



Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning

Fall 2023

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Message from the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, Nello Altomare

As a former teacher and school principal, I am honoured to have been appointed as Manitoba's Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning.

On behalf of our new provincial government, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to you, our education and child care partners.

My approach will be to work collaboratively with you and to listen to your concerns as we move forward together on our shared project of restoring and strengthening the integrity of our public education system for our kids, and in building a truly universal and affordable child care system for Manitoba families.

I am particularly excited to get to work on our government's commitments to a universal school nutrition program in every school so every child can focus on learning, and in reducing class sizes for our youngest learners so kids get more one-on-one attention from their teachers and educational assistants.

Every child matters. As teachers and educators, I know that, together, we will demonstrate that vision in the work we will do every day for kids, families, and the communities we serve.

—Nello

Message from the Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, Brian O'Leary

I am thrilled to be joining this government and this department. I've enjoyed a wonderful career as a teacher, principal, and, for over two decades, superintendent of Seven Oaks School Division.

I'm immensely proud of what we've achieved in Seven Oaks in Indigenous Education, in furthering equity, in arts education, and much more. Now that I'm coming to work in Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, I'm excited to be part of provincial initiatives that make a difference for kids—especially those kids who most need that difference made for them.

I really appreciated the support given to schools by Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The communication was open and frequent, and the support was timely and

adequate. That response and dedication of department staff contributed greatly to the strength, resilience, and flexibility that characterized our schools throughout the pandemic.

With COVID-19 behind us (as a crisis at least), we now deal with its lingering effects. We were all in the same storm but we weren't all in the same boat, and the inequities in our province appear even more glaring. This means our work in education is even more important.

I look forward to meeting you, learning from you, and working together to make a difference.

—Brian

Department Announcements

Recent and Upcoming Engagement and Consultations

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning has posted the 2022/23 Report of the Student Advisory Council. The [Student Advisory Council](#), which is composed of 30 high school students, has successfully completed its second term of annual activities. We thank the outgoing and incoming students who have committed to providing their unique perspectives to support continuous improvement across K to 12 education. We encourage you to read its [2022/23 Report](#).

Contact: Scott Graham-Derham, Director, Sector Relations, SRUnit@gov.mb.ca

Funding Model Review

Last spring, the department met with all 37 school divisions as part of the [Funding Model Review](#). We thank all division leaders for their contributions. Information is being incorporated into the proposed model and will be used to inform next steps and implementation planning.

Contact: Vince Mariani, Provincial Lead, Funding Model Review, vince.mariani@gov.mb.ca

New Provincial Anti-Racism Policy

As recommended in the *Final Report of the Poverty and Education Task Force*, the province is currently developing a provincial anti-racism policy directive. Rebecca Chartrand, President and CEO of Indigenous Strategy, is working with the department to inform the development of the policy. With more than 25 years of experience working in K to 12 and post-secondary education, including advancing work on anti-racism in several Manitoba school divisions, Ms. Chartrand is uniquely positioned to lead this provincial work. In the coming weeks, the consultation team will be developing an advisory group and reaching out to key stakeholders for information, insights, and contacts to advance a variety of engagement opportunities.

Contact: Rhonda Shaw, Executive Director, Learning and Outcomes, lobdirector@gov.mb.ca

Framework for Learning Professional Development Sessions

The Student Achievement and Inclusion Division began a series of professional learning sessions in spring 2023 to support a train-the-trainer implementation approach for Manitoba's [Framework for Learning](#). The implementation sessions have continued this fall in Winnipeg, Selkirk, and Brandon, with over 250 educational leaders from across the province participating. Five sessions, each with a specific focus area, will be offered throughout the 2023/2024 school year. They provide school division staff with information about the elements of the Framework for Learning, curriculum alignment, and how Manitoba's global competencies are embedded into the curriculum. Sessions 1 and 2 have been held already. School division Framework for Learning liaisons have been scheduled to attend Sessions 3 to 5, which will be held throughout the rest of this school year in Winnipeg, Selkirk, and Brandon.

Contact: Janet Tomy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Achievement and Inclusion, SAI-ADM@gov.mb.ca

Important Dates

Take Our Kids to Work™ Day (TOKTW) – Wednesday, November 1, 2023

Take Our Kids to Work (TOKTW) invites students in Grade 9 to experience “a day in the life” of various diverse professionals, and to explore and discover possible future career options and opportunities. This event supports career development education and future readiness through career exploration, as well as through increased knowledge about possible career and educational opportunities.

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning is proud to promote TOKTW and offer resources to assist schools in planning their own event. Please visit [Career Development | Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning \(gov.mb.ca\)](https://www.gov.mb.ca/career-development/) to find valuable resources to facilitate this event.

Contact: Darwin MacFarlane, Coordinator, Senior Years Technology Education Unit, tve@gov.mb.ca

Mamàhtawisiwin Symposium – November 14 and 15, 2023

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning’s planning is underway for the upcoming symposium exploring [*Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With—An Indigenous Education Policy Framework*](#). This opportunity for shared thinking and collective learning will explore each of the four policy directions and their associated strategies and actions, which are being implemented across Manitoba schools with development work to extend to early learning and child care facilities. Invitations and a divisional registration sheet were sent to superintendents. Information regarding registration in the child care sector will be sent to all home- and centre-based facilities and sector partners.

When: Tuesday, November 14, 2023, and Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Where: Victoria Inn and Conference Centre, 1808 Wellington Ave, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Who should attend: Superintendents, school division senior leadership, principals/vice-principals, school division Indigenous education leads, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, trustees, school support teams, child care centre directors, child care home-based providers, early childhood educators

How to register: Early Learning and Child Care facilities and partner organizations will be sent an email with a registration link.

Contact: Helen Robinson-Settee, Director, Indigenous Inclusion Directorate, iid@gov.mb.ca

November is Financial Literacy Month

In recognition of the importance of financial literacy in one’s overall well-being and ability to confidently navigate financial matters in life, November is proclaimed as Financial Literacy Month in Manitoba. This proclamation is intended to increase awareness of the importance of supporting students in the development of these valuable life skills.

Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week: November 12–18, 2023

Individuals, families, schools, and communities work hard daily to reduce bullying in Manitoba. The week of November 12–18, 2023, is declared Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week. The week is about taking the time to promote awareness and understanding of bullying and its impacts.

Please visit [Safe and Caring Schools](https://www.gov.mb.ca/safe-and-caring-schools/) to find resources on how to create a safe and caring learning environment.

Contact: Jennifer Young, Coordinator, Schools and Community Unit, attendance@gov.mb.ca

Dyslexia Awareness Month

October was celebrated as Dyslexia Awareness Month to highlight the need for educators to continue to build upon their awareness and skills to respond to the diverse literacy learning needs of all students. Thank you for your ongoing efforts to make our schools safe, caring, and inclusive learning environments for our children and youth.

Leadership Updates

- **Claire Breul, the department's executive financial officer**, has found an opportunity outside of the Manitoba government. With Claire's departure, **Andrew Henry** is now serving as the department's Executive Financial Officer. After having worked alongside Claire for over 20 years, Andrew has stepped into this role with ease. **Elowina Torres-Montales** is now serving as the Director of Comptrollership and Reporting.
- **Allyson Demski, Manager, Communication and Emergency Preparedness**, joined the Sector Relations Unit. Before joining our Corporate Services team, Allyson held emergency management and preparedness roles, most recently with Manitoba Health and previously with Manitoba's Emergency Management Organization.
- **Ron Sugden, Provincial Lead for the K to 12 Framework for Continuous Improvement**, has joined the department from his former role as Assistant Superintendent, Prairie Rose School Division. With over 30 years of experience as a classroom teacher, school leader, and senior administrator for the division, Ron's leadership, expertise, and passion for school and school division planning and reporting will contribute greatly to our system's commitment to continuous improvement.
- **Roselle Miko, Director, Legislative Office**, brings substantial experience in legislation and policy analysis from policy roles in Manitoba Sustainable Development, Conservation and Water Stewardship, Agriculture, and her recent position with the Regulatory Accountability Secretariat.
- **Toni Landry and Neera Barber, Inclusion Support Program supervisors**, both have their ECE III certification and have worked in the early learning and child care sector for over 15 years. Toni has been with the Early Learning and Child Care Division since 2012, taking on a variety of roles including, most recently, Acting Manager for the Diversity and Inclusion Unit. Neera joined the division in 2019, working as a Child Development Worker and, most recently, as an Inclusion Support Program Coordinator.

For more information on the department's organizational structure and key contacts, please visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aboutus.html.

Spotlight: Canada-Manitoba ELCC Action Plan Update

The department has been working over the past year to build connections with the sector, stakeholders, and new partners in our work to advance Manitoba's commitments under two agreements with the Government of Canada: the [Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement](#) and the [Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement](#).

Much of what we learned through these engagements directly informed the negotiations with Canada for the final years of the two agreements. On August 1, 2023, these new action plans were jointly announced by the governments of Manitoba and Canada. They outline actions that Manitoba will undertake to achieve its commitments to strengthen the workforce, enhance quality, improve affordability, and create 23,000 additional spaces.

Contact: Sarah Whiteford, Assistant Deputy Minister, Early Learning and Childcare, ELCCADM@gov.mb.ca

Early Childhood Educator Workforce Strategy

Early childhood educators (ECEs) and child care assistants (CCAs) are the foundation of quality early learning programs. The department estimates that at least 2,000 ECEs and 1,000 CCAs will be needed to support the expansion of spaces across Manitoba. While much work remains, several initiatives have been launched:

- 18% increase to funding to support increases to wages
- Multi-year training expansion plan to create almost 1,000 new training seats at universities and colleges
- Extension of the ECE Tuition Reimbursement Program until 2026

Qualified vendors are being contracted through competitive processes to support the implementation of a comprehensive framework for wages and benefits, and to modernize the certification system. Stakeholder consultation is planned for winter 2023. Additional strategies to recruit and retain professionals in the sector are in development, and Manitoba is working cross-jurisdictionally on a federal-provincial-territorial workforce strategy, as well as with the [Minister's Consultation Table](#), which comprises providers and stakeholders.

Contact: Mario Gordon, Director, Workforce Development Unit, cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca

Space and Capital Expansion

Towards the target of 23,000 newly funded early learning and child care spaces, as of August 2023, 8,266 spaces have been approved for children 0–6 years (opened or committed) leveraging federal funding. In addition, provincial funding has been invested to extend those supports to school-age programs, including approving an additional 4,272 spaces for children ages 7–12 (opened or committed). This brings the total opened or committed spaces to 12,498 spaces for children 0–12 years. In July 2023, with funding provided under the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, Manitoba announced the allocation of \$132 million across 36 public schools to create more than 2,400 spaces for children under seven. Please visit [Space Creation](#) for more details on the child care in schools expansion, as well as other initiatives underway.

Contact: Pam Wever, Director, Capital and Space Development, ccgf@gov.mb.ca

Training for Early Learning and Child Care Professionals

Post-Secondary Program Expansion

Additional training opportunities are now available for ECEs and CCAs, as the governments of Manitoba and Canada are expanding post-secondary programs at five public universities and colleges. Almost 1,000 seats will be added over the next three years, supporting approximately 2,000 new student admissions, including expanded workplace diploma programs. For more information, please visit our partner post-secondary institutions:

- [Assiniboine Community College](#)
- [University College of the North](#)
- [Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology](#)
- [Université de Saint-Boniface](#)
- [Red River College Polytechnic](#)

ECE II Assessment Program

The ECE II Assessment Program serves as a pathway for individuals to attain their ECE II classification. It is designed for those who are already equipped with the essential knowledge and skills required for child care, utilizing Recognition of Prior Learning practices. There are four streams of ECE II Assessments available to participants:

Competency-Based Assessment, Prior Learning Assessment, Modified Prior Learning Assessment, and Internationally Educated Qualifications. On June 22, 2023, the department celebrated and congratulated over 60 new professionals who received their ECE II certification. This was the first time since 2019 that an in-person event honouring ECE II graduates was held!



Class of 2019 through 2023 ECE II graduates (from left to right): Lovepreet Kaur Mohie, Jasdeep Bajaj, Sathsarani Thenuwara, Dilini Balasooriya, Pratima Bhattarai, Amritpal Thind, Nivin Elserety, Meena Rani, Olga Shmidt, Analyn Frias, and Charito Julian.

The Competency-Based Assessment stream for rural and northern participants has extended its intake deadline to November 30, 2023. This program is designed to support career advancement in early childhood education, offering CCAs the opportunity to become ECE IIs with guidance from an advisor and peer assessor.

For more info and to apply, contact:

Email: cdccertificate@gov.mb.ca

Website: www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students_workforce/ece_assessment.html

K to 12 Education Update

K to 12 Certification Review

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning has begun a review of the [Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation](#), which was last reviewed in 2015. This regulation establishes the requirements for the certification and recognition of the professional experience of teachers, school leaders, and school clinicians in the province. Consultations began in July 2023. Initial feedback from the sector resulted in interim amendments; however, in the coming weeks, the department will continue consultations and use this feedback to consider further amendments to the regulation.

Contact: Stacey Hay, Director, Teacher Certification and Standards, stacey.hay@gov.mb.ca

Provincial Assessment Program Update

Manitoba's [provincial assessment program](#) has dual purposes. At the **school and divisional level**, data is used to provide feedback to students, teachers, and parents/caregivers regarding student learning, to inform instructional planning, and to help inform decisions, such as those related to the allocation of resources. At the **provincial level**, the data provides a snapshot of how students are doing in relation to specific learning outcomes at a specific point in time. This system-wide data assists in identifying trends and informs system-level policy decisions and the development, refinement, and implementation of provincial curriculum and assessments. Here are some important updates for the 2023/24 school year:

- A three-year pilot began in 2023/24 to implement the Early Years Evaluation assessment. This assessment provides real-time, student-specific data in Kindergarten to support responses to in-year learning needs with a focus on literacy skills and healthy childhood development. Thirty school divisions are participating in year one of the pilot.
- The Early Years and Middle Years formative assessments will continue as usual.
- The new Grade 10 Provincial Evaluation, focused on cumulative student learning to the end of Grade 9, is proceeding in November with a pilot across Manitoba schools. The evaluation is focused on the reading and responding component and mathematics component for students taking language arts and mathematics in the first semester. This pilot evaluation, developed with Manitoba teachers, will build system readiness and confidence for full implementation in fall 2024.
- Grade 12 Provincial Tests, suspended early during the COVID-19 pandemic, are scheduled to resume in January and June 2024.

Contact: Janet Tomy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Achievement and Inclusion, SAI-ADM@gov.mb.ca

Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023)

We are pleased to announce the launch of the new *Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension*. This [policy directive](#) provides province-wide guidance to limit, reduce, and phase out exclusionary practices, except in situations of imminent safety risk to students and staff. It also provides school divisions with a framework to develop or renew their local policies on the use of suspension in schools by spring 2024. This policy directive ensures we meet an important recommendation from the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY).

Thank you to Mountain View and River East Transcona school divisions for piloting the collection of suspension and expulsion data in the 2022/2023 school year. The provincial suspension data pilot project will continue in 2023/2024, with all school divisions participating to further inform the collection process.

Contact: Allan Hawkins, Executive Director, Inclusion Support Branch, isbinfo@gov.mb.ca

Provincial School Leadership Framework

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning has worked with education sector partners to co-create a Provincial School Leadership Framework to guide professional learning of school leaders and build school leadership skills within local contexts. Last spring, the department released three surveys: a parent advisory council survey, a student advisory council survey, and a sector survey (school and school division leaders, teachers, Indigenous Rights Holders, and education partners), seeking feedback and validation on the identified skills, knowledge, and behaviours of effective school leadership. Survey results are summarized in a [What We Heard Report](#). The department thanks all who participated in the survey. Work continues to incorporate this feedback and finalize the framework, with support from Dr. Steven Katz, an implementation team, and a number of principal learning networks.

Contact: Donna Davidson, Provincial Lead, Provincial School Leadership Framework, donna.davidson@gov.mb.ca

French Language Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy

[Manitoba's Recruitment and Retention Strategy for French Language Teachers: Moving to Action](#) was launched in June 2023. The strategy outlines a framework to coordinate numerous initiatives intended to increase the supply of French-language teachers in Manitoba. It includes a detailed implementation plan that outlines specific ways in which Manitoba sector partners and education stakeholders can move to collective action. The Bureau de l'éducation française will provide system-level leadership to support the implementation of the strategy in partnership with French education stakeholders. Consultations over the past several years greatly informed the development of the strategy and underscored the need for continued engagement and collaboration among government, stakeholders, and partners in the months and years to come.

Contact: Kassy Assié, Executive Director, Bureau de l'éducation française, exdir-bef@gov.mb.ca

Treaty Education for All

An exciting development for this school year is the [Treaty Education for All](#) plan, which launched in June 2023. This includes a requirement for all K to 12 school teachers and school staff to complete Treaty Education training by December 31, 2025, along with other focused work on supporting school leaders, establishing catalyst teacher learning networks in English and French, ensuring Treaty Education for K to 12 students, and planning for future developments with early learning and child care partners. School divisions will be submitting high-level implementation plans by October 31, 2023, as part of their reporting on the Framework for Continuous Improvement.

This plan builds upon the tremendous work of the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM) and our education partners in the delivery of Treaty Education across the province. Thanks also to the catalyst teachers, school leaders, and school division partners for your work to ensure understanding of our shared history and responsibilities and for advancing Truth and Reconciliation.

Contact: Helen Robinson-Settee, Director, Indigenous Inclusion Directorate, iid@gov.mb.ca

Remote Learning

In the fall 2022 engagement sessions, it was mentioned that students and teachers are often unaware of the breadth of remote learning opportunities already in place to support student success in Manitoba, as referenced in the [Provincial Online High School: What We Heard Report \(April 2023\)](#). To increase awareness, a new user-friendly website has been created that will improve information on remote learning high school programming (see www.mbremotelearning.ca). The website reflects what has been learned from over 20 years of remote learning in Manitoba, two years of emergency remote learning during COVID-19, and what was heard through extensive stakeholder engagement, including engagement with the Student Advisory Council. The department continues to engage with key partners from across the province, including metro, rural, and northern school division representatives and the DSFM, to provide feedback on the provincial remote learning strategy and remote learning programming.

Contact: Ted Fransen. Provincial Lead, Remote Learning, Ted.Fransen@gov.mb.ca

The *Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Newsletter* aims to provide our education and early childhood learning partners with access to information about department initiatives and leadership updates, and to highlight some upcoming plans/important dates. The newsletter is published in fall, winter, and spring. The winter edition is expected in February 2024. To provide feedback on the newsletter or the material covered, please contact dmedu@manitoba.ca.

Thank you.

Contact Us

If you have questions or comments, please email SRUnit@gov.mb.ca.

For more information, visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/.

