

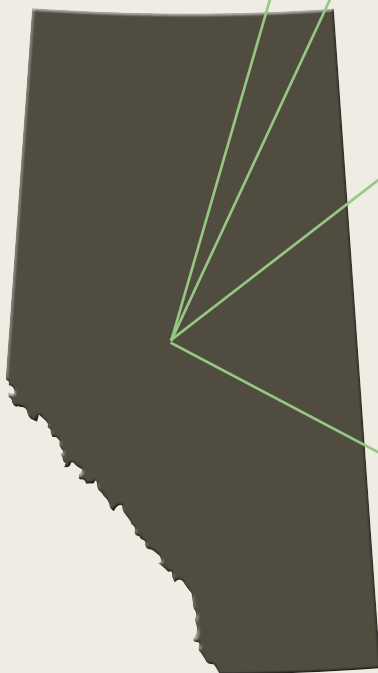
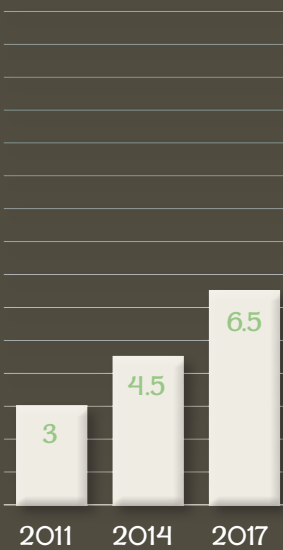
ALBERTA

PROFILE 2017

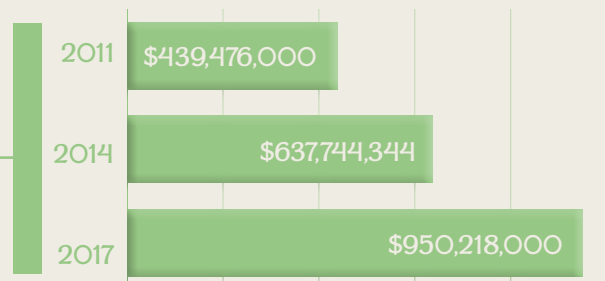


TRENDS IN ECEC FROM 2011-2017

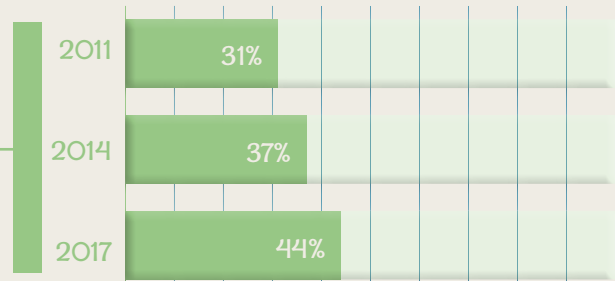
ECE REPORT BENCHMARKS



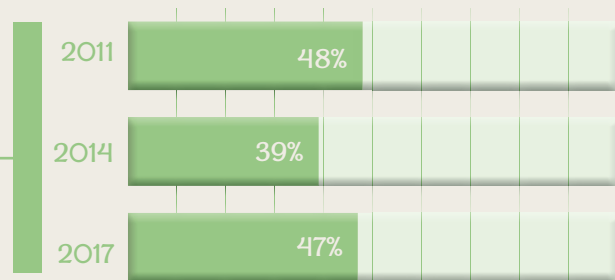
CHANGE IN ECEC SPENDING



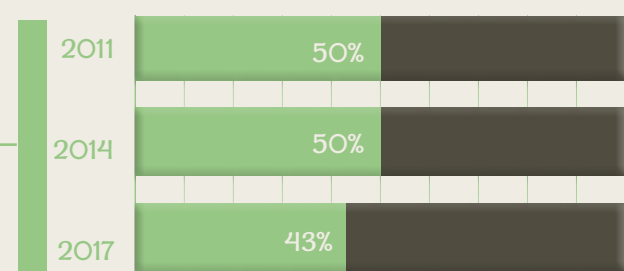
PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN 2-4 YEARS ATTENDING ECEC



ECE SALARIES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TEACHER SALARIES



PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAMS (NON-PROFIT/PROFIT)



1. GOVERNANCE

| Table 1.1 Alberta Governance Structure for Early Childhood Education | |
|--|---|
| Lead Ministry/ Department | Alberta Education Alberta Children's Services |
| Related Ministry/ Department | |
| Policy Framework | <i>Play, Participation, and possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta</i> <i>Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12 2016-2017</i> ¹ <i>The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2002)</i> ² <i>Funding Manual for School Authorities 2016-2017</i> ³ |
| Common Supervisory Unit | |
| Legislation | <i>School Act</i> (2000, current as of 2017) ⁴ <i>Early Childhood Services Regulation</i> (2002, amended 2015) ⁵ <i>Private Schools Regulation</i> (2000, amended 2016) ⁶ <i>Child Care Licensing Act</i> (2007, current as of 2016) ⁷ <i>Child Care Licensing Regulations Alberta Regulation 143/2008</i> (2016) ⁸ <i>Certification of Teachers Regulation – Alberta Regulation 3/1999</i> (2016) ⁹ |
| Related Legislation | <i>Children First Act</i> (2013, 2014) ¹⁰ |
| Local Service Delivery | Alberta has 374 school authorities ^b including: 42 public, 17 separate, 4 francophone, 13 charter, 19 provincial, 149 private, 95 private ECS operators and 35 First Nations. In addition, there is one Federal authority. ¹¹ Early Learning and Child Care: 7 Child and Family Services delivery regions and Métis Settlements |
| Community/Sector Oversight | Alberta Association for the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services |

a The 2017/2018 *Guide to Education* is made available in advance of the school year.

b The *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2016-2017* allows school jurisdictions, charter schools, accredited funded private schools and private ECS operators to access and understand Alberta Education funding. The following definitions are found in the in the *Funding Manual's* "Glossary of Terms," p. 140.
School Authorities include school jurisdictions, accredited funded private schools and private ECS operators. *School Jurisdictions* refer to Alberta school districts, school divisions, regional divisions, Francophone Regional Authorities, charter schools, the Lloydminster Public School Division or the Lloydminster Roman Catholic Separate School Division.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Alberta has established the new Ministry of Children's Services that leads child care, early childhood development, child intervention, foster and adoption programs, including the regional delivery staff for these program areas, and Indigenous and Community Connections.¹²

Alberta announced new investments in child care in November 2016. Twenty-two pilot Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centres received funding to demonstrate the importance and viability of \$25-a-day child care in Alberta. This three year Alberta-wide pilot program provides child care for children from birth to 6 years with maximum fees of \$25 per day. ELCC Centres within existing child care programs began operations on May 1, 2017. As those in new centres need time to get licensed and established, operation dates for new programs varied throughout 2017. This pilot has established almost 1,300 affordable quality child care spaces in Early Learning and Child Care Centres, 714 of which are newly opened spaces, and provide approximately 119 new child care staff with jobs.¹³

Alberta is developing new provincial curriculum for kindergarten to grade 12 aligned with the *Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Provincial Curriculum*. The Framework describes the purpose of curriculum, and includes common principles and standards with a focus on competencies, literacy and numeracy grounded in subject content (learning outcomes).¹⁴

Alberta signed on to the Multilateral Framework for Early Learning and Child Care¹⁵ in June 2017 and is continuing negotiations for a bilateral agreement.

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

The Ministry of Children's Services was created in January 2017 to oversee child care, early childhood development, child intervention, foster and adoption programs, including the regional delivery staff for these program areas, and Indigenous and Community Connections. The Early Childhood Development Branch is responsible for early childhood education and care, including Alberta's new Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centres, child care licensing and monitoring, certification of staff, the accreditation funding program, the child care subsidy funding program, and parenting resources and supports.

Alberta Education is responsible for Early Childhood Services (ECS). ECS are educational programs for children under the age of 6, including the year before grade 1 (kindergarten) and educational programming for children as young as 2.5 years old.¹⁶

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Alberta Education's 2017-20 Business Plan Outcome 3: Alberta's education system is inclusive and identifies a key strategy (3.2) to: "Build an integrated early childhood development, learning and care system with Community and Social Services, Children's Services and Health by aligning programs and services to meet the needs of children and families."¹⁷

SERVICE DESIGN

Education Programs

Alberta Education is responsible for providing Early Childhood Services (ECS) under the *School Act*. Funding for kindergarten and other ECS programs may be accessed by all school authorities, which include school jurisdictions (i.e., public, separate, Francophone school boards), private schools, charter schools and private ECS operators.

Kindergarten: Provincial funding is provided for children to attend kindergarten for 475 hours per year. The local school authority decides whether to offer full-day or junior kindergarten programs within a community. Children who are 4.5 years of age at the beginning of the school year are eligible. This program is not mandated but most school authorities offer at least a half-time program (half days every day, or full days every other day). Kindergarten, as part of ECS programming, is intended for children in the year prior to entry to grade 1 and may be offered by local school boards and/or private ECS operators.

Early Childhood Services (ECS): The *School Act* allows school authorities to provide up to three years of programming to children identified with disabilities or delays, who are learning English as a new language or who have been identified as gifted. ECS provides educational services in a variety of early learning settings and may include children with severe developmental delays/disabilities starting as early as age 2.5 years. Funding is also provided for children as young as 3.5 years who have been identified as having a mild/moderate disability/delay, who are gifted and talented, or who are learning English as an additional language.

Regulated Child Care

*Alberta's Child Care Licensing Act*¹⁸ states that anyone caring for seven or more children must be licensed by the Government of Alberta. Under *Alberta's Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation*, there are six types of regulated Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) programs. Five program types are licensed and one program type is approved.

Licensed

Day care program: Licensed centre-based programs provide care to seven or more infants, preschool and kindergarten children for four or more consecutive hours in each day the program is provided.

Preschool program: Licensed programs are available for preschool children from 19 months up to 5 years of age, operating for less than four hours per child in each day the program is provided.

Innovative program: This licensed child care program is approved by the director and is designed to meet the unique child care needs of the community in which it is provided.

Out of school care: Licensed group programs are available for kindergarten-aged children and children attending grades 1-6.

Group family child care: Individually licensed caregivers provide care in the private residence of a license holder to a maximum of 10 children, including infants, preschool, kindergarten and school-aged children. These programs must have two providers on record and both must be on

the premises when seven or more children are in attendance. In the group, no more than three children may be under 3 years of age, and no more than two may be infants.

Approved

Family Child Care: In approved family day homes, providers may care for a maximum of six children including their own. Alberta's Family Day Home (FDH) Program is delivered under a contracted agency model and is referred to as approved family day homes. Child and Family Services regions contract with family day home agencies to coordinate and monitor the provision of child care in the private residence of each approved child care provider. Individual provider homes are approved by a contracted family day home agency that recruits, trains and monitors providers. Approved homes may display the logo of the Alberta Association for the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services. Approved family day homes may display Alberta's official family day home trademark – the smiling red door.

Unregulated Child Care

Unregulated care: People who offer child care out of their homes that have not been approved to operate under the provincial family day home category are considered private babysitters. These programs can offer private babysitting services for up to six children, not including their own.¹⁹

LOCAL SERVICE DELIVERY

School authorities include school jurisdictions, accredited funded private schools and private ECS operators. For funding purposes, a school jurisdiction refers to an Alberta school district, a school division, a regional division, a Francophone Regional Authority, a charter school, the Lloydminster Public School Division, or the Lloydminster Roman Catholic Separate School Division.²⁰

School authorities offer Early Childhood Services (ECS) programs, including kindergarten and programs for children as young as 2.5 years. Alberta Education has accredited 97 private operators to provide ECS services.

Regional Child and Family Services at the local level are responsible for licensing, monitoring and issuing enforcement actions for licensed child care programs.²¹

Alberta's Child Care Accreditation Program standards include outcomes for the community. Standard 5 requires that child care programs collaborate with community organizations and services to respond to the needs of children and families they serve, including 5.1 being responsive to the diverse needs of the children and families they serve; 5.2 establishing working relationships with organizations and services within the community; and, 5.3 having a clearly defined process for involving community stakeholders.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT/OVERSIGHT

Regional Child and Family Services at the local level work on behalf of the Ministry of Alberta Children's Services and in partnership with the communities served, to plan and deliver a range of services to children, youth and families.

2. FUNDING

Table 2.1 Alberta Provincial Allocations for Regulated Child Care to March 31, 2017²²

| | Actuals for Regulated Child Care (March 31, 2017) |
|--|---|
| Program planning and delivery | \$3,996,000 |
| Child care subsidies and supports ^a | \$201,090,000 |
| Child care accreditation | \$105,832,000 |
| Total regulated child care | \$310,918,000 |

a Includes funding for inclusive child care

Alberta Budget 2017 includes an increase of \$14 million for continued support for Early Learning Child Care Centre pilots and stable funding for the child care subsidy program.

Table 2.2 Alberta Education Funding for Early Childhood Services (ECS), Estimates as of March 31, 2017

| | Base Instruction and Other Operational Funding | Program Unit Funding (PUF) | Total Funding |
|--|--|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Early Childhood Services – public, separate, francophone and charter schools | \$293.4 million | \$187.7 million | \$481.1 million |
| Early Childhood Services – private schools | \$15.8 million | \$16.0 million | \$31.7 million |
| Private Early Childhood Services operators | \$41.4 million | \$63.7 million | \$105.2 million |
| Total ECS funding | \$350.6 million | \$267.4 million | \$618.0 million |

Information provided by the Budget and Fiscal Analysis Branch of Alberta Education.

Table 2.3 Alberta Funding Early Childhood Education/Child Care to March 31, 2017

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Early Childhood Services | \$618,000,000 |
| Regulated child care (licensed and approved) | \$310,918,000 |
| Other ECE spending ^a | \$21,300,000 |
| Total ECE funding | \$950,218,000 |
| Total provincial budget spending estimate ²³ | \$53,744,000,000 |
| ECE as a percentage of provincial budget | 1.8% |

a Parent Link Centres: <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/476d1e4b-bdfa-4330-a88a-79bdacee1a9a/resource/9cc24492-f3dd-4966-8238-c9277989f193/download/CS-AR-2016-17.pdf>

3. ACCESS

Table 3.1 Alberta Child Population 0–5 years (2016)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Child population 0–5 years | 333,253 |
| 0–1 year | 114,718 |
| 2–4 years | 164,561 |
| 5 years | 53,974 |
| Total population of Alberta ^a | 4,252,879 |
| Children 0–5 years as percentage of total population | 7.8% |

a Statistics Canada, Table O51-0001- Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, 2016, Canada, Provinces and Territories (Accessed: April 24, 2017).

Table 3.2 Alberta Labour Force Participation of Mothers by Age of Youngest Child (2016)

| | Number mothers in labour force by age of youngest child ^a | Labour force participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child ^b |
|---|--|--|
| 0–1 year | 60,000 | 61.4% |
| 2–4 years | 68,800 | 70.1% |
| 5 years | 19,500 | 75.9% |
| Total mothers in labour force with child 0–5 years | 149,100 | |
| Average labour force participation of mothers with youngest child 0–5 years | | 66.9% |

a Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation O517_29 Table 1.ivt

b Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation O717_O4 Table 1.ivt.

Table 3.3 Alberta ECS School Programs²⁴

| | |
|--|--------|
| Number of schools that provide Early Childhood Services ^a in francophone, public and separate school jurisdictions and private and charter school authorities (excluding ECS private operators) | 1,381 |
| Number of ECS programs provided by private operators ^b | 127 |
| Number of children enrolled in ECS (2016–2017 school year) | 65,911 |
| Approximate proportion of grade 1 students who participated in ECS programs in the prior year (2015–2016) | 98% |

a Early Childhood Services refers to all programs for eligible children aged 2.5–6 years.

b All ECS programs in Alberta are delivered by school jurisdictions (school boards) or by private schools or private ECS operators. Private schools and private ECS operators must register as not-for-profit under the *Societies Act*, or as a non-profit company under Part 9 of the *Companies Act*.

Table 3.4 Alberta Regulated (Licensed and Approved) Child Care Programs to March 31, 2017²⁵

| Spaces by age group | |
|--|----------------|
| Infants (0 to <19 months) | 7,160 |
| Preschool (full- and part-time) | 57,434 |
| School-aged | 40,451 |
| Family child care/homes and group/special programs | 11,669 |
| Total capacity regulated child care | 116,714 |
| Facilities by type | |
| Day care | 831 |
| Preschool | 687 |
| School age | 954 |
| Family day home | 68 |
| Group family child care program | 5 |
| Innovative child care programs | 22 |
| Child care programs by auspice ^a | |
| % of non profit programs | 43% |
| % for profit programs | 57% |

a March 2017: Alberta child care program operations by auspice

Table 3.5 Alberta Percentage of Children Attending ECE Programs by Age Group^a

| Child ages | Number of children ^b | Child care spaces ^c | Early Childhood Services (ECS) – including kindergarten enrolment ^d | Other ECE programs ^e | % children attending ECE program |
|------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 0-1 year | 114,718 | 7,160 | | | 6.2% |
| 2-4 years | 164,561 | 57,434 | 13,017 | 1,560 | 44% |
| 5 years | 53,974 | | 52,894 | | 98% |

a As of July 1, 2016. Statistics Canada. Note that age breakdowns in table do not exactly match age categories in ECS or in regulated child care age groups.

b Statistics Canada. Table O51-0001 - Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, Canada, provinces and territories, annual (persons unless otherwise noted). (Accessed: April 24, 2017).

c Represents spaces and not enrolment

d Enrolment 2016-2017 for kindergarten includes children starting at 4.5 years. Approximate proportion of grade 1 students who participated in ECS in the prior year.

e Estimated enrolment in 20 Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities²⁵ and 45 First Nations communities providing Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve.²⁶

AFFORDABILITY

Eligibility and amount of subsidy funding depend on the number of individuals in the household, the family's gross income, the age of the child attending child care and the type of care. Eligible families that earn less than \$50,000 annually have access to full subsidy.

The province's online estimator tool²⁷ considers income plus other earnings such as child care benefits, as well deductions (e.g., tuition and medical expenses).

| Table 3.6 Alberta Maximum Child Care Subsidy Rates for Eligible Families Living in All Alberta Regions, Except the Northeast Alberta CFSA Region ²⁸ | | |
|--|---|------------|
| Day Care/Out of School Care | | |
| Infant (1-18 months) | Toddler (19 months) to kindergarten | Grades 1-6 |
| \$628 | \$546 | \$310 |
| Family Day Home and Group Family Child Care | | |
| \$520 | \$437 | \$310 |
| Extended Hours Subsidy | up to an additional \$100 per month per child | |

Alberta also offers the following subsidy options:

- **Extended-Hours Subsidy** – Eligible parents who work or attend classes during evenings or weekends may access an extended-hours subsidy of up to an additional \$100 per month per child.
- **Stay-at-Home Parents Support** – Eligible families that have one parent who stays at home or works, volunteers or attends school less than 20 hours per week may qualify for a subsidy of up to \$1,200 per year to help pay fees for each preschool-aged child who attends a licensed preschool or an approved early childhood development program.
- **Kin Child Care Funding** – Eligible low- and middle-income families may access funding for child care by a non-custodial relative. Up to \$400 per month is provided for families with children under the age of 7 years and not yet attending grade 1, and up to \$200 is provided for school-age children (grades 1-6).

Alberta announced new investments in child care in November 2016. Twenty-two pilot Early Learning and Child Care Centres received funding to demonstrate the importance and viability of \$25-a-day child care in Alberta. This 3-year pilot has established almost 1,300 affordable quality child care spaces in the Early Learning and Child Care Centres.

INCLUSION

Standards for the Provision of Early Childhood Special Education outlines the standards for ECS and education programming and services for eligible children with special education needs.²⁹ The Funding Manual states that approved ECS operators must be prepared to accept and organize programming for all funded children for whom programming is requested, including children with special needs.

Alberta Education has an inclusive education policy, which states: “Alberta’s education system is built on a values-based approach to accepting responsibility for all children and students. Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all children and students. To support children and students in attaining the goals as stated in the Ministerial Order on Student Learning, school authorities must ensure that all children and students (Kindergarten to Grade 12), regardless of race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, or any other factor(s), have access to meaningful and relevant learning experiences that include appropriate instructional supports.”³⁰

Children with disabilities may receive support from the Inclusive Child Care Program in approved child care centres, family day homes and preschools. Support may include training for child care staff, consultation on programming on inclusion, resource and referral information, and/or funding for additional staff.³¹

Under Alberta’s pilot Early Learning and Child Care Centres, all twenty-two programs practice evidence-based inclusive child care for children with diverse needs. The centres provide supports for children with diverse needs and implement an early learning child care curriculum.

Alberta’s Child Care Accreditation Program standards include outcomes for the community. Standard 5 requires that child care programs collaborate with community organizations and services to respond to the needs of children and families they serve, including being responsive to the diverse needs of the children and families they serve. Some of the indicators to measure this include maintaining a collection of information on resources and services for children and families; and assisting families with the barriers to access community resources and services.

4. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

| Table 4.1 Alberta Curriculum Frameworks | |
|---|---|
| Program | Framework Document |
| Kindergarten | <p><i>Kindergarten Program Statement – 2008</i> Kindergarten activities are organized around seven learning areas³²</p> <p><i>Programme d’éducation de maternelle – français langue première</i>³³</p> <p><i>Programme d’éducation de maternelle – immersion</i>³⁴</p> |
| Child care | <p><i>Play, Participation, and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta</i> (2014). Focusing on a holistic view of children, this framework builds common language across diverse delivery settings around the importance of play in early learning, emergent curriculum planning and responsive care.³⁵</p> |

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Kindergarten class size: There are no restrictions on kindergarten class sizes. The provincial average class size for K-grade 3 in 2016–17 was 20.4 children.³⁶

Child care program size: There is no legislated size for child care centres.

Table 4.2 Alberta Group Size and Staff/Child Ratio in Licenced Child Care Centres

| Age | Staff: Child Ratio | Maximum Group Size |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Full day centre-based care | | |
| Infants to 12 months | 1:3 | 6 |
| 12–19 months | 1:4 | 8 |
| 19 months to less than 3 years | 1:6 | 12 |
| 3–4.5 years | 1:8 | 16 |
| 4.5 years and older | 1:10 | 20 |
| Adjusted ratios are permitted for mixed age groupings | | |
| Out-of-school care: part-day programs | | |
| Kindergarten-aged children | 1:10 | 20 |
| 6–12 years (school-aged) | 1:15 | 30 |
| Preschool | | |
| 19 months–3 years | 1:6 | |
| 3–5 years | 1:12 | |

Child Care Licensing Regulation³⁷

EDUCATORS

Table 4.3 Alberta Educator Qualifications

| Kindergarten Teachers | Early Childhood Educators ³⁸ |
|--|--|
| <p>All ECS Teachers must have a valid certificate^c from the Minister of Education, obtained through the Office of the Registrar. In order to obtain a Permanent Professional Certificate, teachers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a Bachelor of Education, including a minimum of 10 weeks of supervised student teaching | <p>Child development supervisors: completion of a two-year early learning and child care diploma program offered by an Alberta public college OR an equivalent level of training.</p> <p>Child development workers: completion of a one-year Early Learning and Child Care certificate program offered by an Alberta public college or university, or an equivalent level of training.^a</p> |

continued on next page

Table 4.3 Alberta Educator Qualifications

| Kindergarten Teachers | Early Childhood Educators ³⁸ |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete two years of successful teaching • Receive two formal evaluations based on the knowledge, skills and attributes for permanent certification outlined in the Teaching Quality Standard • Receive a recommendation to the Registrar for permanent certification from a Designated Signing Authority.³⁹ | Child development assistants: completion of the Child Care Orientation Course ^c (Alberta government sponsored course) OR a 45-hour (3 credit) college/university-level course related to child development) OR completed the Step Ahead Family Day Home Training or Family Child Care Training Program through an approved Alberta Family Day Home Agency registered with the Alberta Family Child Care association. |

a An online optional Early Childhood Education Certificate is offer by faculties of education to professionals who already have a degree in a variety of fields related

b Alberta Child Care Staff Certification Guide.⁴⁰

c Orientation Course for Child Care Staff.⁴¹

Table 4.4 Alberta Professional Recognition and Development

| | Qualified Teachers | Qualified ECEs |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Professional Requirements | The Office of the Registrar is responsible for the certification of teachers as legislated in the Certification of Teachers Regulation. ⁴² | The Alberta Child Care Staff Certification Office certifies staff working in licensed child care, preschool, out-of-school care and approved family day home and group family child care programs. ⁴³ |
| Professional Development | Teachers are required to develop a Professional Growth Plan on an annual basis. ⁴⁴ | Not required. |

Table 4.5 Alberta Density of Qualified Staff in Child Care Centres⁴⁵

1 in 4 staff working with children must be certified as a child development worker (1-year certificate).

Table 4.6 Alberta Teacher and ECE Average Annual Salaries (2016)

| Teachers ^a | Early Childhood Educators ^b | ECE Salary as % of Teacher Salary |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| \$79,726 | \$37,856 | 47% |

a Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation O517_31 Table 1.ivt. Amount consistent with a review of salaries at year 5, level 5 in 2016.⁴⁶

b Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation O517_31 Table 1.ivt. Full time with postsecondary training, 2016.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Progress Reports: *Children's Services Annual Report 2016-2017*⁴⁷

Program Standards: Licensed child care programs are all subject to regulations, including monitoring and inspection visits intended to ensure programs adhere to the Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation. Licensed child care programs will generally receive a minimum of two licensing inspections during a 12-month period. Approved family day home programs are subject to Alberta's Family Day Home Standards on screening, training, monitoring and delivery. Licensed child care programs are required to post their inspection reports in a prominent and visible place on the program premises. Contracted family day home agencies are required to provide information to parents on the compliance history of individual providers. Parents in Alberta also have access to an online tool that provides information about child care programs and services, including recent inspection results and accreditation status of the program.

Regulated and Approved Child Care: Alberta's provincial child care accreditation program⁴⁸ promotes excellence in child care settings and helps families choose the best care for their children. It is based on standards of excellence that reflect current research and leading practices to provide high quality child care over and above licensing regulations for children from birth to 12 years of age. Accreditation is available to all licensed day care centres and out-of-school care programs, as well as approved family day home agencies in Alberta. Participation in accreditation is voluntary. On March 31, 2017, approximately 97 per cent of day care programs and family day home agencies, and approximately 88 per cent of out-of-school care programs were participating in the accreditation program.

Accreditation funding is paid to eligible licensed day care and out-of-school care programs, and contracted family day home agencies. Programs are responsible for transferring funding to the staff in accordance with the Alberta Employment Standards and policies set out in Alberta's Accreditation funding guides.⁴⁹ Accreditation criteria include a commitment to meet accreditation standards at all times; continued work on quality improvement according to strategies set in Quality Enhancement Plans (QEP); annual reviews through submission of evidence to the accrediting body; and unannounced status verification visits. Types of Accreditation funding include: Staff/Provider Support Funding, Benefit Contribution Grant, Professional Development Grant, and the Staff Attraction Incentive.⁵⁰

Early Childhood Services: The Program and System Support Division of Alberta Education conducts reviews and monitors school authorities, including private ECS operators, to provide strategic advice that will advance the success of children and students in safe and caring schools. *The Early Childhood Services Regulation*⁵¹ specifies requirements for the operation of ECS programs, including safety standards, programs and policies. Program Planning requirements and key information for the operation and delivery of ECS programs, including kindergarten, are specified within the *Guide to Education*. Alberta's provincial *Programs of Study* outlines requirements for programs and courses applicable to kindergarten, and also includes learning outcomes.

Population Monitoring: The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a questionnaire completed by teachers regarding individual children. The data from the questionnaires are analyzed and reported at a population level. Alberta completed the province-wide collection of EDI data in February/March 2016. A second province-wide collection is planned for 2019. Parents may choose whether or not their child is included in the EDI data collection. The *Alberta EDI 2015/2016 Summary Report* summarizes the 2016 data collection for Alberta kindergarten children.⁵²

ENDNOTES

1. Alberta Education. *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12 2016–2017*. Retrieved from https://education.alberta.ca/media/3272731/guide_to_ed_2016.pdf
2. Alberta Learning (2002). *The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*. Retrieved from <https://education.alberta.ca/media/385021/first-nations-m%C3%A9tis-and-inuit-policy-framework-2002.pdf>
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