

SASKATCHEWAN 2014

1. GOVERNANCE

Table 1.1 Saskatchewan Governance Structure for Early Childhood Education

Lead Ministry/Department	Ministry of Education
Related Ministry/Department	Ministry of Social Services
Policy Framework	
Legislation	The Child Care Act (1989, amended 2000) ¹ The Child Care Regulations (2001) ² (last amended 2013) ³ The Education Act (last amended 2014) ⁴
Related Legislation	Child Care Subsidy Program ⁵
Common ECE Supervisory Unit	The Early Years Branch, Ministry of Education
Local Authority	Prekindergarten and Kindergarten: 28 school divisions including Conseil des écoles francosaskoises Child care: 3 regional offices of the Early Learning and Child Care Program KidsFirst: 9 Management Committees ECIP Programs: 14 volunteer boards and two school divisions KidsFirst Regional (Early Years Community Developers) from each of the 14 Regional Health Authorities
Public Advisory	Regional Intersectoral Committees (RICS) Early Years Networks in communities, linked to the RICS and KidsFirst

New Developments

The demand for early childhood services continues to increase due to the growing number of births and a labour market that is attractive to parents of young children. By 2014, the number of child care spaces in operation and development increased by about 58.5 percent since 2006, as have the number of prekindergarten spaces for 3 and 4 year olds offered in Saskatchewan schools.⁶

Department Organization

Saskatchewan Governance Structure for Early Years is governed through the Saskatchewan Child and Family Agenda. The Cabinet Committee on Children and Families is supported by a Deputy Ministers Committee as well as a committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers, the Senior Inter-ministry Steering Committee (SIMS). This integrated governance approach includes the Ministries of Health, Social Services, Justice-Attorney General, Justice-Corrections, Parks, Culture & Sport and Education.

The Ministry of Education, Early Years Branch provides leadership for programming for children from birth to age 8. Responsibilities include managing community-based programs (KidsFirst, Early Childhood Intervention Programs, Child Nutrition and Development Program and Regional Intersectoral Committees), licensing, monitoring and supporting early learning and child care, managing the prekindergarten program and supporting kindergarten.⁷

The Ministry of Social Services administers the Child Care Subsidy Program.

Policy Framework

Saskatchewan does not have a specific policy framework for early education and care. The overarching policy approach is the Saskatchewan Child and Family Agenda. The four enduring strategies are:

- Children get a good start in life;
- Families are strong
- Youth are prepared for their future
- Communities are safe

The province will increase its investment in the Saskatchewan Child and Family Agenda by \$8.7 million in 2014–15. Among other measures, this includes 500 new child care spaces and 15 additional prekindergarten programs.⁸

Service Design⁹

- **Kindergarten:** Kindergarten is not a mandated program, but most school divisions offer at least a half time program (half-days every day or full days every other day). School divisions are responsible for establishing the age of entry.
- **Prekindergarten:** Prekindergarten is an early education program available for children 3–4 years of age in many schools. It prioritizes vulnerable children and families. A qualified teacher and assistant provide programming for 16 children for a minimum of 12 hours per week during the school year. Programming focuses on holistic child development. Parent fees are not charged.

- **Child Care Centres:** The ministry licenses group programs for infants to children up to and including 12 years of age. Programs are operated by non-profit boards and agencies and a small number are sponsored by municipalities. For-profit programs do not receive operational funding, and parent fee subsidies may not be used in for-profit facilities.
- **Teen Student Support Centres:** These programs provide licensed child care for more than five continuous hours per day/ three or more days per week, primarily for the infants and toddlers of young parents attending a high school or a high school equivalency program.¹⁰
- **Family child care homes:** There are three types of licensed family child care homes:¹¹
 - ♦ Family child care homes operated by one provider caring for up to eight children (including the provider's own children under 13 years of age). Numbers vary depending on the age of the children.¹²
 - ♦ Group family child care homes operated by a provider and an assistant for up to 12 children, including the children who reside in the home. Numbers vary depending on the age of the children.¹³
 - ♦ Teen student support homes operated for up to six children, including the provider's own children.
- **Unregulated care:** Unlicensed homes follow the same regulated numbers and ages of children as licensed child care homes. A caregiver may care for a maximum of eight children, including the provider's own children under 13 years of age.
- **Preschools:** Outside the regulated child care system, preschools are not licensed or funded by the provincial government and are typically operated by community organizations or individuals. Preschools operating for more than three hours a day are required to meet child care regulations.
- **Before & After School Programs:** Outside of the regulated child care system, programs serving exclusively school-age children and operating on school premises. These programs are often operated by non-profit organizations, and are exempt from child care regulations.

Community Programs

- **KidsFirst** is a voluntary referral program that supports vulnerable families in nine communities through quality home visiting and referrals to intervention, early learning, child care and parenting supports.
- **Early Childhood Intervention Programs (ECIP)** belong to a province-wide network of community-based supports for the families of children experiencing developmental delays. Early childhood interventionists and consultants deliver home-based services and provide a link between families and other service providers to support transitions between services and school.
- **Child Nutrition and Development Program** addresses child and family food security needs by providing funding to school divisions and community-based organizations.

Community Involvement/Oversight

Regional Intersectoral Committees (RICS) comprised of senior leaders from human service (health authorities, social services, law enforcement, school divisions), and others support planning and resource development in the ten regions. The RICS engages in a range of community supports for children and families. Since 2010, their priority has been the early years.

Local Service Delivery

Kindergarten and prekindergarten and prématernelle programs are supported by 28 school divisions, including 19 public school divisions, eight separate school divisions and one Francophone school division.¹⁴

Three regional offices with 7 branch offices of the Early Learning and Child Care Service Delivery Unit provide monitoring, licensing and consultation for regulated child care programs.¹⁵

Nine KidsFirst programs, situated in geographic areas of greatest need, are governed by an integrated management committee at the local level. These management committees advise and support the accountable partner, which is either a school division or a regional health authority.

Fourteen Early Childhood Intervention Programs (ECIP) located across Saskatchewan employ interventionists who deliver services primarily in the family home. They assist the family to address developmental delays by designing a program of learning activities that target a specific area of the child's development. When a child is also involved with a therapy professional they work in co-ordination with the professional therapist by assisting the parent to complete a prescribed therapy program. ECIP interventionists participate in transition planning to social and learning centres like child care and school settings.

2. FUNDING

Table 2.1 Saskatchewan: Provincial Allocations for Regulated Child Care (2014–15)¹⁶

Child care fee subsidies	\$14,675,000
Operating funds (includes wage, training grants and special needs funding)	\$55,465,000
Ongoing child care capital	\$1,700,000
Total operating funding	\$71,740,000

Overall Funding

Table 2.2 Saskatchewan: Funding Early Childhood Education/Child Care

Kindergarten ^a	\$73,023,000
Prekindergarten ^b	\$26,456,000
Licensed child care	\$71,740,000
Early Childhood Intervention Program	\$3,913,000
Other ECE Spending (KidsFirst)	\$14,569,000
Total ECE spending	\$189,701,000
Total operating allocations 2014–2015^c	\$11,296,340,000
ECE as a percentage of provincial budget	1.6%

^a Estimate based on 2013 kindergarten enrolment of 13,488 children times .5 per pupil expenditures of \$10,921; ^b Ministry of Education total prekindergarten funding 2014-15; ^c Operating budget <http://www.finance.gov.sk.ca/budget2014-15/2014-15Estimates.pdf>

3. ACCESS

Population

Table 3.1 Saskatchewan: Child Population 0–5 years 2013

Child population 0–5 years	87,383
0–1 years	29,500
2–4 years	43,827
5 years	14,540
Total population of Saskatchewan	1,108,393
Children 0–5 years as percentage of total population	7.9%

Statistics Canada. Table 051-0001. Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, 2013, Canada, provinces and territories (accessed August 20, 2014).

Table 3.2 Saskatchewan: Workforce Participation of Mothers by Age of Youngest Child (2013 average)

	Number mothers in workforce (000s) by age of youngest child	LF participation rate of mothers in workforce by age of youngest child
0–1 years	15.8	65.9%
2–4 years	18.4	75.2%
5 years	3.7	74.1%
Total mothers in workforce with child 0–5 years	37.9	
Average workforce participation of mothers with youngest child 0–5 years		70.1%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation S0814_04_Tab1.ivt.

Table 3.3 Saskatchewan: ECE School Programs

Enrolment 5-year-old kindergarten ^a	13,448
Prekindergarten for 3 and 4 year olds ^b	4,816

^a September 30, 2013 ¹⁷; ^b Number of funded spaces March 31, 2014¹⁸

Table 3.4 Saskatchewan: Licensed Child Care Programs¹⁹

Spaces by age group in centre-based programs	
Infant	3,787
Preschool-aged	6,006
School-aged	1,411
Total spaces centre-based programs	11,204

Table 3.4 Saskatchewan: Licensed Child Care Programs¹⁹ (con't)

Family child care/home and group	2,110
Total capacity regulated child care	14,025
Facilities by type	
Centre-based programs	282
Family child care providers	243
Facilities by auspice	Funded child care is non profit
2013-14 was the second year in a four-year government commitment to create 2,000 new child care spaces. As of March 2014, an additional 711 spaces were in development. ²⁰ Table 3.4 figures reflect actual spaces at March 31, 2014 plus 711 spaces in development	

Table 3.5 Saskatchewan: Percentage of children attending ECE programs by age group

Child Ages	Number of children ^a	Child care/ preschool	Kindergarten enrolment ^b	Other ECE programs ^c	% children with access to ECE programming
0-1 years	29,471	3,711			13%
2-4 years	43,827	11,144		4,875	37%
5 years	14,540		14,450		99.3%

^aStatistics Canada, Table 051-0001, Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, Canada, provinces and territories; ^bChild care spaces March 31, 2014, Prek enrolment September 30, 2013; ^cEstimated attendance in unlicensed nursery schools, Aboriginal Head Start; ^dKindergarten enrolment as of September 30, 2013. Enrolments in First Nations schools are likely understated as not all FN Schools report enrolments to the Ministry of Education.

Affordability

Subsidies are available to eligible families using a calculation that considers family size, the age of a child, the location of a child care facility and the actual fee charged. Maximum subsidies are provided to families with monthly incomes below \$1,640 with one child. This threshold is increased by \$100 for each additional child.²² Maximum subsidy rates are prescribed at monthly full-time and part-time rates depending on the type and location of the child care facility and the age of child, but do not exceed 90 percent of the fee charged.

Inclusion

Inclusion funding is available to child care centres and licensed child care homes providing child care services for children with diverse needs. Grants of up to \$300 a month are available to assist with the cost of additional supervision required to meet the child's needs; and up to \$600 a year for equipment (\$1,200/year in exceptional cases). In cases where a child has complex needs and requires individualized attention, grants rise to \$2000 monthly for staff. Inclusion grants must be renewed each year.²³

4. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Table 4.1 Saskatchewan: Curriculum Frameworks

Program	Framework Document
Kindergarten	<i>2010 Saskatchewan Curriculum: Kindergarten</i> ²⁴ a number of additional tools are made available, including <i>Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten</i> (2009). <i>Maternelle Programme Fransaskois</i> ²⁵ and <i>Maternelle Immersion française</i> ²⁶ are the provincial curricula for Fransaskois and French Immersion Kindergarten programs.
Prekindergarten	<i>Better Beginnings, Better Futures</i> (Revised 2008) ²⁷ provides practices, policy and guidelines for prekindergarten, emphasizing holistic development and family engagement. <i>Family Engagement in Prekindergarten: A Resource Guide for Prekindergarten Teachers and Associates</i> (2012) is a support to programs in creating respectful, reciprocal relationships with families. <i>Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide</i> (April 2008) <i>Essential Learning Experiences a supplement to Play and Exploration</i> (Draft Fall 2013)
Early years programs	<i>Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide</i> (April 2008) is the program is the curriculum guide for all early years programs. <i>Essential Learning Experiences a supplement to Play and Exploration</i> (Draft Fall 2013)
Early Years (Francophone)	<i>Jouer et explorer, Guide du programme d'apprentissage, Pour la petite enfance</i> (Septembre 2008)
Child care/infants and toddlers	<i>Play and Exploration for Infants and Toddlers. A companion booklet to Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide.</i> (Fall 2010)

Work Environment

Kindergarten class sizes: There is no maximum class size for kindergarten. In 2011, the average kindergarten class size was 17.9.²⁸ Prekindergarten classes are capped at 16.

Table 4.2 Saskatchewan: Group Size and Staff Child Ratio in Licensed Child Care Centres

Age of child	Staff: Child Ratio	Class Size
to 18 months)	1:3	6
19 months to 29 months	1:5	10
3 years	1:10	20
4 years	1:10	20
5 years	1:10	20
6–12 years	1:15	30

A regulated child care centre may have a maximum of 90 spaces. The maximum number of infant spaces per centre is 12.

Educators

Table 4.3 Saskatchewan: Educator Qualifications

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Teachers	Early Childhood Educators
Bachelor of Education degree or equivalent, including 48 semester hours of professional education, including a practicum. ²⁹	<p>ECE Certification Levels</p> <p>The Ministry of Education has three levels of ECE Certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECE Level I - completion of an ECE orientation from an approved, accredited post-secondary institution, or completion of three courses directly related to early childhood, one course from each of three areas: Child Development, Programming and Relationships. ECE Level II - completion of a one year ECE certificate from an approved, accredited post-secondary institution, or an equivalent combination of post-secondary coursework. ECE Level III - completion of a two year ECE diploma from an approved, accredited post-secondary institution, or an equivalent combination of post-secondary coursework.³⁰

Professional Standards

Table 4.4 Saskatchewan: Professional Recognition and Development

Qualified Teachers	Qualified ECEs
Educator Services, Ministry of Education evaluates all applicants in the Anglophone and Francophone sectors.	Educator Services, Ministry of Education assesses all applicants and provides ministry certification for ECE levels I, II and III (as described in Table 4.3)

Table 4.5 Saskatchewan: Density of Qualified Staff in Child Care Centres³¹

ECE Level I	Minimum for all staff
ECE Level II	30% of staff
ECE Level III	20% of staff, including director and supervisors

An ECE Level III is required for directors of child care centres; applies to child care centre staff working with children for 65 hours per month or more.

Table 4.6 Saskatchewan: Teacher and ECE Average Annual Salaries

Teachers	Early Childhood Educators	ECE salary as % of teacher salary
\$83,584 ^a	\$37,731 ^b	45%

^a August 31, 2013; ^b Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation S0814_04_Tab2.ivt.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Progress reports: The most recent online report for the ministry is Annual Report 2013–14.³³ The Annual Report is tabled in the legislature on or before July 29 each year and communicates both financial and non-financial results achieved over the preceding year.

Program standards: Licensing for child care programs.

Population monitoring: The baseline data from the EDI was compiled for children in kindergarten and was incorporated into results for other core indicators.³⁴ *The Early Years Evaluation (EYE)* was implemented in all 28 school divisions and one Tribal Council in the fall of 2013. It is used to assess children to enable supports to be put in place in Prekindergarten and Kindergarten for those children who may be experiencing challenges.

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