number of **independent schools (60)** and **students (16,884)**

WORKFORCE

92,981  People working in the public school system (approx. as of 2023/24 SY)

48,499  Teachers

25,604  Unionized support staff (other than EA's)

16,122  Education Assistants

3,392  Administrators

2,187  Non-unionized support staff



POPULATION

According to B.C. Statistic projections:

5.7 million people in British Columbia
[AS OF JULY 1, 2024] 

3.2%  B.C. population growth in 2024 – largely driven by international immigration 

B.C. (and Ontario) follow Alberta for population growth in 2024 

Overall increase for CANADA
3.0%  [**1.2 million**]
(99% of Canada's growth in 2023/24 accounted to International migration) 

TRANSITIONING TO B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY



**** 2020/21 51.6%** immediate transition rate for graduates
2021/22 50.2% immediate transition rate for graduates

CHILD CARE

- Over **159,000** child care spaces/month operating in B.C. 
- Over **138,800** spaces/month receive Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative funding
- Over **15,300** spaces/month participate in the \$10/day ChildCareBC program
- Over **34,900** children/month receive the Affordable Child Care Benefit

This is the MOST CHILDCARE SPACES/month operating in B.C. history

CHILD CARE WORKFORCE

- Over **26,000** active ECE Certifications 
- Over **16,000** active ECE Assistant Certifications
- Over **15,600** Early Childhood Educators/month (receive the wage enhancement)

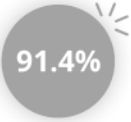
INDIGENOUS LEARNERS

ON RESERVE
8,065 public
1,857 independent
→ **TOTAL 9,922** 

OFF RESERVE
62,009 public
3,620 independent
→ **TOTAL 65,615** 

COMPLETION RATES

2023/24

Public schools **SIX YEAR RESIDENT COMPLETION RATE** exceeded **91.4%**
(fourth year in a row in excess of 90%) 

 **75.5%** Indigenous Completion Rate
(5th year in a row in excess of 70%)
On-reserve [64.4%] Off-reserve [78.2%]

 **78%** Completion Rate for students with a *disabilities/diverse abilities (the 7th year in a row in excess of 70%)*



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

350 Schools | 98,890 Students | 7,446 Teachers, Administrators + Support Staff (23/24 SCHOOL YEAR)

TYPE:

GROUP 01

240 Schools [Including 16 online]



 **73,806 Students**
79% of independent students

 CRITERIA
→ Not for profit
→ BC Curriculum
→ BC Certified Teachers
→ Can offer BC Dogwood

 **50%**
of local district per student rate
FUNDING

EXAMPLES:

- **Pacific Academy** - Surrey, Faith-based, Grades K-12, 1,409 Students
- **Summerland Montessori** - Summerland, Specialized Program, K-5, 58 Students
- **Surrey Muslim** - Surrey, Faith-based K-6, 288 Students

GROUP 02

67 Schools [Including 24 First Nations]



 **17,891 Students**
19% of independent students

 CRITERIA
→ Not for profit
→ BC Curriculum
→ BC Certified Teachers
→ Can offer BC Dogwood

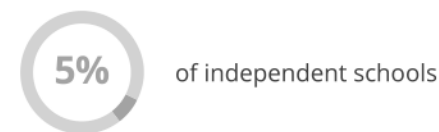
 **35%**
of local district per student rate
FUNDING

EXAMPLES:

- **Cousteau L'Ecole Francaise Internationale** - North Vancouver, Specialized Program K-10, 181 Students
- **Nak'albun Elementary School** - First Nations Independent, K-7, 136 students
- **St. Michaels University School** - Victoria, University Prep, IB, K-12, 1,010 Students

GROUP 03

17 Schools [Including interim Certs.]



 **566 Students**
1% of independent students

 CRITERIA
→ Cannot offer BC Dogwood
→ Not Required to use curriculum or BC certified teachers

 **Not Funded**
FUNDING

EXAMPLES:

- **Ark Elementary School** - Richmond, Specialized Program (Montessori), K-5, 29 students
- **Eaton Arrowsmith** - Vancouver, Special Education, Grades 4-11, 8 Students
- **Kootenay Valley Christian School** - Creston, Faith-based, Grades 1-9, 31 Students

GROUP 04

26 Schools



 **1,627 Students**
2% of independent students

 CRITERIA
→ >50% non-resident students
→ Can be for profit
→ BC Curriculum
→ BC Certified Teachers

 **Not Funded**
FUNDING

EXAMPLES:

- **Bodwell High School** - North Vancouver, Grades 8-12, 416 Students, International
- **Canada Star Secondary** - Richmond, Grades 8-12, 89 Students
- **St. Regis Secondary School** - Vancouver, University Prep, Grades 8-12, 82 Students

TYPES OF SCHOOLS



GROUP 01

GROUP 02

TOTAL

240

67

PROVINCIAL
ONLINE
LEARNING
Independent

16 Schools
7% of group

0 Schools
0% of group

FAITH-
BASED

168 Schools
70% of group

1 Schools
1% of group

MONTESSORI
/ WALDORF

23 Schools
10% of group

3 Schools
4% of group

OTHER
SPECIALIZATION

18 Schools
8% of group

9 Schools
13% of group

NON-
SPECIALIZED

3 Schools
1% of group

3 Schools
4% of group

FIRST
NATIONS
Independent Schools

0 Schools
0% of group

24 Schools
36% of group

Independent
DESIGNATED
INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION
SCHOOLS

12 Schools
5% of group

1 Schools
1% of group

UNIVERSITY
PREP

0 Schools
0% of group

26 Schools
39% of group

FIRST NATIONS INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



24 First Nations
Independent schools 2023/24



Operated by First Nations
that have voluntarily sought out
independent school certification



The Ministry is pleased to work with ANY First Nation wishing to
transition from independent school certification to Participating First
Nation Status or to relinquish independent school certification.





DATA SOURCE AND DEFINITIONS

NOTE: DATA SOURCE FOR ALL 'FACTS AND FIGURES 2024/2025' IS THE EDUCATION DATA WAREHOUSE – EDW [UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE].

SECTION REFERENCE

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

- **Active schools** are defined as those where at least 1 student is enrolled.
- **Source of Offshore school count:** Independent Schools and International Education Branch.
- **Residency** is defined as of September of the reported school year.
- **Indigenous identity** is defined using Indigenous-Ever Backdated. Whether the student has ever self-identified as being of Indigenous ancestry on any September or February authority enrolment collection. Future values will update prior values back to 2003/04.
- **Disabilities/Diverse Abilities** and **ELL** are defined as of September 2023 for the purpose of enrolment statistics.

POPULATION

- **Source:** Statistics Canada, 2024 and BC Stats Website
statcan.gc.ca
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population>

CHILD CARE

- **Source:** Modelling and Analysis Branch, Child Care Division.
- **159,000 child care spaces** operating/month in B.C. *(Monthly average YTD 2024/25 – includes child care spaces participating in the Ministry of Education and Child Care programs, either the Child Care Operating Funding program or the \$10 a Day ChildCareBC program).*
- **138,800 spaces receive Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative funding** (Monthly average YTD 2024/25). Includes eligible facilities and spaces that opt-in to the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative program.

TRANSITION TO B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY

- **Source:** Research results from the Student Transitions Project.
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/data-research/stp/stp_research_results.pdf

COMPLETION RATE

- **Disabilities/Diverse Abilities** is defined using 'Disabilities/Diverse Abilities-Ever' for the purpose of Completion Rate, whether the student was ever given a 'Disabilities/Diverse Abilities' designation in any enrolment in any school year.

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- **Source:** Count of schools, enrolments and educators from EDW, other statistics from Independent Schools and International Education Branch.
- * *School Count – NOTE: Group 2 school count includes 2 schools that transitioned from interim Group 3 to Group 2 after Sept 30, 2024. All other school counts are as at Sept. 30, 2024.*



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January 16, 2025

Honourable Lisa Beare
Minister of Education and Child Care
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Beare:

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Education and Child Care at a critical time for our province. Serving as a member of the executive council is a privilege and responsibility which I am confident you will fulfill with integrity and a commitment to the people of our province.

British Columbians have trusted us with a mandate to deliver for them in ways that make a tangible difference in their daily lives. They expect us to listen and learn from people of different perspectives – and work together to make things better for everyone.

Specifically, we will tackle the challenges people worry about at the kitchen table:

- **Grow the economy by creating good jobs across British Columbia.** We will collaborate with businesses, workers, and communities to attract investments in both new and traditional sectors as well as emerging sectors of the economy. This approach will bring certainty for business, security for workers, and generate the wealth needed to support the essential services British Columbians rely on.
- **Reduce costs for families** including by helping people access homes they can afford through support for first-time homebuyers, increasing the supply of rental housing stock, and stronger measures to crack down on housing speculation.

- **Strengthen health care** by expanding access to family doctors and recruiting and training more health professionals, ensuring that every British Columbian can access the care they need, no matter where they live. We will also increase access to addictions treatment and provide help for people whose struggles require intensive supports.
- **Make our neighbourhoods and communities safer** by working with law enforcement and social agencies to address street disorder, crack down on organized crime, and do all we can to ensure repeat offenders stay behind bars.

Our commitment to take action on climate change remains foundational and will be key to a healthy and prosperous BC for future generations.

Underlying all this work is our partnership with Indigenous peoples. Advancing reconciliation, implementing the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and working in partnership with First Nations rights-holders to advance shared interests is the responsibility of every Minister.

Over this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- In order to protect key services that British Columbians rely on, work with the Minister of Finance to review all existing Ministry of Education and Child Care programs and initiatives to ensure programs remain relevant, are efficient, and improve the experience of British Columbians who access child care and education services in our province. This is important in the context of current Provincial budget constraints and overall efficiency in delivering cost effective and relevant education and child care services to British Columbians.
- Work to ensure that teachers and schools have access to additional supports in the classroom and beyond, including the expansion of education assistants and counseling resources.
- Support effective learning for students across the province by working with the Minister of Infrastructure to accelerate the delivery of new and expanded schools in a cost-effective manner, and by working with the Minister of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills to expedite the certification and deployment of new and experienced international and domestic teachers.
- Continue work to increase Indigenous graduation rates.
- Continue implementing ChildCareBC to improve access to accessible, affordable child care.

- Work with school districts to expand before- and after-school care programs across the province using cost-effective models for parents and the public that leverage existing school facilities and education workers.
- Work with key stakeholders in relation to the SOGI anti-bullying program to improve understanding, protect vulnerable children and support parents.
- Ensure that British Columbia's early interventions for children struggling with numeracy and literacy are the most effective in North America through a centre of excellence in applied research and professional development.
- Prioritize excellence in the British Columbia education system by reviewing existing inter-jurisdictional student evaluation scores post pandemic, and working with teachers, parents, and relevant stakeholders to ensure the global competitiveness of British Columbia student outcomes.

To assist you in meeting the commitments we have made to British Columbians, you are assigned a Parliamentary Secretary for Child Care whose focus will be to:

- Work with you to deliver cost-effective before- and after-school care that leverages existing school infrastructure and workers.
- Work with you to expand child care spaces in a cost-effective way so that more parents may have access to cost-effective child care for their family.
- Support you in continuing to work with Indigenous peoples and the federal government to advance jurisdiction over child care for Indigenous peoples.
- Build relationships with parents, child care service providers, early childhood educators, and advocates to ensure that government policy is responsive to the concerns and interests of these groups.

You will work closely together and ensure your Parliamentary Secretary receives appropriate support to deliver on this work.

As you are aware, we have established an accord with the BC Green Caucus that supports our shared commitment to ensuring stable governance focused on delivering progress and tangible outcomes for British Columbians. The commitments in that accord complement the direction in these mandate letters.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will

establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The work we have ahead takes place in a profoundly challenging geopolitical environment. Close friends and neighbours to our south are contemplating imposing draconian tariffs on our products that would hurt both Americans and Canadians. Our allies internationally face governmental instability. Hate and racism are on the rise around the world. Artificial intelligence breakthroughs with unclear implications and astonishing potential are announced daily. Global inflation, snarled supply chains, and war are threatening global economic growth and prosperity as well as the transition to a low-carbon economy.

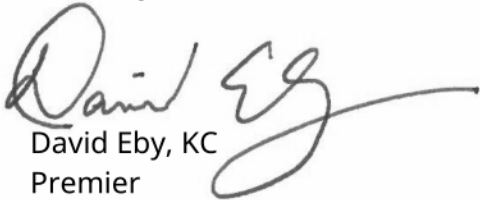
We have an obligation to protect and defend British Columbians, as well as seize opportunities, in these uncertain times.

The good news is that we have everything we need to succeed, and we will succeed. British Columbia's people – our workers, entrepreneurs, business leaders, artists, and innovators – are among the most talented in the world. We are home to world-class educational institutions and public services. Our natural beauty is unmatched, we have internationally envied resources, and we are one of the most diverse places on the planet. Your job is to help us leverage these advantages in perilous times.

Use this mandate letter to guide your work, and do not be afraid to challenge assumptions, or be innovative, bold and aggressive in achieving the goals set out for you and your Ministry by the people of this province.

Thank you for joining me in the work ahead.

Sincerely,



David Eby, KC
Premier

cc: Rohini Arora, MLA
Parliamentary Secretary for Child Care

MINISTRY PROFILE

The Ministry of Education and Child Care (the ministry) is responsible for the governance and oversight of B.C.'s Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) education system, and for ensuring a strong and accessible child care system is available to families living in British Columbia.

The ministry provides leadership and funding to the K-12 education sector through governance, legislation, policy and standards. The ministry also defines broad accountability, promising practices and expectations. Specific roles and responsibilities are set out under the *School Act*, *Independent School Act*, *Teachers Act*, *First Nations Education Act*, and accompanying regulations and orders. Through mechanisms such as the *Statement of Education Policy Order*, the *Policy for Student Success*, and B.C.'s world class curriculum, the ministry also helps ensure learners acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Core to its work, the ministry also manages the implementation and delivery of all government programs associated with child care. The ministry is committed to making child care more affordable, accessible, inclusive and higher quality for families, and to increasing the number of available child care spaces in public spaces and on school grounds. The ministry also provides leadership and funding to the child care sector, workforce and families through legislation, policy and standards under the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* and the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*.

The ministry supports both early years and school-aged learners to achieve their individual potential and become independent adults who have a lifelong appreciation for learning, a curiosity about the world around them, and a capacity for creative thought and expression through compassionate and empathetic worldviews.

Like the Province as a whole, the ministry is committed to a distinctions-based approach in its dealings with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples and that it be conducted in a manner that acknowledges the specific rights, interests, priorities, and concerns of each, while respecting and acknowledging these distinct Peoples with unique cultures, histories, rights, laws, and governments. The ministry is also working with First Nations rights holders and Indigenous partners to achieve lasting and meaningful reconciliation. Aligned with the *Distinctions-Based Approach Primer*, the ministry is actively implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action* pertaining to education, and the *Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples*. As part of this commitment, the ministry is working with First Nations rights holders and Indigenous partners to implement the 13 education and child care-specific actions within the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan* and works in partnership with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and Indigenous Services Canada to implement the *B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement: Supporting First Nation Student Success*. Investments through the Canada-B.C. Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreement 2021 to 2026 and the Canada-B.C. ELCC Agreement 2021 to 2025 are enhancing Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development programs by reducing wait times and increasing the number of families

receiving inclusive child care supports. The ministry supports a distinctions-based approach, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and the Federal Government, to expand access to Indigenous-led, culturally safe child care for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. The ministry will continue to co-develop a First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Consultation and Engagement Plan ensuring equity of access to ELCC programs, moving towards jurisdiction over child care for First Nations and Métis.

Ministry of Education and Child Care

2025/26 – 2027/28 Service Plan

March 2025



For more information on the Ministry of Education and Child Care contact:

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VICTORIA, B.C.
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Or visit our website at

<https://www.gov.bc.ca/ecc>

Published by the Ministry of Education and Child Care

Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Education and Child Care 2025/26 – 2027/28 Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Beare".

Honourable Lisa Beare
Minister of Education and Child Care
March 4, 2025

Strategic Direction

In 2025/26, the Government of British Columbia will continue to prioritize delivering the services and infrastructure needed for people to build good lives in strong communities.

To support this objective, Government will focus on growing the economy, responding to the threat of tariffs, creating good paying jobs, improving affordability, strengthening health care and education, and making communities safer.

Government will also continue deepening relationships with Indigenous Peoples while advancing implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan.

This 2025/26 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Education and Child Care will support the government's priorities and selected action items identified in the [Minister's January 2025 Mandate Letter](#).

The Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Education and Child Care (the ministry) is responsible for the governance and oversight of B.C.'s Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) education system, and for ensuring a strong and accessible child care system is available to families living in British Columbia.

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Operating Environment

B.C.'s K-12 and child care sectors face continued challenges attracting and retaining qualified employees. These challenges are intensifying some longstanding recruitment pressures in the K-12 system and child care sector, especially in rural and remote areas, at a time when equity, both in terms of access to quality education and of student outcomes, is a key priority for government. Elementary/Kindergarten teachers, secondary school teachers, school principals/administrators and Early Childhood Educators and Assistants were all identified as High Opportunity Occupations in the 2023 edition of the [B.C. Labour Market Outlook](#), and this is likely to continue for a few years. In partnership with the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, the ministry continues to implement targeted initiatives to support teacher recruitment and retention in rural and remote areas of the province, as is committed to in the *Declaration Act Action Plan*.

Population growth, driven by immigration, continues to impact B.C.'s education and child care sectors, though at a lower rate than in 2023/2024. In 2024/2025, K-12 public and independent

school enrolment increased to over 708,000. Public school enrolment increased by 10,131 students over 2023/2024 to 614,869 (+1.7%) while independent school enrolment increased by 2,193 (+2.4) to 93,890. The ministry continues to work closely with school districts in regions of high enrolment growth to build new schools and spaces. It is also implementing new strategies (e.g., providing funding for prefabricated classrooms) to mitigate the cost to districts of purchasing portable classrooms when construction cannot keep pace with the demand.

Growth continues in the child care sector with child care spaces increasing every year since the beginning of the [ChildCareBC](#) plan, from 114,600 child care spaces in 2018-19 to over 159,000 in 2024-25. This is a 39 percent increase of over 44,000 child care spaces.

The devastating effects of climate change, including flooding and wildfires, are also greatly impacting many communities across the province. The ministry will continue to work with schools, districts, and child care providers in emergency situations to ensure that all children, students, staff, and families are safe, and there is minimal disruption to learning and care.

The ministry is committed to working collaboratively with sector and partner groups to remove barriers to student learning and continuously improve educational outcomes. In support of the Minister's January 2025 mandate letter, the ministry will be exploring new early interventions for children struggling with numeracy and literacy. The ministry will also be exploring new ways to prioritize excellence in the B.C. education system by reviewing existing provincial, national and international assessment results, determining options for improvement, and working with education partners to determine how to ensure the global competitiveness of BC student outcomes. New systems are also delivering equitable access to high quality online learning for all students in B.C. In addition, the ministry is working with schools and districts to strengthen school policies and procedures to foster safe, caring and inclusive school communities where every child feels safe, accepted and respected. The ministry is also committed to equity and addressing racism and discrimination in the education system through implementation of the [K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan](#) in collaboration with racialized communities, Indigenous and K-12 education partners. Making equitable access to inclusive child care a reality by launching the [Inclusive Child Care Strategy](#) and investing in resources to help child care providers build their foundational knowledge in providing inclusive child care is also a priority. Additional priorities include developing mental health and substance use initiatives to support the well-being of students and maintaining our commitment to true and meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, which will shape our direction in the years to come.

This year's Service Plan is also informed by a significant organizational change. In the fall of 2024, Ministry of Education and Child Care staff who held capital services responsibilities were moved to the new Ministry of Infrastructure to better support the construction of important facilities needed to support our growing communities and the needs of people living in British Columbia.

Economic Statement

B.C.'s economy experienced moderate growth last year amid relatively high interest rates, persistent price pressures and ongoing global economic uncertainty. The labour market ended the year on a positive note, supported by high immigration and strong population growth. Inflation in B.C. continued to moderate as the price growth of goods eased, while inflation for services remained elevated. Consumer spending and home sales activity were weaker for most of 2024 in the wake of still elevated interest rates and high prices. Subdued global demand and lower prices for key commodities led to a decline in the value of the province's merchandise exports in 2024. Meanwhile, B.C. homebuilding activity remained relatively strong following record high housing starts in 2023.

The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) estimates that B.C. real GDP rose by 1.2 per cent in 2024. In the near-term, the EFC expects B.C.'s economy to grow by 1.8 per cent in 2025 and 1.9 per cent in 2026, in line with the national average. For Canada, the EFC estimates growth of 1.4 per cent in 2024 and projects national real GDP growth of 1.8 per cent in 2025 and 1.9 per cent in 2026. These projections do not fully include the impact of the evolving U.S. tariff situation.

Restrictive global trade policies, particularly potential U.S. tariffs, pose a risk to the outlook and there is uncertainty over the degree and timing of impacts on B.C.'s economy, and among the province's trading partners. Other risks include lower population growth due to changes to federal immigration policy, as well as the potential for renewed price pressures leading to interest rates remaining elevated for longer, weaker global demand, and commodity market volatility.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: All Students Become Educated Citizens

Enhance educational outcomes and experiences for all students to prepare them for achieving their career and life goals, no matter their background, learning needs or where they live.

Objective 1.1: Improve Student Learning Outcomes

The ministry is committed to continually improving student outcomes so students can achieve their highest potential. Many processes and assessment points are in place at the provincial, district and school level to ensure every student is on a path to success and to identify supports and resources that may be needed.

Key Strategies

- As part of the [Framework for Enhancing Student Learning](#), continue to require Boards of Education to set, create and maintain a strategic plan, annually report on student outcomes, and put systems in place to continuously improve the educational outcomes for all students, particularly Indigenous students, students with disabilities or diverse abilities, and children and youth in care.

- Improve literacy outcomes for B.C. students by: (a) scaling up early literacy screening for all students in Kindergarten to Grade 3; (b) enhancing intervention and outreach programs for K-12 students; (c) providing professional learning for K-12 teachers and support staff and (d) developing resources for educators, parents and caregivers, including the [BC Learning Pathways](#).
- Continue working with the First Nations Education Steering Committee, First Nations Leadership Council and cross-ministry partners (Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills and Ministry of Children and Family Development) to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in care.
- Implement a comprehensive career development and dual credit expansion strategy for students in K-12 public and independent schools with the goal of increasing graduation rates, transitions to post-secondary and employment in high-demand occupations.

Discussion

To drive continuous improvement within the K-12 education system, the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning requires Boards to report annually on their use of data and evidence to monitor, assess and address inequities in student outcomes. Improvements to B.C.'s K-12 assessment system will also help achieve this objective by providing timely and reliable data for planning and decision-making and which lead to effective interventions to support student progress to accomplish their goals.

Objective 1.2: Deliver upon meaningful Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in alignment with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and the Action Plan

In partnership with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), First Nation rights holders, Métis Nation BC (MNBC), and Inuit and sector partners, work to close the equity gap for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners through fully implementing the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#). The province continues to work with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the Government of Canada to implement [B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement: Supporting First Nation Student Success](#).

Key Strategies

- Continue to increase Indigenous graduation rates by acting on recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General (OAG)'s [Audit of the Education of Aboriginal Students in the B.C. Public School System](#) report, the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action](#), and actions within the [Declaration Act Action Plan](#).
- Continue to co-develop an approach for implementing key legislative changes, including [Local Education Agreements](#), [Indigenous Education Councils](#), and [First Nations Schools of Choice](#).
- Continue to support the implementation of the [Indigenous-focused Graduation Requirement](#).

- As outlined in the *Declaration Act Action Plan*, develop a systematic approach to ending Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination to further improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students.
- Continue to develop and implement, in partnership with FNEC and close collaboration with MNBC, effective recruitment and retention strategies to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in the K-12 public education system.

Discussion

The ministry continues to make tangible progress on the goals outlined in the *Declaration Act Action Plan* and is committed to working with Indigenous partners and First Nations rights holders to focus on the 13 education and child care-specific actions to collectively support Indigenous students in the years ahead.

Amendments to the *School Act* (Bill 40) to action commitments in the *Declaration Act Action Plan*, including actions 1.6 (Local Education Agreements), 4.3 (Indigenous Education Councils) and 4.4 (School of Choice), and the BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA), were passed in the Legislature in November 2023. These changes support better education outcomes and attendance for Indigenous students attending provincial public schools. Changes require all Boards to establish an Indigenous Education Council (IEC) in their school district. In addition, the new Schools of Choice provision enables First Nations to decide which schools First Nation's students living on-reserve, self-governing First Nation lands or Treaty Lands will attend. The changes in legislation also allow First Nations to choose to negotiate a custom Local Education Agreement (LEA) or choose not to have a LEA. Alternatively, First Nations and Treaty First Nations also have the option to apply the [Model Local Education Agreement](#).

Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target
[1a] Percentage of non-Indigenous students who complete ¹ Grade 12 within five years of first starting Grade 8.	93%	94%	94%	95%
[1b] Percentage of Indigenous students ² who complete ¹ Grade 12 within five years of first starting Grade 8.	64%	64%	65%	65%

Data source: Ministry of Education and Child Care, <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/bc-schools-five-year-completion-rate/resource/e8ecf3ac-2cbf-442c-9280-2bbd7e1dcbff>

¹ Completion rates only apply to residents attending B.C. Public or Independent schools.

² Indigenous students refer to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners.

Discussion

The five-year completion rate indicates the percentage of students who graduate with a B.C. Certificate of Graduation or a B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma within five years of entering

Grade 8 for the first time, adjusted for estimated migration out of B.C. As stated in her January 2025 mandate letter, the minister is expected to work to increase Indigenous graduation rates; the ministry is committed to helping achieve this important goal in collaboration with the First Nations Education Steering Committee and in engagement with Métis Nations BC and Indigenous people throughout B.C.

Goal 2: Learning Environments Support Student Well-Being

The environments in which students learn have a major impact on their success and well-being. The ministry will continue to ensure students learn in environments that are safe, conducive to learning, welcoming and supportive.

Objective 2.1: Ensure safe, caring, and inclusive learning environments for all students

Inclusion is critical for ensuring children and students are supported to be successful from the early years through to graduation. The ministry, in collaboration with K-12 education and Indigenous partners, aims to support all students with a focus on mental health and well-being, while recognizing opportunities to meet the unique needs and diversity of students in B.C.

Key Strategies

- Provide supports to enhance inclusive and responsive learning environments that value diversity and improve equity of access and outcomes for all students.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Ministry of Health, continue to implement and operate [Integrated Child and Youth teams](#) in school district communities to deliver seamless wraparound mental health and substance use service and support for children, youth and families.
- Deliver on actions within the [Mental Health in Schools Strategy](#) to embed mental health promotion in all aspects of the education system, including culture, leadership, curriculum and learning environments.
- Continue to promote equity and address racism and discrimination in the education system through the implementation of the [K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan](#) in collaboration with Indigenous and racialized partners and communities.
- Work with key partners to strengthen anti-bullying and inclusivity initiatives to continue to support learning environments free of discrimination for all students.

Discussion

This objective will be monitored through implementation of resources and strategies to support student mental health and well-being and foster an increased sense of belonging in schools as well as equity of access, opportunity and outcomes for students of all ages. The

ministry has worked in furthering the erase (expect respect & a safe education) strategy while continuing to maintain engagement with cross-sector partners and youth in B.C. to support safe, caring and inclusive schools. Moving forward, the ministry will continue to provide erase training and safety support across the province and consult with youth and K-12 partners to ensure resources and support on the erase website meet the needs of all users.

Delivering on actions within the Mental Health in Schools Strategy, the ministry will continue to deliver seamless wraparound mental health and substance use service and support for children, youth and families. The ministry will also continue to engage with the Provincial Mental Health Leadership Network, which includes representation for all 60 school districts and the Federation of Independent School Associations, to monitor the impacts of the key strategies in supporting students in their districts and schools.

Objective 2.2: Provide the supports necessary for students to succeed

Student success is at the heart of everything the ministry does and providing learners with optimal opportunities to achieve the best of their abilities in a supportive environment. Supports include school food programs, highly qualified educators, and online learning opportunities, no matter where they live.

Key Strategies

- Continue to provide funding to schools and districts to create and expand local school food programs based on district data and priorities, and work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to integrate Feed BC for districts to include locally grown food.
- Implement, in partnership with the Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills and K-12 partners, initiatives to support international teachers to join BC's K-12 workforce, and targeted actions to strengthen teacher recruitment and retention, particularly in rural and remote areas of the province as outlined in the Stronger BC Future Ready Action Plan.
- Continue to implement the new Online Learning model, Provincial Online Learning Schools and a new Provincial Learning Management System to deliver equitable access to high quality online learning programs and courses to all students in B.C.
- Discuss ways to ensure BC's early interventions for children struggling with numeracy and literacy are effectively addressed.
- Consider new ways to prioritize excellence in the BC education system by reviewing existing provincial, national and international assessment results, determining options for improvement, and working with education partners to determine how to ensure the global competitiveness of BC student outcomes.

Discussion

Taking concrete steps towards greater equity, such as, creating or expanding school food programs and ensuring a stable, qualified and sufficient workforce across the province, with a particular emphasis on remote and rural areas of the province, will help provide students with the supports they need to be successful and develop into educated citizens. The ministry will

continue to work with interest holders and education partners to better understand what steps are needed to serve students and their families to ensure equity of opportunities and outcomes for all learners.

Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target
[2a] Percentage of Indigenous students in Grades 4, 7, 10, and 12 who feel welcome and have a sense of belonging in their school.	45%	47%	48%	49%
Percentage of non-Indigenous students in Grades 4, 7, 10, and 12 who feel welcome and have a sense of belonging in their school.	55%	56%	57%	58%
[2b] Percentage of Indigenous students in Grades 4, 7, 10, and 12 who feel safe in their school.	71%	72%	73%	74%
Percentage of non-Indigenous students in Grades 4, 7, 10, and 12 who feel safe in their school.	75%	75%	76%	76%
[2c] Percentage of Indigenous students in Grades 4, 7, and 10, and 12 who feel there are one or more adults at their school who care about them.	76%	76%	76%	77%
Percentage of non-Indigenous students in Grades 4, 7, and 10, and 12 who feel there are one or more adults at their school who care about them.	70%	71%	72%	72%

Data source: Ministry of Education and Child Care [Student Learning Survey](#)

Discussion

Students who feel welcome, safe, and have a strong sense of belonging and who feel that adults in their school care for them, are more engaged and more likely to move through their education program on pace. They are also more inspired to explore their individual aptitudes and interests. This Performance Measure has three sets of data, for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, to provide a more holistic perspective on how welcome and safe

students may be feeling. The ministry is working hard to continue to ensure every school is a place where all students are welcomed, included, and respected in a safe learning environment, while being fully and completely themselves and providing resources so schools feel supported in delivering programs to assist with this.

Performance Measures	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target
[2d] Percentage of Indigenous students in Grade 4 who are learning to care for their mental health ¹ .	43%	45%	47%	47%
Percentage of non-Indigenous students in Grade 4 who are learning to care for their mental health.	42%	43%	45%	45%
[2e] Percentage of Indigenous students in Grades 7, 10, and 12 who are learning to care for their mental health ² .	35%	37%	38%	38%
Percentage of non-Indigenous students in Grades 7, 10, and 12 who are learning to care for their mental health ² .	41%	42%	43%	43%

Data source: Ministry of Education and Child Care [Student Learning Survey](#)

¹Results for Grade 4 are shown separately from Grades 7,10, and 12 because the question is worded differently for Grade 4. In Grade 4, students are asked, "Are you learning how to care for your mental health?"

²Grade 7 students are asked to state their agreement with: "At school, I am learning how to care for my mental health". Grade 10 and 12 students are asked to state their agreement with: "At school, I am learning how to care for my mental health (e.g., anxiety or stress management, anger management, relationship skills)."

Discussion

Mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being and impacts how students think, what they feel, and the way they act. Children's early social and emotional health is foundational for building positive relationships, successful academic outcomes, and career success later in life. Research findings show early social and emotional learning can protect against adult mental health disorders, poor sexual health outcomes, and adolescent involvement in the justice system. The Performance Measure can track both the learning capacity and self-assessment capability involving students' mental health. This data assists the ministry when designing inclusivity policies that address the needs of certain student populations and provide a safe learning environment for all. The values for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in Grade 4 and in Grades 7, 10, are projected to increase as we continue to track the impact of erase training and safety support across the province and engage with cross-sector partners and youth to ensure resources meet the needs of all students. Through the ministry's engagement with the Provincial Mental Health Leadership

Network with all 60 school districts and the Federation of Independent Schools Associations, the ministry can monitor the impacts of the key strategies in supporting students in their districts and schools.

Goal 3: High-quality, inclusive child care as a core service that supports families and the early learning development of children 12 years of age and under

We know kids learn the most from birth to five years old. The ministry, along with other partners in government, are working to improve access to affordable, inclusive, quality child care for families living in B.C.. This includes reducing child care fees for parents, building more licensed spaces and increasing supports for those working in the sector.

Objective 3.1: Families have access to affordable, licensed child care options

Reduced child care fees make life more affordable for families and having reliable, licensed care allows families peace of mind that their child is in a safe environment. Making child care more affordable allows parents, especially mothers, to pursue opportunities and achieve financial independence and security, which benefits families, our communities and the economy as a whole.

Key Strategies

- Continue investments to support families by increasing access to affordable child care and maintaining fee reductions for families accessing licensed child care at participating facilities, including testing and refining a new Operating Funding Model that will make funding more efficient, stable and equitable.
- Increase the number of licensed child care spaces, including Indigenous-led child care and work with school districts to expand child care on school grounds that leverage existing school facilities and education workers.
- Continue to refine recruitment and retention initiatives and investments, including a wage grid for child care professionals to encourage more child care professionals to enter and stay in the child care sector and so newly created spaces are adequately staffed.

Discussion

Creating better access to child care remains at the forefront of the Province's [ChildCareBC Plan](#) to make inclusive, high-quality affordable child care a core service for families, allowing parents to pursue opportunities and achieve financial independence and security, which benefits families, communities and the economy.

Objective 3.2: Enhance provider capacity to offer high quality and culturally safe child care options

The ChildCareBC vision includes ensuring that child care professionals are ready to support all children, so we can offer high quality, inclusive child care that all families can rely on.

Key Strategies

- Continue to support child care professionals to access training and supports for their professional development and well-being, as they provide high quality, inclusive child care.
- In partnership with Indigenous Peoples and the Federal government, support a distinctions-based approach to increasing Indigenous-led child care for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples who want and need it.

Discussion

Early childhood educators (ECEs) are skilled professionals who care for children at one of the most important times in their lives and are at the heart of building inclusive, high-quality, affordable child care as a core service that families can rely on. Early childhood educators and other child care professionals need access to educational programs, quality professional learning, supports and adequate compensation to enable them to provide the best possible care and education to children in B.C.

Part of building a child care system is making sure ECEs have access to the training and support they need, along with the compensation and recognition they deserve. The Province has made significant investments to enhance ECE recruitment and retention through access to post-secondary bursaries, wage enhancement, professional learning opportunities, peer mentoring networks, online courses, curriculum support and a hub for accessing online learning. The ministry will continue to invest in various initiatives to improve child care providers' capacity to provide inclusive child care with grants for "specialized" or "post-basic" certificates like the Infant Toddler Educator or Special Needs Educator certificates.

The *Declaration Act* Action Plan commits the Province to "work[ing] in collaboration with B.C. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples to implement a distinctions-based approach to support and move forward jurisdiction over child care for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples who want and need it in B.C." (Action 4.19). The ministry is committed to consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people and ongoing dialogue with Indigenous partners to meaningfully implement this commitment using a distinctions approach.

A Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in September 2024 between First Nations Leadership Council, B.C. and the Government of Canada. The MOU confirms and sets a mutual commitment of the parties to collaborate, dialogue, and jointly act on issues and initiatives related to Early Learning Child Care as self-determined by First Nations in B.C. This relationship will support the on-going work to building a child care system that supports First Nations ELCC. The ministry will continue to work to ensure Indigenous children and families

have full access to child care in B.C., and to partner with Indigenous Peoples to build culturally relevant child care that meets the unique needs of Indigenous families.

Objective 3.3: Build/enhance system-capacity to support child care as a core service families can rely on

To provide child care as a core service, system-level improvements are important to support streamlined administrative processes, consistent data collection, and sustainable approaches to supporting growth.

Key Strategies

- Improve Information Management/Information Technology systems to gather data and support system delivery.
- Work with school districts to deliver cost effective before and after school care, leveraging existing resources.
- Continue collaboration with the Government of Canada on the implementation of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

Discussion

As government makes child care more affordable, the tools and infrastructure needed to support the delivery of these services must also be in place, such as technological tools to support service delivery. The Province continues to invest in this much-needed infrastructure and adapt it to the changing needs of the ChildCareBC program, families and providers. The ministry tracks progress towards these objectives in annual reports on the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement as well as through ministry mandate reports.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2016/17 Baseline	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target
[3a] Average monthly number of provincially funded licensed child care spaces in operation.	108,110	160,100	165,700	171,300	176,900

Data source: Ministry of Education and Child Care, Child Care Operating Funding program database and \$10 a Day ChildCareBC program database

Note: 2016/17 data have been used as the baseline since the 2018/19 ministry service plan report and is used as a measure of the size of the B.C. child care system before the ChildCareBC plan was launched in 2018/19.

Discussion

The 2025/26 target of 165,700 spaces reflects the strong space growth in 2024/25. Space growth was estimated using historical trends, as earlier funded space creation projects become open to families. This projection takes into account inflationary pressures on new construction projects and increased child care operating costs, such as wages and supplies.

Financial Summary

Core Business	2024/25 Restated Estimates ¹	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Public Schools	8,000,122	8,215,737	8,240,500	8,240,500
Independent Schools	571,217	589,091	591,180	591,180
Transfers to Other Partners	58,053	63,527	63,527	63,527
Child Care	865,255	865,853	865,853	865,853
Executive and Support Services	54,454	54,314	54,314	54,314
British Columbia Training and Education Savings Program Special Account	30,001	30,001	30,001	30,001
Teachers Act Special Account	8,600	9,082	9,174	9,174
Total	9,587,702	9,827,605	9,854,549	9,854,549
Capital Expenditures (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services	3	3	3	3

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2024/25 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2025/26 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#)

School Districts Financial Summary

School Districts	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Budget	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Combined Income Statement (\$000)				
Total Revenue	9,312,717	9,394,144	9,444,214	9,468,814
Total Expense	(9,285,778)	(9,361,180)	(9,405,208)	(9,429,224)
Operating Results	26,939	32,964	39,006	39,590
Gain (Loss) on sale of capital assets	9,865	12,938	999	0,000
Annual Surplus (Deficit)	36,804	45,902	40,005	39,590

¹This combined income statement includes 60 school districts. Numbers do not include the eliminating entries required to consolidate these agencies with the government reporting entity.

Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of February 1, 2025, the Minister of Education and Child Care is responsible and accountable for the following organizations:

B.C. Teachers' Council

Under the *Teachers Act*, the [BC Teachers' Council](#) (BCTC) is responsible for:

- Setting standards for teachers and educators in B.C., including education, competence, and professional conduct requirements
- Setting standards for post-secondary teacher education programs
- Reviewing and approving post-secondary teacher education programs

Disciplinary and Professional Conduct Board

The Disciplinary and Professional Conduct Board consists of nine members of the BC Teachers' Council appointed by the minister. The Board deals with complaints and reports about alleged teacher misconduct and certification appeals that are referred to it by the [Commissioner for Teacher Regulation](#).

Independent School Teaching Certificate Standards Committee

Under the *Independent School Act*, the [Independent School Teaching Certificate Standards Committee](#) (ISTCSC) is responsible for establishing the standards required to receive and maintain an independent school teaching certificate (ISTC) and determining which standards apply for each type of Independent School Teaching Certificate.

Provincial Child Care Council

The [Provincial Child Care Council](#) provides advice on the policies and programs that affect the affordability, quality, stability and accessibility of child care. Its members are appointed from throughout the province and represent five key sectors: Indigenous communities, the business sector, child care providers, the education system, the non-profit sector, and local government.

Budget 2025

KEY MESSAGES

- British Columbia's 2025/26 K-12 Education and Child Care Operating budget is \$9.828 billion. This represents a \$240 million year-over-year increase from 2024/25 (See Appendix 1).
- Budget 2025 provides \$0.619 billion in incremental operating funding over the three-year fiscal plan.
- Budget 2025 supports the K-12 education sector with new funding to address Classroom Enhancement Fund pressures, Public School wage lifts related to the 2022 Shared Recovery Mandate (SRM) for Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and Management/Excluded Compensation, Independent School enrolment growth and associated increases related to the wage mandate for public schools, the First Nations Reciprocal Tuition program, ministry staff salary and benefits costs related to the 2022 Shared Recovery Mandate, and Teachers Act Special Account operations.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Budget 2025 provides an additional \$0.619 billion in operating funds for the ministry over three years. The main additions include:
 - \$322.9 million in funding under the Classroom Enhancement Fund (CEF)
 - \$230.3 million to fund public school wage lifts related to the 2022 Shared Recovery Mandate (SRM) for Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and Management/Excluded Compensation approved in School Year (SY) 2024/25
 - \$44.9 million for independent schools to fund enrolment (\$30.4 million) and associated increases related to the 2022 SRM costs for public schools (\$14.5 million)
 - \$17.0 million to fund caseload pressures for First Nations Reciprocal Tuition Funding
 - \$4.1 million to fund Ministry Administration (K-12, Child Care and Teachers Act special account) salary and benefit costs related to the 2022 Shared Recovery Mandate COLA and Management/Excluded Compensation approved in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024/25
 - \$0.8 million net increase for the Teachers Act Special Account due to an anticipated increase in ongoing operational costs
 - \$0.9 million net reduction due to the pause in funding for the Minister of State's office for Child Care, related to office operations such as staffing, travel and office expenses, until a new Minister of State is appointed

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Funding is provided for Classroom Enhancement Fund to support the restoration of clauses on class size and composition in the BCTF collective agreement under the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA).
- Funding is provided for the First Nations Reciprocal Tuition program for caseload pressures that exceeded base budget appropriations. The program is part of the BC Tripartite Education Agreement with the First Nations Education Steering Committee and Canada and provides funding to First Nations for provincial students who do not live on-reserve but attend a First Nations-run school.

- ECC did not request additional Public School enrolment funding in Budget 2025 due to a forecasted student enrolment decline for the first time since 2015/16. However, any savings from reduced enrolment will be reduced by funding backstops in the K-12 model and are expected to be offset by growth in higher-cost student categories, especially inclusive education designations. Advice/Recommendations; Government Financial Information
- Funding from prior budgets and federal agreements are provided for child care to continue implementing ChildCareBC, government's 10-year strategy to build affordable, accessible, quality, inclusive child care as a core service that families can rely on.
- The Capital Management Program was transferred from the Ministry of Education and Child Care to the Ministry of Infrastructure midway through 2024/25. This transfer includes branch administration costs, operational government transfers for the annual facilities grant and responsibility for Capital Grants for schools budgeted under government's Capital Funding vote.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- Boards of Education
- Federation of Independent Schools Association
- Other Education Sector Partners (e.g., FNEESC, BCCPAC, BCSTA, BCPSEA)
- Child Care providers (e.g., Child Centre Resource Centres, Prototype Site Providers, First Nation Health Authority, Aboriginal BC Association, partnership ministries and municipalities, Early Childhood Educators of BC, CanAssistance)

BUDGET/FUNDING

- The Ministry of Education and Child Care's 2025/26 operating budget of \$9.828 billion includes:
 - \$8.216 billion for public schools (84%)
 - \$866 million for child care (9%)
 - \$589 million for independent schools (6%)
 - \$64 million for other partners (less than 1%)
 - \$54 million for ministry administration (less than 1%)
 - \$30 million for the BC Training and Education Savings Program (less than 1%)
 - \$9 million for the Teachers Act Special Account (less than 1%)

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Appendix 1: Budget 2025 vs. Budget 2024 Comparison

Ministry of Education and Child Care

	(\$000)		
	2024/25 Restated Estimates	2025/26 Estimates	Change
Public Schools	8,000,122	8,215,737	215,615
Approved 2022 Shared Recovery Wage Mandate for K-12 public schools			116,839
Classroom Enhancement Fund represents funding for BCTF hiring, overhead and ancillary costs, remedies, and emerging labour relations costs associated with implementation of the MoA, which was replaced with a Letter of Understanding in the 2019-2022 BCTF collective agreements. Additional funding in 2025/26 for the incremental BCTF hiring costs in SY 2024/25 and SY 2025/26 as they are non-discretionary costs that allow districts to comply with class size and composition			112,258
One time funding for professional learning opportunities for K-12 classroom teachers and support staff were provided in 2024/25			(12,732)
Budget 2023 Health Human Resources Framework reduction due to funding to school districts to develop elective work experience coursework for students the previous year			(750)
Total Public Schools			215,615
Independent Schools	571,217	589,091	17,874
Lift due to higher enrolment in this sector, coupled with the legislated linkage between independent school funding and funding increases provided to public schools			12,173
Lift for impact due to approved 2022 Shared Recovery Wage Mandate for public schools			7,365
Reduction for one time funding for professional learning opportunities for K-12 classroom teachers and support staff were provided in 2024/25			(1,664)
Total Independent Schools			17,874
Transfers to Other Partners	58,053	63,527	5,474
Lift for First Nations Reciprocal Tuition program enrollment growth and student rate increases. This program provides funding to band-operated schools for provincial students who choose to attend school on reserve			5,659
Reduction for Future Ready Skills Plan related to Budget 2023 temporary funding for Recruitment & Retention for Teachers (Rural and Remote focus) : -\$50K and for HR capacity building (-\$135K)			(185)
Total Transfers to Other Partners			5,474
Child Care	865,255	865,853	598
Approved 2022 Shared Recovery Wage Mandate for Child Care division staff.			598
Executive and Support Services	54,454	54,314	(140)
Approved 2022 Shared Recovery Wage Mandate for K-12 ministry staff			654
Reduction due to one time funding for School Food Program Advisory Committee in 2024/25			(350)
Reduction due to adjustments for Minister Office and Minister of State budgets for 2025/26 (-\$514K and -5 positions for MoS and +\$220K+3 positions for MO) total reduction of \$294K in accordance with staffing levels and allocation as approved by the Office of the Premier as temporarily we do not have MoS. When MoS returns, budget transfers back from MCFD			(294)
reduction due to Budget 2023 Health Human Resources Strategy (-\$.100M) adjustment for temporary funding for Start Up - Health Career Sampler Program (Open School BC contract) and (\$.050M) for one time grant funding for Start Up - Health Career Work Experience			(150)
Total Executive and Support Services			(140)
British Columbia Training and Education Savings Program Special Account	30,001	30,001	0
Teachers Act Special Account	8,600	9,082	482
Lift for operating costs and 2022 Shared Recovery Wage Mandate. Net increase due to an increase in volume and complexity of teacher applications. The special account can manage the expenses within their revenue			482
Ministry of Education and Child Care Total	9,587,702	9,827,605	239,903

2025-2026 Operating Grants and District Funding

KEY MESSAGES

- The Ministry of Education and Child Care allocates operating grants to boards of education.
- Operating funding is primarily based on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students determined by course registration.
- Each year, operating grants are recalculated following the September and February enrolment count and finalized following the May enrolment count.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Approximately 75% of operating grant funding is based on enrolment (per student amount).
- The remaining 25% is distributed through a series of supplements for students with disabilities or diverse abilities, English/French Language Learning, Indigenous Education, promoting equity of student opportunities, educator salary differentials, and geographic factors.
- Estimated operating grants are released by March 15 before the school year begins, based on estimated enrolment submitted by school districts. This year the ministry published the 2025/26 preliminary operating grants on March 13, 2025.
- Funding is adjusted throughout the school year as actual enrolment is counted:
 - July (Summer Learning)
 - September (all students)
 - February (continuing education (CE), online learning (OL), refugees, inclusive education growth)
 - May (CE and OL)
- The per pupil Operating Grant average funding amount for the estimated 2025/26 operating grants is \$11,939, an increase of \$180 compared to 2024/25 and an increase of \$2,968 or 33% compared to 2016/17.
- Including special grants, the estimated total operating funding per student is \$13,596 for the 2025/26 school year. This is 44% higher than in 2016/17.
- The 2025/26 operating grant formula is unchanged from 2024/25 apart from a number of rate increases as a result of the allocation of the remaining labour settlement funding from the third and final year of the 2022 Shared Recovery Mandate and a minor adjustment to the Student Location Factor.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Boards of education are projecting an increase in their September enrolment of 1,250 FTE in 2025/26, the 10th annual increase in the last 11 years.
- This is significantly lower than the rate of growth in 2024/25 when enrolment increased by more than 7,800 school-age FTE between September 2023 and September 2024.

- Despite enrolment growth at the provincial level, 34 of British Columbia's 60 school districts are expecting to serve fewer school-age students in September 2025 compared to the previous September.
- The projected increase in provincial enrolment contrasts with the ministry projections from Governance and Analytics Division that forecast a decline in enrolment in September 2025. We are in a period of change and the situation is difficult to predict.

Key Dates/Timelines

- School districts are required to submit their balanced 2025/26 Annual Budget to the ministry by June 30, 2025.
- Operating grants will be recalculated following the September 2025, February 2026, and May 2026 enrolment counts.

Policies and Regulations

- The *School Act* requires the Minister of Education and Child Care to provide operating grant allocations to boards of education for the coming school year on, or before, March 15.

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- The provincial operating grant block is estimated to be \$7.251 billion for 2025/26, an increase of \$123.7 million from 2024/25. This is the result of the addition of \$76.5 million for labour settlement costs and \$47.2 million for anticipated enrolment increases.
- The above totals are for the entire 2025/26 school year, including district estimates for the July 2025, September 2025, February 2026 and May 2026 enrolment counts.
- Funding for the 2025/26 school year will be updated following each of these enrolment counts.
- Outside of the operating grants, an additional \$1.0 billion in special grants will be allocated to boards of education in 2025/26, including an estimated \$757 million for the Classroom Enhancement Fund.
- Boards of education have the autonomy to allocate their operating funding within their school district according to local decisions and priorities; however, they are obligated to provide an appropriate level of service to all students enrolled in their district.

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Classroom Enhancement Fund

KEY MESSAGES

- The Classroom Enhancement Fund (CEF) was introduced in the 2017/18 school year to fund the implementation of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) to restore class size and composition language from before 2002 to BCTF collective agreements.
- School districts have hired over 5,700 additional teacher full time equivalents (FTEs) through CEF, including enrolling and non-enrolling (specialist) teachers.
- The total CEF allocation provided to school districts to implement the restored language for the 2024/25 school year is \$799 million, which includes \$7.4 million in labour settlement funding (LSF) associated with the third and final year of the 2022 Shared Recovery Mandate.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- CEF has three components:
 1. Staffing (for classroom and specialist teachers);
 2. Overhead (for the ancillary costs of employing these teachers, including support staff dictated by collective agreement language); and
 3. Remedies (where school districts are unable to implement the restored language despite best efforts).
- Funding is based on actual hiring and costs as reported to the Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC), based on actual hiring as of September 29 of the school year, and actual remedy costs for October.
- Cabinet Confidences ECC has allocated LSF to CEF overhead to help address cost pressures reported by districts.
- For the 2024/25 school year the CEF allocation totals \$799 million, supporting:
 - 5,746 teacher FTEs at a cost of \$710.6 million:
 - 3,453 enrolling teacher FTEs; and,
 - 2,293 non-enrolling (specialist) teacher FTEs.
 - \$46.8 million of overhead costs.
 - An estimated \$41.6 million for remedies based on actual remedy costs incurred in October 2024.
- The primary driver of CEF is the cost of additional teachers, which accounts for almost 90% of the total allocation.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- On March 3, 2017, the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA), the Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC), ECC, and the BCTF signed a MOA that fully and finally resolves all matters related to the implementation of the Supreme Court of Canada's decision regarding restoration of class size and composition language in effect before 2002.

- The MOA implements the restoration of over 1,600 clauses to collective agreements across the province, together with process around the interpretation of the restored clauses.
- To be compliant with the MOA and the Supreme Court decision, the Province's 60 school districts must meet class size and composition requirements as specified in the MOA and their respective local teacher collective agreements. Government has committed to fully funding the staffing and overhead/administration required for compliance with the MOA through the CEF.
- This MOA was updated and replaced with a Letter of Understanding in the 2019 to 2022 round of collective bargaining.
- BCPSEA advised ECC on the interpretation of the restored collective agreement language in their position as official bargaining agent.
- Boards of Education are responsible for meeting the terms and conditions of their collective agreements, including the MOA.

Key Dates/Timelines

- The current CEF application and reporting process includes:
 - BCTF staffing due mid-October;
 - Remedies due mid-November; and
 - Year-end report due mid-July (preliminary) and end of September (final).

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- As CEF is a restricted grant (i.e., Special Purpose Fund), funding in excess of actual costs is recovered. ECC has recovered \$2 million in funding from 2023/24, which has been reallocated to minimize 2024/25 costs.
- Total funding provided to school districts to implement the restored language has increased from \$695.2 million in 2023/24 to an estimated \$799 million in 2024/25.
- Funding for the 2024/25 school year will be adjusted based upon school districts' end-of-year reporting of actual spending, which should align with their audited financial statements. Underspend on staffing, overhead and remedies will be recovered; overspend in remedies only will be funded.

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School District Cost Pressures

KEY MESSAGES

- Boards of education have indicated that they continued to face cost pressures for the 2024/25 school year.
- In 2022, inflation in BC, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), was 6.9%, the highest rate since 1982. School district costs related to services and supplies are directly impacted by inflation.
- Although inflation slowed in 2023 (3.9%) and 2024 (2.6%), prices for some goods and services remain elevated.
- School districts are also experiencing labour cost pressures related to changes to Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Employment Insurance (EI) maximums, annual illness and injury leave benefits under the *Employment Standards Act* (ESA), and WorkSafeBC premiums.
- Government Financial Information

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Most of a school district's costs are labour related and not directly affected by inflation. However, districts are experiencing labour cost pressures related to changes in CPP and EI maximums, sick leave provisions and WorkSafeBC premiums.
- Based on the 2023/24 Audited Financial Statements (AFS), 89% of school district operating expenditures are salaries (71%) and benefits (18%) for teachers, management, and support staff.
- The remaining 11% are for services and supplies, which include expenditures on professional/technical services, data processing services, contracted transportation, utilities, and supplies and materials of a consumable and/or non-capital nature. These are directly affected by inflation.
- The estimated 2024/25 school district labour cost pressures are as follows:
 - Increases to CPP and EI maximums – \$73.2 million
 - ESA changes – \$25 million
 - Increases to WorkSafeBC premiums – \$9.6 million
- A comparison of the 2024/25 Annual Budget and 2023/24 AFS shows the following school district cost pressures related to services and supplies:
 - Insurance – increase of \$0.7 million (3.5%)
 - Supplies – increase of \$3.4 million (1.3%)
 - Utilities – increase of \$8.7 million (7.3%)
- School districts ended the 2023/24 school year with \$327 million of Accumulated Operating Surplus, an increase of \$19 million compared to 2022/23.
- The increase in accumulated surplus, coupled with the conservative budgeting approach taken by school districts, indicates that districts can absorb the inflationary cost pressures.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Boards that experience increasing enrolment generally do not add costs at the same rate. An additional 100 students in a district may generate (on average) an additional \$1 million in funding for the board but does not necessarily require the hiring of an additional eight teachers or add significantly to services, supplies or transportation costs. However, in some districts, there are increased costs for portable classrooms due to space pressures.
- The existing Funding Allocation System (FAS) also supports those districts with declining enrolment through Funding Protection (FP). FP ensures that total September operating grants do not drop more than 1.5%, i.e., the board is guaranteed at least 98.5% of the previous year's September operating grants.
- This is to allow the board to manage the impact of declining enrolment if a district loses 100 students (potentially \$1 million less in funding) and they may not be able to reduce their staffing by eight teachers and/or associated educational assistants and still have the same overhead costs to run the school district. The level of FP has varied over the past 20 years, and at times, 100% of the previous year's September funding has been guaranteed.
- Where a district has relatively flat enrolment (or with a small increase or decrease), they do not see the benefit of either of these mechanisms, and so must bear increased costs, without the benefit of increasing funding, or the FP safety net.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- School district funding is based primarily on a per student full time equivalent (FTE) funding allocation, which has risen from \$7,158 to \$8,915 per FTE (+24.5%) since student enrolment started increasing in the 2015/16 school year.
- Prior to that, the basic allocation increased each year as a fixed funding block and was allocated among a decreasing number of students.
- Since 2015/16, the basic allocation has only increased when labour settlement funding has been added to the operating grant funding rates, i.e., to fund the costs of negotiated wage and benefit increases for teachers and support staff.

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Teachers Act Special Account

KEY MESSAGES

- Teacher regulation in British Columbia has been established to be delivered on a cost recovery basis.
- The Teachers Act Special Account (TASA) was created as the mechanism through which the application and annual practice fees paid by teachers would fund all operating costs associated with the regulatory structure for the teaching profession.
- Budget 2025 provides an increase of \$0.482 million in 2025/26 to support increased operational costs mainly due to an increase in volume and complexity of teacher applications and wage lifts.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The annual practice fee increase, from \$80 to \$95 was implemented effective April 1, 2024, and a decrease for Application fee for Certificate of Qualifications for internationally educated teachers from \$395 to \$245 was implemented effective July 1, 2024.
- Based on the timelines of this implementation TASA is now forecasting a \$0.118 million operating surplus in 2025/26.
- TASA continually reviews administrative processes with a goal of finding administrative cost savings, where possible, to help minimize costs to teachers. Annual practice fees for educators in BC are substantially lower than other professional annual practice fees in BC, and lower than other teacher regulators in Canada.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The application fee for Internationally educated teachers was reduced by \$150. This decrease was to align with standards under the International Credential Recognition Act, which applies to the teaching profession.
- Internationally educated teachers (IETs) applications for Certificates of Qualification (CoQ) have significantly increased in recent years: 971 in 2022, 1,482 in 2023 and currently forecasting 1,700 in 2024.
- Evaluations of applications by IETs are the most complex, as is the review of their initial applications and responding to their service queries.
- These factors have necessitated an increase in temporary staffing to address higher volumes and backlog.
- The annual practice fee increase in April 2024 enables TASA to offset rising costs and maintain an accumulated equity surplus of \$2 million on an annual basis up to fiscal year 2027/28.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- TASA 2025/26 operating budget is \$9.082 million. This budget includes salaries for staff who carry out the operations of teacher certification and discipline, building occupancy, legal fees, as well as remuneration for the Commissioner for Teacher Regulation, the BC Teachers Council and hearing panels and other operating costs.
- Budget 2025 provides an increase of \$0.376 million in 2025/26 to support increased operational costs mainly due to an increase in volume and complexity of teacher applications and \$0.106 million for wage lifts.
- The revenue is projected to be \$9.2 million in 2025/26 from annual certification fees and from application and other fees. This is an increase of \$0.160 million from last year due to the annual practice fee increase and an increase in the number of teachers forecasted.

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ChildCareBC - Quality/Workforce Overview

KEY MESSAGES

- Early childhood educators (ECEs) are skilled professionals who provide and co-create quality, inclusive, culturally safe and responsive care and learning environments for children at some of the most important times in their lives.
- We know some parents are struggling to find child care, which in some cases is made more challenging due to staff shortages. That's why we're making it easier for more people to become ECEs by helping with the cost of education and streamlining pathways for international ECEs.
- We're providing better access to education and professional development for ECEs who want to advance their careers. We're also enhancing wages and providing grants to recognize additional specialized education in inclusive child care and/or in caring for infants and toddlers.
- We're working hard to test a wage grid and compensation standard (including paid time off and benefits) with a growing number of providers through the Operating Funding Model (OFM) Test.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Since the 2018 Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy, approximately \$640 million in provincial and federal funding has been invested in the child care workforce.
- The ECE Wage Enhancement has contributed to the increase in median wage of ECEs in BC from \$19/hour in 2018/19 to \$29/hour in 2024/25.
- Over 5,300 ECEs who hold Infant Toddler Educator and/or Special Needs Educator certificates have been approved for the Specialized Certification Grant.
- Between 2018-19 and August 2024, over 24,600 bursaries were awarded through the Education Support Fund to more than 11,800 students.
- By the end of the 2025 calendar year, 50 school districts and 15 post-secondary partners will have delivered about 2,400 ECE Dual Credit courses to approximately 1,000 students.
- Since 2018, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS) invested \$25.9 million to add approximately 2,600 student spaces at 17 public post-secondary ECE programs.
- The number of active ECE certificates has increased since 2018-19 from approximately 16,700 to more than 26,000 in 2024/25 (YTD); the overall number of ECEs employed at group facilities has increased by about 6,600 from 10,400 in 2018-19 to 17,000 in 2024/25.
- Between 2017-2018 and 2023-24, B.C. invested nearly \$30 million in professional development.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Individuals interested in a career as an ECE can receive up to \$4,000 per semester through the ECE Education Support Fund to help with the costs of their education, while those working in the sector can receive up to \$5,000 per semester for additional costs (lost wages, travel).
- The ECE Dual Credit program allows students to take post-secondary courses while in high school. These courses count as both post-secondary and elective Grade 12 credits.

- The Province is exploring updates to the ECE Occupational Competencies, used by the Registry to assess certification, investigate practice complaints and review post-secondary programs; which supports high quality education and professional standards for ECEs.
- The ECE Registry has had a hold on applications for net new post-secondary institutions wishing to offer early childhood education programs. A phased approach to lift this hold is underway and phase one was publicly launched in July 2024. Phase Two includes the release of prioritization criteria for net new post-secondary applicants and is expected summer 2025.
- The ECE Wage Enhancement of up to \$6 an hour is available to eligible ECEs.
- The annual ECE Specialized Certification Grant is available to ECEs holding Infant Toddler Educator and/or Special Needs Educator certificates and working in an eligible program.

Key Dates/Timelines

Cabinet Confidences

-

- Prioritization criteria for net-new post-secondary institutions wishing to apply for ECE Registry recognition to offer ECE programs are scheduled for release summer 2025.

Policies and Regulations

- Current priorities include updating policies and regulations to be compliant with the *International Credentials Recognition Act*; developing a Quality Assessment Framework; exploring updates to the ECE Occupational Competencies; and looking into bringing the *ECE Act* into force through regulation, in consultation with First Nations and Indigenous partners.
- The wage grid and compensation standard (including paid time off and benefits) for the child care workforce continues to be tested through the OFM and reviewed for future changes.

Relevant Engagement

- In August-September 2024, engagements with key interest holders, Indigenous partner organizations and First Nations Title and Rights holders were held to gather feedback on the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Workforce Strategy. Findings from the federal government engagement strategy will also inform other ChildCareBC initiatives, where relevant.
- Winter/Spring 2025: engagement with interest-holders, Provincial Child Care Council, Indigenous organizations and First Nations Title and Rights holders on Standards of Practice and Occupational Competencies; ECE Registry Waitlist Prioritization; and the Child Care Licensing Regulation amendments to align with the International Credential Recognition Act and update Schedule D.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- See Appendix 1 in the ChildCareBC Estimates Note for details.

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Teacher Certification Timelines

KEY MESSAGES

- We've seen an increase in people applying for teacher certification over the past three years, driven by record numbers of applications from internationally educated teachers.
- This is a positive step towards addressing workforce shortages; but the pace of the increase paired with the creation of more pathways for certification has resulted in longer timelines.
- Teacher candidates from BC or other provinces are being certified in an average of 14 days.
- We expect to be evaluating international applications within the service standard average of 90 days by September 2025 as a result of recently implemented staffing, process and technology improvements.
- The mandate commitment to expedite the certification and deployment of new and experienced international and domestic teachers is an opportunity to consider policy initiatives in this area that support the K-12 workforce in sustainable and flexible ways.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The number of internationally educated teachers applying for certification in BC has increased significantly in the last three years, from 971 in 2022, 1,482 in 2023 and 1,753 in 2024.
- During the same period, total volume of applications received was 5,534 in 2022, 6,181 in 2023, and 6,659 in 2024.
- New certification standards introduced in December 2023 expand eligibility for internationally educated teachers; but also make applications more complex and time consuming.
- Since December 2023 evaluation timelines for internationally educated teachers have increased from 63 days to 208 days but are expected to be below 90 days by September 2025.
- The ministry hired 6 new FTEs in different roles, shifted work within the unit and is streamlining processes to increase capacity to evaluate international applications. This includes modernized IT tools to support the management of high-volume tasks.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The BC Teachers' Council (BCTC) sets the certification standards for the Certificate of Qualification (COQ). A COQ is required to teach in the public school system. An individual with a COQ can also teach in the Independent School system.
- The Independent School Teaching Certificate Standards Committee sets the standards for the Independent School Teaching Certificate required to teach in the independent system.
- The Director of Certification is a ministry employee and has legislated responsibility to oversee certification, determine fitness to teach, and maintain an online registry of all certificate and Letter of Permission holders.

Key Dates/Timelines

- December 2023: The BCTC updated the certification standards with respect to language proficiency and professional training requirements. There are eight different ways an applicant can demonstrate proficiency in English or French, and teacher training programs are now evaluated on “substantial content” requirements in nine distinct areas.
- Summer 2024: The ministry temporarily increased the number of staff in several roles to support the increased volume in applications.
- July 2024: Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) implements new document management system.
- October 2024: The TRB began offering information sessions targeted to internationally educated teachers and making recordings available online after the sessions have concluded.
- November 2024: Pathways to Teach Canada Credential Assessment Report (Pathways)
 - Pathways is a single pan-Canadian entry point for the review of internationally educated teacher qualifications and standardizes how international credentials are assessed.
 - All internationally educated teachers are required to apply to Pathways for assessment and the TRB uses the report to determine if they meet the Certification Standards.
 - Pathways is in the process of having its credential assessment report recognized by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. This would enable international teachers to use the same report for immigration and teacher certification purposes.
 - Pathways will make it faster for TRB staff to review international applications.
- February 2025: The TRB completed updates in the applicant log in area to increase clarity and efficiency for applicants and evaluators.

Policies and Regulations

- Teachers Act
- January 2025 Certification Standards

Relevant Engagement

- Director of Certification chairs the consortium of Pathways to Teach Canada members.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- The TRB is funded through the Teachers Act Special Account (TASA). TASA charges fees for applications and a certificate holder annual practice fee.
- When the current model for certifying and regulating teachers was established in 2012, annual practice fees were lowered from \$120 to \$80.
- In July 2024, the annual practice fee increased to \$95 to cover the increased administrative costs and allow for the teaching profession to be regulated without running a deficit.
- In July 2024, the application fee for IETs was reduced from \$395 to \$245 to align with requirements under the International Credential Recognition Act.

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K-12 Workforce Pressures

KEY MESSAGES

- BC is not unique in facing this problem. Jurisdictions across Canada and the world are experiencing challenges hiring qualified teachers and support staff.
- We are working closely with education partners on implementing our Workforce Plan supported by investments of \$14.6 million over 3 years.
- While there is more work to do, we are starting to see positive results, like rural and remote communities recruiting more than 100 new teachers over the past few years through hiring incentives.
- We are also investing to train more teachers and improve program accessibility through:
 - A program at UBC designed to allow students to remain in rural communities while studying
 - The creation of two new teacher education programs to be delivered partly online
 - Additional seats in French teacher training programs

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Recent workforce initiatives also include:
 - Recruiting more than 100 new teachers over the past two years in rural and remote areas through hiring incentives, with a third round of \$500,000 going out next school year.
 - 25+ student teachers experiencing the benefits of teaching in rural communities thanks to a new \$8,000 award that supported them to relocate to Northern BC for their practicums.
 - Reducing application fees for international teachers and working with the BC Teachers' Council to change certification standards so more international teachers can work in BC.
 - Establishing a teacher mentorship program to support teacher growth and career development.
 - Working with Indigenous partners to recruit and retain more Indigenous teachers, as per a commitment from the Declaration Act Action Plan.
 - Developing a competency framework to better support education assistants in their training and ensure more consistency across training programs in BC.
- This school year alone, we are investing almost \$4 million in recruitment and retention efforts, with a focus on teachers in rural and remote areas.
- An additional \$1.1 million over four years (2024/25 to 2027/28) is being provided by the federal government to support the recruitment of French-speaking teachers in BC.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- As of December 2024, there were over 49,000 teachers (including TTOCs), and about 40,000 support staff (including over 16,000 education assistants) working in public schools.
- Most school districts across the province are facing recruitment and retention challenges for all positions, not just teachers.

- The Labour Market Outlook 2024 projects the following number of job openings over the next 10 years (2024-2034): 21,910 for K-12 teachers, and 7,880 for education assistants.

Key Dates/Timelines

- In spring 2023, ECC convened education partners to start developing a K-12 Workforce Plan.
- In spring 2024, ECC launched the K-12 Workforce Plan.
- In fall 2024, ECC established cross-sector working groups and tables to implement initiatives under the K-12 Workforce Plan.

Policies and Regulations

- Under the Teachers Act, the BC Teachers' Council is responsible for setting standards for teacher certification and standards for post-secondary teacher education programs in BC.

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry has been working with K-12 partners on the K-12 Workforce Plan, including employer groups (including school trustees through the BC School Trustees Association), unions (BC Teachers Federation (BCTF) and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)), Indigenous organizations (First Nations Education Steering Committee and Metis Nation BC), post-secondary institutions and the BC Teachers' Council.
- The BCTF has been advocating for a fully funded K-12 workforce strategy, similar to Health's Human Resources Strategy, with an emphasis on loan forgiveness programs, accessible training programs and retention initiatives.
- The BCTF has expressed strong support for ECC's mandate letter commitments on the expansion of education assistants and counselling resources and recently commissioned a poll, the results of which show strong public support for this action.
- CUPE has been advocating to increase: 1) the number of education assistants and 2) their hours of work by involving them in the delivery of child care on school grounds, and address violence in the workplace (e.g., when working with students with dysregulated behaviours).

BUDGET/FUNDING

- The Stronger BC Future Ready Action Plan includes \$6.5 million for ECC and \$6 million for PSFS over three years (a total of \$12.5 million from 2023/2024 to 2025/2026) to support recruitment and retention for teachers in rural and remote areas, and Indigenous teachers.
- In addition, the ministry has invested over \$2 million over two years (\$905,000 in 2023/2024 and \$1.17 million in 2024/2025) to expand K-12 recruitment and retention initiatives.
- In 2024/2025, investments of almost \$4 million went into supporting K-12 recruitment and retention initiatives under the K-12 Workforce Plan.
- Under the Protocol for Agreements for Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction with the Government of Canada covering 2024-25 to 2027-28, \$1.1 million is earmarked to support French teacher recruitment and retention in BC.

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BC Training and Education Savings Grant

KEY MESSAGES

- The BC Training and Education Savings Grant (BTESG) helps parents and guardians plan and save early for their child's post-secondary education by providing a one-time grant of \$1,200.
- There are no additional fees or financial contributions needed to receive the grant, so parents and families who cannot afford to put aside savings can still start a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP).
- Children are eligible for the grant between their sixth and ninth birthday.
- Parents/guardians can apply for the grant on behalf of their children through one of 56 participating banks, credit unions and other financial institutions.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Over 290,000 children have received the grant since it was launched in August 2015.
- Nearly \$349 million in grants have been issued.
- This represents approximately 50% of the estimated eligible cohorts.
- Approximately 150,000 BC children are currently eligible to receive the grant.
- The Government of Canada administers the BCTESG on behalf of the province (through the Canada – BC Agreement) and offers additional savings incentives through RESPs, including: the Canada Education Savings Grant and the Canada Learning Bond.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- To be eligible for the BCTESG, children must meet the following three criteria at the time of application:
 - The child is between the age of six and the day before their ninth birthday
 - The child and their parent/guardian are residents of BC
 - The child is named as the beneficiary of a RESP with a participating financial institution (Social Insurance Number required to open a RESP)
- The BCTESG grant is available through 56 promoters including:

◦ CIBC	◦ Toronto-Dominion Bank
◦ BMO Bank of Montreal	◦ HSBC Bank of Canada and
◦ RBC Royal Bank	◦ BC Credit Unions
◦ Scotiabank	
- The BCTESG was originally conceived as the Children's Education Fund (CEF) in 2006, at which time \$1,000 was invested into a special account for every child born or adopted in BC on or after January 1, 2007, to make higher education more affordable.

- Budget 2013 announced the transition of the CEF into the BCTESG. For those children impacted by this transition (those born in 2007, 2008 and 2009), an extended deadline (August 14, 2018) was provided to ensure these groups had a full three years to apply.
- Initially, a one-year application window was to be provided. It increased to three years based on feedback from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and financial institutions.
- In 2016, an additional regulation change was made to change the 2006 cohort deadline to August 14, 2019, to ensure a full three-year window for applications.
- The initial age of eligibility set for BCTESG is six years old because that was the youngest age of the original CEF cohort when BCTESG was officially announced in 2013.
- To ensure children and youth who have been in care and may not have been able to access the funds, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) established the Learning Fund for Young Adults in 2015. In September 2024, MCFD opened applications for the Learning Fund for Young Adults which provides \$1,500 for education, employment, training or life-skills programs. Eligibility requirements include:
 - 12 months of total time in care by 19th birthday;
 - Born after January 1, 2006; and,
 - At least 17 and under the age of 36.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- The British Columbia Training and Education Savings Program Regulation establishes eligibility criteria for the grant under section 9.4 of the *Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act*.

Relevant Engagement

- In 2024, ECC promoted BCTESG through schools via Deputy Minister Bulletins.
- In addition, the Government of Canada included information about the BCTESG in a direct mailing campaign for the Canada Savings Bond. This included over 30,000 letters.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- In 2023/24, the program cost \$30.5 million. The 2024/25 estimated expense is \$30.0 million.
- The Government of Canada annual administration fee is approximately \$430,000.
- Due to lower-than-expected uptake rates and accumulation of a significant cash balance within the Special Account, contributions to the account were suspended in 2021.
- The fund has sufficient funding until 2030 to meet demands when factoring in program eligibility and projected investment income, and if forecasted uptake remains relatively stable (approximately \$443 million as of January 31, 2025).

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Children and Youth in Care

KEY MESSAGES

- We know that children and youth in care face unique challenges that can significantly impact their learning.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care continues to take action to improve outcomes for children and youth in care, in alignment with recommendations from the Representative for Children and Youth.
- The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning recognizes children and youth in care as priority learners and commits the ministry and school districts to work with Indigenous peoples and education partners to create a brighter future for these students.
- To support this work, the ministry provides Equity of Opportunity Supplement funding to boards of education to provide programs and services for children and youth in care.
- The ministry is also working closely with the Ministries of Children and Family Development and Post Secondary-Education and Future Skills, and First Nations leadership to achieve the objectives of the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol, including improving data collection, information sharing, public reporting, and services for children and youth in care.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- In 2023/24, 5,194 (public schools = 4,849; independent = 345) students were identified as children and youth in care (CYIC), or less than 1% of BC K-12 students.
 - 68% of CYIC in public and independent schools self-identify as Indigenous.
- Six-year completion rates (resident only) for CYIC in public and independent schools:
 - Increased from 53.5% in 2018/19 to 61.1% in 2023/24 for all CYIC.
 - Increased from 46.8% in 2018/19 to 58.4% in 2023/24 for Indigenous CYIC.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- In 2017, the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) released a report, *Room for Improvement: Toward Better Education Outcomes for Children in Care*, that outlined recommendations to government for improving educational outcomes for CYIC.
 - As a result, ECC and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) developed the *Joint Educational Planning for Children and Youth in Care: Cross-Ministry Guidelines* to improve information sharing, collaboration and communication between schools, child welfare workers and families.
- In May 2020, ECC, along with MCFD, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS), the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESEC), signed the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol.
 - The Protocol is connected to the Declaration Act Action Plan Action 4.18, which commits ECC, PSFS, and MCFD to co-develop and implement measures to support improved education outcomes for current and former FN CYIC, including meaningful data collection to inform policy planning and service delivery.

- A workplan to implement key aspects of the Protocol was approved by the Protocol Oversight Table in November 2023.
- In January 2025, ECC released the first annual Children and Youth in Care: How We Doing? Report, which provides data on the educational performance of CYIC and insights on what areas the system could focus on to improve their educational outcomes.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- The Ministerial Order for Enhancing Student Learning Reporting requires school districts to report on the educational outcomes of CYIC.

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry continues to work with MCFD, PSFS, FNLC and FNEC to achieve the objectives of the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol.
 - The Oversight Table (political/leadership level) is intended to meet twice per year to identify priority issues, establish a mutual and focused agenda, and direct the work of the Technical Working Table. The next meeting of the Oversight Table is tentatively scheduled for late Spring 2025.
 - The Technical Working Table (staff level) meets monthly to carry out the direction of the Oversight Table and implement the Protocol workplan.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- \$27.5 million in Equity of Opportunity Supplement funding will be distributed to boards of education for the 2025/26 fiscal year. This is an increase of \$1 million (3.7%) from 2023/24.
- \$60.4 million in CommunityLINK funding will be distributed to boards of education for the 2025/26 fiscal year. This is an increase of \$1.4 million (2.37%) from 2023/24.

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CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) Learning

KEY MESSAGES

- Government has committed to ensuring that all students receive mandatory CPR learning before graduation.
- Starting in the 2025/26 school year, CPR learning will become a required part of the curriculum in Grade 10 Physical and Health Education.
- We know that CPR saves lives. The more people out in the world who know how and when to start CPR, the more likely someone will act in those crucial moments before paramedics arrive.
- The ministry has been working with the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation, a national organization that provides free CPR and AED programs in Canadian high schools, to figure out how best to implement this curriculum change.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- According to the ACT Foundation, almost 90% of BC high schools already do some form of CPR learning, but next year will be the first time it is required for all Grade 10 students across the province.
- For the first year of implementation (2025/26), schools and districts will be asked to extend the opportunity for CPR learning beyond grade 10 to include any grade 11 and 12 students who have not already received it.
- During the 2024/25 school year, there were 58,147 Grade 10 students in BC public and independent schools.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The CPR learning announcement came after the tragic death of 18-year-old University of Victoria student Sidney McIntyre-Starko and recommendations from her parents to help prevent a similar tragedy in the future.
- The ACT Foundation, and other respected experts, have the information and training available to support schools and teachers to implement this learning.

Key Dates/Timelines

- May 2024: BC announced CPR learning would become mandatory
- November-December 2024: Engagement with education partners and health experts
- September 2025/26: Implementation of new CPR learning requirement

Policies and Regulations

- The Physical and Health Education 10 curriculum and the Educational Program Guide Order will be updated to reflect this curriculum change before the start of the 2025/26 school year.

Relevant Engagement

- ECC engaged with multiple rightsholders/stakeholders including:
 - First Nations Education Steering Committee

- Metis Nation BC
- BC Teachers' Federation
- BC Confederation of Parents Advisory Councils
- BC School Trustees Association
- BC School Superintendents Association
- BC Principals and Vice-Principals Association
- First Nations Health Authority
- ACT Foundation
- BC Emergency Health Services
- St. John Ambulance

BUDGET/FUNDING

- N/A

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Dual Credit / Future Ready / Trades Programs and Skills Training

KEY MESSAGES

- As part of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, the Ministry of Education and Child Care implemented a comprehensive career and skill development strategy to expand dual credit and other career education opportunities for students.
- Over the past two years, the Dual Credit Program Expansion component of the strategy provided grants to grow regional programs connected to health career and other in-demand jobs, allowing students to get a head start on their post-secondary journey by taking courses that count towards both their high school and post-secondary graduation credentials.
- The K-12 Career Connections component has enhanced career exploration and foundational skill development for students in Grades K-8, and expanded career sampler programs and work experience opportunities for high school students.
- The ministry has invested over \$7 million over two years into this initiative, to help increase high school graduation rates, transition rates to post-secondary education, and employment in in-demand occupations.
- In collaboration with SkilledTradesBC, the ministry also continues to provide students with trades training and skill development programs and courses that feature hands-on work experience and support a successful transition to post-secondary training and the world of work.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The 2024 Labour Market Outlook report forecasts that BC will have one million job openings in the next decade; nearly 78% will require some form of post-secondary education or training.
- The report highlights job vacancies in categories like health, education, natural and applied sciences (e.g., climate change and emergency management), and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).
- Dual credit students are 7% more likely to graduate on time, and that effect is greater for Indigenous students (8%) and students with disabilities and diverse abilities (9%).
- Dual credit students are also 16% more likely to enroll in post-secondary study (based on immediate transition to BC's 25 public post-secondary institutions).
- Approximately 3% of students take dual credit.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- According to the Student Transitions Project, the immediate-entry transition rate from K-12 to BC Public post-secondary education has increased from 51% to 52% since 2002.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- The Ministry-Authorized Work Experience Courses and Workplace Safety, Elective Work Experience Courses and Workplace Safety Policy, Work Experience Order MO237/11, and the

Employment Standards Act and Regulation apply to work experience placements for K-12 students.

- The Earning Credit through Equivalency, Challenge, External Credentials, Post-Secondary Credit and Independent Directed Studies Policy enables grades 11 and 12 students to take post-secondary courses and receive credit toward both their high school and post-secondary graduation credentials, and the Recognition of Post-Secondary Transition Programs for Funding Purposes enables schools to claim those dual credit courses for regular per-course funding.

Relevant Engagement

- To support planning and implementation of the Future Ready K–12 Career Connections and Dual Credit Expansion initiative, the ministry has hosted bi-monthly meetings of a K-12 advisory, which includes the BC Teacher’s Federation, the First Nations Education Steering Committee, Métis Nation BC, and other provincial K-12 education partners.
- The ministry has undertaken extensive stakeholder engagement regarding proposed dual credit policy changes that would increase the variety of dual credit opportunities and the number and diversity of participating students.
- The policy engagements revealed strong support for the proposed changes.

Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet
Confidences; Government Financial
Information

BUDGET/FUNDING

- The StrongerBC Future Ready Action Plan, including the Health Human Resources Strategy, included nearly \$4 million for K–12 Career Connections initiatives and \$3.2 million for dual credit expansion related to health and other in-demand careers from fiscal 2023/24 to 2024/25.
- Since 2021, the Province has committed \$6.3 million to expand dual credit programs related to early childhood education through the Childcare BC Plan.
- The Ministry has allocated \$0.6M for career and skill development initiatives for 2025/26, in addition to per course funding for dual credit programs offered by school districts.
- The ministry’s annual commitment to the Youth Explore the Trades, Youth Work in Trades, Youth Train in Trades, and Work Experience programs is over \$21 million (based on 2023/24 course enrolments generated by course-based funding).
- Approximately \$300,000 annually for the Youth Work in Trades Awards (SkilledTradesBC matches funding, for a combined total of approximately \$600,000).

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Holocaust Education

KEY MESSAGES

- Holocaust education is being added to the Social Studies 10 curriculum for September 2025.
- As Social Studies 10 is a mandatory course, this change will ensure that all students learn about the Holocaust in high school.
- We are also expanding existing learning about other types of discrimination and injustices in BC.
- Ministry staff are working on the policy updates to bring the changes into effect before the start of the new school year.
- We are also working with education partners and community groups to make sure teachers have access to accurate information about new learning topics.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- In October 2023, the Province announced that the Holocaust would become a mandatory topic of learning for high school students in the Social Studies 10 curriculum beginning in the 2025-26 school year.
- A commitment was also made to explore adding other topics to the Grade 10 Social Studies curriculum to reflect the diversity and history of BC.
- Between April and June 2024, ministry staff engaged with a variety of community organizations, education partners and Holocaust experts for feedback on proposed curriculum changes.
- Feedback indicated that while most Grade 10 Social Studies teachers are already teaching about the Holocaust, this change will ensure that every student in BC receives this learning prior to graduation.
- During the 2024/25 school year, there were 58,147 Grade 10 students in BC public and independent schools.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- While some groups advocated for the inclusion of mandatory learning about events surrounding the creation of the State of Israel and the current conflict in Gaza, these are complex topics that can be difficult for even the most experienced teachers to teach while also ensuring classrooms remain safe and inclusive for all students.
- This doesn't mean teachers can't teach about these topics – teachers can still choose to teach about these topics as well as many others that fall within the scope of “Canada and the World – 1914 to the Present.”

Key Dates/Timelines

- October 2023 - Government first announced Holocaust education would become mandatory.
- April-June 2024 - Engagement with education partners.
- September 2025 - Implementation of the new curriculum requirement will begin.

Policies and Regulations

- The Social Studies 10 curriculum and the Educational Program Guide Order will be updated to reflect this curriculum change before the start of the 2025/26 school year.

Relevant Engagement

- ECC engaged with multiple rightsholders/stakeholders including:
 - First Nations Education Steering Committee;
 - Metis Nation BC;
 - BC Teachers' Federation;
 - BC Confederation of Parents Advisory Councils;
 - BC School Trustees Association;
 - BC School Superintendents Association;
 - BC Principals and Vice-Principals Association;
 - Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre;
 - B'nai Brith;
 - Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs;
 - BC Black History Awareness Society;
 - National Association of Japanese Canadians; and
 - National Council of Canadian Muslims.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- N/A

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Literacy Supports for Students

KEY MESSAGES

- Children who are struggling with their reading or writing need more support to set them up for future success.
- That's why our government is investing \$30 million over three years to improve literacy levels for BC students, including more supports for students with dyslexia and other learning differences.
- This funding is supporting school districts to scale up early literacy screening for Kindergarten to Grade 3 students and expanding Provincial Outreach programs and teams to provide new screening and literacy intervention supports.
- It also includes more than \$13 million that was distributed to all sixty public school districts earlier this year to provide professional learning opportunities for classroom teachers and support staff related to literacy instruction, screening, and interventions.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- For the 2024/25 Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) results for literacy, the percentage of Grade 4 and 7 public school students who are On Track or Extending is 63% (down by 8%) and 67% (down by 3%) respectively.
 - FSA results for Indigenous students for Grades 4 and 7 Literacy are significantly lower than the provincial average, with 47% of Grade 4 students achieving On Track or Extending and 49% for Grade 7.
- Since 2015/16, the percentage of BC K-12 public school students designated in the Learning Disability funding category has increased by 32.8% (from 18,082 students to 24,009 students).

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The ministry increased funding to the Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years (POPEY) in 2024/25, allowing them to triple their team of literacy specialists (from two to six) to support teachers and schools across the province.
- The ministry is working with the BC Council of Administrators of Inclusive Support in Education (BC CAISE) to update the *Supporting Students with Learning Disabilities: A Guide for Teachers* and host a literacy session for staff from all 60 school districts at the BC CAISE Spring Conference in May 2025.
- The ministry is working with BCcampus to gather input from K-12 teachers, support staff, and parents/caregivers which will inform the development of new online literacy resources in 2025/26.
- The ministry is working with researchers and K-12 partners (including CSF) to assess specific literacy support needs for English Language Learners, French Language Learners, and Indigenous students, to inform related resource and program development over the next two years.

Advice/Recommendations; Government Financial Information

Key Dates/Timelines

- October 2024: The Provincial Outreach Programs and Provincial School Outreach teams hosted a provincial “Literacy for All” professional learning day for educators to showcase literacy development strategies and resources for K-12 students, including students with disabilities or diverse abilities. 1,800 participants attended this virtual event.
- February 2025: \$13.863 million in literacy professional learning grants were distributed to all 60 public school districts (districts must expend the funding by June 2027).
- Spring 2025: \$1.664 million will be distributed to independent schools to support professional learning opportunities for teachers and support staff.
- Spring 2025: The ministry will be releasing an early literacy screening resource for school districts, including a list of recommended, evidence-based screeners.

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry chairs a Provincial K-12 Literacy Supports Technical Table that has been meeting monthly since July 2024.
 - The Table includes K-12 education partners, researchers, and specialists who provide advice to inform planning and implementation for the K-12 Literacy Supports initiative.
- In January 2025, BCcampus surveyed over 3,500 educators, education assistants and parents/caregivers about their literacy online resource needs. Additional focus groups and interviews are being conducted in spring 2025.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- \$30 million over three years (2024/25 to 2026/27).
- Key Year 1 funding milestones to date:
 - \$13.863 million in literacy professional learning grants to public school districts.
 - Over \$2.5 million to Provincial Outreach Programs to enhance early literacy screening and intervention support for school districts and independent schools.

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School Exclusions

KEY MESSAGES

- We are committed to removing barriers that students with disabilities or diverse abilities face in accessing an educational program.
- Our government has more than doubled inclusive education funding since 2017 and we are continuing to focus on provincial supports for K-12 students with disabilities or diverse abilities.
- This includes continued funding for Provincial School Outreach teams and Provincial Outreach Programs, and working with K-12 partners to develop new guidelines for Individual Education Plans and additional resources for school staff and families.
- The ministry provides high-level policy direction and annual funding to boards of education. Boards of education decide how best to allocate the funding and deliver educational programming within their districts to meet the needs of their student populations.
- The ministry is committed to working with the Ombudsperson in their investigation of exclusion of students from school.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- On January 14, 2025, the Office of the Ombudsperson of BC announced an investigation into the exclusion of students, including students with disabilities or diverse abilities, from schools in BC's K-12 public education system.
- In 2024/25, 96,598 students (14% of BC's student population) were designated in an inclusive education funding category.
- Since 2015/16, there has been a 11.6% increase in the total number of students enrolled in public BC K-12 schools, but a 46.6% increase in the number of students with inclusive education designations. The number of students designated in the Autism Spectrum Disorder category has increased by over 192% (from 7,794 students to 22,824 students) during that same time.
- Over the past five years, from 2020/2021 to 2024/2025, the number of classes with an educational assistant increased from 23,531 to 32,393 (a 38% increase).

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Boards of education (Boards) must make available an educational program to all persons of school age who enrol in a school in the district (*School Act*, section 75).
- Boards must offer minimum hours of instruction to students enrolled in their schools. Instructional hours can be delivered in different ways that include in-class, online, and self-directed learning based on the student's needs; there is no *School Act* requirement for boards to provide an educational program in person.
- BCEdAccess Society ran an online school "exclusion tracker", where parents could report incidences of school exclusions related to children with disabilities or diverse abilities, from 2018 to 2024.
 - The Family Support Institute of BC has assumed responsibility for the "exclusion tracker", and is planning to release a new "child care exclusion tracker".

Key Dates/Timelines

- The Ombudsperson is planning to complete their investigation into school exclusions by January 2026 and will issue a public report with findings and recommendations.

Policies and Regulations

- Section 91 (5) of the *School Act* defines school exclusions for medical conditions only. Boards must continue to make an educational program available to students in these circumstances.
- The Students with Disabilities and Diverse Abilities Order requires boards to provide a student with disabilities or diverse abilities with an educational program in a classroom where that student is integrated with other students who do not have disabilities or diverse abilities, unless the educational needs of the student with disabilities or diverse abilities or the other students indicate that the educational program for the student with disabilities or diverse abilities should be provided otherwise.
- Partial day attendance is not defined in the *School Act*; it is appropriate for some students and works best when it is a joint decision between the school and the parents/caregivers.

Relevant Engagement

- Provincial advocacy organizations, including BCEd Access Society, Inclusion BC, and the Family Support Institute of BC, continue to raise concerns about the number of students with disabilities who are “excluded” from educational experiences in schools, often due to a lack of available support staff.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- For the 2024/25 school year, the ministry provided school districts with over \$975 million in inclusive education funding to support students with disabilities or diverse abilities.

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Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities

KEY MESSAGES

- All students should have equitable access to learning opportunities that can support them to reach their full potential.
- Our government has more than doubled inclusive education funding since 2017 and we are also providing significant provincial supports.
- This includes Provincial School Outreach teams – which are multi-disciplinary teams of specialists who work directly with schools, primarily in rural and remote communities – to provide support and services for students with diverse learning needs.
- The ministry also funds Provincial Outreach Programs that provide services and capacity building to educators and families to help them meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- The ministry is also working with K-12 partners to develop new guidelines for Individual Education Plans, and new resources to support collaboration between school staff and families.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- In 2024/25, 96,598 students (14% of BC's student population) were designated in an inclusive education funding category.
- Since 2015/16, there has been a 11.6% increase in the total number of students enrolled in public BC K-12 schools, but a 46.6% increase in the number of students with inclusive education designations. The number of students designated in the Autism Spectrum Disorder category has increased by over 192% (from 7,794 to 22,824) during that time.
- The 2023/24 Six-Year Completion Rates for students in public and independent schools designated in an inclusive education category was 79%, up from 78% in 2022/23.
- The Provincial School Outreach teams have provided support to 48 schools in 25 school districts since the first team was launched in fall 2023.
- Approximately 20,000 educators and school administrators receive support from Provincial Outreach Programs annually.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The Provincial School Outreach teams include learning supports teachers, speech language pathologists, behaviour analysts, school counsellors, a school psychologist, an occupational therapist and an English Language Learner teacher.
- In 2018, an Independent Review Panel presented recommendations to government to improve funding for public education, including a recommendation to create a single Inclusive Education supplement. *Cabinet Confidences*
- Between 2018-2021, the ministry worked with K-12 partners and stakeholders to develop a new Inclusive Education Policy and Guide. However, several partners identified challenges with releasing a new policy without updating the current funding model.

- In 2021, the Representative for Children and Youth released *Excluded: Increasing Understanding, Support and Inclusion for Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder*, which included a recommendation for ECC to update its Inclusive Education policy and documents.
- Many K-12 partner organizations and stakeholders continue to express concerns that the ministry's policy framework and funding model for students with disabilities or diverse abilities are outdated and not responsive to the actual needs of students and families.

Key Dates/Timelines

- On July 1, 2024, as part of a language modernization initiative, ECC ministerial orders, policies and documents related to students with disabilities or diverse abilities were updated to remove outdated and offensive terminology (e.g., "special education", "special needs").

Policies and Regulations

- Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities Order, M150/89
- Individual Education Plan Order, M638/95
- Support Services for Schools Order, M149/89
- Inclusive Education Policy
- Inclusive Education: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry has convened a K-12 Partner Inclusive Education Project Table that meets regularly to advise on several inclusive education initiatives, including:
 - the development of new Individual Education Plan guidelines and an optional needs-based assessment tool for school-based teams; and
 - the creation of new resources that clarify roles and responsibilities for, and support meaningful consultation between, school staff and families.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- For the 2025/26 school year, the ministry estimates providing \$1.01 billion in supplementary funding for students designated in one of the 8 inclusive education supplemental funding categories:
 - Level 1: \$51,300 (includes Physically Dependent, Deafblind)
 - ◦ Level 2: \$24,340 (includes Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability, Physical Disability Chronic Health Impairment, Visual Impairment, Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Autism)
 - ◦ Level 3: \$12,300 (includes Intensive Behaviour Interventions or Serious Mental Illness)

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Transition Program for Gifted Students (TPGS)

KEY MESSAGES

- The pause on admissions into the Transition Program for Gifted Students will continue for the 2025/26 school year.
- This decision was made in response to the findings of an external review and following discussion with the Vancouver School Board and University of British Columbia, who support the decision.
- The external review highlighted concerns from some alumni and other stakeholders related to student well-being and a lack of focus on social and emotional learning, which is important for students to successfully transition to post-secondary education and employment.
- Over the next year, the ministry will look at how gifted students are currently being served across BC and consider options for how best to support their learning needs, recognizing school districts are already doing this work in different ways.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The Transition Program for Gifted Students (TPGS) previously supported 40 students annually, between the ages of 13 to 15, with a 4.4 FTE teaching staff
- In the 24/25 school year there are 4,872 (BC public and independent schools, 4,555 for only BC public schools) students designated in the Inclusive Education Category P – Gifted.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- TPGS was established by the Vancouver School Board (VSB) in partnership with the University of British Columbia (UBC) in 1993 and was designated a Provincial Resource Program in 1995.
- TPGS students complete a two-year accelerated graduation program and are eligible to apply for early entrance to UBC.
- From 2016-2021, 46% of students admitted to TPGS were from Vancouver public or independent schools, only two students were from outside of the Lower Mainland, and no students were from the Interior or Northern regions of the province.
- Key external review findings included:
 - misalignment between TPGS practices and ministry and VSB policies related to curriculum, teacher instructional vs prep time, and the Parent Advisory Council's unusual influence over program activities.
 - concerns from some families and alumni regarding teaching practices (e.g. poor classroom management, favoritism), student workload, peer dynamics, lack of focus on social-emotional development and non-STEM subjects, and student well-being.
 - limited access - TPGS is only a practical option for students living in the Lower Mainland.

Key Dates/Timelines

- Fall 2023: Concerns about TPGS are brought to the attention of the ministry, VSB, and UBC by some TPGS students, parents, and alumni; identified concerns include issues around support for social/emotional learning, mental health of students, and admissions practices.
- November 2023: Ministry, VSB, and UBC agree to initiate a formal, third-party review of TPGS.
- January 2024: Ministry contracts Deetken Insight to conduct an external review of TPGS.
- January 2024: Ministry and VSB, in consultation with UBC, suspend admissions into TPGS to allow time for completion of the external review and consideration of potential changes.
- October 2024: Deetken Insight submits final TPGS review report to the ministry.
- February 2025: Minister of Education communicates decision to continue the admissions pause for TPGS for the 2025/26 school year to current TPGS families and applicants.

Policies and Regulations

- Ministerial Order M189/08 Provincial Resource Programs

Relevant Engagement

- During the external review. Deetken Insight engaged with TPGS students, parents, and alumni, as well as VSB and UBC staff through a mix of surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- 2024/25 school year - \$507,706 (program only running single Year 2 cohort of 20 students)
- 2023/24 school year - \$749,000 (Year 1 and Year 2 cohorts, 40 students total)
- 2022/23 school year - \$559,000 (Year 1 and Year 2 cohorts, 40 students total)

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Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)

KEY MESSAGES

- Public school FSA participation rates increased to 84% this year, the highest in over ten years. More students participating means more accurate data on how students are doing.
- This year we saw a slight improvement in numeracy results for both grades 4 and 7 and a decline in literacy.
- Ministry staff are digging into the results to look at trends and potential reasons for the declining literacy results. More students participating in assessments is positive, but as our data gets more robust we are seeing gaps in results for Indigenous students, students with disabilities and diverse abilities and English Language Learners that we need to address as a system.
- Over the past two school years, the ministry has worked with teachers to develop new resources to support classroom teachers to teach literacy and numeracy.
- Our government is also investing \$30 million over three years to help support all of our students to achieve literacy proficiency. We will be asking districts to report back on progress; reviewing FSA results to understand the impact of screening and intervention; and conducting a formal evaluation of the overall initiative.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The FSA is an important system measure of student learning at grades 4 and 7 and is administered each year to track how well our students are doing in their development of foundational literacy and numeracy skills.
- The 2024/25 provincial FSA participation rate for public schools (Grades 4 and 7 combined) was 84%, up by 7 percentage points compared to 2023/2024, and the highest participation we've seen since 2012/13.
- For literacy, the percentage of Grade 4 and 7 students who are On Track or Extending is 63% (down by – 8%) and 67% (down by – 3%) respectively.
- For numeracy, the percentage of Grade 4 and 7 students who are On Track or Extending is 65% (up by +2%) and 59% (up by +3%) respectively.
- Results for Indigenous students for Grades 4 and 7 Literacy are significantly lower than the provincial average, with 48% of Grade 4 students achieving On Track or Extending and 49% for Grade 7. This gap is equally pronounced in Numeracy, with 48% of grade 4 students achieving On Track or Extending and 34% for Grade 7.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The main purpose of the FSA is to help the province, school districts, and schools evaluate how well students are learning fundamental skills and make plans to improve student success.
- FSA results are categorized under three levels of proficiency – emerging, on-track and extending. The goal is for all students is to reach at least On Track in their literacy and numeracy proficiency.
- FSA results are shared with parents/caregivers, school districts, independent schools, and with the public as part of the government's commitment to system accountability.

- The British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) does not support the FSA and encourages parents and caregivers to withdraw their children from participation.
- The use of FSA data by the Fraser Institute to rank schools is a key reason for the BCTF's opposition to FSA.

Key Dates/Timelines

- FSA is administered annually in October for 6 weeks.
- FSA final provincial results are released in March of the year following the assessment.

Policies and Regulations

- Administration of FSA is governed under the Student Learning Assessment Order.

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- N/A

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Graduation Assessments

KEY MESSAGES

- Our provincial assessment results have remained relatively stable in recent years, including during and after the pandemic.
- There has been some declines in numeracy results, and we are developing some teacher resources to help support achievement in this area.
- There is much more work to do to address the gap in learning outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, both in literacy and numeracy.
- BC has invested \$30 million to improve literacy foundations for all students, with a focus on addressing equity gaps.
- The ministry wants to ensure that all students reach their highest level of proficiency in literacy and numeracy prior to graduation, so that they leave our education system with the skills they need for success in their next steps.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Percentage of public school students who achieved proficient or better on the Graduation Assessments in the 2023/24 school year:
 - Numeracy 10: Non-Indigenous students = 45%; Indigenous students = 22%
 - Literacy 10: Non-Indigenous students = 74%; Indigenous students = 52%
 - Literacy 12: Non-Indigenous students = 79%; Indigenous students = 59%

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The BC Graduation Program requires all students to complete three Provincial Assessments to graduate: Grade 10 Numeracy, Grade 10 Literacy, and Grade 12 Literacy.
- There are four assessment sessions each school year (November, January, April, and June) and students can write each assessment up to three times, to demonstrate their best proficiency level.
- Students are required to write each assessment, but they are not required to achieve proficiency to graduate. As a result, students may not be motivated to write more than once, and actual proficiency rates may be higher at the time of graduation than assessment results suggest.
- Results are reported out on a four-point proficiency scale: Emerging, Developing, Proficient, and Extending. The goal is for all students to achieve at least Proficient prior to graduation.
- The Provincial Assessments align with the redesigned curriculum and reflect international trends for large-scale assessments.

Key Dates/Timelines

- Provincial assessment results from all four sessions are released in the fall of the following school year.
- Provincial Graduation Assessments replaced previous course-based provincial exams, which were phased out between 2016-2019.

Policies and Regulations

- Graduation assessments are governed under the Student Learning Assessment Order.

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- N/A

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Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 Results

KEY MESSAGES

- The most recent PISA results (2022) indicate that BC students continue to perform among the best in the world in math, science and reading.
- Our 2022 performance in reading and math declined in comparison with 2018. This is a global trend that has multiple causes.
- For example, PISA 2022 revealed that approximately 43% of students in Canada reported being distracted by digital devices in all or most of their math classes.
- We need to think broadly about how to support high quality education and better results for our kids. For example we have:
 - required boards to have policies to restrict cell phone use at school
 - worked with teachers to develop and release new resources to support high quality literacy and numeracy instruction
 - developed a workforce strategy to support recruitment of qualified teachers in districts across the Province

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- BC continues to perform well in math in a global context, with only 9 out of 81 jurisdictions performing statistically above BC's range. 79% of BC students reached the baseline level of Math proficiency required to participate fully in modern society (Level 2), while 12% were high performers (Level 5 or 6).
- BC students scored well above the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD) average in Reading, with 83% reaching the baseline proficiency level required to participate fully in modern society (Level 2), while 14% were high performers (Level 5 or 6).
- 86% of BC students reached the baseline level of Science proficiency required to participate fully in modern society (Level 2), while 12% were high performers (Level 5 or 6). Overall BC students improved in Science compared to 2018 results.
- 89% of BC students reached the baseline level for financial literacy (Level 2). This is 2% higher than the Canadian average and 7% higher than OECD average results.
- 90% of BC students reached the baseline level for creative thinking (Level 3). This is 1% higher than the Canadian average and 12% higher than OECD average results.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- PISA is an OECD assessment of 15 year-olds' knowledge and skills in math, science and reading.
- PISA 2022 included 81 participating countries and all 10 provinces in Canada.
- In 2022, some provinces, including BC, opted to include financial literacy and creative thinking components for evaluation.

- Although each PISA administration includes questions on all three domains (math, reading and science), the major domain changes from one administration to the next. In 2022, the major domain was math.
- Students who took part in PISA assessment in 2018 were on the old BC curriculum. PISA 2022 is the first administration of PISA where students are on the redesigned BC curriculum.

Key Dates/Timelines

- PISA administration happens every three years with results released the following year.
- Randomly selected schools in BC are preparing to participate in PISA 2025 this spring.

Policies and Regulations

- School participation in PISA is governed by the Student Learning Assessment Order.

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- N/A

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Report Cards

KEY MESSAGES

- The updated policy on report cards was introduced in July 2023. This change followed years of engagement and piloting of the new report cards with teachers.
- The report card changes have required a shift for teachers, families and students as we moved away from letter grades to a proficiency scale at K-9.
- Letter grades and percentages remain in place for Grades 10 to 12, but we added a graduation status update to make it clear whether students are on track to graduate when expected.
- We've heard from superintendents and staff in many schools and districts that they've put a lot of work into implementing the new report cards locally.
- When parents and caregivers have been brought along with the changes, the new report cards have been well received.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Report cards provide important updates on student learning, so parents and caregivers know what their child has already learned and what else they may need to focus on.
- In secondary schools, reports cards also make sure families know whether their child is on track to graduate.
- In K-12, families will receive three formal report cards each school year and at least two informal updates on how their child is doing.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The shift to the proficiency scale was based on global research and curriculum changes that emphasized development of competencies (e.g., critical thinking, creativity) that were not seen to align well with letter grades or percentages.

Key Dates/Timelines

- The updated reporting policy took effect on July 1, 2023.
- The ministry delayed the policy change by an extra year so teaching staff could have more time to prepare.

Policies and Regulations

- Learning Update Order
- K-12 Student Reporting Policy

Relevant Engagement

- There has been no recent engagement on report cards and after an initial wave of correspondence, the ministry receives little correspondence on this issue.

- There was extensive engagement with K-12 partners during development and implementation of the new reporting policy, and sector feedback indicates high satisfaction with the implementation of this policy change

BUDGET/FUNDING

N/A

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BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan

KEY MESSAGES

- This government's commitment to true and lasting reconciliation is evidenced through the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* Action Plan.
- My ministry has 13 of the 89 commitments and we are working closely with First Nations leadership and Métis Nation BC to deliver on these commitments.
- Indigenous leaders have stressed to me the importance of education for their youth, and I am pleased we have already completed three actions, including *School Act* changes for Local Education Agreements and Indigenous Education Councils, and mandatory Indigenous Focused graduation requirements for all students.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The Indigenous-focused graduation requirement, Action 3.04 (complete) came into effect July 1, 2023.
- The *School Amendment Act* was passed on November 8, 2023:
 - Action 1.06 (complete) – First Nations may apply the Model Local Education Agreement with a school district
 - Action 4.03 (complete) – Indigenous Education Councils (IECs) are mandatory in school districts
 - Action 4.04 (in progress) – First Nations may designate a school as their School of Choice for First Nations students who live on-reserve, self-governing First Nation lands or Treaty lands
- 3 of ECC's 13 actions in the Action Plan are in partnership with other ministries: the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR), the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS), and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).
- In 2024/25, there were 75,551 students who identified as Indigenous in BC public and independent schools.

BACKGROUND

- 2007: The United Nations General Assembly adopted the UN Declaration outlining 46 articles covering all rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- November 2019: *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* introduced into the legislature as Bill 41 and passed into law.
- The Ministry's Actions in the Action Plan were cocreated with the First Nations Education Steering Committee and Métis Nation British Columbia, and any reporting is also done in collaboration with FNEC and MNBC.

Supporting Facts

- BC is the first jurisdiction in Canada to put the UN Declaration into action through legislation.
- The Province worked with the First Nations Leadership Council to develop the Declaration Act.

Key Dates/Timelines

- The Province is currently in Year 3 of Action Plan Reporting.
- All ECC Actions, except Actions 4.04 and 4.29, will be reported out in the public-facing Annual Report by June 30, 2025.

Policies and Regulations

- April 30, 2024: Model LEA and policy were publicly released.
- Spring 2024: School of Choice policy was finalized and publicly released.
- August 16, 2024: IEC Policy and Terms of Reference finalized. Implementation into the sector is underway for the 2024/25 school year.

Relevant Engagement

- On December 5, 2023, MIRR released the Distinctions-Based Approach Primer (the primer) outlining a distinctions-based approach in all the Province's relations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit in BC.
- ECC is following direction of the primer to conduct our relations and dealings with First Nations, Métis and Inuit in a manner that is appropriate for the context of our work.
- ECC continuously consults with First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) at the staff level through all Action Plan reporting cycles and drafting of public-facing Annual Reporting
- ECC consulted directly with BC First Nations and Modern Treaty Nations on legislation and subsequent policy relating to individual Actions.
- ECC engages with Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) on Actions that impact all Indigenous students.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Dedicated \$5.7 million in capacity funding in the 2024/25 school year for implementing IECs across the 60 school districts in the province.
- Dedicated ^{Government} ~~Financial~~ through ECC and ^{Government} ~~Financial~~ through PSFS ^{Government Financial Information} ~~Government~~ to develop and implement an effective recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in the K-12 public education systems.
- Through our K-12 Literacy Supports budget, we have allocated ^{Government Financial Information} ~~Government~~ to develop and implement culturally safe and appropriate early literacy screening tools ^{ment} ~~ment~~ and processes, and literacy intervention programs for Indigenous students, English Language Learners and French Language Learners.

CONTACT

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BC Tripartite Education Agreement

KEY MESSAGES

- BC's Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) is the only agreement of its kind in Canada where provincial, federal and First Nations governments collaborate to improve outcomes for First Nations students.
- BCTEA is intended to initiate further systemic changes to improve outcomes for First Nations students, e.g., First Nation on reserve schools are now funded by the Federal government at the same rate the province funds the public schools in that community.
- Education and Child Care plays a key role in reconciliation and in creating a future of equity and inclusion for all learners.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- BCTEA is a tripartite agreement between the Province, the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).
- In 2024/25, there were 75,551 students who identified as Indigenous in BC public and independent schools.
- In 2024/25, 70,074 of public-school students self-identified as Indigenous. Of these students, approximately 8,065 were Indigenous students living on reserve.
- In 2024/25, there were 5,477 school-age students living on reserve in BC attending independent schools.
- BC's five-year completion rate for public schools in 2023/24 is as follows:
 - 90% for all non-Indigenous students, and 89% without Adult Dogwood
 - 65% for all Indigenous students, and 61% without Adult Dogwood
 - 50% for Indigenous students living on reserve, and 45% without Adult Dogwood

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) aligns with BC's commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan and the Distinctions-Based Approach Primer.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care co-developed a Local Education Agreement (LEA) policy and Model LEA with FNESC. The Model LEA would apply at the request of a First Nation.
- LEAs improve relationships and accountability between school districts and local First Nations.
- School Act amendments in 2023 fulfilled a BCTEA commitment to implement a Model Local Education Agreement that can be applied by First Nations.
- BCTEA commitments include:
 - an accreditation process was established for First Nations to award the Adult Dogwood school graduation certificate to students in First Nations schools (17 Adult grads in 2023/24, 16 Adult grads in 2022/23 and 13 Adult grads in 2021/22);

- administration of a First Nations Student Transportation Fund to support students living on-reserve to attend BC public schools; and
- creation of a First Nations Student Data committee to find strategies for providing individual First Nations and FNESC access to student-level data to inform decision-making.

Key Dates/Timelines

- BCTEA builds on BC's commitments made in the 2012–2018 Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA).
- Originally signed in July 2018, BCTEA was originally a five-year agreement expiring in June 2023, but was extended for two years to June 30, 2025.
- All three parties are working on an extension, amendment or renegotiation before expiry.

Policies and Regulations

- *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*
- *School Act*
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action
- *Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan*
- Distinctions-Based Approach Primer

Relevant Engagement

- Delivery Partners are FNESC, First Nations Schools Association (FNSA), and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

BUDGET/FUNDING

- BCTEA is the mechanism Canada uses to determine funding for First Nations schools.
- Canada reimburses BC, in the absence of an LEA, for services provided by public schools to students living on-reserve.
- Through BCTEA, Canada provides additional transportation funding for First Nations students living on-reserve who attend BC public schools. Transportation Plans jointly developed between school districts and First Nations address service gaps to ensure students are transported to and from school safely and on time:

Government Financial Information

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Distinctions-Based Approach

KEY MESSAGES

- The Distinctions-Based Approach Primer is a key guiding document for how the Ministry of Education and Child Care is addressing our work and developing policy moving forward.
- It is essential the languages, cultures, heritages, histories and land-based connections of the First Nation(s) on whose territory a school district is located are honoured, acknowledged and taught.
- Métis, Inuit and other First Nation cultures, heritages and languages will continue to be celebrated and reflected in the school system as part of the diversity of our society.
- The Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) is the lead on this work. MIRR is developing a companion document that will provide further guidance to government and public servants on the practical application of a distinctions-based approach.
- Any detailed questions and concerns should be directed to MIRR in the absence of further information.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The Ministry of Education and Child Care applied a distinctions-based approach when co-developing Indigenous Education Councils (IECs) with Indigenous partners.
- IECs are intended to ensure Boards of Education meaningfully engage with First Nations, Treaty First Nations and Indigenous communities, and that Indigenous Peoples have input into decisions affecting Indigenous students.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- On December 7, 2023, the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) shared a news release stating their support for the release of the primer and clarification of BC's position on Métis rights.
- All Superintendents in BC received letters from the ministry's Deputy Minister in January 2024 with the direction that, in alignment with a distinctions-based approach, the languages and cultures of First Nation(s) whose territory a school district is located are honoured, acknowledged, and taught.

Key Dates/Timelines

- The ministry is ensuring that a distinctions-based approach is being followed in all initiatives, including priorities actions such as the implementation of the School Act Amendments and an Indigenous-Specific Racism Review in the public K-12 and post-secondary education sectors.

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry meets on a regular basis with the First Nations Education Steering Committee and Métis Nation British Columbia.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- N/A

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First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education

KEY MESSAGES

- The Ministry of Education and Child Care is working alongside Canada, the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations Education Authority to support First Nations Jurisdiction over K-12 education.
- Implementing Education Jurisdiction Agreements recognizes First Nations' inherent rights of self-determination and self-government.
- Through these self-government agreements, Participating First Nations (PFNs) have recognized law-making authority over K-12 education on their lands, including school certification, curriculum, graduation requirements and teacher certification.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- As of July 1, 2023, there are Seven Participating First Nations - ʔaq'am First Nation (aw-come; St. Mary's Band), Cowichan Tribes, Seabird Island, Lil'wat First Nation, Canim Lake Band, Ditidaht First Nation, and Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation).

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- In Jurisdiction, First Nations take control and management of their own schools, as opposed to being managed through the federal system under the *Indian Act* (Canada).
- This achievement is a significant milestone towards First Nations' right to establish and control their education system, as affirmed by Articles 14 and 15 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Key Dates/Timelines

- The Reciprocal Tuition Agreement template was amended in 2021/22 to ensure that PFNs can continue to access Reciprocal Tuition once they become PFNs.
- ʔaq'am First Nation, Cowichan Tribes, Seabird Island, and Lil'wat First Nation were the first First Nations to operate their own schools under their jurisdiction starting in 2023/24.
- Canim Lake Band, Ditidaht First Nation, and Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) have been able to operate their own schools under their jurisdiction starting in 2024/25.

Policies and Regulations

- Education Jurisdiction Framework Agreement (2023, FNEA, BC, CIRNAC)
- First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in BC Act (2006, Canada)
- First Nations Education Act (2007, BC)
- Education Statutes Amendment Act (2021, BC-FNEA)
- BC First Nation Education Agreement Regarding Jurisdiction Initiative (BC-FNEA)
- Information Sharing Agreement (2023, BC-FNEA)
- Coordination Agreement (2023, BC-FNEA)
- BC-FNEA Education Jurisdiction Agreement

- BC-First Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreements (FNESC, FNEA, CIRNAC, BC)

Relevant Engagement

- The First Nations Education Authority (FNEA) and BC have signed a Coordination Agreement, which outlines how BC will support FNEA with the implementation of teacher certification and regulation under First Nations jurisdiction by providing investigative and advisory assistance at the request of FNEA.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- BC has jurisdiction over K-12 education in the province except on reserves or First Nation land.
- Canada has jurisdiction over education on reserves and First Nation land and is responsible for funding the operation of federally run schools and schools operating under First Nation Jurisdiction.
- Under Reciprocal Tuition, the Province compensates First Nations for providing an education to students who reside off reserve, but who attend First Nation schools on reserve.
- Total funding provided to First Nations through Reciprocal Tuition was \$25.69 million in 2024/25.
 - \$9.91 million went to public schools and \$15.78 million to independent schools

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Indigenous Education

KEY MESSAGES

- I am committed to improving results for Indigenous students and increasing the presence of Indigenous languages, cultures and histories for all students, in a way that aligns with a distinctions-based approach.
- My ministry is actively working to implement the 13 education and child care specific actions in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* Action Plan.
- Improving Indigenous student outcomes is a priority, and confirmed in my mandate letter. While there has been a significant increase in completion rates over the last fifteen years, we recognize we still have a lot of work to do.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- In 2024/25, there were 75,551 students who identified as Indigenous in BC public and independent schools.
- In 2024/25, 70,074 of public-school students self-identified as Indigenous. Of these students, approximately 8,065 were Indigenous students living on reserve.
- In 2024/25, there were 5,477 school-age students living on reserve in BC attending independent schools.
- BC's five-year completion rate for public schools in 2023/24 is as follows:
 - 90% for all non-Indigenous students, and 89% without Adult Dogwood
 - 65% for all Indigenous students, and 61% without Adult Dogwood
 - 50% for Indigenous students living on reserve, and 45% without Adult Dogwood
- In 2023/24, there were 132 First Nation schools in BC in approximately 111 First Nations communities. 24 are certified as Independent, 98 are First Nation Schools Association only, and 10 are operating under their own jurisdiction over education.
- There are 204 First Nations governments, and 35 language families - 60% of Canada's First Nations languages are in BC.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- ECC's relationship and engagement with First Nations, Métis and Inuit requires different approaches to honour a distinctions-based approach, that said, all must be engaged and included.
- ECC has established a Legislation and Policy table with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) to assist in the *Declaration Act* s.3 consultation and cooperation obligations.
- ECC has established a staff level working table with Métis Nation British Columbia to assist in engagement with Métis in British Columbia on K-12 education topics.
- The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) requires Boards of Education to "put systems in place to continuously improve the educational outcomes for all students and improve

equity for Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.”

Key Dates/Timelines

- November 2023: *School Act* Amendments (Bill 40, 2023) was passed to act on commitments in the *Declaration Act* Action Plan: 1.06 (Local Education Agreements), 4.03 (Indigenous Education Councils), 4.04 (School of Choice).
- This legislation was developed collaboratively with FNESC and reflects consultation with BC First Nations and Modern Treaty Nations and engagement with Indigenous Peoples, including extensive Métis community engagement, throughout BC.
- All BC students now graduate with knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Peoples perspectives, histories, and cultures as of the 2023/24 school year (Action 3.04 of the *Declaration Act* Action Plan).
- Effective September 1, 2020, school districts are required to report on specific outcomes and measures separately for each of the following student populations through the Framework for Enhanced Student Learning district reports:
 - Indigenous students (living on-reserve and living off-reserve)
 - children and youth in care
 - students with disabilities or diverse abilities

Policies and Regulations

- *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (2019, BC)
- Distinctions Based Approach (BC)
- *Declaration Act* Action Plan (BC)
- BCTEA (FNESC, BC, ISC)
- *School Act* sections 87.001, 87.002, 166.4 (2.1) (2024/25 interim, BC)

Relevant Engagement

- First Nations Education Steering Committee, First Nations Education Authority
- B.C. First Nations, Modern Treaty Nations, and Indigenous people throughout BC
- Métis Nation British Columbia

BUDGET/FUNDING

- For school year 2024/25, \$114 million is being invested in supplemental funding at \$1,770 per student who self identifies as Indigenous and is participating in Indigenous education programs/services in a public school.
- Government for the Equity in Action Project:
 - Financial Government for 1 FTE seconded employee for part of the fiscal
 - Financial Information grant for Growing Innovation in Rural Sites of Learning Project
 - grant for Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education

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Indigenous Languages Education

KEY MESSAGES

- We understand the fragility of Indigenous languages in BC, and that Indigenous languages are inextricably linked to identity.
- BC is home to 60% of Canada's Indigenous languages, and we currently have 20 approved language curriculum available in schools.
- In 2024/25, approximately 17,465 students in Grades 8-12 were enrolled in Indigenous language and culture learning through targeted funds in public schools.
- Métis, Inuit and other First Nation cultures, heritages and languages will continue to be celebrated and reflected in the school system as part of the diversity of our society.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Canada is home to over 70 Indigenous languages spanning 12 separate and distinct language families.
- BC is home to approximately 35 Indigenous languages, and 60% of Canada's First Nations languages are in BC.
- There are currently 20 Ministry-Recognized Indigenous Language Curriculum Documents, to support the teaching and learning of 20 Indigenous Languages.
- In 2024/25, approximately 17,465 students in Grades 8-12 were enrolled in Indigenous language and culture learning through targeted funds in public schools.
- In 2023/24, approximately 671 Indigenous students in Grades 10–12 were enrolled in First Nations language courses (2024/25 data is not yet available).
- In 2022/23, approximately 15,554 students in grades 8-12 were enrolled in Indigenous language and culture learning through targeted funds in public schools and 548 Indigenous students in grades 10-12 were enrolled in First Nations language courses.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Superintendents received direction from the Deputy Minister in January 2024, that, in alignment with a Distinctions-Based Approach, it is essential that the language, culture, heritage, history, and land-based connections of the First Nation(s) on whose territory the school district is located are honoured, acknowledged, and taught.
- *School Act Amendments* (Bill 40, 2023) require that boards engage with Indigenous Education Councils to ensure that the learning of local First Nation languages and cultures are prioritized.
- Each curriculum document represents a separate Indigenous language or dialect and is the intellectual property of the community partner (i.e., school district, band council, or school district-community partnership), not the ministry.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC) supports implementation of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act)*, particularly the articles that pertain to Indigenous languages and education. Actions 4.29, 4.31 and 4.32 of the *Declaration Act* Action Plan (Action Plan) relate specifically to Indigenous languages.

- ECC's ministerial mandate letter no longer includes a specific commitment to support Indigenous languages.

Key Dates/Timelines

- Action 4.29 – Indigenous Language Revitalization Strategy: This is a Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) led action. ^{Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications}
Advice/Recommendations; Intergovernmental Communications
- Action 4.31 – Full-course offerings in Indigenous languages: ^{Advice/Recommendations}
Advice/Recommendations Engagement with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) on a joint approach to this action is still underway.
- Action 4.32 – Work to co-develop a K-12 First Nations Language Policy and associated implementation plan for the public education system with FNESC: ^{Advice/Recommendations}
Advice/Recommendations

Policies and Regulations

- BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) commits BC to work with FNESC to implement a First Nations languages policy in the provincial school system.

Relevant Engagement

- Engaged with FNESC in 2019 to complete a capacity and needs assessment with school districts regarding Indigenous languages programs.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- School districts can use Indigenous Education Targeted Funding, an estimated \$114 million in 2024/25, to support services, language and culture programs that are supplemental to the regular educational program for Indigenous students.

CONTACT

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Indigenous-led Child Care

KEY MESSAGES

- Through our ChildCareBC Plan, we are building affordable, accessible, quality, inclusive child care as a core service that families can depend on.
- Our plan includes a commitment to ensure Indigenous children and families have full access to child care in BC, and to partnering with Indigenous Peoples in building culturally relevant child care that meets the unique needs of Indigenous families.
- Indigenous families have told us they need choice and flexibility in the types of child care available to them, and the importance of a holistic approach to child care that supports language and culture.
- This is why we're working with Indigenous partners and investing in more options for Indigenous-led child care, including funding from the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CW-ELCC) Agreement and the Canada-BC Early Learning and Child Care (CAN-BC ELCC) Agreement.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The *Declaration Act* Action Plan commits the Province to “work[ing] in collaboration with BC First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples to implement a distinctions-based approach to support and move forward jurisdiction over child care for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples who want and need it in BC” (Action 4.19).
- Further, the Province's two bilateral agreements with the Government of Canada include commitments to “develop a collaborative plan with relevant First Nations and Métis Nation organizations in BC to ensure that Indigenous children resident in BC will have access to affordable, quality and culturally appropriate ELCC.”
- Indigenous child care is supported through provincial funding investments and programs, the Bilateral Early Learning Child Care (ELCC) Agreement and the Canada Wide-ELCC Agreement. Total Indigenous Child Care investments are \$89.18 million made possible through combined provincial (\$11.431 million) and federal (\$77.749 million) funding.
- Additionally, over 2,500 Indigenous-led child care spaces have been funded since 2018 through the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund. This includes over 2,300 spaces for First Nations projects and over 220 spaces for Indigenous not-for-profits. Over 600 of these spaces are open and providing care for families.
- Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) is an evidence-based early learning and child care program for Indigenous children aged birth to 6 years and their families that provides wrap-around family support and inclusion services at no cost to parents. Since 2018, the Province has partnered with the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and the BC Association of Aboriginal Head Start Association (AHSABC), to support the creation or transformation of over 2,200 AHS spaces province-wide.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The First Nations Leadership Council (the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, the First Nations Summit and the BC Assembly of First Nations) and the governments of British Columbia and Canada

signed a Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on early learning and child care (ELCC) for First Nations in BC.

- This MOU is the first of its kind for ELCC in Canada. It is an important step on BC's path to reconciliation, to support the self-determination of First Nations in British Columbia and to make progress on Declaration Act Action Item 4.19 to advance First Nations' jurisdiction in ELCC.

Key Dates/Timelines

- September 2024: Signing of Tripartite MOU on early learning and child care for First Nations in British Columbia

Policies and Regulations

- Our work is grounded in a commitment to reconciliation and guided by a number of legal and policy frameworks upholding the inherent rights of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people, including the *Declaration Act on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *Declaration Act* Action Plan, and the Tripartite Agreement MOU for First Nations Early Learning and Child Care.

Relevant Engagement

- In early 2024, the ministry collaborated with Indigenous partners to co-develop and co-host eight in-person engagements across the province, as well as two virtual webinars. These engagements brought together leaders in the governance, development and delivery of Indigenous early learning and child care for two days of learning, relationship building and discussion of First Nations child care priorities.
- The ministry intends to consult with rights and title holders on the resumption of jurisdiction over early learning and child care, in accordance with Action 4.19 in the *Declaration Act* Action Plan.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Refer to Appendix 1 in the ChildCareBC Estimates Note for 2025/26 Budget information.

CONTACT

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Government
Financial

Indigenous-Specific Racism Review

KEY MESSAGES

- I recognize the importance of ensuring that all students, and particularly Indigenous students, need to have a safe and supportive learning environment.
- The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) has called on the Province to commission an independent distinctions-based investigation and report.
- My ministry and the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS) have committed to an external review of systemic and Indigenous-specific racism in the K-12 and post-secondary public education system (the Review).
- We are currently in the early stages of discussions and planning for the Review, and are working with the First Nations Leadership Council, First Nations Education Steering Committee, and Métis Nation British Columbia.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Declaration Act Action Plan Action 3.03 commits to “conduct an external review of Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination in the provincial public education system, and create a strategy, including resources and supports, to address findings.”
- ECC is the lead ministry for the Indigenous-Specific Racism Review.
- ECC and PSFS share responsibility for implementing Action 3.03.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- In the summer of 2023, the First Nations Leadership Council shared a draft Terms of Reference and a proposed budget for the Review.
- Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences
-
-
- A working technical table (FNESC, FNLC, ECC, and PSFS) have met
- Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences
-
-

Key Dates/Timelines

- Currently in the initial stages of discussion for the Review.
- Advice/Recommendations

Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences

Advice/Recommendations

Policies and Regulations

- Distinctions-Based Approach
- Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan

Relevant Engagement

- A working technical table has met (FNESC, FNLC, PSFS and ECC) ^{Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences}
- Technical table's last meeting was on June 3, 2024, and have not met since due to interregnum and working at the pace of Indigenous partner priorities.
- Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences; Intergovernmental Communications

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Cabinet Confidences
-

CONTACT

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School Act Amendments

KEY MESSAGES

- The Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC), along with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), is working on legislative, policy and practice reforms to improve educational outcomes for First Nation students.
- School Act Amendments will help ensure Indigenous Peoples have a voice in decisions and funding that impact Indigenous students.
- These Amendments shift towards improving public education for First Nations and Indigenous learners, families and communities.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- On November 8, 2023, *School Act* amendments were passed that support changes for Indigenous students' K-12 learning outcomes. These provisions are in effect for the 2024/25 school year:
 - a First Nation may choose to apply the Model Local Education Agreement (LEA) where there is no existing LEA in place
 - a First Nation may choose to designate a school as their "school of choice" for those First Nation students who live on-reserve, self-governing First Nation lands or Treaty lands
 - all boards of education are required to establish an Indigenous Education Council (IEC)

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The Model LEA:
 - serves as an option that a First Nation may apply to the First Nation and a board
 - is deemed to be a contract between the First Nation and a board
- First Nations School of Choice:
 - is the process for a First Nation to designate a school as their school of choice for those First Nation students who live on-reserve, self-governing First Nation lands, or Treaty lands
- Indigenous Education Councils:
 - advise the board on the distinct languages, cultures, customs, traditions, practices or history of the First Nations, the Treaty First Nations or the Nisga'a Nation on whose territory the school district operates
 - include members who are representative of the Indigenous student population
 - review and approve plans and reports related to Indigenous Education Targeted Funds
 - advise on programs, services and spending related to Indigenous learners
 - are mandatory for all 60 school districts

Key Dates/Timelines

- 2022: Amendments co-developed between ECC and FNEC at the direction of the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC)
- November 8, 2023: Amendments receive Royal Assent
- School Act Amendments implemented in the 2024/25 school year
- April 30, 2024: Model LEA is set out in Minister's Regulation
- Date into force/revised August 16, 2024: IEC Policy and Terms of Reference

Policies and Regulations

- *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*
- *School Act*
- Ministerial Order 217/2024 and 302/20
- BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA)
- Distinctions-Based Approach

Relevant Engagement

- ECC consulted directly with BC First Nations and Modern Treaty Nations on the legislation and policy.
- ECC also engaged with Métis Nation BC (MNBC) on the legislation and subsequent policy relating to IECs.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- In FY2024/25, ECC allocated \$6.016 million to support the implementation of IECs for School Year 2024/25.
- Boards will be required to report back to ECC on how they spent the grants by September 2025.

CONTACT

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Cell Phones in Schools

KEY MESSAGES

- As of September 2024, all 60 school districts have cell phone restrictions in place.
- On July 1, the *Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order* was amended to require Boards of Education to update their codes of conduct to include statements on restricting student use of personal digital devices.
- The goal is to support focused learning environments, keep students safe from online harm, and to promote provincially consistent cellphone restrictions across BC.
- Teachers are reporting positive changes in their classrooms as a result of the cellphone restrictions, such as: increased student engagement, decreased distractions and fewer classroom disruptions, and enhanced peer to peer connections.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- All 60 school districts have statements to restrict student use of personal digital devices in their district codes of conduct that meet the direction provided in the Provincial Codes of Conduct Order.
- In 2023/24, twelve digital literacy training sessions were offered through erase (expect, respect & a safe education) with over 5000 people participating in these sessions.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Statements about restricting the use of personal digital devices in district codes of conduct must address cell phone use for instructional purposes, student's age, accessibility/accommodation needs, medical/health needs and equity to support learning outcomes.
- GCPE launched a cell phone restrictions awareness campaign in September 2024 that included a marketing toolkit for districts and schools and a *Cell phone restrictions in schools* web page for parents and caregivers.
- Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island all have cell phone policies in place, or have announced policies, for the 2024/25 school year.

Key Dates/Timelines

- July 1, 2024: The amended *Provincial Codes of Conduct Order* came into effect.

Policies and Regulations

- *Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order*, amended July 1, 2024.

Relevant Engagement

- In spring of 2024, education and Indigenous partners were engaged to determine the mechanism for the restrictions and to seek input on implementation supports.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- N/A

CONTACT

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Jennifer McCrea, Associate Deputy Minister, jennifer.mccrea@gov.bc.ca, 250-896-3735

Feeding Futures and National School Food Program

KEY MESSAGES

- In Budget 2023, this government invested \$214 million over three years for Feeding Futures, the largest investment in school food programs in the province's history.
- Feeding Futures is dedicated funding for school districts to create or expand school food programs to feed students in need.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC) works closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) to integrate Feed BC into programs so districts can include locally grown food.
- I'm so pleased that last month (March 7) the Province and the Federal governments signed an agreement that adds an additional \$39 million over the next three years for food programs in BC schools. The National School Food Program (NSFP) funding will provide access to enhanced school food programs for up to 90,000 students that need it most.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Feeding Futures funding is expected to reach approximately 20% of students in each district who need it most.
- In the 2024/25 school year, approximately 87% of schools offer a school food program (vs. 59% in 2021, before Feeding Futures) and approximately 160,000 students (28%) accessed a program (vs. 94,000 students or 16% in 2021, before Feeding Futures).
- BC is expected to receive up to \$71.4 million over five years through the NSFP, with BC's allocations for the first three years including: \$7.388 million in FY 2024/25, \$15.996 million in FY 2025/26, and \$15.996 million in FY2026/27. Government Financial Information

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- A school food survey conducted in February 2024 indicated that staffing and infrastructure are the two biggest barriers to delivering school food programs.
- Feeding Futures funding can be used for food purchases and staffing, including hiring up to one school food coordinator in each district and offsetting staffing costs for staff directly involved in the delivery of school food programs.
- Budget 2023 introduced the Food Infrastructure Program, which allocates \$5 million annually over five years to districts to support minor capital enhancements for school food program delivery.
- Funding through the NSFP will be flexible for BC school districts to spend funding where it is needed most, including flexibility to spend funds on capital infrastructure needs.
- BC worked with Canada to develop a 2024/25 Action Plan for Year 1 of the NSFP to guide implementation of the program in BC, which will complement Feeding Futures. An Action Plan for Years 2 and 3 of the NSFP is in development.
- Under the BC Tripartite Education Agreement, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) provides equivalent funding that is provided to BC public schools for First Nation schools.

- Responsibility for the School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program (SFVNP) transitioned to AF for the 2024/25 school year. AF provided \$1.5 million in bridge funding to support a transition of the SFVNP to a district-funded business model for the 2024/25 school year. ECC and AF also provided \$1 million in 2023/24 year-end funds to support this transition.
- Since 2022, Government has also provided \$80 million for the Student and Family Affordability Fund (SFAF) for temporary assistance to families with the costs of school supplies and education-related fees. There is currently no additional funding committed for SFAF.

Key Dates/Timelines

- In September 2022, Government endorsed the Feeding Futures Framework to create and expand school food programs.
- Budget 2023 announced three years of funding for Feeding Futures for school districts and independent schools.
- Cabinet Confidences
- School districts received Feeding Futures funding for the 2024/25 school year in September 2024 and April 2025. Year 1 of NSFP funding is expected to be distributed to school districts in April 2025.

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- ECC established a Feeding Futures Advisory Committee comprised of school food experts, non-profits and community partners, the First Nations Education Steering Committee, and other Indigenous partners to inform development of the Feeding Futures Framework.
- ECC engages regularly with district school food coordinators, including through in-person Feeding Futures Spring and Fall Gatherings and monthly Community of Practice meetings.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- \$71.5 million – FY24/25 Feeding Futures Funding – School Districts
- \$4.505 million – FY24/25 Feeding Futures Funding – Independent Schools
- \$5 million – FY24/25 Minor Capital Funding to School Districts – Food Infrastructure (transferred to Ministry of Infrastructure in January 2025)
- \$7.388 million - FY24/25 National School Food Program (federal funding)
- Grants: \$75K First Nations Education Steering Committee; \$25K Nourish Cowichan

CONTACT

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K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan

KEY MESSAGES

- The ministry released the K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan (Action Plan) in January 2023, a multi-year plan to address racism and discrimination in schools and support equity for all students, staff and families.
- The Action Plan guides system-wide anti-racism change through engagement with youth, racialized communities, Indigenous partners, sector leaders and provincial education partners.
- The Action Plan focuses on resources and training for the sector, capacity building for district and school leaders, enhancing workplace diversity, as well as anti-racism programming for youth.
- The Action Plan is intended to address all forms of racism and hate in schools.
- In the 2024/25 school year, the ministry released two key resources, an anti-racism training course and racism response guidelines, to support district and school staff to identify and respond to racism in schools and strengthen anti-racism learning environments.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- According to the BC Adolescent Health Survey (McCreary 2023), 35% of youth have experienced discrimination, with the majority reporting that it occurs most frequently at school.
- Over the fiscal year 2024/25 Action Plan key initiatives included:
 - Hosting the 5th annual Minister's Community Roundtable in Education
 - Expanding BC Lions youth anti-racism programming to BC students in grades 6-11
 - Working with School Districts 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) and 43 (Coquitlam) to facilitate Indigenous Youth Summits
 - Launching an anti-racism training course for all employees in the K-12 education system
 - Releasing the Racism Response Guidelines to help educators to identify and address incidents of racism in schools
 - Working with BCCPAC to implement a communications plan to increase parent awareness and involvement in anti-racism initiatives in schools
 - Expanding the K-12 Anti-Racism Educator Network to promote capacity building and collaboration across districts

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- All BC public school districts must have codes of conduct and independent school authorities must have policies to address racism and discrimination that align with the BC Human Rights Code.
- The Action Plan is a pillar of the *erase* (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) strategy, developed to address complex issues facing students.
- The Province committed to making the Holocaust a mandatory topic of learning within the Social Studies 10 curriculum for the 2025/26 school year.

- Implementation of the Action Plan is guided by sector leaders, Indigenous partners, community organizations, education partners and students with living and lived experiences of racism.

Key Dates/Timelines

- May 2024: Hosted the 5th Minister's Community Roundtable on Anti-Racism in Education.
- June 2024: Launched a free anti-racism online course, *Learning To Be Anti-Racist*, for all employees in BC's education system, available in French and English.
- February 2025: Released the *Racism Response Guidelines* to help address incidents of racism and hate in schools. The French version will be available in late spring 2025.

Policies and Regulations

- *Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order* requires boards of education to reference the *BC Human Rights Code* protected identity characteristics in their codes of conduct.
- Under the *Anti-Racism Data Act* introduced in June 2022, the Province can collect and use race-based data to identify systemic racism that limits equitable access to services.
- The *Anti-Racism Act* (May 2024), requiring the Province to address create and implement a strategy to address racism in public policies, programs and services.

Relevant Engagement

- Collaborated with SD 41 (Burnaby) to develop the Racism Response Guidelines, informed by extensive engagement with K-12 anti-racism leaders across BC.
- Worked with SD 43 (Coquitlam) and SD 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) to gain insights on unique experiences faced by Indigenous youth in schools.
- Engaged with 18 community organizations representing racialized communities at the Minister's Roundtable.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- In 2024/25, \$839,000 was allocated as the last year of a three-year total of \$2.5 million to support the Action Plan. This included:
 - \$250,000 to BC Lions to expand anti-racism youth programming in schools across BC
Advice/Recommendations
 - \$35,000 to the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils to increase parent awareness of the Action Plan
- \$30,000 to Open School BC for development and hosting of an anti-racism online course.

CONTACT

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- Jennifer McCrea, Associate Deputy Minister, jennifer.mccrea@gov.bc.ca, 250-896-3735

Safe, Caring and Inclusive Schools

KEY MESSAGES

- When students feel a sense of safety, belonging and acceptance, it positively impacts their school attendance, feelings of connectedness, academic achievement and overall health.
- All adults in the K-12 system, including trustees, educators and district staff, have an obligation under the *BC Human Rights Code* to ensure each and every student feels safe at school and is not discriminated against.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care is working with K-12 education partners and an Educator Advisory Group to develop a provincial safe, caring and inclusive schools framework that will include:
 - relevant and current guidance for K-12 educators to promote safe and inclusive learning environments for all students, including those with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations
 - policy guidance to boards of education to have policies and procedures for selecting library books, accompanied by a set of guiding criteria for districts to ensure that library books are age and developmentally appropriate and reflect the diversity within a school community

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Stats Canada data (2022) shows that sexually and gender diverse youth are significantly more likely than cisgender youth to frequently experience multiple types of bullying.
- Gender diverse youth were significantly more likely than cisgender youth to report self-harm, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts (*The Well-Being Gap*, Saewyc et. al 2024).
- A recent study (Saewyc et.al, 2024) shows that SOGI 123 reduced bullying and sexual orientation discrimination among LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students and the longer it has been implemented, the greater the improvement.
- There has been a rise in anti-SOGI activities, with over 29 major disruptions outside BC public schools over the 2023/24 school year, which supported the implementation of *Safe Access to Schools* legislation in May 2024.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- SOGI-inclusive education is an approach to strengthen district and school policies and procedures, foster inclusive school environments, and provide resources for K-12 schools.
- SOGI-inclusive education is not mandatory in schools and is not part of the certified BC curriculum.
- The Physical and Health Education curriculum is mandatory and includes topics related to reproduction, sexuality, gender and self-identity.
- The 2025 mandate letter states that we will work with key stakeholders in relation to the SOGI anti-bullying program to improve understanding, protect vulnerable children and support parents.

- Districts, schools and K-12 education partners are all strong supporters of SOGI-inclusive education as highlighted in a 2022 joint statement issued with the Minister supporting SOGI-inclusive education, and subsequently in 2023 and 2024 in support of safe, caring and inclusive schools.

Key Dates/Timelines

- January 2024: SOGI Non-Truths and Truths document, available in eight languages, was shared with the K-12 sector.
- April 2024: A commitment was made in estimates debate to review all provincially available SOGI resources, with the Minister stating the expectation that all resources in schools are age appropriate.
- August 27, 2024: Safe access zones were re-established at all of BC K-12 public and independent schools, with a few limited exceptions, for the 2024/25 school year.
- January – April 2025: Educator Advisory Group review and update of guidance provided in provincially available SOGI resources.

Policies and Regulations

- *BC Human Rights Code*
- *Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct and Harassment and Bullying Prevention Order* require all boards of education and independent schools to have SOGI-inclusive codes of conduct and anti-bullying policies
- *Safe and Caring School Communities Policy* guides boards of education and schools in their efforts to create safe, caring, and inclusive learning environments
- *Safe Access to Schools Act* (May 2024)

Relevant Engagement

- K-12 SOGI Collaborative comprised of representatives from the education partner groups
- Educator Advisory Group (January – April 2025) to review and update guidance in ministry SOGI-inclusive resources

BUDGET/FUNDING

- \$350,000 allocated in FY2024/25 to ARC Foundation
- \$10,000 allocated in FY2024/25 to BCTF Advisory Working Group participants

CONTACT

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Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and Naloxone Availability in Schools

KEY MESSAGES

- Student safety is a top priority for our ministry. The ministry supports safe, caring and inclusive schools where students and staff have safety tools available to respond to health emergencies.
- While the decision to have AEDs and Naloxone is not mandatory, many schools and boards of education have these tools available:
 - 57 districts (95%) currently have AEDs available in some or all their schools. This includes ~70% of secondary schools and 40% of elementary and middle schools.
 - 51 districts (85%) currently have Naloxone available in some or all their schools. It is most commonly available in middle, secondary, and alternative schools.
- I applaud both Richmond and Vancouver School Boards, who have recently committed to making AEDs available in all schools, as well as boards who already have these tools in place. Richmond also plans to make Naloxone available. We encourage all efforts to have these safety tools available where anyone could be assisted when emergencies arise.
- We have also committed to ensuring all students receive CPR learning before graduation, starting in the 2025/26 school year. We know CPR saves lives, and the more people who know how and when to start CPR, the more likely someone will act in those crucial moments before paramedics arrive.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- The Office of the Provincial Health Officer (OPHO) continues to identify schools as low-risk settings for cardiac arrest and overdose.
- 60,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests happen in Canada each year, with only one in 10 people surviving. Nearly half of cardiac arrests happen to people under age 65.
- There are no BC Coroners Services record/reports of an overdose death occurring on school grounds, and their *Unregulated Drug Deaths 2024* Summary notes that the number of deaths for youth aged 0-18 years (both actual and per capita figures) is the lowest it has been since 2020.
 - 2024 saw a 29% decrease in unregulated drug deaths for youth aged 0-18 years (28 to 20) and a 12% decrease for adults aged 19-29 years (342 to 302), compared to 2023).

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- AEDs are safe, easy-to-use, portable devices that can deliver an electric shock to a person in cardiac arrest, if needed, to restart their heart. When used alongside cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), a person's chance of survival can double.
- Naloxone is a fast-acting medication used to temporarily reverse the effects of opioid overdoses, also called opioid poisoning. Naloxone is available in two forms: nasal spray (also known as Narcan) and intramuscular injection (more commonly available in BC).
- Both AEDs and Naloxone are low-risk, high-reward safety tools: they will significantly decrease ill-effects and can be lifesaving if administered when needed with no harm caused if administered unnecessarily.

- While adults are at greater risk than children and youth for both cardiac arrest and opioid overdoses, all can experience these life-threatening conditions.
- Since 2017, it has been recommended that school districts/schools use the *Naloxone Risk Assessment Tool – For Public Sector Organizations* (currently being updated by the Ministry of Health (HLTH) and BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to determine whether to stock naloxone in their schools. This guide supports decision-making regarding whether an organization should obtain naloxone, what formulation (i.e., intramuscular or intranasal), and how to procure naloxone and access training.

Key Dates/Timelines

- HLTH has approved the distribution of the provincial nasal naloxone supply to institutions including K-12 schools. As these naloxone kits are set to expire in January 2026, HLTH is working closely with the Ministry of Citizens' Services Production Distribution Centre to distribute the kits in a timely manner.
- Beginning in 2024, HLTH and Heart & Stroke have worked together to make AEDs more available in several BC communities, beginning in Prince George.

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- Survey to School District Secretary Treasurers and discussion at Learning Advisory Board in January 2025.
- Discussion with School Medical Officers via HLTH and BCCDC's School Health Committee in January 2025.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- N/A

CONTACT

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Naloxone: Danielle Carter-Sullivan, Executive Director Early Learning, Mental Health & Student Safety, System Liaison and Supports Division, Danielle.CarterSullivan@gov.bc.ca, 250-888-4092

Emergency Management

KEY MESSAGES

- Emergency preparedness in schools is critically important to the well-being of students and school staff and to the confidence that parents feel in entrusting their children when they send them to school.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness is BC's lead coordinating agency for all emergency management activities.
- School districts and independent school authorities are responsible for planning and responding to emergencies in their areas, including the development of emergency management plans in consultation with local emergency responders and law enforcement.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care provides public and independent schools with information and support to assist with emergency management planning, mitigation, response and recovery.
- During each wildfire and flooding season, the ministry plays an active role in emergency response and recovery and connects with every district impacted to support coordination and access to resources.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- BC has experienced a notable increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters, with the 2023 wildfire season being reported as the most destructive in BC's recorded history.
- In the 2024 wildfire season, eight school districts were affected by evacuation orders or alerts.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Emergency management activities are defined as the coordinated actions taken across the four phases of emergency management - preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery - to prevent, limit and manage the negative impacts of disasters on people, property and the environment.
- The ministry participates on provincial tables to support coordinated provincial emergency responses.
- The ministry tracks and monitors all evacuation orders and alerts for the K-12 system and child care spaces on school grounds and provides coordinated updates.
- The *Emergency Management Planning Guide for Schools, Districts and Authorities* (2015) establishes provincial standards for planning for, responding to and recovering from all types of emergencies including natural and human caused.
 - Five all-hazard emergency responses: 1) Drop-Cover-Hold On, 2) Evacuate, 3) Lockdown, 4) Hold and Secure, and 5) Shelter in Place
- The *Education Sector Integrated Response Plan for Catastrophic Earthquake* (2017) supports communication and coordination between local and provincial emergency management and the K-12 education system in the event of a catastrophic earthquake.

- Emergency management goals in school include:
 - keeping students and staff safe in the event of an emergency
 - making sure personnel have clear and consistent standards and procedures to follow in the event of an emergency
 - clearly describing roles and responsibilities of personnel during an emergency
 - ensuring that there are communications and protocols aligned to the community
 - minimizing disruption and ensuring the continuity of education for all children
- The Expect Respect and A Safe Education (*erase*) strategy provides training and support to help schools and districts respond to emergencies.
- The *erase* website also provides mental health resources to support school staff, parents/caregivers, and students recover from a natural disaster event.

Key Dates/Timelines

- June 2024: ECC released the *Emergency Management Information and Resource Package*, outlining resources and key contacts for districts, child care centres, and independent schools.

Policies and Regulations

- Under the *School Act*, schools can close if the health or safety of students is endangered. Lost instructional time does not have to be made up. The decision is at the school district's discretion or under the direction of the local medical health officer.

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Emergency management and safety training are incorporated as part of the overall *erase* budget in Student Safety; fiscal year 2024-25 budget is \$1.075 million.
 - *erase* Refresh Project: \$35,000
 - *erase* training, subject matter expertise and critical incident support: \$1.04 million

CONTACT

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Mental Health and Wellness

KEY MESSAGES

- Every student in BC deserves an educational environment that helps them learn, grow and thrive.
- Supporting the mental health and well-being of students and adults in our systems is a key part of fostering safe, caring and inclusive school communities.
- The ministry's *Mental Health in School Strategy*, in alignment with *A Pathway to Hope*, provides a pathway and vision for embedding mental health and well-being into all aspects of our system.
- ECC, in partnership with the ministries of Health and Children and Family Development, continues to support the operations and implementation of 39 Integrated Child and Youth Teams across 20 school district communities – to provide children and youth with multi-disciplinary wraparound mental health and substance use care when they need, where they need it at schools and in the community.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- More students reported *good to excellent* mental and physical health in 2023/24 than in the past two years (Student Learning Survey 2023/24).
- 1 in 3 secondary school students are satisfied that they are learning emotional skills to deal with problems they may face in the future (Student Learning Survey 2023/24).
- In 2023, youth positive mental health rates decreased from 81% in 2013, to 73% in 2018, to 60% in 2023. Males were the most likely to report positive mental health and well-being, while non-binary youth were the least likely (73% males reported positive mental health vs 22% non-binary youth). (McCreary Adolescent Health Survey 2023)
 - Six free online sessions for families on child and youth mental health and substance use have been offered over the last two years with a total of 2470 participants.
- ECC has hosted four Mental Health in Schools Conferences with over 2000 attendees.
- ECC has supported Compassionate Systems Leadership training of approximately 4,500 school staff across 56 school districts.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- In September 2020, ECC released the Mental Health in Schools Strategy to take a system-wide approach to mental health promotion with a focus on compassionate systems leadership, capacity building, and mental health in the classroom.
- Compassionate systems leadership is an intentional approach that provides school staff training on tools and practices to take care of their well-being and build resilience. It is a whole-system approach that considers interconnectedness to self, others and the underlying structures and cultures that enable or prohibit system changes that lead to student success.
- ECC's *erase* mental health and substance use webpage provides students, school staff and families with mental health and substance use information and resources - including educator resources to support mental health literacy, decision-making for mental health resource selection, and ways to embed mental health into learning environments.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- May 5-6, 2025: ECC is hosting the fifth Mental Health in School Conference to bring together K-12 and early learning representatives and partners to learn, network and engage in supporting mental health and well-being in school communities. This conference on average brings together 350-450 participants.
- ECC convenes the Provincial Mental Health Leadership Network, which includes representatives from all 60 school districts and the Federation of Independent School Associations BC every six weeks from October to May. This network meets, share resources, co-design programs and works collectively within and across the sector to foster mental health and substance use supports and resources for BC's K-12 students, educators, administrators and families.
- ECC is part of the 2025 BC Coroners Death Review Panel on Youth and Young Adult Deaths by Suicide and participates on several committees to support the development of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Plan in response to RCY recommendations.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- In 2024/25, ECC had a combined total of \$5 million to support mental health in schools - \$2 million from operating budget and \$3 million through a bilateral agreement with the Ministry of Health.
 - ECC allocated \$3+ million of this budget to Mental Health in School Grants, which are distributed to all 60 school districts and the Federation of Independent School Associations BC to support mental health and substance use initiatives in schools. This grant funding has been provided annually since 2018/19.
 - Mental Health in School Grant funding allocations are determined by the size of school districts, which are assessed annually by student headcount. Smaller school districts receive higher funding amounts to address the unique needs of rural and remote communities.
- In 2024/25, ECC also received \$6.95 million from the Ministry of Health for the school-based Integrated Child and Youth Team positions. This funding was allocated directly to the 20 school districts currently operating and implementing Integrated Child and Youth Teams in their communities.

CONTACT

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Safety in Schools

KEY MESSAGES

- Every child deserves to feel safe, accepted and respected at school.
- The Expect Respect and A Safe Education (*erase*) strategy focuses on fostering safe, caring and inclusive schools.
- Every school district and independent school in the province has a dedicated Safe School Coordinator responsible for district or school-wide safety initiatives.
- Provincial safety expert Safer Schools Together provides training, subject matter expertise and critical incident support to school safety teams, available 24/7.
- Through the *erase* website, students, families and school staff can access free online training sessions to help students stay safe in person and online.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Over 116,000 students, families, educators and community partners have participated in *erase* training since 2012.
- In the 2023/24 school year:
 - over 1,300 educators and community partners, 31,000 students and 5,600 families participated in *erase* training to support school and online safety;
 - nearly 2,000 submissions were received through Report It, the province's anonymous reporting tool for students; and
 - Safer Schools Together supported districts and schools with over 1,200 critical incidents. The most reported categories: threat-related behaviour, bullying/cyberbullying, school community concerns, and negative digital climate/culture.
- 77% of students feel safe at school (Student Learning Survey 2023/24).

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- *erase* began in 2012 as an anti-bullying strategy and has evolved significantly over time to meet the emerging needs of students, families and school staff.
- The *erase* website was refreshed in September 2024 to include a mobile-first design; new resources for students, adults, and school staff about diversity and inclusion, mental health and substance use, and school and online safety; and easy access to the Report It tool.
- Key documents to support and guide Safe School Coordinators and school safety teams:
 - The *Community Threat Assessment Protocol Guide for BC* (2024) supports the development of local community threat assessment protocols and collaborative responses to threat-making and worrisome behaviour.
 - The *Emergency Management Planning Guide for Schools, Districts and Authorities* (2015) establishes provincial standards for planning for, responding to and recovering from all types of emergencies including natural and human caused.

- *Maintaining School Safety: A Guide for School and Police Personnel in BC* (2024) strengthens information sharing and relationships between police and schools to address violence and threats.
- The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG) leads gang and gun violence prevention.
 - In 2023/24, nine priority school districts received a total of \$880,000 in targeted funding to support at least one full-time employee dedicated to building local capacity to detect and intervene early in student gang involvement and exploitation.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC) partners with PSSG to promote awareness of the Intimate Images Protection Service and with the Ministry of Attorney General to promote awareness of the *Intimate Images Protection Act* among the education sector, students and families.
- ECC partners with the Ministry of Finance's Gender Equity Office on the province's Gender-Based Violence Action Plan to help prevent, address and respond to gender-based violence.

Key Dates/Timelines

- September 2024: Launch of refreshed *erase* website

Policies and Regulations

- Safe and Caring School Communities Policy – last updated September 2024
- Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order – last updated July 2024

Relevant Engagement

- *erase* website refresh (2024) - students, families, school staff, sector partners, and cross-ministry teams advised on content and accessibility
- October 2024 - annual two-day, in-person Safe School Coordinator meeting
- Training – Various sessions for students, families, school staff and community partners on school and online safety, digital and behavioural threat assessment and trauma-informed approaches

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Contract through Safer Schools Together (2024-2026) is incorporated as part of the overall *erase* budget; fiscal year 2024-25 budget is \$1.075 million.
 - *erase* Refresh project: \$35,000
 - *erase* training, subject matter expertise and critical incident support: \$1.04 million
- Annual Safe School Coordinator meeting: \$50,000 budget

CONTACT

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Student Substance Use

KEY MESSAGES

- The mental well-being and safety of students and staff is our highest priority. The Ministry of Education and Child Care is taking action to ensure students know the risks of using substances, including tobacco, nicotine, alcohol, cannabis and illicit drugs.
- In BC, students learn about substance use through age-appropriate and evidence-based lessons in the mandatory Physical and Health Education (PHE) K to 10 curriculum.
- The ministry, in partnership with the ministries of Health and Children and Family Development, continues to support the operations and implementation of 39 Integrated Child and Youth Teams across 20 school district communities. These teams provide multi-disciplinary wraparound mental health and substance use care, at schools and in community.
- Recognizing the key role parents, guardians and caregivers play in substance use education, the ministry has offered free virtual training sessions this year and last year focused on talking to youth about substance use. These sessions have reached almost 2,500 participants.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- While the decision to have Naloxone available is not mandatory, 47 districts (78%) currently have this tool available in some or all their schools. It is most commonly available in middle, secondary and alternative schools.
- The BC Coroners Services *Unregulated Drug Deaths 2024 Summary* notes that the number of deaths for 0-18 (both actual and per capita figures) is the lowest it has been since 2020.
- 2024 saw a decrease in unregulated drug deaths of 29% for 0–18-year-olds (28 to 20) and 12% for 19-29-year-olds (342 to 302), compared to 2023.
- Compared to 2013 and 2018, youth were less likely have vaped, smoked tobacco, drank alcohol, and used cannabis (e.g., youth who had ever smoked tobacco decreased to 15% in 2023 vs. 18% in 2023). However, compared to 2018, the age of youth who have tried tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis were younger (before 13 years of age) in their first use of these substances. (McCreary Adolescent Health Survey, 2023)

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- School districts follow the mandatory Physical and Health Education K to 10 curriculum where students learn about risks of substance use, the importance of making healthy choices, and basic principles for emergency responses.
- The curriculum provides some flexibility for school districts and classroom educators to teach about topics in ways that meet the local needs of their students and community.
- Most recently, Richmond School District plans to make Naloxone available in all schools.
- The ministry shares the *Naloxone Risk Assessment Tool – For Public Sector Organizations* annually with the education sector. This provides organizations with a tool for deciding whether they should have naloxone on site, what type of naloxone they should obtain, how to procure naloxone and how to access training.

- Naloxone is accessible for schools districts via their local pharmacy, the Provincial Distribution Centre (PDC) managed by the Ministry of Citizens' Services (CITZ) and drug suppliers (e.g., Narcan). Interior Health provides naloxone to schools for no cost through their *Blue Kit Program*.
- The ministry's *erase* (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) website Substance Use section provides students, families and school staff with information about resources and supports on substances and substance use.
- For two subsequent years, the ministry in partnership with Dr. Hayley Watson, an adolescent clinical psychologist, and CEO of Open Parachute, offered six free virtual training sessions to parents, guardians, and caregivers.
 - In February 2024, the sessions focused on tools, strategies, and specific language to use when speaking to children about substances in a way that would encourage positive decision-making through a psychological lens. A total of 1,642 participants attended the sessions.
 - In February 2025, the subsequent sessions focused on tools, strategies families can use to boost children's mental health and prevent/reduce substance use. A total of 828 participants attended the sessions.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry convenes the Provincial Mental Health Leadership Network which includes representatives from all 60 school districts and the Federation of Independent School Associations BC to share resources, co-design programs and work collectively within and across the sector on supports and resources for K-12 students, staff and partners.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- In 2024/25, the ministry had a combined total of \$5 million to support mental health in schools - \$2 million from operating budget and \$3 million through a bilateral agreement with the Ministry of Health.
 - Since 2018/19, the ministry allocates \$3+ million annually of this budget to Mental Health in School Grants, which are distributed to all 60 school districts and the Federation of Independent School Associations BC to support MHSU initiatives in schools.
 - Mental Health in School Grant funding allocations are determined by the size of school districts, which are assessed annually by student headcount. Smaller school districts receive higher funding amounts to address the needs of rural and remote communities.

CONTACT

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School Board Governance

KEY MESSAGES

- I expect boards of education to put kids first and focus on student safety and achievement while adhering to good governance in alignment with the School Act.
- We work closely with the BC School Trustees Association to support boards to meet their obligations, including training on board governance and provincial guidance for Trustee Codes of Conduct.
- The decision to remove an elected board is a difficult one, but it is a step our government is willing to take when we feel it is necessary to support students.

Legal Information

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- On January 30, 2025, Cabinet appointed an official trustee, Sherri Bell, to SD 61 and as a result, the elected trustees were removed from office.
- Sherri Bell previously served in senior leadership positions as the Superintendent of schools in Victoria and the president of Camosun College and her term as official trustee will end after the next general local election in October 2026 when the newly elected trustees take office.
- The Official Trustee's compensation, \$225,000 annually, is paid by SD 61 and is similar to that of the district Superintendent and other comparable public sector senior leadership positions.
- This was the first appointment of an official trustee by Cabinet since 2016 when official trustees were appointed to SD 83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap) and SD 39 (Vancouver).
- On January 30, 2025, the Minister re-appointed Kevin Godden as special advisor to SD 61 to continue supporting the development of a Safety Plan.
- Remuneration and costs of the current special advisor are being paid by the Ministry up to a maximum of \$20,000.
- On March 31, 2025, the former trustees from SD 61 filed a petition with the court challenging:
 - the appointment of an Official Trustee to replace the board;
 - the Administrative Directive requiring a Safety Plan;
 - the appointment of a Special Advisor

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- In 2023, the ministry and the BC School Trustees Association developed guidelines for Trustee Codes of Conduct to provide boards with clarity on their roles and responsibilities, and to assist them in developing codes of conduct that allow them to focus on their core responsibilities to deliver educational programs and to support safe and inclusive schools and workplaces.

- The Minister requested all boards of education review and update their codes by spring 2024 in alignment with best practices and all boards have completed this work.

Key Dates/Timelines

Key Official Trustee Dates

- July 1, 2012: Mike McKay is appointed official trustee to SD 79 (Cowichan Valley) after the board failed to pass a balanced budget.
- June 15, 2016: Mike McKay is appointed official trustee to SD 83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap) after a special advisor found that the board had lost the confidence of the community.
- October 16, 2016: Dianne Turner is appointed official trustee to SD 39 (Vancouver) after the board failed to pass a balanced budget.
- January 30, 2025: Sherri Dee Bell is appointed official trustee to SD 61 (Greater Victoria).

Policies and Regulations

- Under section 171.1 of the *School Act*, the Minister may appoint a special advisor or a special advisory committee to one or more school districts.
- Under section 172 of the *School Act*, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint an official trustee to any school district to conduct the affairs of the school district under certain circumstances.
- Ministerial order issuing the administrative directive to SD 61: Ministerial Order 339/2024
- Ministerial orders appointing special advisors to SD 61: Ministerial Order 406/2024; Ministerial Order 17/2025
- Order in Council appointing the official trustee to SD 61: Order in Council 40/2025

Relevant Engagement

- The Minister engaged with the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, as well as Area Police Chiefs, regarding their concerns about SD 61, Intergovernmental Communications
- Intergovernmental Communications
-

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Annual compensation for the previous SD 61 Board (Chair, Vice Chair and 7 Trustees) was \$249, 259.41.
- The Official Trustee's compensation, \$225,000 annually, is paid by SD 61.
- The appointment of an Official Trustee is not expected to result in additional costs to the district.
- Remuneration and costs of the current special advisor appointed to SD 61 are being paid by the Ministry up to a maximum of \$20,000.
- Previous special advisor costs were paid by the district in the amount of \$51,600.

CONTACT

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Conseil scolaire francophone (CSF) Litigation

Legal Information

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Student Enrollment

KEY MESSAGES

- BC has been one of Canada's fastest-growing provinces in recent years but population trends are beginning to change.
- After three years of rapid increases, enrollment growth in the current school year is lower than last year. Going forward, we expect public school enrollment growth to slow as the impacts of federal immigration policy changes result in fewer new students.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care is working closely with the Ministry of Infrastructure to ensure that capital investments and decisions continue to be informed by the most up-to-date enrollment data and scenarios.
- Today's classroom continues to evolve: the number of students with disabilities and diverse abilities is growing along with the number of English Language Learners.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- In the 2024/2025 school year, there are 708,759 K-12 students:
 - 614,869 in public schools (+10,131, +1.7%)
 - 93,890 students in independent schools (+2,193, +2.4%)
- Enrollment growth in BC public schools continues at rates last seen in the late 1990s.
 - Public school enrollment grew by 1.7 % this year, compared to 2.4% last year.
- Since 2020/21, there are 46,585 more students in BC public schools (+8.2%) and most of this growth was driven by immigration.
- In the current school year there are 84,933 public school students with disabilities or diverse abilities (+5.4% and 13.3% of enrollment).
- In the current school year there are 90,055 English Language Learners in the public school system (+6.7% and 14.0% of enrollment).

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- School districts in Metro Vancouver, Fraser Valley, Southern Vancouver Island and Central Okanagan have the highest rates of enrollment growth.
- The number of students with disabilities or diverse abilities is consistently growing faster than public school enrollment. The largest category is Learning Disabilities (24,012; +4.4%). The fastest growing is students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (22,824; +14.3%).
- The number of English Language Learners grew from 12% of enrollment to 14% in the years from 2022/2023 to 2024/2025 (+21,202 students).
- Under the *School Act*, parents who are resident in BC (including some temporary residents) must register their children for school, and a board of education must offer an educational program to all eligible students.

Key Dates/Timelines

- The ministry collects enrollment data from public and independent schools as of September 30 each school year.
- The final annual enrollment data are available to the public in December.
- Enrollment forecasts are done in December to support provincial budget planning and capital project planning.

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry and school districts work closely together but have distinct and complementary approaches to enrollment analysis and forecasting.
 - The ministry focus is provincial support for budget and capital planning.
 - Districts focus on local dynamics to support facility and workforce planning.
- The ministry is working closely with the newly established Ministry of Infrastructure to continue to share enrollment information and forecasts to accelerate the delivery of new and expanded schools in a cost-effective manner.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Enrollment forecasts and actuals are used to support operating funding and capital projects.

CONTACT

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Cybersecurity in K-12 Schools

KEY MESSAGES

- School Boards are responsible for developing cybersecurity policies and managing network security in their districts.
- ECC works in partnership with school boards, Focused Education Resources BC, CyberBC and the private sector to provide districts with tools and resources to implement their security programs and ensure a safe digital learning environment.
- Since 2018, the Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC) has provided firewall security services to reduce the risks of cyber-attacks in schools, block access to inappropriate content found online and keep students safe.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Since 2018, ECC invested ^{Government} ^{Financial} on firewall security services under the Enhanced Cybersecurity Agreement that will expire in June 2027. A procurement project to replace this service has been initiated.
- This service provides a layered defense to protect personal and business information for 1,563 school sites across 60 school districts.
- It consists of deployment of over 1700 firewalls across school sites and board offices to protect data and critical digital assets and include software licensing and support for districts.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Firewall security services under the Enhanced Cybersecurity Agreement are provided by Kyndryl Canada, IBM Canada, and Palo Alto Networks.
- The contract term ends in June 2027 and provides a one-year transition period.

Key Dates/Timelines

- July 2018 – ECS contract signed. Direct award to IBM Canada for a 4-year term (expired June 2022)
- Aug 2021 – ECS contract was assigned to Kyndryl following its spin-off from IBM
- July 2022 – ECS contract renewed with Kyndryl for a 3-year term (expired June 2025)
- July 2025 – ECS contract renewed with Kyndryl for a 2-year term (expiring June 2027)

Policies and Regulations

- Under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, school boards are required to implement and maintain a privacy management program to protect personal information in their custody.

Relevant Engagement

- School districts will be part of the stakeholder engagement to ensure their security requirements are included in the new contract.

- o ECC is also engaged with the Ministry of Citizen Services collaborating on security initiatives such as CyberBC to raise the bar for cybersecurity across BC in the face of increased threats.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- ECC has a budget of \$5.1 million (FY24-25) to support the firewall security services.
- Funded through school district recoveries of \$30/student which also partially funds telecommunications services under the Next Gen Telecom Agreement (NGTA).
- Student fees are administered by the ministry in collaboration with school district's officials.

CONTACT

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Education and Child Care IM/IT Capital Projects

KEY MESSAGES

- The Ministry of Education and Child Care is investing in modernizing IM/IT systems to enable capacity to deliver education and child care programs.
- Many business critical systems are end of life, difficult and expensive to maintain, and unable to meet the growing demand for enhanced program services or policy implementation.
- Some legacy systems cannot enable the Sex and Gender Data Standard or the Indigenous Technology Standard.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Projects to support Education digital modernization were granted capital funding in FY2018/19 and are on track to be completed by FY2025/26.
- Projects to support Child Care digital modernization were granted capital funding in FY2023/24 and are on track to be completed by FY2026/27.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- As modernized systems come online, they will deliver scalable, efficient, and agile digital services that are cost-effective, meet the demand for enhanced services and growth, and support the implementation of ministry policies, programs, and corporate data standards.

Key Dates/Timelines

- The Education Modernization portfolio includes the following projects that began in FY2019/20:
 - Personal Education Number Registry (PEN) – Complete
 - Capital Asset Planning System (CAPS) – Complete
 - Independent Schools Funding Systems (ISFS) – Complete
 - Education Data Warehouse (EDW) – Complete
 - Education Data Exchange (EDX) - Complete
 - Graduation Records and Achievement Data (GRAD) – In Progress
 - Scholarships – In Progress
- The Child Care Modernization portfolio includes the following projects that began in FY2023/24:
 - Child Care Data Warehouse (CCDW) – Complete
 - Capital Asset Planning System Child Care Expansion (CAPS) – Complete
 - MyChildCare BC Services (MyCCBC)
 - Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) – Complete
 - Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF) – In Progress
 - Operating Funding Model (OFM) – In Progress
 - Early Childhood Educator Registry – In Progress

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- N/A

BUDGET/FUNDING

- FY2024/25 IM/IT Capital allocation is \$7.907 million.
- FY2025/26 IM/IT Capital notional allocation is \$5.100 million.

CONTACT

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MyEducation BC Student Information System

KEY MESSAGES

- MyEducation BC (MyEd BC) is BC's provincial student information system (SIS) that provides secure, consistent access to student records for BCBC students.
- MyEd BC ensures educators and school leadership have ready access to information that supports each student throughout their educational career from Pre-K to graduation.
- MyEd BC supports districts and schools in their day-to-day operations and delivery of education such as registering students, scheduling student classes, taking attendance, managing grades, generating Learning Updates, and developing Individual Education Plans.
- MyEd BC also tracks the enrolment and attendance of early learners in StrongStart programs across the province.
- Parents/caregivers and students can access learning update reports and attendance information through optional web portals if enabled by their school district.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- All 60 public school districts, the Yukon and 263 independent schools (including 7 independent First Nation schools) use MyEd BC as their student information system.
- MyEd BC supports over 950,000 users including school and district staff, teachers, parents and students.
- MyEd BC has over 740,00 active student records, making it one of the largest, centralized Student Information Service (SIS) implementations worldwide.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- MyEd BC supports data quality, security and integrity by establishing common standards and role-based security business practices which ensures streamlined data collections, strong security practices and efficient reporting procedures.
- The MyEd BC governance structure fosters a culture of collaboration and strong working relationships among districts, schools and teachers.
- The continuous improvement process continues to expand to include new features that support ministry objectives such as:
 - modernizing inclusive education language
 - including French and Indigenous characters and the Gender and Sex Data Standard
 - support for BCBC's curriculum, assessments, and reporting
 - enhancing communication between home and school through the family portal
 - streamlining district and school reporting to the ministry

Key Dates/Timelines

- Fujitsu Consulting (Canada) Inc. has held the contract for MyEd BC since 2013, one of the seven largest deals in the Province.

- In 2022, the ministry negotiated an end-of-term agreement with Fujitsu, securing a stable cost model and an extension of services through March 31, 2028.
- The ministry is currently in the planning stages of procurement to replace the current contract.

Policies and Regulations

- MyEd BC supports the operationalization of several policies, orders and regulations including but not limited to:
 - K-12 Student Reporting Policy
 - Individual Education Plan Order
 - Learning Update Order
 - English Language learning Students Policy
 - Framework for Enhancing Student Learning
 - Permanent Student Record Order

Relevant Engagement

- The Service Management Council (SMC), a sector-based governance structure comprised of various committees, oversees MyEd BC enhancements.
- In 2023, the ministry established a Teacher Working Group with the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) to co-design future system improvements.
- The ministry hosts the annual MyEducation BC Academy, which brings together 300 representatives from school districts, the Yukon, service providers (Fujitsu and Follet), and ministry staff.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Total annual budget for FY24/25 is \$13.8 million, which includes operations, support costs and improvements.
- The ministry and school districts share the service costs of MyEd BC in the Fujitsu contract.
- Government Financial Information

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Next-Gen Telecom Agreement (NGTA)

KEY MESSAGES

- The Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC) uses government contracts for the provision of telecom services in school districts.
- The Next Gen Telecom Agreement (NGTA), administered through the Ministry of Citizens Services (CITZ), is a commodity contract for data, voice and cell services.
- ECC works in collaboration with school districts to leverage the NGTA and provide best value for their telecom service needs.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- ECC is a member of the NGTA buyer's group and represents the interests of school districts.
- The NGTA provides a common procurement mechanism to enable connectivity to over 1600 schools and board offices across the province and cellular services to over 8200 subscribers.
- In 2025-26, ECC will work with school districts to transition telecom services to the NGTA.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- The NGTA will replace the Telecommunication Service Master Agreement (TSMA) which expires in July 2026.
- TELUS and ROGERS are the service providers selected under the NGTA.
- School districts currently make up 23% of the total expenditure under the TSMA, adding to the buyer power of the Province to negotiate best pricing on behalf of the public sector entities.
- School districts will be invited to participate in the NGTA, with ECC as a sponsor.

Key Dates/Timelines

- The procurement process for the ROGERS NGTA was completed in December 2024, and February 2024 for TELUS.
- School districts will transition to the NGTA by July 2026.

Policies and Regulations

- NGTA was subject to the BC government procurement process in an open and transparent bid.

Relevant Engagement

- School districts were engaged in the consultation process through established governance and working committees.
- ECC maintains strong engagement with CITZ through various governance committees (operational and strategic) to ensure the best value of telecom services to school districts.
- ECC is also establishing a new governance structure for the NGTA to maintain district and vendor engagement throughout the terms of the contracts.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- ECC maintains a budget of \$28.4 million to support the delivery telecom services (FY2024-25).
- Funded through a ministry entitlement of \$22.6 million and school district recoveries of \$30/student.
- Student fees are administered by the ministry in collaboration with school district's officials.

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Online Learning

KEY MESSAGES

- Online Learning is a flexible delivery model that allows students to connect with their teacher from anywhere using a wide variety of online and electronic tools and can be used to provide students with a fully online program or to enhance traditional in-person classroom-based learning.
- On July 1, 2023, a new policy came into effect making online learning services available for both public and independent school students through the Provincial Online Learning Schools and District Online Learning Schools.
- Provincial Online Learning Schools (public and independent) are authorized through Ministerial Agreements to offer Online Learning to students no matter where they reside in the province. District Online Learning Schools can only offer Online Learning to students who reside in the local district.
- There are 18 school districts and 16 independent school authorities that operate a total of 37 Provincial Online Learning Schools and 31 school districts operate District Online Learning Schools.
- All Provincial Online Learning Schools are required to participate in the Accountability and Quality Assurance process to ensure consistent, high quality Online Learning experiences for all students in BC.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

2023/2024 Online Learning Headcount:

- Public school students: 61,660
- Independent school students: 15,074
- Public students with diverse abilities and disabilities: 3,586
- Independent school students with diverse abilities and disabilities: 2,073

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Work to modernize Online Learning in BC started with the introduction of Bill 8, amending the *School Act* and the *Independent School Act* to replace Distributed Learning with Online Learning.
- The ministry provides a Provincial Learning Management System called Brightspace that is used to deliver Online Learning which enables consistent, high quality learning experiences and ensures equitable access for educators and students across BC.

Key Dates/Timelines

- July 1, 2023, the new Online Learning Policy was implemented and Provincial Online Learning Schools launched.

- On October 31, 2024, the new Online Learning Accountability and Quality Assurance process launched.

Policies and Regulations

- Online Learning Policy
- Interim Online Learning Procedures Guide
- Accountability and Quality Assurance framework and process

Relevant Engagement

- The Online Learning Sector Advisory Committee meets once every six weeks and includes representation from the following groups:
 - First Nations Education Steering Committee
 - Métis Nation BC
 - BC Association of School Business Officials
 - BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
 - BC Online Learning Administrators' Association
 - BC School Superintendents Association
 - BC Teachers' Federation
 - CUPE BC
 - Federation of Independent Schools Association
 - BC Principals and Vice Principals Association
 - Provincial Online Learning Schools Steering Committee

BUDGET/FUNDING

- In 2023/24, public school funding totaled ^{Government}Financial (including ^{Government}Financial in inclusive education funds).
- In 2024/25, public schools funding is estimated to total \$125.8 million (including \$25.6 million in inclusive education funds).
- In 2023/24 school year (SY), independent funding totaled ^{Government}Financial (which included ^{Government}Financial in inclusive education funding).
- In 2024/25 school year (SY), independent funding totaled \$122.8M (which included \$78.4M in inclusive education funding).
- Basic allocation per FTE (school-age) is \$6,960; This is increasing to \$7,200 per FTE
- Adults are funded at \$688 per 4-credit course (2023/24 SY), increasing to \$711 in 2024/25.
- All independent OL schools are Group 1 (funded at 50% of the public OL school rate).

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ChildCareBC

KEY MESSAGES

- In 2018, BC launched the ChildCareBC Plan, its 10-year strategy to build affordable, accessible, quality, inclusive child care as a core service that families can rely on.
- We are committed to partnering with Indigenous Peoples in building culturally relevant child care that meets the unique needs of Indigenous families.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Since launching ChildCareBC in 2018, the Province, in partnership with the federal government, has funded a range of key early learning and child care programs, including the following:
 - **Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI):** Every month, over 138,800 child care spaces at over 5,200 facilities across BC receive CCFRI fee reductions of up to \$900 a month per child, reducing the cost of child care for over 90,100 spaces for children 5 and under and over 48,700 spaces for half-day preschool and school age programs.
 - **Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB):** Provides up to \$1,250 a month, per child, to help eligible low- and middle-income families (earning up to \$111,000 per year) with their child care costs. On average, over 34,000 children per month from over 27,000 families received ACCB so far in 2024/25.
 - **\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centres (\$10 a Day):** BC has transitioned over 15,300 child care spaces to be designated \$10 a Day spaces since 2018. Under this model, families save about \$915 a month, on average, per child, reducing the average cost of child care from \$1,115 a month (for full-time 5 and under care) to \$200 a month.
 - **ECE Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE):** Since 2018, we have implemented three increases that have increased wages by up to \$6 per hour, helping to bring the median wage for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) to \$29 per hour. The program has a high participation rate, with 93% of ECEs at ECC-funded facilities receiving the wage enhancement.
 - **Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD):** Delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), these programs are key to supporting child care providers to deliver inclusive child care. The average number of children receiving inclusive child care supports per month through SCD and ASCD programs has increased by 50%, or over 3,000 more children, since 2017-18. Additionally, the average number of service hours per child has increased. SCD and ASCD programs have a base provincial budget of \$70 million through MCFD, with an additional \$41.8 million of federal funding provided by ECC.
 - **New Spaces Fund:** Since launching in July 2018, the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund has supported the creation of over 40,000 new child care spaces in group child care facilities across BC, with 23,000 of these spaces operational and the rest in development. With a total investment of over \$1.2 billion, the New Spaces Fund has contributed to improved access to child care for families who want affordable, quality child care.
 - **Aboriginal Head Start (AHS):** AHS is an early learning and child care program for Indigenous children aged birth to 6 years and their families that provides wrap-around family support and inclusion services at no cost. Since 2018, the Province has partnered

with the First Nations Health Authority and the Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC, currently supporting over 2,200 AHS spaces provincewide.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- Since its launch, a series of new mandates, cabinet and treasury board decisions, and agreements with the Government of Canada established new targets and refined the 10-Year ChildCareBC vision.

Key Dates/Timelines

- In Years 1-3 (2018-19/2020-21) of the plan, government took initial steps towards building cohesive, publicly managed child care as a core service for families.
- Year 4 (2021-22) focused on supporting child care providers through the COVID-19 pandemic and planning for future years of ChildCareBC.
- Year 5-7 (2022-23 to 2024-25) focused on implementing initiatives that support the key pillars of the ChildCareBC Plan, including affordability, quality, access, inclusion and Indigenous-led child care.

Policies and Regulations

- The *Early Learning and Child Care Act* (ELCCA) was developed to form a legislative foundation to implement inclusive, quality, affordable early care and learning and was brought in to force by regulation on September 1, 2024.

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry continues to engage regularly with all orders of government; Indigenous governing bodies and entities; school boards; child care providers; families, the Provincial Child Care Council and other sector interest holders to collaborate on projects, solicit feedback and provide important updates.
- In September 2024, the First Nations Leadership Council, the province and the Government of Canada signed a Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on early learning and child care (ELCC) for First Nations in British Columbia. The first of its kind for ELCC in Canada, it is an important step on BC's path to reconciliation, to support the self-determination of First Nations in British Columbia as well as advancing progress on First Nations jurisdiction under the *Declaration Act* Action Item 4.19 in ELCC.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Since its launch in 2018, \$8.52 billion has been invested in ChildCareBC, including \$5.85 billion in provincial investments and \$2.67 billion in federal funding. Please refer to Appendix 1.

CONTACT

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APPENDIX 1

Government Financial Information

Government Financial Information

Government Financial Information

For further financial information: refer to the Financial Booklet.

ChildCareBC – Accessibility Overview

KEY MESSAGES

- Since 2018, the child care sector has grown by more than 48,000 spaces province wide (43% increase), due to the investments in space creation, workforce, and child care operations.
- Provincial and federal funding for child care spaces has been focused on community investments that are long term and run by public and not-for-profit institutions.
- Significant progress has been made in expanding access to affordable child care for families and it will take time to build enough spaces for the future and make child care available for all families in BC.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- As of December 2024, the coverage rate for children birth-5 had increased to 44%, while the coverage rate for school age children has increased to 11%, Advice/Recommendations
- Continued sector growth is dependent on space creation projects, growth in workforce capacity, and capacity within the public and not-for-profit sectors to expand and maintain quality child care.
- Since the launch of ChildCareBC in 2018, the provincial government, with support from the federal government, has funded the creation of over 40,000 new child care spaces, with 23,000 of these spaces operational and the rest in development.
- BC is on track to meet its commitments of 30,000 spaces by 2024/26 and 40,000 spaces by 2026/27 under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CW-ELCC) plan.
- The Province supports child care sector growth through funding for space creation (often as the sole funder), and through supports to recruit and retain ECEs and strengthen program operations.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- In the first three years of the CW-ELCC Agreement (2021-24), BC added over 22,500 more licensed, operational spaces for children birth to 5 years.
- New Spaces Fund has been the primary mechanism for child care space creation.
- The most recent New Spaces Fund intake closed on August 2, 2024, and received a high number of applications, demonstrating the sector's continued commitment to providing accessible, affordable, quality and inclusive child care.
 - To date, in 2024/25, New Spaces Fund has approved 30 projects, representing over 1,100 spaces.
- Since 2018, the Start-Up Grants program has supported individuals to create and operate new licensed funded child care spaces within their personal residence.
 - Uptake continues to be strong in the Start-Up Grants program with over 7,500 approved spaces since 2018. In 2024/25, 166 applications were approved, representing over 1,300 spaces.

- Since 2018, the ChildCareBC Maintenance Fund has supported licensed funded child care providers with emergency funding to repair their facilities or purchase replacement equipment. The Maintenance Fund also supports group licensed funded child care providers with the costs of relocation in emergency circumstances.
 - In 2024/25, the Maintenance Fund has supported 81 applicants facing emergency circumstances to keep their facilities open and support health and safety.
- In August 2024, BC published the Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres to help organizations with child care space creation projects achieve a balance between consistent, quality, and functional child care centre designs.

Key Dates/Timelines

- April 2024: Launch of the Single Application Point for School Districts space creation project proposals
- May 15 to August 2, 2024: 2024-25 New Spaces Fund Call for Applications
- August 2024: Publication of Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres

Policies and Regulations

- 2024/25 New Spaces Fund policy change: Introduction of Major and Minor Capital funding streams

Relevant Engagement

- In 2023/24, BC distributed a School Age Parent Survey which found a 59% demand for school age care across the province.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Refer to Appendix 1 in the ChildCareBC Estimates Note for 2025/26 Budget information.

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ChildCareBC – Affordability Overview

KEY MESSAGES

- Since April 2018, thousands of families are benefiting from lower child care fees as a result of ChildCareBC affordability programs such as the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI), the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) and \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centres.
- Parents at participating licensed centres now receive CCFRI savings of up to \$900 per month per child automatically applied to their child care fees or pay no more than \$10 a day for child care at a \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centre.
- Eligible low- and middle-income families (earning up to \$111,000/yr) can receive up to \$1,250 per month per child through the ACCB. This, in many cases, reduces their monthly child care fees to nothing.
- We know there is more work to do to make child care more affordable for families, and we're committed to continuing this work.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- In 2024/25, the ministry approved over 5,200 facilities to participate in the CCFRI, resulting in fee reductions for over 138,800 spaces, representing 96% of eligible facilities and 97% of eligible child care spaces in BC.
- Parents' total savings through CCFRI and ACCB are up to \$25,800 per year per child.
- In 2024/25, the ACCB reduced child care fees for over 34,000 children from over 27,000 eligible low- and middle-income families on average each month.
- BC has transitioned over 15,300 child care spaces to designated \$10 a Day ChildCareBC spaces since 2018, exceeding the Province's goal of 15,000 spaces by the end of 2024.
- A \$10 a Day ChildCareBC space saves families an average of \$915 a month per child ages 5 and under.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB)

- The ACCB is an income-tested benefit that provides funding on a sliding scale based on factors such as family income, family size, ages and number of children, whether children have support needs, type of child care accessed, and the number of days care is required.
- Families referred by a Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) social worker, Indigenous Child and Family Services Agency or an Indigenous authority providing child and family services under Indigenous law may be eligible to access enhanced support, including exemptions from income testing.
- Additional supports are also available for parents participating in the Young Parent Program, or with children with support needs.

Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI)

- The CCFRI is a voluntary, application-based program, to help lower the cost of child care at approved, licenced child care facilities, regardless of a family's household income.
- Introduced in 2018 for children aged birth-5, fee reductions were enhanced in December 2022 (in partnership with the government of Canada) and expanded to include half-day preschool and school-age programs in September 2023 (using provincial funding only).
- CCFRI facilities are required to reduce parent fees by prescribed amounts and may not increase parent fees by more than 3% of the regional median parent fee annually, with limited exceptions.
- The annual fee increase limit helps ensure predictability and affordability of child care costs for families, while allowing providers to increase fees annually to address rising costs.

\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centres (\$10 a Day) / Operating Funding Model

- In Spring 2024, the province announced over 50 new \$10 a Day centres in communities throughout BC.
- In October 2024, the province opened a new program \$10 a Day spaces intake.
- BC is on track to achieve our Action Plan commitments under the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement to increase the total number of \$10 a Day child care spaces to 20,000 by spring 2026.
- BC is currently testing an Operating Funding Model (OFM) to provide formula-based, stable and equitable funding for licensed funded child care providers while also ensuring funding programs are affordable, high quality, equitable, and inclusive through standardized fees, wages and services.

Policies and Regulations

- The province's affordability initiatives are administered under the authority of the Early Learning and Child Care Act (ELCCA).
- The ELCCA and ELCC Regulation came into effect September 1, 2024, replacing the Child Care Subsidy Act and Child Care Subsidy Regulation.

Relevant Engagement

- Ongoing engagement with the Provincial Child Care Council and participants of the OFM test to refine the model and implementation process.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- See Appendix 1 in the ChildCareBC Estimates Note for details.

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Child Care on School Grounds

KEY MESSAGES

- Child care on school grounds makes it easier for families through one drop-off and pick-up location, streamlining their daily routines, and creating a smoother transition for children.
- The ministry is actively working with school districts to expand the number of child care spaces operating on school grounds, with a specific focus on increasing the number of school age spaces on school grounds.
- Since 2018, the Province has been helping to create over 14,000 new child care spaces on school grounds, totaling over \$505.88 million.
- These spaces are part of the more than 42,000 child care spaces on public and independent school grounds in BC, the majority of which (27,000) are school age care spaces.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- Third-party providers operate approximately 93% of child care spaces on school grounds while school districts operate 7% directly.
- For school age care specifically, third-party providers operate 90% of school age care spaces on public school grounds, while school districts operate 10% directly.
- Demand for child care is estimated at 59% while the provincial coverage rate is 44% for children ages birth-5 and 11% for children ages 6-12.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- When new and replacement schools are requested by districts, they must work with the local community to determine best uses for Neighbourhood Learning Centres funding, including consideration for building child care.
- Since 2021/22, eligible organizations for the New Spaces Fund has been limited to public and not-for-profit organizations, including school districts.
- Private providers continued to be supported through the Child Care Operating Fund, Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative and the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement.
- In 2024/25, the ministry has continued supporting child care on school grounds through the following school district pilots: Integration Inquiry Project (3 districts), Just B4 licensed preschool (24 districts), Seamless Day Kindergarten (33 districts), School Age Care Pilot (3 districts), and District Early Learning and Child Care Leads (59 districts).
- In 2024/2025, the ministry launched a new streamlined application process for school districts to request capital funding for child care space creation alongside their five-year capital plan submissions for K-12 capital projects. It supports a longitudinal approach to child care space creation, in alignment with K-12 capital planning, and helps the ministry identify future child care space demand at a district level.

Key Dates/Timelines

- April 2024: Launch of the Single Application Point for school district child care space creation projects

- April 8 to May 15, 2024: 2024-25 call for submissions for school district child care space creation projects

Policies and Regulations

- *School Act* was amended in 2020 to enable board-operated school age care to students enrolled with the board on school days, provided the board becomes licensed under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act.
- Child Care Licensing Regulations were amended in 2021 to create the School Age Care on School Grounds license type to streamline licensing processes and better align school age care licensing requirements with licensing requirements for boards of education and independent schools.

Relevant Engagement

- The ministry works closely with school districts to expand access to board-operated and third-party operated child care on school grounds.
- The ministry will continue to work with CUPE, the BC Public School Employers Association (BCPSEA), the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA), and the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) to support the expansion of child care on school grounds and address related workforce needs.
 - The 2023/24 School Age Parent Survey results showed 59% of parents needed school age care across the province. Almost all (97%) parents surveyed indicated that having school age care on school grounds was important to them.
- In December 2023, engagement occurred with school districts and child care providers on the Single Application Point policy and implementation.
- The ministry continues to engage regularly with all orders of government; Indigenous governing bodies and entities; school boards; child care providers; families; the Provincial Child Care Council; and other sector interest holders to collaborate on projects, solicit feedback and provide important updates.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Refer to Appendix 1 in the ChildCareBC Estimates Note for 2025/26 Budget information: Table 1 (CCD) & 2 (Partnership Ministries).

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Inclusive Child Care

KEY MESSAGES

- All children benefit from inclusive child care settings that are welcoming and celebrate the diverse cultural backgrounds, identities and abilities of children, families and staff.
- We are working to make equitable access to child care a reality so that children from diverse backgrounds and family circumstances and children with support needs can fully participate and truly belong.
- To support this future state, the ministry has developed the *Where All Children Belong: BC Inclusive Child Care Strategy*. This strategy identifies goals and early actions the Province will take as it makes progress towards inclusive child care as a core service.
- The capacity to support effective, inclusive child care varies across the province. Government is committed to supporting and empowering providers, Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and other members of the child care workforce to provide inclusive, culturally safe care.
- We know that the Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) programs are key to supporting child care providers to deliver inclusive child care. We are continuing to invest in these programs so that more children have access to inclusive child care supports.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- In 2023/24, an average of 8,986 children received inclusive child care supports each month through the SCD and ASCD programs, and a total of 14,298 unique children were served throughout the year. This is an increase of 50%, or 3,021 more children, since 2017-18. Additionally, the average number of service hours per child has increased.
- In partnership with CanAssist with the University of Victoria, the ministry has launched two online courses and a suite of resources to support the child care workforce in building their capacity for inclusion, including understanding and responding to children's behaviour:
 - The Foundations of Inclusive Child Care training, in which over 4,013 learners have enrolled as of January 29, 2025
 - The Behaviour in the Early Years initiative, in which over 3,274 learners have enrolled as of January 29, 2025
- In a subset of \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centres, the ministry is testing a requirement to develop and implement an inclusion policy for their child care setting. Learnings from this test will inform future approaches.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- In BC, child care providers in receipt of the Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF) and the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) are expected to make every reasonable effort to provide an inclusive and supportive environment for all children, including children with support needs. Child care providers participating in the \$10 a Day ChildCareBC program must be willing to accept children with support needs into their program.

- However, as independent business owners, each child care provider sets their own program policies and determines admission according to their facility's capacity to meet the needs of individual children.
- SCD and ASCD are community-based programs that offer a range of consulting and support services to children, families and child care centres, enabling children with support needs to fully participate in child care.
- SCD/ASCD programs have a base provincial budget of \$70 million through the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), and annual federal funding of \$41.8 million from the Bilateral Canada-BC Early Learning and Child Agreement and the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, for a total of \$111.8 million.
- A Memorandum of Understanding is in place between ECC and MCFD for the ongoing funding and delivery of SCD and ASCD.
- We know that recent investments in the community-based SCD and ASCD programs are improving access to inclusive child care supports for many families; however, funding is not fully meeting demand, and in many communities, there are significant wait times for services.

Key Dates/Timelines

- BC has committed to reporting on progress of the Inclusive Child Care Strategy in 2026.

Policies and Regulations

- To support and empower ECEs, the ministry is exploring the development and implementation of updated occupational competencies for ECEs to reflect changes in ECE education, particularly related to inclusive child care and Indigenous competencies.
- BC published the Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres in August 2024, to help organizations with space creation projects achieve higher and more consistent quality that is accessible and inclusive for all.

Relevant Engagement

- In 2023-2024, MCFD collected input on BC's system of supports for children and youth with support needs, including feedback on SCD and ASCD. ECC will continue to learn alongside MCFD to make progress towards inclusive, quality, and culturally safe child care as a core service.
- The ministry continues to engage and build relationships with families, including those who are newcomers to Canada, Indigenous, low-income or experiencing vulnerability; child care service providers; early childhood educators; and advocates, to ensure that government policy is responsive to the concerns and interests of these groups.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- See Appendix 1 in the ChildCareBC Estimates Note for details.

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 Government
 Financial Information

ECC and Health Roles and Responsibilities

KEY MESSAGES

- The health and wellbeing of children in a child care setting is our top priority and taken seriously. In order to monitor health and safety, government sets regulation and standards to protect the children in licensed child care settings.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC), through ChildCareBC, is responsible for child care policy development, child care capital investments and community development, and sector engagement and communication.
- The Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA) and Child Care Licensing Regulation (CCLR) under Ministry of Health, governs all licensed child care facilities and requires all operators to prioritize and protect the health, safety and well-being of children in their care.
- The Ministry of Health (HLTH) is responsible for the overall maintenance and stewardship of the CCALA and the CCLR. Health Authorities report data on the number of licensed facilities and licensed maximum capacity to HLTH. Data on the number of individual spaces is not reported.

KEY FACTS AND NUMBERS

- There are 10 different types of licensed child care programs under the Child Care Licensing Regulation (e.g., group child care; preschool; family child care; occasional care; school age care; recreation care; child minding; and, multi age care.
- There are a total of 8,551 licensed child care facilities throughout BC. A breakdown of licensed facilities by type is listed in Appendix 1.

BACKGROUND

Supporting Facts

- ChildCareBC also administers child care operational funding through programs such as the \$10 a Day ChildCareBC program, Child Care Operating Funding and the Affordable Child Care Benefit for families, as well as capital funding through programs such as the New Spaces Fund, Start-Up Grants, and Maintenance Fund.
- The *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* (CCALA) and the Child Care Licensing Regulation (CCLR) make up the legislative framework that establishes the health and safety requirements that all licensed child care providers must meet.
- Under this legislative framework, the Ministry of Education and Child Care is assigned responsibility for the Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Registry.
- The CCALA and the CCLR establish the statutory authority for the Director of the ECE Registry to regulate the ECE workforce through certification, investigations into practice complaints, and the recognition of post-secondary ECE programs.
- The CCALA assigns statutory authority for licensing to Medical Health Officers in each health authority, while the day-to-day work of monitoring and inspecting child care facilities is delegated to licensing officers by their Medical Health Officer.
- Health Authority Licensing Officers to monitor, assess, inspect and investigate complaints about all licensed child care facilities, including those funded through ChildCareBC. Through a

reporting protocol, health authorities report any investigations involving a certified ECE to the ECE Registry for further follow-up.

- Licensed facilities must meet specific regulatory requirements for staffing qualifications, criminal record checks, first aid, record keeping, physical premises and equipment, child to staff ratios and programming.
- Child care spaces may be occupied by more than one child, particularly where children attend only mornings or afternoons on specific weekdays, such as in preschool, or where children from two families are sharing a space on alternate days of the week.
- ECC reports on licensed child care spaces for those facilities that participate in available funding programs such as the Child Care operating funding (CCOF).
- In February 2025, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) released a report on Child Care Licensing Capacity and found that ECC had not worked effectively with health partners to implement the commitment to increase capacity in health authorities to license new spaces, conduct investigations, and monitor compliance in child care facilities and concluded the ministry did not know if health authorities have increased their capacity to license, investigate and monitor child care facilities.
- ECC accepted OAG's five recommendations on coordinating with health partners to document expectations for increasing capacity in health authorities' child care licensing programs, and to monitor and report on progress. This work is being led by a cross-ministry committee jointly chaired by the ADMs of Child Care Division in ECC and of Senior Services Division in HLTH.

Key Dates/Timelines

- N/A

Policies and Regulations

- N/A

Relevant Engagement

- The ECC has a joint standing committee with HLTH to discuss and resolve issues. This committee had an initial meeting on September 27, 2024, and continues to meet regularly.

BUDGET/FUNDING

- Refer to Appendix 1 -Table 1 (CCD) & 2 (Partnership Ministries) in the ChildCareBC Estimates Note for 2025/26 Budget information.

CONTACT

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Appendix 1: Licensed Child Care Facilities by Type

December 31, 2024	FHA	IHA	VIHA	NHA	VCHA	BC
Facility Service Type						
Group Child Care < 36 months	632	197	230	61	350	1,470
Group Child Care > 30 months	810	310	399	97	492	2,108
Group Child Care School Age	361	271	200	86	233	1,151
Preschool	307	179	132	80	144	842
Family Child Care	288	169	243	138	174	1,012
Occasional Child Care	4	30	11	4	17	66
In-Home Multi Age Child Care	216	66	82	38	83	485
Multi Age Child Care	445	159	123	71	101	899
Child-minding	13	2	3	1	4	23
School Age Care on School Grounds	230	39	96	40	77	482
Recreational Care	7	1	0	0	5	13
Total	3,313	1,423	1,519	616	1,680	8,551

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