

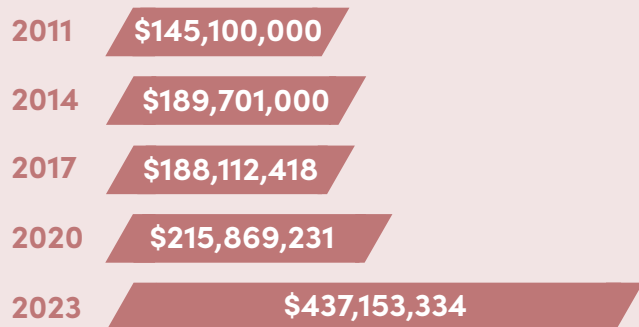
Early Childhood Education Report



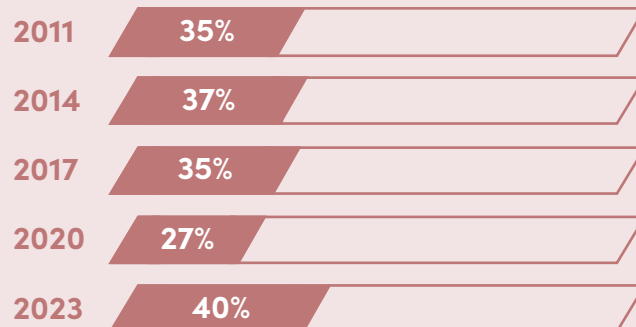
SASKATCHEWAN

Profile 2023

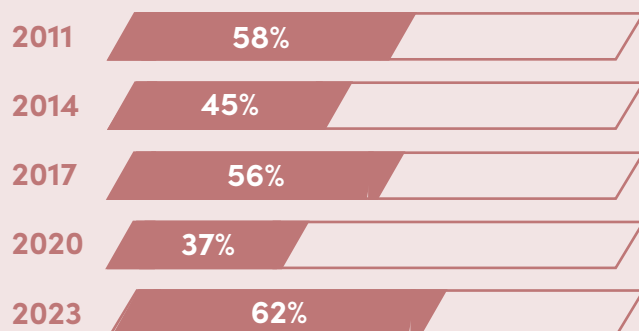
CHANGE IN ECEC SPENDING



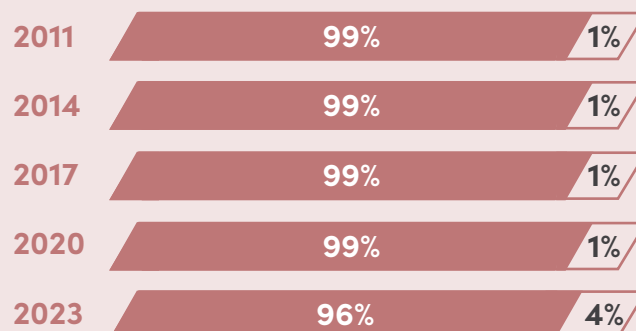
ECEC CAPACITY TO PERCENTAGE OF 2- TO 4-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN



ECE WAGES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TEACHER WAGES



PERCENTAGE OF ECE FACILITIES (NON-PROFIT/PROFIT)





Early Childhood
Education Report



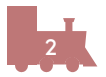
ABOUT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REPORT BENCHMARKS

The Early Childhood Education Report (ECER) is produced by the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto and the Abilio – Childhood Knowledge Dissemination Centre, formerly the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development, at the Université Laval and Université de Montréal. Twenty-one benchmarks are organized into five equally weighted categories, totalling a score of 15. The benchmarks evaluate governance structures, funding levels, access, quality in early learning environments, and the rigour of accountability mechanisms. Results are populated from detailed provincial and territorial profiles developed by the researchers and reviewed by provincial and territorial officials. For the federal overview, a detailed look at the benchmarks, the full methodology, and all provincial and territorial profiles, please visit [ECEReport.ca](https://ecereport.ca).

Please cite this publication as:

Akbari, E., McCuaig, K., & Mehta, S. (2024). *The Early Childhood Education Report 2023*. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto.





NEW DEVELOPMENTS

This Saskatchewan profile captures early learning and child care initiatives to March 31, 2023. The New Developments section highlights activities occurring after this date.

The 2023–24 budget provides \$382.4 million for early learning and child care, an increase of \$72.1 million over the previous year. This funding reduces child care fees for families with children up to 6 years of age to \$10 per day as of April 1, 2023. It will also be used to further increase the number of regulated home-based and centre-based child care spaces, as part of the ongoing goal of ensuring families have access to regulated child care.¹

Starting October 1, 2023, wages for early childhood educators (ECEs) increased by 8 per cent as part of the \$7 million investment through the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement for the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement Grant. ECE Level I received an additional \$1.50 per hour, Level II ECEs received \$2.00 per hour, and ECE Level III received \$2.50 per hour. Certified assistants working in group family child care now receive wage supplements of up to \$7.50 per hour, bringing them in line with assistants in group child care.²

CANADA–SASKATCHEWAN CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE AGREEMENTS (CWELCC)^{3,4,5}

The Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan signed two agreements on August 13, 2021: the Canada–Saskatchewan Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) and an extension to the Canada–Saskatchewan Bilateral Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

The CWELCC Agreement provides \$1.1 billion in federal funding between 2021 and 2026 to reduce child care fees for families to an average of \$10 per day and add 28,000 regulated spaces for children age 6 and younger.

The Canada–Saskatchewan Bilateral Early Learning and Child Care Agreement extension from 2021 to 2025 allocates \$68.5 million over four years with a focus on accessibility, inclusivity, and quality in early learning and child care, including francophone spaces. Between 2021 and 2022, additional funding of \$17.2 million was provided to enhance professional learning for the workforce and expand the number of qualified educators.



GOVERNANCE

TABLE 1.1 SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Lead Ministry/Department	Ministry of Education ^a
Related Ministry/Department	Ministry of Social Services ^b
ECE Supervisory Unit	The Early Years Branch, Ministry of Education ^c
Policy Framework	<i>A Strong Start for Children</i> ^d <i>Canada – Saskatchewan Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Action Plan 2022–2023</i> ^e <i>Early Learning and Child Care Action Plan</i> ^f
Legislation	<i>The Child Care Act, 2014</i> ^g <i>The Child Care Regulations, 2015</i> (last amended 2021) ^h <i>The Education Act, 1995</i> (last amended 2022) ⁱ
Related Legislation	n/a
Local Service Delivery	Prekindergarten and Kindergarten: 27 school divisions including Conseil des écoles fransaskoises ^j Child Care: 11 regional offices of the Early Learning and Child Care Program ^k KidsFirst: 9 targeted communities plus 12 northern communities ^l KidsFirst Regional: 10 southern regions ^m Early Childhood Intervention Program: 14 regions, 12 community-based organizations, and 2 school divisions ⁿ
Community/Sector Oversight	n/a

^a Government of Saskatchewan. *Education*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/government-structure/ministries/education>

^b Government of Saskatchewan. *Social Services*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/government-structure/ministries/social-services>

^c Government of Saskatchewan. *How Childcare Works in Saskatchewan*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/child-care/how-child-care-works>

^d Government of Saskatchewan. *A Strong Start for Children*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/saskatchewan-health-initiatives/saskatchewans-children-and-youth-strategy/a-strong-start-for-children>

^e Government of Canada. *Canada – Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement 2021 to 2015*. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/early-learning-child-care-agreement/agreements-provinces-territories/saskatchewan-2021.html>

^f Government of Canada. *Canada – Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement 2021 to 2015*. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/early-learning-child-care-agreement/agreements-provinces-territories/saskatchewan-2021.html>

^g Government of Saskatchewan. *The Child Care Act, 2014*. Retrieved from: <http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/freelaw/documents/english/Statutes/Statutes/C7-31.pdf>

^h Government of Saskatchewan. *The Child Care Regulations, 2015*. Retrieved from: <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/freelaw/documents/English/Regulations/Regulations/C7-31R1.pdf>

ⁱ Government of Saskatchewan. *The Education Act, 1995*. Retrieved from: <https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/614/E0-2.pdf>

^j Government of Saskatchewan. *K-12 School Divisions in Saskatchewan*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/education-and-learning/prek-12-education-early-learning-and-schools/k-12-school-divisions-in-saskatchewan>

^k Government of Saskatchewan. *How Child Care Works in Saskatchewan*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/child-care/how-child-care-works>

^l Government of Saskatchewan. *Community Programs for Families with Young Children*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/community-programs-for-new-families-in-canada>

^m Government of Saskatchewan. *Community Programs for Families with Young Children*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/community-programs-for-new-families-in-canada>

ⁿ Government of Saskatchewan. *Early Childhood Intervention Program*. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/child-care/early-childhood-intervention-program>



DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

The Ministry of Education, Early Years Branch oversees programming for children from birth up to and including age 8. The branch is responsible for supporting early learning and child care by licensing and monitoring child care programs; managing community-based programs (i.e., KidsFirst, Early Childhood Intervention Program, Child Nutrition Program, and Family Resource Centres); managing the Prekindergarten program; and supporting the Kindergarten program.⁶

The Ministry of Social Services is responsible for administering the Child Care Subsidy program for eligible families with children enrolled in regulated child care.⁷

POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan signed a series of agreements between 2017 and 2023. These agreements have guided the development of access to affordable, inclusive, and quality early learning and child care services.^{8,9}

Policy development is also influenced by *A Strong Start for Children*, Saskatchewan's Children and Youth Strategy. This strategy adopts a cross ministry, community, and collaborative approach to setting and achieving goals for the province's children.¹⁰

SERVICE DESIGN

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

KINDERGARTEN: Kindergarten is offered in all schools. Although not compulsory, most children attend Kindergarten in the year they turn 5 years of age. School divisions are responsible for delivery and oversight of the program. Kindergarten is either half-day, five days a week (especially in urban school divisions), or full-day, two days, or the option of three days per week (common in rural school divisions).¹¹

PREKINDERGARTEN: Prekindergarten is available in 316 schools as a half-day, targeted early education program for 3- and 4-year-old children living in vulnerable environments. Children are

enrolled in the government-funded program based on the Ministry of Education's selection criteria. A qualified teacher and assistant provide programming for 16 children for a minimum of 12 hours per week during the school year. No parent fee is charged.^{12,13}

REGULATED CHILD CARE

CHILD CARE CENTRES: The Ministry of Education, Early Years Branch licenses group programs for children from the age of 6 weeks up to and including age 12 years for a maximum of 90 children per centre. In 2021, The Child Care Licensing System adopted the Differential Monitoring System for a more efficient and risk-based approach to licensing and monitoring regulated child care spaces.^{14,15}

TEEN STUDENT SUPPORT CENTRES (TSSC):

These programs receive funding from the Ministry of Education to cover child care fees for the children of teen parents. Licensed child care is provided for more than five continuous hours a day, three or more days per week, predominately for the infants and toddlers of teen parents attending a high school or a high school equivalency program.¹⁶

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES: There are three types of licensed family child care homes:

- **Family child care:** Homes are operated by one provider caring for up to eight children, including the provider's own children up to and including the age of 12 years. Numbers vary depending on the ages of the children. Licensing is optional.^{17,18}
- **Group family child care:** Homes are operated by a provider and an assistant for a maximum of 12 children up to and including the age of 12 years, including the provider's and assistant's own children. Numbers vary depending on the ages of the children. Licensing from the Ministry of Education is required.^{19,20}
- **Teen student support family child care:** Homes are operated for up to six children, including the provider's own children up to the age of 10 years. Numbers vary depending on the ages of the children.^{21,22}



UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Several services are exempt from the *Child Care Act, 2014* and *Child Care Regulations, 2015*. These include:^{23,24}

UNLICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES:

Although not regulated by the Ministry of Education, family child care homes must follow the same rules governing the numbers and ages of children as licensed homes. A caregiver may care for a maximum of eight children, including the provider's own children up to the age of 12 years.²⁵

PRESCHOOL: Preschool programs operating for not more than three hours per day do not require a licence.

BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS:

These programs are usually provided by non-profit organizations, operate on school premises, and serve school-age and Kindergarten children. Prekindergarten programs are operated by school boards.

The Government of Saskatchewan does not license child care programs for Indigenous children.²⁶

CHILD/FAMILY SERVICES

EARLY YEARS FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRES

(FRCS): Free programming is offered to families with children up to and including the age of 6 years. Services are provided under one hub and include drop-in services, information resources, parenting support, early literacy opportunities, access to visiting professionals, and referrals. In March 2023, six new Early Years Resource Centres were developed, and programming began in the fall of 2023. There are now a total of 21 operational Early Years Family Resource Centres across 19 targeted communities in the province.^{27,28,29}

KIDSFIRST TARGETED PROGRAM: This voluntary program focuses on holistic development and supporting positive learning experiences for children from birth up to and including the age of 3 years who are living in vulnerable circumstances

off-reserve. The program is offered at 13 regional sites. Various services are provided for families using an interdisciplinary team model that includes professionals (e.g., mental health and addictions staff) and paraprofessionals (e.g., home visitors). The program provides connections to child care, early learning, and other community supports to help eligible parents deal with issues affecting them.³⁰

KIDSFIRST REGIONAL PROGRAM: Programming is provided across nine regions serving 343 communities. It includes tools, events, and resources for families with children from birth up to and including the age of 5 years in 10 smaller urban and rural communities. Early childhood community developers collaborate with public health, Early Childhood Intervention Programs (ECIPs), family resource centres (FRCs), and libraries in small urban and rural communities to deliver events and activities for families. Community stakeholders and partners provide group programming opportunities to support early childhood development.³¹

The program is mobile and travels to communities offering pop-up preschool events, take-home literacy kits, and story walks.³²

LOCAL SERVICE DELIVERY

The Ministry of Education and the local school boards oversee 27 school divisions that support Kindergarten, Prekindergarten, petite enfance, and maternelle programs. There are 18 public school divisions, eight separate school divisions, and one francophone school division.³³

Eleven regional offices of the Early Learning and Child Care Service Delivery Unit monitor, license, and consult with regulated child care programs.³⁴

COMMUNITY/SECTOR OVERSIGHT

n/a.



FUNDING

TABLE 2.1 SASKATCHEWAN EXPENDITURES FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE TO MARCH 31, 2023

Capital funding	
Capital for centre-based child care spaces ^a	n/a
Operating funding	
Child care parent fee subsidies ^b	\$5,780,000
Operating funding and fee reduction ^c	\$314,129,000
Total regulated child care funding^d	\$319,909,000

^a Personal Communication. Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. Early Years Branch. December 4, 2023. Capital grants of \$10,000 per space available to centres to expand capacity. Amounts included in operating funding.

^b Government of Saskatchewan. *Estimates For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2023*, p 116. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/120493/formats/139368/download>

^c Government of Saskatchewan. *Estimates For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2023*, p. 39. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/120493/formats/139368/download>

^d Expenditures include federal funding through the Canada – Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

Centre- and home-based regulated child care programs are eligible for several grants to help them comply with licensing requirements and enrich the learning environment with equipment, resources, and healthy foods. In addition, grants are available to support inclusion, to enhance educator wages,³⁵ and for educator training and professional development.^{36,37}

The Governments of Saskatchewan and Canada are investing \$28.9 million to develop up to 2,197 new child care spaces in regulated child care centres across the province.³⁸

TABLE 2.2 SASKATCHEWAN EXPENDITURES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION/CHILD CARE TO MARCH 31, 2023

Prekindergarten ^a	\$25,934,752
Kindergarten ^b	\$69,472,582
Regulated child care ^c	\$319,909,000
Total ECEC spending	\$415,317,334
Total provincial budget spending estimate ^d	\$17,620,500,000
ECEC as a % of provincial budget	2.4%

^a Per pupil funding of \$10,259, is based on 2022/23 estimates (less capital) \$1.95B divided by 2022/23 × 5,056/2. *2022–23 Funding Manual: Prekindergarten to Grade 12 Funding Distribution Model December 2022*, p. 33. Retrieved from: https://www.google.com/url?sa=f&rc=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwi4xM3u3Jr_AhUNecAKHYNHUEQFnoECCoQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fpubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net%2Fpubsask-prod%2F116307%2F2022-23%25252BFunding%25252BManual%25252BDecember%25252B2022%25252B-%25252BEnglish%25252BVersion.pdf&usq=AOvVaw32OhFQ8k0UDXINO6VYxu6j

^b Estimate based on Kindergarten enrolment of 13,544 × \$10,259/2. Kindergarten is 0.5 FTE. Per pupil funding of \$10,259 is based on 2022/23 estimates (less capital) \$1.95B divided by 2022/23 school enrolment of 189,924 students. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/120493/formats/139368/download>. *Budget 2023 increases funding to school boards by \$49.4B*

^c From Table 2.1.

^d Projected spending to March 31, 2023. *2023–24 Budget Highlights*. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/120489/formats/139364/download>

Saskatchewan’s Funding Manual outlines the Prekindergarten to Grade 12 funding distribution model.³⁹



ACCESS

TABLE 3.1 SASKATCHEWAN CHILD POPULATION 0 TO <6 YEARS (2022)

Child population 0 to <6 years	87,574
0 to <24 months	27,944
24 months to <5 years	44,007
5 years	15,623
Total population of Saskatchewan	1,194,803
Children 0 to <6 years as % of total population	7.3%

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0005-01. Population estimates on July 1, 2022, by age and sex (accessed January 10, 2023).

TABLE 3.2 SASKATCHEWAN LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF MOTHERS BY AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD (2022)

	Number of mothers in labour force by age of youngest child	Labour force participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child
0 to <24 months	16,900	74.1%
24 months to <5 years	17,300	77.9%
5 years	5,200	73.2%
Total mothers in labour force with child 0 to <6 years	39,400	
Average labour force participation of mothers with youngest child 0 to <6 years		75.6%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey. 0620_13 Table 3—Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates of mothers by age of youngest child, Canada, provinces, territories, annual average, 2016 to 2022 (persons × 1,000).

TABLE 3.3 SASKATCHEWAN ECE SCHOOL PROGRAMS (2022–23)

Children attending Prekindergarten ^a	5,056
3- to 4-year-old child population ^b	29,780
% of 3- to 4-year-olds attending Prekindergarten	17%
Children attending Kindergarten ^c	13,544
5-year-old child population ^b	15,623
% of 5-year-olds attending Kindergarten	87%

^a Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *Ministry of Education's 2021-22 Annual Report*, p. 22. Retrieved from: <https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/136216/2021-22EducationAnnualReport.pdf>

^b Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0005-01. Population estimates on July 1, 2022, by age and sex (accessed January 10, 2023).

^c Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *2022–23 Provincial Enrolment Statistics*. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/83292/formats/95843/download>

Kindergarten enrolment as of September 30, 2022. Student count is based on head count, not full-time equivalent. Numbers do not include children enrolled at First Nations schools or other independent schools as the province does not collect this information.

TABLE 3.4 SASKATCHEWAN REGULATED CHILD CARE TO MARCH 31, 2023

Spaces by age group in centre-based programs

Infants and toddlers (6 weeks to <30 months)	5,807
Preschool-age (30 months to <6 years)	9,399
School-age (Grade 1 to <13 years)	1,620
Total spaces centre-based programs^a	16,826
Family child care/home and group	3,481
Total capacity regulated child care	20,307

Facilities by type^b

Centre-based programs ^b	378
Family child care providers	346

Facilities by auspice^c

Only non-profit child care is funded

^a Includes flexible spaces. A flexible space may be occupied by a toddler, preschooler, or school-age child.

^b The Saskatchewan government does not license First Nations child care programs. Health Canada. *First Nations Head Start Standards Guide*. Retrieved from: <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1582215017700/1582215088300>

^c Centres are overwhelmingly operated by non-profit boards of directors but include a small number of publicly-operated, First Nations and for-profit programs. For-profit programs receive no public funding, with the exception of grants for professional development.

Start-up grants are available to support regulated child care facilities to increase capacity.

By March 31, 2023, an additional 2,677 new child care spaces were added in centre- and home-based facilities.⁴⁰

TABLE 3.5 SASKATCHEWAN ECE CAPACITY TO PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN BY AGE GROUP TO MARCH 31, 2023

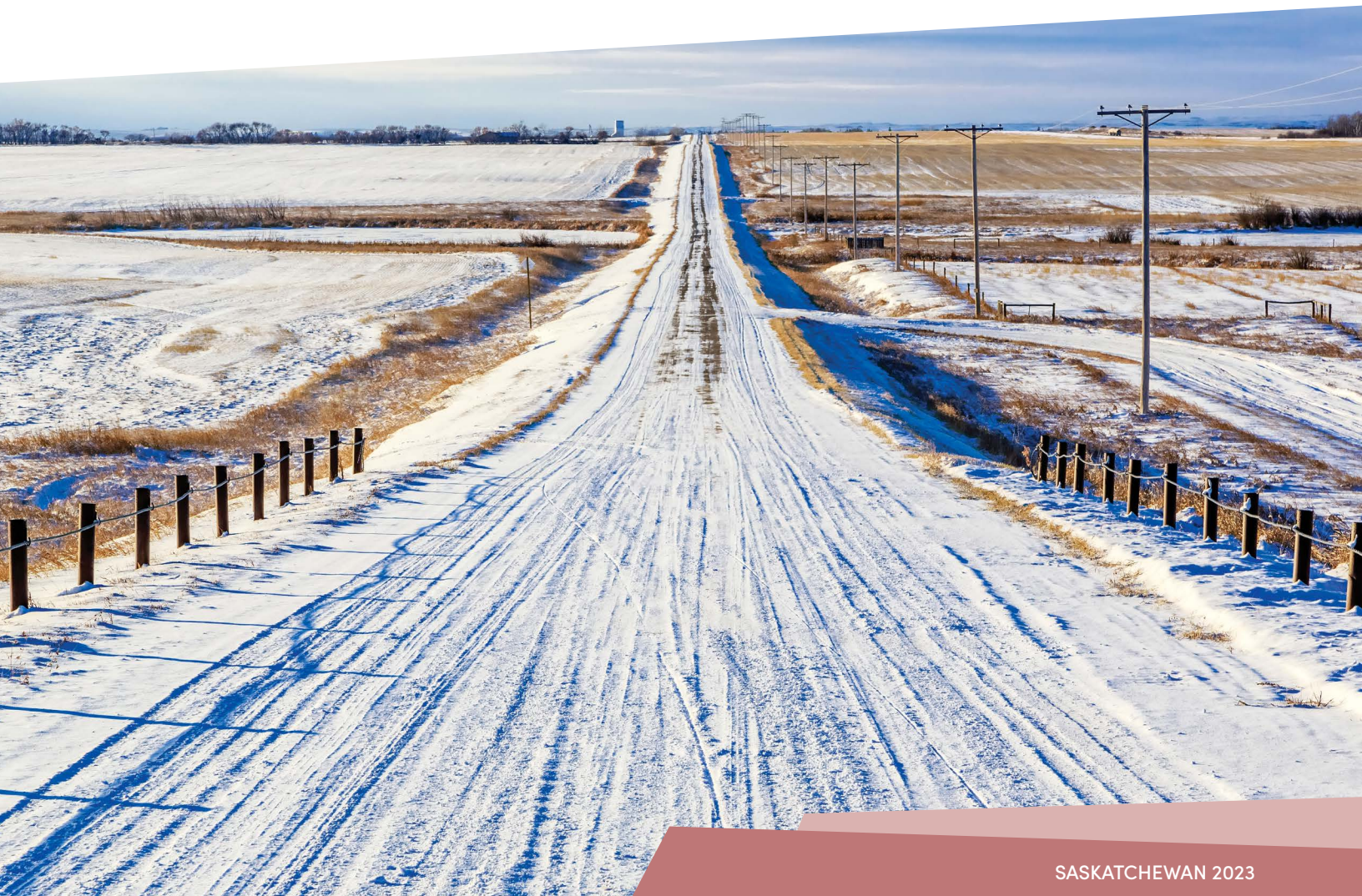
Child Ages	Number of Children ^a	Child care/ preschool ^b	School-based Kindergarten/ Prekindergarten enrolment ^c	Other ECE Programs ^d	Capacity to % of children
0 to <24 months	27,944	4,646			16%
24 months to <5 years	44,007	9,056	5,056	3,376	40%
5 years	15,623		13,544		87%

^a Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0005-01. Population estimates on July 1, 2022, by age and sex (accessed January 10, 2023).

^b From Table 3.4. Infant/toddler spaces: one-fifth (1,161) were deducted from the 5,807 total of spaces to account for the unmatched age groups. This amount (1,161) was added to the 24 months to <5 years age group. Five year olds were deducted from this group. The province does not license private preschool. They are not included in this count.

^c To avoid double counting, 5-year-old children attending child care are assumed to also be attending Kindergarten. The portion of Prekindergarten attendees was deducted from the 24 months to <5 years age group. Kindergarten enrolment figures include associate schools but do not reflect children enrolled at First Nations schools or other independent schools as information for those schools is not reported to the Ministry of Education.

^d Personal communication. Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. Early Years Branch. July 14, 2023.



AFFORDABILITY

Under the Canada–Saskatchewan Canada–Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement, regulated child care providers receive a Parent Affordability Grant that lowers parent fees for children under the age of 6 years to \$10 per day starting in April 2023.⁴¹

Fee subsidies are also available for low-income families. The amount of the subsidy is based on a calculation that considers gross income, family size, the child's age, the location of the child care facility, and the actual fee charged.

Families with one child may qualify if they have a gross monthly income below \$1,640. The threshold increases by \$100 for each additional child. Maximum subsidy rates do not exceed 90% of the fee charged. Parents must be engaged in work or study or have a medical or social need to qualify. Parents using for-profit programs are ineligible for fee subsidies or reduced rates.

Child care programs set their own rates. Parental fees can range widely depending on the community.⁴²

INCLUSION

The Child Care Inclusion Program offers funding to centres and licensed homes that provide child care for children with diverse needs requiring individualized attention.⁴³ Equipment grants for up to \$600 a year (\$1,200 a year in exceptional cases) are available for centres, while \$300 is available for home child care.

The Enhanced Accessibility Grant is available to regulated facilities (up to \$2,000 per month) for additional staff. The grant has supported 390 children to date over the course of the agreement. To be eligible for additional supports, a child must be referred by a professional. Programs must renew inclusion grants each year.^{44,45}

The Early Learning Intensive Support (ELIS) Program is for 3- and 4-year-old children attending Prekindergarten with significant, enduring disabilities and developmental delays. Programs can hire an educational assistant to incorporate two additional students in the classroom. The ELIS Program received additional funding through the CWELCC Agreement to support an additional 150 preschool-age children for the 2022–23 school year, for a total of 393 preschool children.^{46,47}

The Children Communicating, Connecting and in Community Pilot provides children who are deaf and hard of hearing with support through trained staff and appropriate technology. The programs operate in two sites, one in Regina and another in Saskatoon, with a total of 32 children in attendance.^{48,49}

Early Childhood Intervention Programs (ECIPs) are voluntary, early intervention programs that provide support for families with children from birth up to 6 years of age who are either at-risk for or have been diagnosed with developmental delays or disabilities. Programming may be delivered in the child's home or a community-based program. Families are also connected to additional services and resources within the community.^{50,51,52}



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

TABLE 4.1 SASKATCHEWAN CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

Program	Framework Document
Kindergarten	<p><i>2010 Saskatchewan Curriculum: Kindergarten</i>^a</p> <p>A number of additional tools are also available, including <i>Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten (2009)</i>^b</p> <p><i>Maternelle programme francaskois</i>^c and <i>Maternelle immersion française</i>^d are the provincial curricula for Fransaskois and French immersion Kindergarten programs.</p>
Prekindergarten	<p><i>Prekindergarten Essentials (2017)</i>^e replaces <i>Better Beginning, Better Futures</i>. It contains practices, policies, and guidelines for Prekindergarten programs.</p> <p><i>Family Engagement in Prekindergarten: A Resource Guide for Prekindergarten Teachers and Associates (2012)</i>^f supports programs in creating respectful, reciprocal relationships with families.</p>
Child care	<p><i>Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide (2008)</i>^g promotes play-based learning experiences for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children in a variety of settings, including the home, child care, Prekindergarten, preschool, and other early childhood settings.</p> <p><i>Essential Learning Experiences (2015)</i>^h, a supporting document to <i>Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide (2013)</i>, provides further information regarding the domains of holistic learning for preschool-age children.</p>
Child care (francophone)	<p><i>Jouer et explorer, Guide du programme d'apprentissage, Pour la petite enfance (Septembre 2008)</i>ⁱ.</p>
Child care/infants and toddlers	<p><i>Play and Exploration for Infants and Toddlers. A Companion Booklet to Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide (Fall 2010)</i>^j.</p>

^a Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *2010 Saskatchewan Curriculum, Kindergarten*. Retrieved from: https://www.edonline.sk.ca/bbcswebdav/library/curricula/English/Kindergarten_K_2010.pdf

^b Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten*. Retrieved from: https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/40196/40196-Children_First_K_2009.pdf

^c Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *Maternelle Éducation francaskois, 2010 Programme d'études de la Saskatchewan*. Retrieved from: https://www.edonline.sk.ca/bbcswebdav/library/curricula/Francais/Francais/Maternelle_2010_FRAN.pdf

^d Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *Programme d'études, Maternelle en immersion*. Retrieved from: https://www.k12.gov.sk.ca/docs/francais/maternelle/matcguide/pdf/mat_cgguide.pdf

^e Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *2017 Prekindergarten Essentials: Effective Practices, Policies, and Guidelines*. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/88213/formats/104897/download>

^f Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *Family Engagement in Prekindergarten: A Resource Guide for Prekindergarten Teachers and Associates*. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/74055/formats/82935/download>

^g Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide*. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/74066/formats/82946/download>

^h Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *Essential Learning Experiences*. Retrieved from: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/79287/formats/89611/download>

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WORK ENVIRONMENT

TABLE 4.2 SASKATCHEWAN GROUP SIZE AND STAFF/CHILD RATIO IN REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES^{a, b}

CHILD CARE CENTRES		
Age	Staff:Child Ratios	Maximum Group Size
6 weeks to <18 months	1:3	6
18 to <30 months	1:5	10
30 months to <6 years, including Kindergarten	1:10	20
6 to <13 years	1:15	30

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES		
Family child care homes	1:8 including provider's own children ≤12 years old	8
Group family child care homes	2:12 including provider's/assistant's own children ≤12 years old	12
Teen student support family child care homes	1:6 including provider's own children <10 years old	6

^a Government of Saskatchewan. *The Child Care Regulations, 2015*. Retrieved from: <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/freelaw/documents/English/Regulations/Regulations/C7-31R1.pdf>

^b Ratios are the same for First Nation child care programs.



KINDERGARTEN CLASS SIZE: There is no maximum class size for Kindergarten. Prekindergarten classes are capped at 16. Two additional children may be included in Prekindergarten classes with the support of an educational assistant.

CHILD CARE PROGRAM SIZE: Regulated child care centres and First Nation child care centres may have a maximum of 90 spaces. The maximum number of infant spaces per centre is 12.⁵³

EDUCATORS

TABLE 4.3 SASKATCHEWAN EDUCATOR QUALIFICATIONS

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Teachers	A Bachelor of Education degree or equivalent is required, including 48 semester hours of professional education and a practicum. ^a Prekindergarten teachers require early childhood education certification
Early Childhood Educators	ECE Certification Levels: ^b ECE Level I —Completion of an ECE certification from an approved, accredited post-secondary institution, or completion of 9 credit units (three courses) directly related to early childhood development and programming, or 120 hours of introductory ECE training. ECE Level II —Completion of a 1-year ECE certificate or the first year of a 2-year diploma in early childhood education from an approved, accredited post-secondary institution or an equivalent combination of post-secondary coursework (39 credits). ECE Level III —Completion of a 2-year ECE diploma from an approved, accredited post-secondary institution or an equivalent combination of post-secondary coursework (81 credits). First Nations Child Care Centre Staff —Must be over 16 years of age and have completed a child care worker course within 6 months of commencing employment. At least 1 staff must have First Aid certification. ^c

^a Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board. *Certification*. Retrieved from: http://www.sptrb.ca/web/SPTRB/Certification_and_Registration/Certification/SPTRB/Certification_and_Registration/Certification.aspx?hkey=6b376901-39b5-42db-8a5f-17ca75158320

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To support ECE recruitment, in 2022 the province partnered with Collège Mathieu, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, and Saskatchewan Polytechnic to provide early childhood education training at no charge.⁵⁴

TABLE 4.4 SASKATCHEWAN PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION AND DEVELOPMENT

	Teachers	Early Childhood Educators
Professional Recognition	The Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board is responsible for teacher certification. Annual registration is required to teach in Saskatchewan's publicly funded PreK–12 education system. ^a	Educator Services, Ministry of Education assesses all applicants and provides ministry certification for ECE levels I, II, and III. ^b
Professional Development	Professional development is integrated into the school year by school districts.	Not required.

^a Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board. *Certification*. Retrieved from: http://www.sptrb.ca/web/SPTRB/Certification_and_Registration/Certification/SPTRB/Certification_and_Registration/Certification.aspx?hkey=6b376901-39b5-42db-8a5f-17ca75158320

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TABLE 4.5 SASKATCHEWAN DENSITY OF QUALIFIED STAFF IN CHILD CARE CENTRES

ECE Level I ^{a,b}	Minimum for all staff
ECE Level II ^a	30% of staff
ECE Level III ^{a,c}	20% of staff, including director and supervisors

^a Government of Saskatchewan. *The Child Care Regulations, 2015*. Retrieved from: <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/freelaw/documents/English/Regulations/Regulations/C7-31R1.pdf>. One in two staff require a minimum of a one-year program in early childhood studies.

^b Applies to child care centre staff working with children for 65 hours/month or more. Individuals who work fewer than 65 hours/month are not required to have ECE certification.

^c Directors of child care centres require an ECE Level III.

Centres, with ministry permission, may hire staff without the appropriate training providing a training plan is in place.⁵⁵

TABLE 4.6 SASKATCHEWAN ECE ANNUAL WAGES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TEACHER WAGES (2023)

Teachers	Early Childhood Educators	ECE Wage as a Percentage of Teacher Wage
\$74,611 ^a	\$46,176 ^b	62%

^a Salary at Step 5, Class V. The annual rate of basic salary of full-time teachers for the period September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023. *Teacher Salaries*. Retrieved from: <https://www.stf.sk.ca/teaching-saskatchewan/collective-bargaining/teachers-salaries/>

^b Calculation based on median provincial wage of \$22.20 as of November 2022, for educators working full year at 40 hours per week. Includes reported wages as of November 2022, plus government wage increase of \$2 an hour announced in 2023. Government of Canada. *Early Childhood Educator (ECE) in Saskatchewan*. Retrieved from: <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/5189/SK;jsessionid=37DF3BEFAB2C91E595F9754B73E3AC65.jobsearch74>; Government of Saskatchewan. Ministry of Education. *Ministry of Education 2021–22 Annual Report*, p. 22. Retrieved from: <https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/136216/2021-22EducationAnnualReport.pdf>

As part of the \$7 million investment through the CWELCC Agreement Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement Grant, ECE wages increased by 8 per cent as of October 1, 2023. ECE Level I received an additional \$1.50 per hour, ECE Level II received an additional \$2.00 per hour, and ECE Level III received an additional \$2.50 per hour. Certified assistants working in group family child care now receive wage supplements of up to \$7.50 per hour, bringing them in line with assistants in group child care.⁵⁶ These amounts are not reflected in Table 4.6.

ACCOUNTABILITY

PROGRESS REPORTS: Saskatchewan's most recent reports cover the bilateral agreements current to the 2021–22 fiscal year.⁵⁷ The Ministry of Education's Annual Report is current for the fiscal year 2022–23.⁵⁸

PROGRAM STANDARDS: Child care programs must comply with licensing standards. Saskatchewan curriculum outlines program standards for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten environments.⁵⁹

POPULATION MONITORING: The Early Years Evaluation (EYE)—Teacher Assessment (TA) is a mandated screening tool used in Kindergarten that provides a leading indicator of children's development with a focus on literacy. EYE results help guide schools in planning and practice for meeting the learning needs of whole classes, small groups, and individual children at a critical point in the early years.⁶⁰



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