

Membership Impact Report

Celebrating the collective impact of AECEA members
on Alberta's early learning and child care system.

2025-2026



What is a Membership Impact Report?

This report shares how member support, educator engagement, and community partnerships shaped AECEA's work over the past year. It highlights not only what we accomplished, but how educator voices influenced our priorities and what those collective efforts are making possible for the future.

Unless otherwise noted, information in this report reflects AECEA's work between 2025 and 2026.

Why Membership Matters

Membership provides the collective strength that allows us to advocate for educators, develop resources, build community, and strengthen the profession across Alberta.

When you are a member, your voice and support help shape a stronger future for educators, children, and families.

Membership makes possible...

Advocacy

- Bringing educator perspectives directly to government.
- Influencing policies that affect the profession.
- Building relationships with partners and decision-makers.

Sector Resources

- Consulting educators and community partners before developing resources.
- Creating practical tools grounded in educator experiences.
- Providing free, high-quality resources to the sector.

Community Building

- Connecting educators across Alberta through events and initiatives.
- Creating opportunities for collaboration and peer support.
- Strengthening local and provincial educator networks.

Professional Recognition

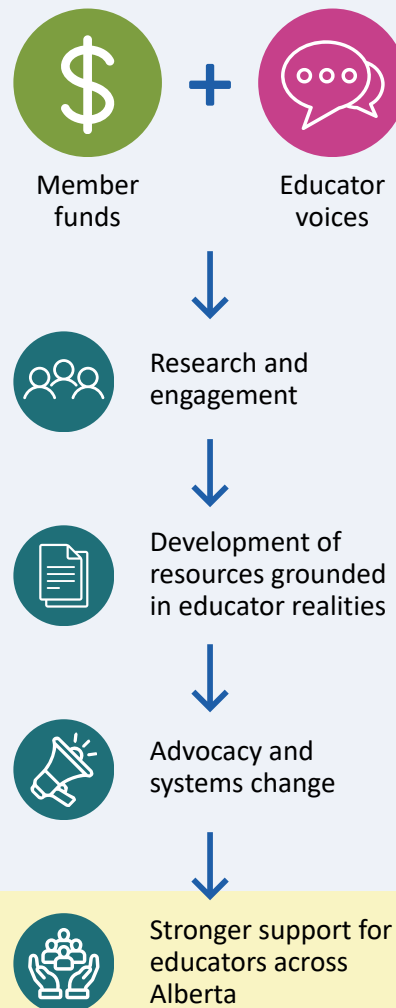
- Celebrating excellence through awards and recognition.
- Promoting the value of early childhood educators.
- Advancing recognition of ECE as a respected profession.

Research & Engagement

- Listening to educators through surveys, focus groups, and conversations.
- Identifying emerging needs and priorities across the sector.

Your membership creates real impact

Member funds and educator voices go directly into AECEA's work.



Nearly

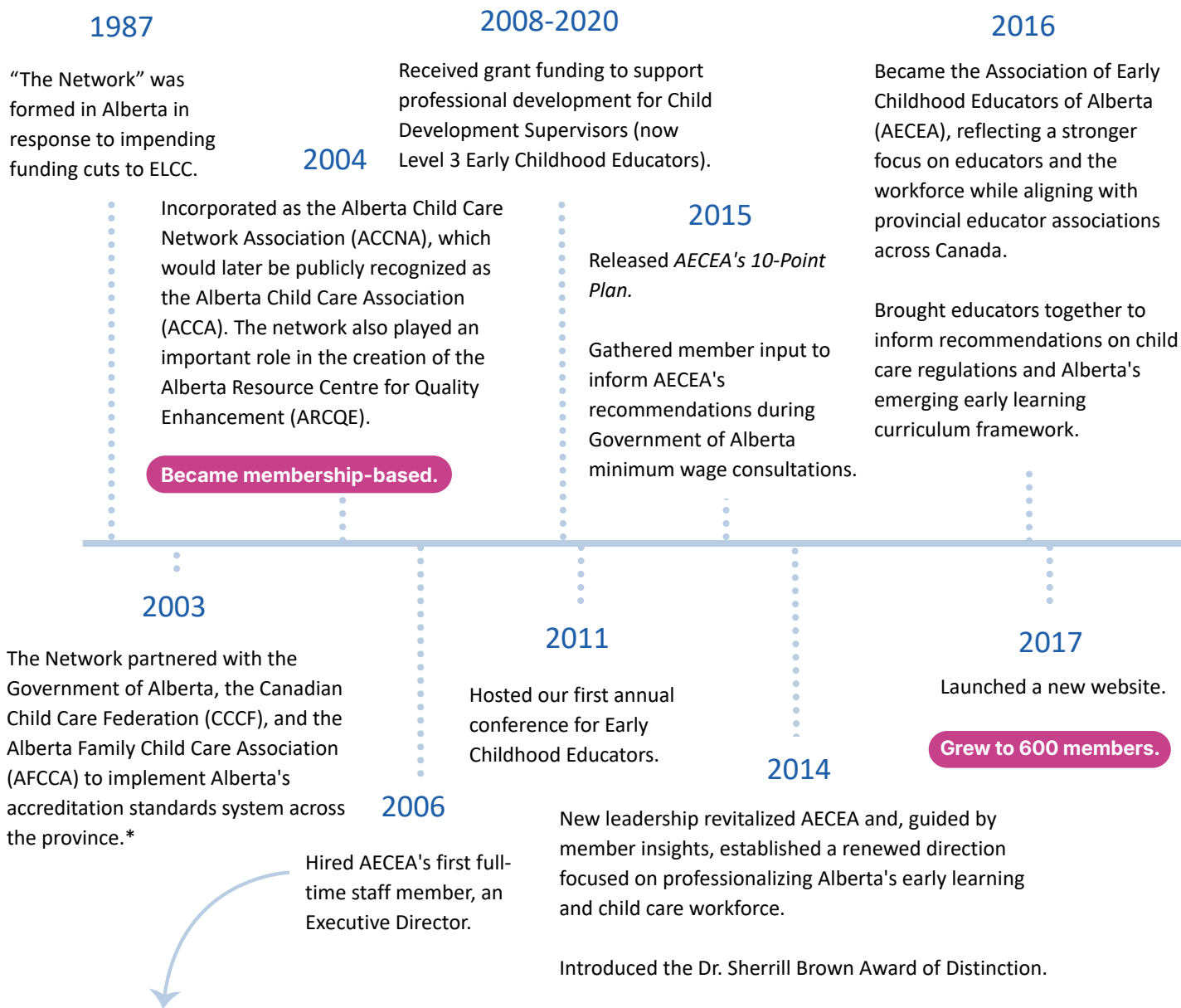
1,500

Members in 2026

Together, AECEA members represent one of Alberta's largest professional communities of early childhood educators.

What Members Helped Build

A brief history of AECEA's work, made possible by members.



Powered by People

Over nearly four decades, member support has helped AECEA grow from a volunteer-led network into a provincial organization supported by dedicated staff, a volunteer board of directors, committees, and ambassadors working together to strengthen Alberta's early childhood education profession.

As of July 2026, AECEA has 3 FT staff, 3 PT staff, 2 PT students, 9 volunteer board members, & 5 volunteer ambassadors.

**Although the accreditation system concluded in 2020, it marked an important advancement in quality early learning and child care.*

Behind the Milestones

The milestones presented here are only the visible outcomes. Behind each one are countless hours spent listening to educators, collaborating with partners, meeting with government, conducting research, and developing resources—all to strengthen Alberta's early learning and child care sector.

2018

Sector Milestone

Flight becomes Alberta's Early Learning and Care framework.

Released the mandate document *Qualified Educators, Quality Care*.

2020

Launched the AECEA Connect Webinar Series in response to COVID-19, in partnership with the Alberta Early Learning and Care Leaders' Caucus.

Grew to 1,000 members.

2021

Released the *Position Paper for Legislative Change*.

2022

Received the Brain Story: Theory to Practice (T2P) grant, which would allow thousands of educators to access reimbursement between 2022-2025.

Sector Milestone

Alberta's federal-provincial child care agreement accelerated system transformation.

2023

Released the *ECE Wage Grid Recommendations*.

2024

Transitioned from a working Board to a governance Board.

2025

Became steward of *Flight: Alberta's Early Learning and Care Framework*.

Began developing and publishing toolkits to support educators, based on what was heard from the field:

- *Choosing the Right Professional Development Toolkit*
- *Choosing an ELCC Post-Secondary Program Toolkit*
- *Self-Advocacy Toolkit*.

2026

Released the *Guiding Principles for Ethical Practice in Early Childhood Education in Alberta*.

Began the pilot of the new Flight learning series format.

Released *A Revised and Updated Provincial Wage Scale for Early Childhood Educators in Alberta*.

Community-building initiatives expanded: Launched the Edmonton Ambassador Program pilot, held a 5-part AECEA Conversations series, and delivered in-person Self-Advocacy Toolkit workshops across Alberta to foster connection, leadership, and professional engagement.

Grew to nearly 1,500 members.

What's next?

Turn to page 11 to discover what AECEA is working on in 2026/2027.

The Impact of Educator Voices

Every AECEA resource, initiative, and advocacy effort begins with listening. Through focus groups, conversations, surveys, partnerships, and ongoing dialogue, educators help shape the priorities we pursue and the resources we create.

Updated Wage Scale, 2026

What we were hearing

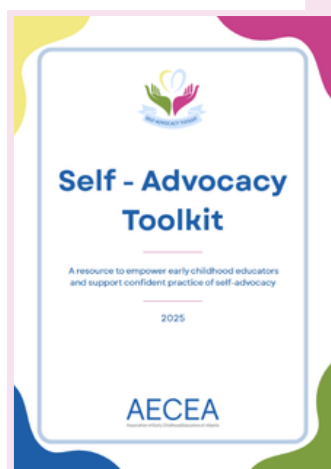
When the original wage grid recommendation was published (2023), there were only two provinces with endorsed wage scales. Since then, a majority of provinces created wage scales under the Canada-wide ELCC agreements. We wanted to update the scale based on what was successful in other provinces.

How we explored it

In partnership with The Muttart Foundation, we reviewed workforce data, current research, and compensation models from Alberta and across Canada to ensure the recommendations were evidence-informed.

How it shaped our work

The feedback we received informed the design of a wage scale that better recognizes educator qualifications, experience, and career progression while addressing workforce challenges. The result is an updated framework that supports recruitment and retention, strengthens professional recognition, and aligns with Alberta's long-term workforce priorities. We will be taking the wage scale into the community for feedback in fall 2026.



Self-Advocacy Toolkit, 2025

What we were hearing

Educators wanted to advocate for themselves, their profession, and children, but many were unsure where to begin or how to approach advocacy.

How we explored it

In partnership with Mount Royal University students, we completed an environmental scan exploring current available resources for advocacy. We then conducted several interviews with sector leaders, along with 5 focus groups to hear educator's perspectives on advocacy.

How it shaped our work

From our conversations with educators, we found that advocacy was often seen as unapproachable. This shaped our direction in ensuring the toolkit felt accessible and practical for all educators. Educators also wanted an opportunity to practice advocacy skills, which led to the development of the Self-Advocacy Workshop.

Guiding Principles for Ethical Practice, 2026

What we were hearing

Educators wanted a shared framework for ethical practice that reflected the realities of Alberta's early childhood education sector. Without one, many educators relied on resources from other provinces and countries.

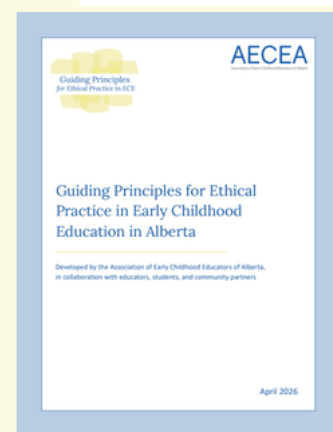
How we explored it

We began by engaging knowledge holders from Alberta and across Canada to help identify the project's priorities and inform the initial draft. Once a draft was developed, we invited educators to help shape the final document through seven AECEA focus groups, six focus groups hosted in partnership with post-secondary institutions across Alberta, and written reflections.

We asked participants whether the document reflected the realities of their practice, felt relevant to their context, and represented the diverse perspectives, values, and experiences of Alberta's early childhood educators.

How it shaped our work

Educator feedback directly informed revisions to the final Guiding Principles. Following engagement, we strengthened the document's clarity, structure, and usability, while more fully reflecting educator well-being, systemic realities, Indigenous perspectives, and the diverse experiences of Alberta's early childhood educators.



"It was lovely to read through and see some of the recommendations we discussed in our focus group! Really appreciate the opportunity to participate."

– Guiding Principles Focus Group Participant

"It's a big milestone for the ECE sector in Alberta and you've done amazing work writing, synthesizing, and revisiting it after the focus groups...I really enjoyed being a part of the feedback process"

– Guiding Principles Focus Group Participant

Choosing the Right Professional Development Toolkit, 2025

What we were hearing

Educators wanted support navigating the growing number of professional learning opportunities and understanding how to identify high-quality, Alberta-relevant professional development.

How we explored it

We reviewed current research and adult learning best practices. Then we examined Alberta funding, professional learning expectations, and quality indicators.

How it shaped our work

We developed a practical toolkit to help educators evaluate facilitators, training quality, and system supports so they can confidently choose professional learning that strengthens their practice and makes the best use of their time and funding.

Choosing an ELCC Post-Secondary Program in Alberta Toolkit, 2025

What we were hearing

Prospective and current educators wanted clear, Alberta-specific information to help them compare post-secondary programs and make informed education decisions.

How we explored it

We reviewed ELCC programs offered across Alberta. Then compiled information on pathways, tuition, transferability, field placements, and student supports.

How it shaped our work

The toolkit provides a consistent, evidence-informed guide that helps educators compare programs, ask meaningful questions, and choose educational pathways that align with their goals and Alberta's ELCC system.

Ambassador Program: Edmonton Pilot, 2026

What we were hearing

Educators wanted more opportunities to connect locally, build relationships with colleagues, and become more involved in strengthening the profession.

How we explored it

We brought together educators and sector leaders from across Alberta to explore what meaningful local engagement could look like. We also spoke with associations across Canada to learn from their experiences with similar community-building models.

How it shaped our work

The Ambassador Program was designed to foster community, develop educator leadership, and create opportunities for connection. Feedback from educators continues to shape the program as it evolves.

Educator Voices at the Table

AECEA helps ensure educators have a voice in conversations that shape early childhood education in Alberta. Through our participation on advisory committees, research collectives, provincial initiatives, and sector working groups, we bring forward the experiences, perspectives, and priorities shared by educators. These relationships also help keep AECEA informed about emerging issues, strengthening the resources and advocacy we contribute to the sector.

What our participation in these partnerships means for you...

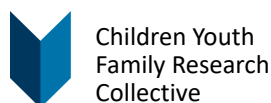


Your experiences help inform provincial and national conversations.



AECEA brings emerging ideas and opportunities back to the sector.

Post-Secondary Institutions



Sector Organizations & Provincial Initiatives



The Muttart Foundation



Alberta Early Learning and Child Care Provincial Coordinators'

Collaboration in Action

Recent projects we have been involved in through co-design consults or collaborative development.

Alberta Workforce Strategy Communication Materials, 2026

Led by the Alberta Early Learning and Care Leaders Caucus

Seven Principles For Building an Affordable System of Early Learning and Child Care in Alberta, 2026

Led by the Council for Early Learning and Care

Co-Designed Recommendations for Sustainable Quality in Early Learning and Child Care, 2025

Led by the Council for Early Learning and Care

Knowledge-Exchange Event on Young Children's Play, 2025

Collaboration with Dr. Ozlem Cankaya, Macewan University, & the Community-University Partnership

Strategies to Improve the Total Compensation and Working Conditions of Certified Early Childhood Educators in Alberta, 2024

Led by The Muttart Foundation & the Alberta Early Learning and Care Leaders Caucus

Creating Meaningful Connections

Strong professions are built on strong relationships. Throughout the year, AECEA connects with educators in post-secondary classrooms, at conferences, online, and in communities across Alberta. These interactions foster learning, strengthen relationships, and build a more connected early childhood education profession.

2,500+

Educators reached between
September 2025-August 2026*



Walk in the Park - July 2026



Conference exhibitor booth



“This event gave me the opportunity to meet and connect with other educators, share ideas and experiences, and build supportive professional relationships. It was a valuable opportunity to learn from each other and create new connections.”

– Community event attendee



Hosted 26 community events

Bringing educators together through workshops, webinars, conversations, and ambassador-led events.



Attended 11 conferences

Sharing ideas, resources, and advocacy while connecting with educators and sector leaders across Alberta.



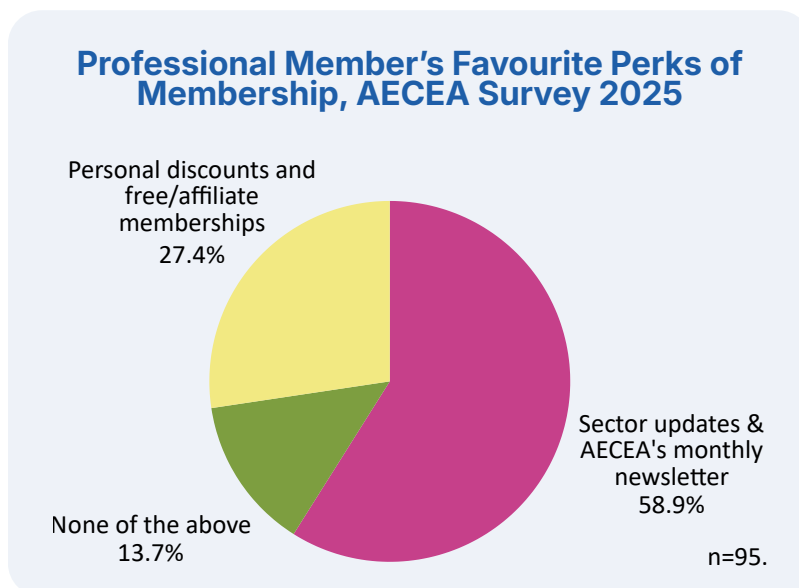
Visited 33 post-secondary classes

Supporting the next generation of educators through conversations about professional identity, advocacy, and the ELCC sector.

*All data on this page represents September 2025-August 2026

What Members Value Most

When we asked members what they value most about AECEA membership, one answer stood out above all others: staying informed. Members consistently told us they rely on AECEA to help them understand what's happening across Alberta's early childhood education sector, interpret change, and connect it back to their everyday practice.



Members told us...

"I truly believe that AECEA is dedicated to supporting Alberta's early childhood educators and the child care sector as a whole. While I do my best to stay informed about sector changes, government policies, and the perspectives of other child care programs, I appreciate having AECEA as a trusted source. Their commitment to gathering, interpreting, and sharing information ensures that ECEs receive clear, accurate updates on how these changes will directly impact our work and our profession."

"It is vital to keep up with what is changing in our sector and AECEA is prompt with sending out what's new."

"As an operator I like to share these updates with families. I see value for leaders to bring attention to educators what is happening and their role in advocacy...Knowing that AECEA is working hard to support us is a perk!"

"I am newer to the Alberta Childcare Sector, and love knowing about what is going on in this province."

"The wrap up of information is very helpful to steer educators and directors to understanding current trends and training. Work is hectic, having this pop into our mailbox to know what is happening for advocacy, innovation, workforce support is critical at this time."

Added Value of Membership

While staying informed is what many members value most, membership also includes a growing range of practical benefits—from discounts and affiliate memberships to professional learning opportunities. In our 2025 survey, members most frequently identified insurance discounts, professional learning discounts, and free/affiliate memberships as their favourite additional perks.

The benefits shown here reflect member feedback, not the full range of membership benefits. Explore the current list of member benefits at <https://aecea.ca/membership/membership-benefits>



"[Co-operators] has saved me \$1900 a year"

– 2025 Survey Respondent

Member experiences

"I use the [Institute of Child Psychology] workshops monthly and have learned a lot that applies directly to my work and as a parent" – 2025 Survey Respondent

"Having access to group benefits helps our educators feel valued for the work they do." – 2025 Survey Respondent

"[Scholar's Choice a]llows me to purchase supplies and equipment for my dayhome" – 2025 Survey Respondent

What Membership Will Make Possible Next

The work highlighted throughout this report is only the beginning. Guided by educator voices and made possible through member support, AECEA continues to develop new resources, initiatives, and opportunities that respond to the evolving needs of Alberta's early childhood education sector. From practical tools for educators to broader provincial and national initiatives, this work builds on what we have learned together and creates new opportunities to strengthen the profession, build community, and support educators across Alberta.

Who's Who in The Ministry?

We are developing a guide to help educators better understand how high-level decision-making related to early learning and child care happens within the Government of Alberta. The resource will help make government structures, roles, and responsibilities more accessible and easier to navigate.

Family Day Home Toolkit

In partnership with the Alberta Family Child Care Association, we are developing a community-engaged toolkit designed to support family child care educators. We are currently gathering perspectives to ensure the resource reflects the unique experiences of family day home educators.

Essential Pieces Conference 2027

Planning is underway for Essential Pieces Conference 2027! We are reflecting on feedback and learning from previous conferences to continue strengthening the experience for educators. As planning progresses, we'll be exploring opportunities for meaningful learning, connection, and celebration of the profession.

National Initiatives

As an affiliate of the Canadian Child Care Federation, AECEA is contributing an Alberta perspective to national initiatives focused on strengthening the early learning and child care workforce. This includes work to update the National Occupational Standards, improve labour market information, modernize workforce tools, and support career development, mentorship, and professional learning.

Community Building Toolkit

In partnership with Noah Kenneally and students from MacEwan University, we are building on our 2025 Self-Advocacy Toolkit. This resource will explore practical ways educators and programs can strengthen their connection to their community.

Practicum Toolkit

In partnership with post-secondary instructors, AECEA will be developing a toolkit that supports student educators as they enter into their practicums. The content of this toolkit will be community-informed to reflect the needs of students.

Building on the Guiding Principles

Following the release of the Guiding Principles for Ethical Practice, we are exploring new ways to bring the principles to life through presentations, workshops, and practical resources. This includes partnering with Spark to explore the connection between the Guiding Principles and culturally responsive practice.

Strengthening Our Collective Voice

AECEA listens to and amplifies the voices of early childhood educators across Alberta, including educators who are not yet members. Every perspective helps us understand the realities, priorities, and needs of the profession.

However, membership adds something important: visible collective strength.

When AECEA meets with government, participates in policy discussions, and advocates for better compensation, working conditions, professional recognition, and system supports, our membership numbers demonstrate how many educators are standing behind that work. The more members AECEA represents, the stronger our mandate and the greater the weight of our collective voice.

Membership is not only about accessing benefits. It is an investment in:

- ✓ Stronger representation with government and decision-makers
- ✓ Advocacy grounded in educators' experiences
- ✓ Greater recognition of early childhood education as a profession
- ✓ Resources and initiatives developed for Alberta educators
- ✓ A connected professional community across the province
- ✓ AECEA's long-term capacity to advance systems change

Making Membership More Accessible

We recognize that cost can be a barrier. Professional membership can be paid annually or through a monthly payment option, making it easier to include membership in your budget.

AECEA hears your voice. Membership strengthens the collective voice behind it.

Join nearly 1,500 educators who are helping demonstrate that Alberta's early childhood educators are informed, connected, and united in shaping the future of their profession.

Become a member at aecea.ca/membership

Thank You to Our Members

This work is possible because of you.

Every membership represents an educator, student, leader, or supporter who believes in the value of early childhood education and the importance of a strong, connected profession.

Your support allows AECEA to listen, learn, advocate, build relationships, develop resources, and create opportunities for educators across Alberta. Just as importantly, your voices, experiences, ideas, and participation continue to shape where this work goes next.

Whether you joined us at an event, shared your perspective in a focus group or survey, used or shared an AECEA resource, connected with another educator, or simply chose to be a member, your involvement contributed to the collective impact reflected in these pages.

Thank you for being part of AECEA and for investing in the future of Alberta's early childhood education profession. We are proud to continue this work alongside you.

With gratitude,

The AECEA Team

The strength of AECEA is the strength of its membership.

When educators come together, ideas become resources, conversations become advocacy, and shared experiences become meaningful change for our profession.



Association of
Early Childhood
Educators of Alberta