



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

**AECEA**

Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta

# Acknowledgements

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# Introduction

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Early childhood educators in Alberta remain poorly compensated for their specialized work with young children and families. The primary reliance on market-based approaches to organize and finance the delivery of regulated child care services has resulted in an undervaluing of educators' work, with low pay, limited access to workplace benefits and challenging working conditions all contributing to shortages of qualified educators and high rates of staff turnover.<sup>1</sup>

During the first five years of Canada-wide early learning and child care system building work, provincial and territorial governments have begun to address the longstanding challenges facing early learning and child care workforces, including through new investments in educator compensation. Recognizing the central role that qualified educators play in the delivery of high-quality care, most provincial and territorial governments have either implemented or committed to implement some form of provincial wage scale. These wage scales are intended to more fairly and competitively compensate educators for their important work and to help build the capacity of child care workforces to deliver the high-quality, inclusive early learning and child care children and their families need.

The following report, prepared by the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta (AECEA), with support from The Muttart Foundation, presents an updated and revised draft provincial wage scale for early childhood educators in Alberta. The draft wage scale builds on initial work AECEA previously undertook in partnership with the University of Alberta and the Council for Early Learning and Care on recommendations for a wage grid in 2023.<sup>2</sup> It further draws on the growing body of comparable wage scale work in other provinces and territories, particularly those which have implemented wages scales for their early learning and child care workforces. These wage scales have begun to change how educators are compensated and resulted in some improvements in educator pay. The draft wage scale also takes into account Alberta's labour market conditions.

The draft wage scale is intended to provide the basis for discussions with early childhood educators across the province on what a fair and competitive wage scale will need to include and look like. AECEA has also proposed how the wage scale might best be funded and some guidelines for its implementation to ensure that all educators are treated equitably.

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1 Employment and Social Development Canada. (2025). *Research summary: Workforce experiences of early childhood educators*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/reports/research/workforce-experiences.html>

2 Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta, Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care, Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families, & Evaluation Capacity Network. (2022). *The Alberta compensation framework report: ECE wage grid recommendations*. <https://aecea.ca/sites/default/files/1-ECE%20Wage%20Grid%20Recommendations.pdf>

# The Early Childhood Educator Workforce and Its Compensation

The specialized nature of early learning and care work requires a qualified, well-supported workforce. The strong relationship between early childhood educators' level of formal education and the quality of early learning and care environments for children makes it essential that child care sectors can attract and retain qualified staff.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the relationship between educators' well-being and their capacity to support children's growth and development requires that they feel valued and supported in their work and receive sufficient income to meet their own financial needs.<sup>4</sup>

Alberta's provincial government supports early childhood educators through wage enhancements and funding for professional learning. Yet despite these investments, the early learning and child care workforce in Alberta, like child care workforces in other provinces, has historically been both under-supported and under-resourced. The combination of modest compensation, educators' limited and varied access to workplace benefits and challenging working conditions have led to shortages of qualified staff and contributed to high rates of staff turnover, both of which negatively impact the quality of early learning and care environments.<sup>5</sup>

## The Educational Profile of the Early Learning and Child Care Workforce

The Alberta early learning and child care workforce has much in common with child care workforces in other provinces and territories. It is almost entirely female and includes a growing number of racialized women, many of whom are newcomers and some of whom are non-permanent residents.<sup>6</sup> The workforce has undergone significant growth since the signing of the Canada-Alberta Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. Between November 2021 and the end of December 2025, the workforce increased in size from 18,103 educators to over 30,300, as the provincial government has worked to increase the supply of child care spaces across the province (Table 1).

3 Manning, M., Garvis, S., Fleming, C., & Wong, G.T. (2017). The relationship between teacher qualification and the quality of the early childhood education and care environment. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 13(1), 1-82. <https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2017.1>

4 Cumming, T. (2017). Early childhood educators' well-being: An updated review of the literature. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45(5), 583-593. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0818-6>

5 McMullen, M.B., Lee, M.S., McCormick, K.I., & Choi, J. (2020). Early childhood professional well-being as a predictor of the risk of turnover in child care: A matter of quality. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 34(3), 331-345. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2019.1705446>

6 Government of Canada. (2025). *Immigrants' contribution to the early learning and childcare sector*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/campaigns/immigration-matters/growing-canada-future/early-learning-child-care.html>; Statistics Canada. (2022). *Diversity and retention of early learning and child care workers in Canada*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2023011-eng.htm>

The workforce comprises early childhood educators who are certified at three levels, which correspond to their educational preparation.<sup>7</sup> Level 1 early childhood educators complete an orientation course in early childhood education or equivalent post-secondary or high school-level course work. Level 2 educators hold a one-year early learning and child care certificate, while Level 3 educators hold a two-year early learning and child care diploma or greater. The province also certifies individuals with various educational equivalencies as Level 2 or Level 3 early childhood educators, including those with training in education, social work, human ecology, kinesiology and recreation.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 1. Number of Staff in Alberta Across Certification Levels<sup>9</sup>**

Certification Level	November 2021		December 2025	
	Number of Staff	% of Total	Number of Staff	% of Total
Level 1	7,229	40%	12,500	41%
Level 2	2,881	16%	4,800	16%
Level 3	7,993	44%	13,000	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,103</b>		<b>30,300</b>	

Almost 12,200 early childhood educators have joined the sector since 2021. In 2025, 43 percent of the workforce held a Level 3 certification, 41 percent a Level 1 certification, and 16 percent a Level 2 certification. The profile of the workforce, based on level of certification, has remained relatively constant since the signing of the Canada-Alberta Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

<sup>7</sup> Government of Alberta. (n.d.). *Apply for certification*. Retrieved March 31, 2026, from <https://www.alberta.ca/apply-for-certification>

<sup>8</sup> Government of Alberta. (n.d.). *Certification guide for early childhood educators*. Retrieved March 31, 2026, from <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/early-childhood-educators-certification-guide>

<sup>9</sup> Government of Alberta, personal communication, March 2026.

## Early Childhood Educators' Compensation

Despite the long-term provision of publicly funded wage enhancements to boost their pay, the hourly wages of certified early childhood educators remain stubbornly low (Table 2) and significantly below the provincial average hourly wage of \$37.35 per hour.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 2. Wages for Early Childhood Educators in Alberta, September 2024<sup>11</sup>**

Certification Level	Average Hourly Employer-Paid Wage	Government-Paid Wage Top-Up Rate	Average Hourly Wage with Wage Top-Up
<b>Level 1</b> (Orientation course or equivalent)	\$17.23	\$2.64	\$19.97 <sup>12</sup>
<b>Level 2</b> (One-year certificate)	\$18.30	\$5.05	\$23.35
<b>Level 3</b> (Two-year diploma)	\$20.39	\$8.62	\$29.01

As of fall 2024, the average hourly wages for certified early childhood educators were \$19.97 for a Level 1, \$23.35 for a Level 2 and \$29.01 for a Level 3. Before government-paid wage top-up funding, the average employer-paid wages for early childhood educators working in Alberta are \$17.23 per hour for a Level 1, \$18.30 per hour for a Level 2 and \$20.39 per hour for a Level 3.

The provincial wage enhancements (wage top-up) have helped to increase early childhood educators' compensation since their introduction in conjunction with the provincial accreditation program in the early 2000s. The wage enhancements establish 'wage floors' for early childhood educators, consisting of the provincial minimum wage of \$15 per hour and the wage top-up amount for each certification level. For Level 1 early childhood educators this wage floor is \$17.64 per hour, for Level 2 it is \$20.05 per hour and for Level 3 it is \$23.62 per hour.

Level 3 and Level 2 certified educators, who hold formal post-secondary qualifications, commonly earn less than workers with similar qualifications in related or comparable fields.<sup>13</sup> Level 3 certified educators (which include educators in supervisory positions) earn average hourly wages that place them in the top third of occupations that require a two-year college diploma, but they commonly have lower hourly wages and more limited access to workplace benefits than staff in comparable health and education fields. Level 2 certified educators' hourly wages place them in the bottom quartile of occupations that require a one-year college certificate.

The average hourly wage for Level 1 certified educators falls below the 'living wage' threshold across much of the province – the wage an employee needs to cover their core expenses and participate in their

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada. (2026). *Employee wages by industry, annual*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410006401>

<sup>11</sup> Government of Alberta. (n.d.). *Alberta child care grant funding program*. Retrieved March 31, 2026, from <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-child-care-grant-funding-program>

<sup>12</sup> These numbers are provided as written on the Government of Alberta website.

<sup>13</sup> Based on comparisons with all occupations that require similar educational requirements as listed in the Federal Job Bank.



community.<sup>14</sup> This very low wage puts pressure on educators' own financial well-being and results in some taking second jobs to cover their living expenses. For many Level 1 certified educators, who make up 41 percent of the child care workforce, work in early learning and child care has a precarious quality characterized by low pay and demanding working conditions.

Not only are early childhood educators' wages low, but there are also inequities within the sector. Educators with similar levels of education and experience, for example, receive different employer-paid hourly wages depending on where they work. Individual for-profit businesses or community-based organizations set the 'employer-paid wage' they pay based on their own business model and allocation of resources. These differences in employer-paid wages result in some staff moving between employers for higher wages and other workplace benefits. Similarly, there are no standard or consistent ways in which educators are compensated for their years of experience in the field. This presents a particular challenge for educators with long work histories whose hourly wages may become frozen after a number of years and contributes to some experienced staff leaving the field for other occupations that provide longer-term wage growth.

Early childhood educators' low and inequitable wages reflect the historic financing and delivery of child care services, as well as the undervaluing of early learning and care work with very young children. The delivery of child care as a market-based service, with parent fees covering the bulk of child care costs, has resulted in service providers trying to keep the costs of child care low. This is so that families can afford child care and service providers can generate sufficient income to sustain their for-profit business or community-based organization. As a result, the low wages of educators, which often make up between 65 to 80

<sup>14</sup> Alberta Living Wage Network. (2025). *Alberta living wage report: Community calculations & methodology*. <https://www.livingwagealberta.ca/reports>

percent of the costs of child care services,<sup>15</sup> have effectively subsidized the cost of child care for families<sup>16</sup> while also enabling services to remain economically viable and, in the case of many private businesses, generate a profit.

More broadly, early childhood educators' low wages reflect the undervaluing of learning and care work with very young children, which is viewed as 'women's work' that 'comes naturally' and does not require specialized knowledge or skills.<sup>17</sup> The predominantly female make-up of the workforce,<sup>18</sup> which has remained unchanged for decades, has perpetuated this bias. Simply put, early learning and care work, like other female-dominated fields, remains undervalued compared to male-dominated occupations that require similar levels of education, skills and knowledge, because it is viewed as 'women's work' and has a lower market value.

In the absence of significant improvements to educators' compensation and a greater valuing of early learning and care work, the child care sector in Alberta will struggle to recruit and retain the qualified staff required to deliver the expanded high-quality child care services anticipated under the Canada-Alberta Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.<sup>19</sup> One option to address these challenges is the design and implementation of a publicly funded wage scale for educators, similar to the ones now in place or under development in almost all other provinces and territories. The current report presents a draft version of such a wage scale.

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15 Statistics Canada. (2024). *Child care centre workers serving children aged 0 to 5 years in Canada, 2021 to 2022*.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2024012/article/00004-eng.htm>; Mitchell, L., Botes, V., & Kamenarac, O. (2025). Early childhood education as a public good: Challenges and possibilities. *Early Childhood Folio*, 29(2), 8-14. <https://doi.org/10.18296/ecf.1158>

16 Fairholm, R. & Davis, J. (2012). Canadian ECEC labour shortages: Big, costly and solvable. In E. Llyod & H. Penn (Eds.), *Childcare markets: Can they deliver an equitable service?* (pp. 153-171). Policy Press.

17 Mitchell, L., Vandenbroeck, M., & Lehrer, J. (2022). Resisting the alienation of the workforce. In M. Vandenbroeck, J. Lehrer & L. Mitchell (Eds.), *The decommodification of early childhood education and care: Resisting neoliberalism* (pp. 147-213). Routledge.

18 Statistics Canada. (2022). *Diversity and retention of early learning and child care workers in Canada*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2023011-eng.htm>

19 Centre for the Study of Living Standards & YMCA Canada. (2024). *Assessing the early childhood educators labour shortage in Canada: Challenges, solutions, and impacts*. <https://www.csls.ca/reports/csls2024-02.pdf>

# The Implementation of Wage Scales for Early Childhood Educators Across Canada

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To help recruit and retain the larger numbers of qualified educators required to deliver expanded high-quality child care under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements, governments across Canada have introduced publicly funded wage scales. These wage scales are intended to improve educator compensation and to more fairly and competitively compensate educators for their work with young children and families.

Six provinces and two territories now have publicly funded wage scales in place (Manitoba, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut). Two provinces implemented wage scales prior to the Canada-Wide system building investments (Quebec and Prince Edward Island), with the others developed as part of the initial phase of system building work. Two further provinces and one territory (British Columbia, Saskatchewan and the Yukon) have committed to develop wage scales as part of their Canada-Wide agreements. In December 2023, British Columbia began piloting a wage scale in select child care programs across the province.<sup>20</sup> Alberta and Ontario are the two jurisdictions that have not committed to implement wage scales.

Prior to the Canada-Wide investments, six provinces and one territory relied on some form of publicly funded wage enhancements to increase educator compensation, including Alberta.<sup>21</sup> The majority of these have now implemented wage scales or indicated their commitments to do so, given the advantages that wage scales present over wage enhancements.

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<sup>20</sup> Vescera, Z. (2023, December 11). The BC experiment that could transform child-care work: The government is testing a new, higher salary grid to attract and retain workers. *The Tyee*. <https://thetyee.ca/News/2023/12/11/Experiment-Could-Transform-Child-Care-Work/>

<sup>21</sup> Child Care Now. (2024). *Wages, benefits and pensions: Policy recommendations developed by the National Early Learning and Child Care Workforce Policy Table*. <https://childcarenow.ca/educators-matter/wages-benefits-and-pensions/>

## The Common Features of Provincial and Territorial Wage Scales

The eleven provincial and territorial wage scales either in place or in a preliminary design phase have two common features: ‘levels’ and ‘steps’ (Figure 1). The levels reflect an educator’s certification and workplace roles and responsibilities, while the ‘steps’ consider length of service or years of experience.

**Figure 1. Typical Wage Scale Design**



The majority of scales establish different levels that align with an educator’s education and certification, while also distinguishing between educators in front-line service delivery roles and those in supervisory or senior management positions. Educators at ‘higher’ levels receive higher hourly wages to compensate them for their additional education or workplace responsibilities. In Newfoundland and Labrador, rather than a higher hourly wage, educators in senior roles receive an administrative bonus to compensate them for their additional responsibilities.<sup>22</sup> In Manitoba, the wage scale establishes wages for educators in leadership

<sup>22</sup> Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. (n.d.). *Early childhood educator wage grid*. Retrieved March 31, 2026 from <https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/childcare/childcareresources/early-childhood-educator-wage-grid/>

positions based on the size of the child care centre in which they work.<sup>23</sup> Some scales also include additional levels for other staff such as cooks and support staff.

The ‘steps’ reflect an educator’s experience or demonstration of competency. Educators move up the steps either on an annual basis or based on a number of years of service. The number of steps in the wage scales vary from a low of four to a high of 11. Once educators reach the top step for their pay level, their hourly wage may remain constant unless the wage scale is indexed to reflect annual cost of living increases. Some provinces have already introduced adjustments to their wage scales to accommodate increases in pay.<sup>24</sup> The provincial wage scale in Manitoba differs from most others in that it establishes a ‘target’ hourly wage for educators based on their level of certification or role and does not propose steps.

## Regional Considerations

Five provincial wage scales establish the hourly wages for educators across the whole province, regardless of where an educator works. Three (those in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut) provide higher compensation or regional allowances for educators working in more isolated regions or communities with higher living costs. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the provincial government supports a ‘Labrador Allowance’ of \$5,178 per year for educators working in the Labrador region.<sup>25</sup>

## The Development and Design of Wage Scales

The ways in which jurisdictions have developed wage scales differs. In most cases, the provincial or territorial government has taken the lead in designing the scale, with some level of stakeholder input or engagement.<sup>26</sup> In a smaller number of cases, a provincial association led the work. The Manitoba Child Care Association, for example, developed one of the first competitive wage scales for educators close to two decades ago.<sup>27</sup> The provincial government now relies on an updated and revised version of this scale to establish the starting hourly wages for educators across the province.

In nearly all of the jurisdictions where wage scales have yet to be implemented, community-based child care organizations have followed the lead of the Manitoba Child Care Association and developed scales and wage recommendations for their governments to consider. In British Columbia and Ontario, early childhood educator associations and provincial advocacy groups have recommended a wage range of at least \$30 to \$40

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23 Government of Manitoba. (n.d.). *Early learning and child care wage grid*. Retrieved March 31, 2026, from [https://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students\\_workforce/wage\\_grid.html](https://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students_workforce/wage_grid.html)

24 Belliveau, K. (2025, August 8). Province bumping up pay for experienced educators at daycares: Daycare director says raise doesn’t close pay gap between daycare workers and school educational assistants. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/early-childhood-educator-pay-grade-salary-1.7604282>; Government of Manitoba (2025, May 23). *Government of Canada, Manitoba raising wages for early childhood educators*. <https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=69300>

25 Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. (2024). *Early learning, inclusion and child development: Early childhood educator wage grid policy and standards manual*. <https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/files/ECE-Wage-Grid-Policy-and-Standards-Manual-v-1.3.pdf>

26 Child Care Now. (2024). *Wages, benefits and pensions: Policy recommendations developed by the National Early Learning and Child Care Workforce Policy Table*. <https://childcarenow.ca/educators-matter/wages-benefits-and-pensions/>

27 Manitoba Child Care Association. (2026). *Market competitive salary guideline scale*. <https://mccahouse.org/sites/default/files/2025-12/MCSGS%202026-2027.pdf>

per hour for early childhood educators in 2023 – numbers which would likely be higher today.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association and Saskatchewan Leaders’ Caucus have recently developed a provincial wage scale recommending a starting hourly wage of \$31.64 per hour for educators with a diploma-level education.

How the different wage scales establish fair and reasonable wages for early childhood educators also varies. The wage scales in Manitoba and British Columbia both consider comparisons with other occupations that either require similar education or skills or have related levels of responsibility.<sup>29</sup> These comparisons help to ensure that educators are competitively compensated, especially with occupations that prospective educators might either choose rather than entering the field or subsequently leave child care to pursue. In addition to comparisons with other occupations, the work undertaken in British Columbia also highlights the importance of ensuring that the wages of educators working in non-profit community-based organizations and private businesses are comparable to those of educators working in early learning and child care programs in the public sector, such as those operated by municipalities, postsecondary institutions or health care. Within the early learning and child care sector, wages in public sector positions tend to be higher.

In contrast to the comparison approach, the Prince Edward Island wage scale, developed by the provincial government, and the recent wage scale developed by early learning and child care stakeholders in Saskatchewan both use the provincial average hourly wage for all occupations to establish educators’ compensation.<sup>30</sup> Proponents of this approach argue that it offers a relatively simple and straightforward way to set educators’ wages and one that makes them competitive with other occupations within a given province.

## The Positive Impact of Wage Scales on Educator Compensation

Since the signing of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements, the compensation for educators in all jurisdictions has risen. These increases have resulted both from the introduction of wage scales, and their subsequent upward adjustments, as well as through increases in wage enhancements. Overall, early childhood educators’ compensation is most competitive, compared to the average provincial hourly wage, in those provinces with wage scales. Compensation is less competitive in those provinces which continue to rely on wage enhancements to increase educators’ pay (Table 3).

The largely publicly funded wage scales in the Maritime provinces, Manitoba and Quebec currently provide early childhood educators with the most competitive wages. The Maritime provinces have also recently introduced new publicly funded benefit programs for educators which have further helped to improve educators’ total compensation.

<sup>28</sup> Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC & Early Childhood Educators of BC. (2023). *Early childhood educator wages in British Columbia: Recommendations for a wage grid of at least \$30-\$40/hour*. [https://www.ecebc.ca/application/files/5516/8919/8966/10aDay\\_ECE\\_wages\\_and\\_grid\\_July\\_12\\_web.pdf](https://www.ecebc.ca/application/files/5516/8919/8966/10aDay_ECE_wages_and_grid_July_12_web.pdf); Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario & Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care. (2023). *Position paper on a publicly-funded early learning and child care salary scale*. [https://childcareontario.org/wp-content/uploads/Salary\\_scale\\_Position\\_Paper.pdf](https://childcareontario.org/wp-content/uploads/Salary_scale_Position_Paper.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Manitoba Child Care Association. (2026). *Market competitive salary guideline scale*. <https://mccahouse.org/sites/default/files/2025-12/MCSGS%202026-2027.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> Government of Prince Edward Island. (2025, October 1). *Early years centre wage grid*. <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/publication/early-years-centre-wage-grid>

**Table 3. Starting Hourly Wage for Diploma-Level Early Childhood Educators vs. Average Hourly Wage of All Workers, by Province**

	Compensation Approach	Two-year ECE Diploma (or Equivalent) Starting Hourly Wage	Average Hourly Wage of All Workers (2025)	Two-year ECE Starting Wage as % of Average Hourly Wage
PEI	Wage scale	\$29.15	\$30.11	97%
MB	Wage scale	\$28.36	\$31.63	90%
NS	Wage scale	\$27.61	\$32.39	85%
NB	Wage scale	\$23.69	\$31.27	76%
NL	Wage scale	\$25.00	\$33.42	75%
QC	Wage scale	\$25.78	\$35.05	74%
SK	Wage enhancement	\$24.20	\$33.39	72%
ON	Wage floor and wage enhancement	\$25.86	\$37.72	69%
AB	Wage enhancement	\$23.62	\$37.35	63%
BC	Wage enhancement	\$23.85	\$37.95	63%

*Note: For provinces with wage enhancements, the starting wage is based on the provincial minimum wage plus the publicly funded wage enhancement. Data on starting wages for early childhood educators with a two-year diploma or equivalent are current as of April 1, 2026. Data on provincial hourly wages for all workers are from Statistics Canada for 2025.<sup>31</sup>*

The starting hourly wage for an early childhood educator with a two-year diploma in Prince Edward Island is now just below the provincial average hourly wage for all occupations. Directors of licensed child care centres credit this competitive wage, along with the introduction of publicly funded benefits, as significantly improving the child care sector’s capacity to recruit and retain qualified staff.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Statistics Canada. (2026). *Employee wages by industry, annual*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410006401>

<sup>32</sup> Early Childhood Development Association of PEI. (2025). *Early learning and child care recruitment and retention: PEI’s 2024 director and staff surveys: Final report*. [https://mcusercontent.com/aff981eb17e452f90e6094988/files/50178ef2-2c85-9175-8afd-59f7f42ff215/2024\\_ELCC\\_Director\\_and\\_Staff\\_Survey\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/aff981eb17e452f90e6094988/files/50178ef2-2c85-9175-8afd-59f7f42ff215/2024_ELCC_Director_and_Staff_Survey_Final_Report.pdf)

## The Rationale for a Publicly Funded Wage Scale for Early Childhood Educators

The increased public funding of child care services under the Canada-Wide agreements has provided provinces and territories with the opportunity to rethink how educator compensation is determined and supported at a sector-wide level. This rethinking has proven critical both in ensuring the most effective use of public monies and in compensating educators more fairly for their work.

With these considerations in mind, the majority of provincial and territorial governments have either implemented or committed to implement publicly funded wage scales for early childhood educators. The evidence from other jurisdictions, and findings from related research,<sup>33</sup> show how well-designed and sufficiently publicly funded wage scales can improve the fairness and competitiveness of early childhood educator compensation.

The strong relationships between early childhood educators' formal education, knowledge and skills and the quality of children's early learning environments makes it critical that Alberta's child care sector can recruit and retain the qualified staff it needs to support the expansion of child care services across the province. Early childhood educators' low pay and inequities in their compensation present barriers to the expansion of high-quality early learning and child care – a longstanding challenge that a publicly funded provincial wage scale can help remedy.

## The Benefits of Wage Scales Over Wage Enhancements

In addition to supporting more competitive compensation for educators, provincial and territorial wage scales have also helped to reduce the inequities in educator compensation resulting from the historic reliance on market-based service delivery models. The implementation of wage scales rather than the reliance on employer-paid wages plus wage enhancements to set educator wages has resulted in educators receiving equitable compensation based on their level of education and workplace roles and responsibilities. The use of steps in wage scales further provides educators with opportunities for wage growth over time, encouraging them to pursue longer-term careers in the field, rather than viewing the educator role as a short-term job. No matter where educators work, or in what type of organization, a provincial wage scale ensures that they are fairly and equitably compensated. A wage scale further provides educators with a greater sense of pay security and certainty and has the potential to reduce the turnover resulting from staff either moving between employers for marginally higher pay or leaving the field for other work or occupations that offer higher compensation.

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<sup>33</sup> Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC & Early Childhood Educators of BC. (2020). *Next step: A competitive, publicly funded provincial wage grid is the solution to BC's ECE shortage*. [https://www.ecebc.ca/application/files/4915/9553/5275/CCCABC\\_ECEBC\\_Wage\\_Grid\\_Report\\_June\\_2020\\_web.pdf](https://www.ecebc.ca/application/files/4915/9553/5275/CCCABC_ECEBC_Wage_Grid_Report_June_2020_web.pdf)

# A Revised and Updated Provincial Wage Scale for Early Childhood Educators

In 2023, AECEA released its first report outlining recommendations for a wage grid for early childhood educators in Alberta.<sup>34</sup> This initial report, prepared in collaboration with the Council for Early Learning and Care, the Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth and Families, and the Evaluation Capacity Network, provides the foundation for the current report that proposes a revised and updated provincial wage scale.

The 2023 wage grid was guided by a set of values that remain central to the revised wage scale. Namely, that a wage scale for Alberta should ensure that early childhood educators:

- are valued for their work with children and families;
- are fairly compensated for their education, experience and responsibilities;
- are paid wages that are comparable to occupations requiring similar levels of education and with similar responsibilities;
- see career progression and financial rewards for their efforts; and
- experience increased economic well-being.

The updated wage scale uses a revised method to determine fair and competitive compensation for educators that draws on the approaches used in other provinces and territories to develop similar wage scales. The previous ‘values-based’ wage grid used the average reported wage for an early childhood educator in Alberta to determine a ‘base entry wage’ for an entry-level Level 1 early childhood educator. This wage was then used to calculate the wages for Level 2 and 3 educators at an entry level. The revised method follows a ‘comparator’ approach that uses the wages of staff in other occupations that require similar educational requirements or have similar roles and responsibilities to establish fair and competitive compensation for educators.

One limitation of the current scale, however, is that it does not consider how to ‘value’ or compensate educators for their Indigenous or ethnocultural knowledge. Some Canadian jurisdictions are beginning to explore approaches to recognize culturally specific knowledge and experiences, but these practices are not yet widespread. For example, the Government of Northwest Territories provides an ‘Indigenous Educators Bonus’ which allocates up to \$2,500 per year in additional funding to Indigenous employees.<sup>35</sup> Given the rich cultural diversity of Alberta’s families and the importance of intercultural competence in

34 Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta, Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care, Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families, & Evaluation Capacity Network. (2022). *The Alberta compensation framework report: ECE wage grid recommendations*. <https://aecea.ca/sites/default/files/1-ECE%20Wage%20Grid%20Recommendations.pdf>

35 Government of Northwest Territories. (n.d.). *Indigenous educators bonus for centre-based employees*. Retrieved March 31, 2026, from <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/starting-and-operating-licensed-centre-based-program/indigenous-educators-bonus-centre>

providing quality care for young children, additional research is needed to explore approaches to valuing this knowledge.

## The Design of the Revised and Updated Wage Scale

In common with the wage scales in other provinces and territories, as well as with the earlier Alberta wage grid, the revised wage scale sets out a series of levels and steps for educator compensation. The pay levels correspond to the current certification levels outlined in regulation for front-line educators, with additional levels for staff in supervisory or leadership positions or roles. There are also levels for educators with additional formal education.

The steps reflect increases linked to experience or length of service and are similar to those set out in the original scale, albeit with a reduction in the number of steps from eight to seven. The increase in hourly pay between steps is based on Alberta's 25-year average inflation rate.

The hourly wages for the different levels of the scale are based on comparisons with the average hourly wages for occupations that require a similar level of education, and which demand related skills or involve similar responsibilities. Occupations were generally drawn from the service sector, including health, education and community and government services. Consideration was also given to those occupations that likely compete with the early learning and child care sector for staff.

The Level 1 educator role was compared against occupations requiring high school or less, Level 2 against occupations requiring a certificate of less than two years, and Level 3 against occupations requiring a two-year diploma. For Level 3 educators holding a bachelor's degree or greater, comparisons were made with occupations requiring a four-year degree. Supervisory and management positions were compared against occupations requiring a minimum of a two-year diploma. The comparable occupations were drawn from Statistics Canada labour force data (See Tables 6 to 10 in Appendix A for the list of selected occupations and their associated labour force data, including information on wages and benefits). The average hourly wage for the comparator occupations was used to establish the mid-point wage (step four) of the wage scale for the different levels.

The hourly wages presented in the wage scale are the educator's total wage, with the proposed wage scale replacing the current employer-paid wages and wage enhancements (Table 4).

Under the revised scale, hourly wages for frontline educators at the mid-point of the scale (step four) range from between \$22 and \$25 per hour for Level 1 certified staff, to between \$35 and \$37 for Level 3 certified staff, depending on their education.

The mid-point hourly wages for Level 1 educators, including those working toward certification and those already certified, are above the living wage in most communities across Alberta.<sup>36</sup> The mid-point hourly wage for a Level 3 educator with a two-year diploma is \$35, equal to 94 percent of the provincial average hourly wage for all workers, while the mid-point hourly wage for a Level 3 educator with a degree or greater is \$37 and on par with the provincial average hourly wage.

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<sup>36</sup> Alberta Living Wage Network. (2025). *Alberta living wage report: Community calculations & methodology*. <https://www.livingwagealberta.ca/reports>

**Table 4. Draft Wage Scale for Early Childhood Educators in Alberta**

Early Childhood Educators								
Level	Qualification	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7
Level 1	Orientation course or equivalent (or working towards certification)	\$20.08	\$20.70	\$21.34	<b>\$22.00</b>	\$22.66	\$23.34	\$24.04
	Level 1 and enrolled in a certificate program or greater	\$22.82	\$23.52	\$24.25	<b>\$25.00</b>	\$25.75	\$26.52	\$27.32
Level 2	Certificate	\$26.47	\$27.29	\$28.13	<b>\$29.00</b>	\$29.87	\$30.77	\$31.69
Level 3	Diploma	\$31.94	\$32.93	\$33.95	<b>\$35.00</b>	\$36.05	\$37.13	\$38.25
	Degree+	\$33.77	\$34.81	\$35.89	<b>\$37.00</b>	\$38.11	\$39.25	\$40.43
Leadership								
Level	Qualification	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7
Supervisor	Diploma	\$34.68	\$35.75	\$36.86	<b>\$38.00</b>	\$39.14	\$40.31	\$41.52
	Degree+	\$36.51	\$37.64	\$38.80	<b>\$40.00</b>	\$41.20	\$42.44	\$43.71
Director	Diploma	\$37.42	\$38.58	\$39.77	<b>\$43.00</b>	\$42.23	\$43.50	\$44.80
	Degree+	\$39.24	\$40.46	\$41.71	<b>\$45.00</b>	\$44.29	\$45.62	\$46.99

The mid-point hourly wages for certified educators under the wage scale are higher than the most recently reported average hourly wages for early childhood educators in Alberta, with the majority of educators seeing increases of 20 percent or more (Table 5). The increase is lower (10 percent) for Level 1 educators who are not enrolled in further education to obtain a certificate or greater. Level 3 certified educators with a bachelor’s degree or higher qualification would see the largest increase in their average hourly wage. Comparisons are not provided for the proposed supervisor and director level wages, as the provincial government does not report comparable wage data for these positions.

**Table 5. Impact of the Draft Wage Scale on Early Childhood Educator Wages**

	Alberta Average Wage with Top-Up	Proposed Wage Scale Mid-Point	Change
Level 1	\$19.97	\$22.00	\$2.03 (10%)
Level 1 in Further Education	\$19.97	\$25.00	\$5.03 (25%)
Level 2	\$23.25	\$29.00	\$5.75 (25%)
Level 3 (Diploma)	\$29.01	\$35.00	\$5.99 (21%)
Level 3 (Degree+)	\$29.01	\$37.00	\$7.99 (28%)

## Regional Considerations

The revised wage scale sets out the target wages for certified early childhood educators across the province. Based on the preliminary review of comparable wage scales for similar occupations in other related fields, including the health and education sectors, the scale may require adjustments for educators who work in regions in which there is significant competition for staff, especially from comparable sectors and for regions with significantly higher living costs.

Two amendments are proposed to accommodate labour market forces and cost of living considerations: a three to five percent premium for educators working in the Calgary region, and a smaller two to four percent premium for educators in the Edmonton region, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and the City of Grande Prairie.

In addition, the wage scale may also need to be upwardly amended for ‘special areas’ in the province in which there is a combination of exceptionally competitive labour markets or higher living costs (especially for housing). These ‘special areas’ might include the Towns of Banff, Jasper and Canmore.

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo continues to experience labour market pressures that affect the recruitment and retention of qualified early childhood educators. Since the discontinuation of the Northern Allowance for early childhood educators in 2020, disparities have emerged between the child care sector and related occupations in the health and education sectors, where comparable northern incentives remain in place. These differences may contribute to ongoing workforce challenges and warrant further consideration as part of broader efforts to strengthen workforce stability in the early learning and child care sector.



## The Accommodation of Educators Paid Above the Wage Scale Rates

The wage scale is designed to fairly and competitively compensate early childhood educators for their work by taking into account their level of education, their working roles and responsibilities and their experience or length of service in the field. The introduction of the wage scale is not intended to result in a reduction in any educator's compensation. This means that educators who currently earn above the wage scale rate for a given level/step should continue to receive their higher compensation and be eligible for increases based on the similar 'step' increases other staff receive.

## Equitable Compensation for Family Child Care Educators

The wage scale establishes fair and competitive hourly wages for certified early childhood educators working in centre-based child care. The wage scale does not currently accommodate family child care educators, the majority of whom are private contractors. The wage scale can accommodate Family Day Home Agency staff who work in consultant positions, with these educators likely to have roles and responsibilities comparable to those of a supervisory level position.

Family child care educators work under unique and complex conditions that require special consideration, including serving as the sole provider within their care environments, working extended hours, caring for mixed-age groups and carrying out additional administrative roles. AECEA recognizes the need for further research, in partnership with the Alberta Family Child Care Association, Licensed Family Day Home Agencies, and family child care educators, to develop a comparable compensation approach for family child care educators that ensures that they are fairly and competitively compensated.

## Benefits and Total Compensation

This report focuses on educators' wages and how they might be improved and become more equitable through the design and implementation of a publicly funded wage scale. AECEA also recognizes, however, the importance of improving educators' access to workplace benefits, such as pensions or retirement plans, health and dental insurance and paid leave, to help the sector recruit and retain qualified staff. Early childhood educators' limited and inequitable access to benefits contributes to the perception that working in child care is a transitory job rather than a life-long career, particularly once educators have dependents of their own to support.<sup>37</sup>

Wages, benefits and working conditions together make up educators' 'total compensation' and significantly influence their employment decisions. In focus groups with early childhood educators from across Alberta conducted in 2023, AECEA and its research partners heard that a lack of benefits and challenging working

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<sup>37</sup> The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta, Alberta Early Learning and Care Leaders' Caucus & The Muttart Foundation. (2024). *Strategies to improve the total compensation and working conditions of certified early childhood educators in Alberta*. <https://www.muttart.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Strategies-to-Improve-the-Total-Compensation-and-Working-Conditions-of-Certified-Early-Childhood-Educators-in-Alberta.pdf>

conditions contributed to educators' decisions to leave the sector.<sup>38</sup> In several communities, early childhood educators left the sector to work in the school system, where pay for educational assistants may be comparable but benefits and working conditions are better. Educators also moved to other caring professions or service jobs with similarly low wages, but fewer responsibilities and less stress.

As with wages, the historic reliance on a market-based approach to child care delivery has meant that educators' access to benefits is largely determined by individual employers.<sup>39</sup> Provincially funded benefits are limited to professional development and release time funding. Employers may choose to provide additional benefits, but in the absence of any provincial sector-wide policy and accompanying investments, access to non-wage benefits varies across the workforce.

Two-thirds of early childhood educators working in Alberta have access to non-wage benefits, compared to 78 percent Canada-wide.<sup>40</sup> Across Canada, access to benefits tends to vary by auspice and whether an educator is employed in a single or multi-site centre, with non-profit programs and multi-site centres more likely to provide benefits.<sup>41</sup> A national study of child care centres across the country found that just 62 percent of for-profit single-site centres offered any employee benefits, compared to 93 percent of not-for-profit multi-site centres.

While some other provinces and territories have created or expanded educators' retirement and health benefits, including pension plans, as part of their system building efforts, Alberta has, thus far, chosen not to take this approach.<sup>42</sup> Transforming Alberta's early learning and child care sector will require improvements to wages alongside benefits and working conditions for early childhood educators.

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38 The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta, Alberta Early Learning and Care Leaders' Caucus & The Muttart Foundation. (2024). *Strategies to improve the total compensation and working conditions of certified early childhood educators in Alberta*. <https://www.muttart.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Strategies-to-Improve-the-Total-Compensation-and-Working-Conditions-of-Certified-Early-Childhood-Educators-in-Alberta.pdf>

39 Child Care Now. (2024). *Wages, benefits and pensions: Policy recommendations developed by the National Early Learning and Child Care Workforce Policy Table*. <https://childcarenow.ca/educators-matter/wages-benefits-and-pensions/>

40 Statistics Canada. (2025). *Wages – 2025 wages*. <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/adad580f-76b0-4502-bd05-20c125de9116/resource/9da94d63-b178-4a64-aeb3-b6a3bd721ad2>

41 Statistics Canada. (2024). *Child care centre workers serving children aged 0 to 5 years in Canada, 2021 to 2022*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2024012/article/00004-eng.htm>

42 Child Care Now. (n.d.). *Policy brief: Employer pension plans in Canada's early learning and child care sector*. Retrieved March 31, 2026, from <https://childcarenow.ca/educators-matter/employer-pension-plans-in-canadas-early-learning-and-child-care-sector/>; Child Care Now. (2024). *Wages, benefits and pensions: Policy recommendations developed by the National Early Learning and Child Care Workforce Policy Table*. <https://childcarenow.ca/educators-matter/wages-benefits-and-pensions/>

# Implementing the Provincial Wage Scale for Early Childhood Educators

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The implementation of the revised and updated wage scale outlined in the current report will take time and require significant changes to how educator compensation is supported. It will depend on both new public funding and a new funding model to support its implementation. The Ministry of Education and Childcare will need to take the lead role in advancing these funding changes with the twin goals of expanding the delivery of high-quality, inclusive child care and ensuring the most effective use of public funds. In developing the current wage scale, AECEA further recognizes and affirms the rights of Indigenous governments and communities to design approaches to early learning and child care that reflect the unique cultures and needs of their communities. Indigenous governments and communities must therefore lead any work that addresses compensation for educators supported under the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework.<sup>43</sup>

Before the Ministry of Education and Childcare considers the larger funding changes required to support the implementation of a provincially funded provincial wage scale, educators and service providers will both need to provide their feedback on the proposed wage scale outlined in the current report. They will need to evaluate its fairness and its potential to support the recruitment and retention of qualified educators. In addition, service providers will also need to consider how the proposed wage scale will change their own approaches to educator compensation.

Early childhood educators will need to see that the wage scale fairly reflects their education, roles and responsibilities and experience and that it compensates them appropriately for their specialized work with young children and their families. They will further need to feel confident that a provincial wage scale will be implemented and supported in ways that advance their professional interests. Early learning and child care sectors across Canada stand out as one of the few primarily publicly funded sectors in which staff wages are currently set either by governments or by individual employers without some form of collective bargaining.<sup>44</sup> In other publicly funded sectors, such as education and health care, it is commonly unions or other professional bodies which play important roles in collectively bargaining on behalf of their members' interests. This is also the case in Quebec's longer established child care system. In Alberta, the approach for determining fair compensation for educators will need to look different. The professional associations who represent educators are perhaps best placed to seek educator input and advice on their compensation and then, based on this input and advice, to work with the provincial government, the primary funder of services, to reach consensus on what constitutes fair and competitive compensation for educators.

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<sup>43</sup> Government of Canada. (2022). *Indigenous early learning and child care framework*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/indigenous-early-learning/2018-framework.html>

<sup>44</sup> Child Care Now. (2024). *Wages, benefits and pensions: Policy recommendations developed by the National Early Learning and Child Care Workforce Policy Table*. <https://childcarenow.ca/educators-matter/wages-benefits-and-pensions/>



In addition to educators, service providers will also need to provide their input and comments on the proposed wage scale, considering amongst other things its potential to help them recruit and retain the qualified staff they need to deliver high-quality child care. They will also need to reflect on the changes it will bring to their current approaches to staff compensation.

The proposed provincial wage scale will be implemented in a service sector that is diverse and fragmented. The close to 2,000 organizations that deliver regulated child care, including those providing school-age care, include stand-alone single-site organizations and those that are part of larger chains – including franchises, single organizations with multiple service sites and organizations that offer multiple services including child care. Most of these organizations are privately owned for-profit and non-profit businesses, many of which are smaller ‘family owned’ enterprises. Others are larger businesses or corporations, some of which are funded through private equity. There are also community-based organizations, governed by community boards, made up of parents and community members, as well as a small number of centres owned and operated by public entities.

These organizations currently have different wage rates or scales in place, shaped, in large measure, by their business models. The resources they allocate to staffing vary, as do the ways in which they approach staff compensation. In a small number of cases, educator wages have been determined through a collective bargaining process. Broadly, a publicly funded provincial wage scale for educators will require service providers to approach and support their staff compensation in ways that are more consistent across the sector – an approach that is commonplace in other publicly funded sectors, such as education.

As outlined above, the Ministry of Education and Childcare will need to provide new public investments to support the wage scale and develop a new funding model to disburse these monies in ways that ensure the most effective use of public funds. A full costing of the proposed wage scale was not undertaken as part of the current work. The estimated annual staffing costs, including basic mandatory employment related costs, for a 100-space centre, with a staff team of 22 to 24 full-time equivalent educators (comprising a mix of Level 1, 2 and 3 educators, as well as two staff in management/administration roles), under the proposed wage scale would be between \$1.5 and \$1.6 million using the mid-point hourly wages set out in the scale. This represents an increase of around 20 to 25 percent based on the estimated current staffing costs for the same centre using the existing average hourly wage rates for certified educators.

For the workforce as a whole, the total estimated annual cost for early childhood educator compensation under the wage scale for educators working in centre-based child care is in the region of \$1.7 billion. This estimate is based on wages set at the mid-point of the scale and a provision for basic mandatory employment

related costs. Additional monies would also be required to provide the over 2,600 family child care educators with a comparable level of compensation.

To successfully implement the scale, service providers will require sufficient, dedicated supply-side funding to cover a substantial portion of their staffing costs (based on the size and composition of their staff teams). The current ‘revenue replacement’ funding approach, which primarily distributes funding through an Affordability Grant, with additional funding support through the Early Childhood Educator Workforce Supports Program, will need to be replaced with a ‘cost-based’ funding model or formula. This funding model or formula will need to cover a substantial portion of service delivery costs, including staffing, with the remainder covered by a flat rate (or average) parent-paid fee.

The new funding model or formula should provide service providers with funding that reflects the actual costs of service delivery, including for staffing, which make up between 65 and 80 percent of service costs.<sup>45</sup> The current funding models in Prince Edward Island and Ontario provide possible examples or approaches that the Ministry of Education and Childcare could adapt or modify to fit Alberta’s funding landscape. Similarly, the funding model the Ministry currently uses for Early Childhood Services could provide another funding option or approach.

The new funding model should include dedicated funding for staffing costs and should not result in service providers having to hire educators with either lower certification levels or with less experience to reduce their operational costs. The importance of qualified educators to the delivery of high-quality, inclusive child care makes it essential that dedicated public investments in staffing form the foundation of any new funding model.

Given the above, it will take time to fully implement a publicly funded provincial wage scale for educators – potentially up to five years. An initial step might, therefore, be to ensure that all educators receive, at minimum, compensation that meets the step one hourly wages set out in the scale for the various proposed levels. All service providers would need to commit to meet these initial minimum wage rates. Educators whose compensation is currently higher than the step one hourly rates would continue to receive this higher compensation. The funding for the full implementation of the wage scale would then be introduced over a period of up to four fiscal years. This would provide a level of certainty both for educators and service providers. The Ministry of Education and Childcare would further commit to index the wage scale to inflation over this period and beyond, to ensure that educators’ wages remain competitive with other occupations, including those in related fields.

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<sup>45</sup> Statistics Canada. (2024). *Child care centre workers serving children aged 0 to 5 years in Canada, 2021 to 2022*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2024012/article/00004-eng.htm>; Mitchell, L., Botes, V., & Kamenarac, O. (2025). Early childhood education as a public good: Challenges and possibilities. *Early Childhood Folio*, 29(2), 8-14. <https://doi.org/10.18296/ecf.1158>

# Conclusion

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Since AECEA released its first wage grid report in 2023, Canada has seen significant shifts in how early childhood educators are compensated for their vital work with young children and families. During the first five years of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements across Canada, wage scales have gone from being an exception within Canada’s early learning and child care sectors to a central pillar of provinces and territories’ workforce strategies to increase the size and capacity of their child care workforces. Today, Alberta is one of just two provinces which have yet to implement or commit to a wage scale for their early learning and child care workforces.

AECEA remains committed to working with early childhood educators and other stakeholders to advocate for higher education standards, better wages and working conditions and comprehensive system supports that will enable educators to support the delivery of high-quality early learning and child care for all children and their families. The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements signed in 2021 and 2022 provide the basis for a redesign of how early learning and child care services are organized, financed and delivered. Central to this redesign are new investments in the workforce with the larger goal of ensuring that the specialized nature of professional early childhood educators’ work with young children and their families is more fairly and appropriately valued. Early childhood educators deserve to be paid fair and competitive wages. A publicly funded provincial wage scale, supported and endorsed by educators and service providers, represents an important step towards realizing this goal.



# Appendix A

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## ***Notes on Data Sources for Wage Comparisons***

The occupational data for non-early childhood educator occupations in Alberta were derived from the Job Bank website maintained by Statistics Canada, updated November 2025.<sup>46</sup>

Wage data for early childhood educators broken down by level were obtained from the Government of Alberta website (updated September 2024) and include wage top-up.<sup>47</sup>

The percentage of early childhood educators receiving benefits is from the Statistics Canada Job Bank website for educators working in Alberta across all certification levels, and is the percentage of educators receiving at least one type of non-wage benefits. This can include employer-sponsored pension plans; dental, medical and life insurance plans; leave entitlements such as maternity, parental or caregiver leave; sick days and vacation days; and employer contributions to the Employment Insurance program.

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<sup>46</sup> Statistics Canada. (2025). *Wages – 2025 wages*. <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/adad580f-76b0-4502-bd05-20c125de9116/resource/9da94d63-b178-4a64-aeb3-b6a3bd721ad2>

<sup>47</sup> Government of Alberta. (n.d.). *Alberta child care grant funding program*. Retrieved March 31, 2026, from <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-child-care-grant-funding-program>

**Table 6. Hourly Wages in Alberta for Selected Occupations Requiring High School or Less**

<b>NOC Code</b>	<b>Occupation Title</b>	<b>Low Hourly Wage</b>	<b>Avg. Hourly Wage</b>	<b>Median Hourly Wage</b>	<b>High Hourly Wage</b>	<b>Percent with Benefits</b>
<b>NOC_14100</b>	General office support workers	\$15.50	\$26.38	\$25.00	\$36.13	75%
<b>NOC_64410</b>	Security guards and related security service occupations	\$17.25	\$24.60	\$21.00	\$38.00	81.6%
<b>NOC_64400</b>	Customer service representatives – financial institutions	\$18.50	\$24.21	\$22.56	\$32.00	83.8%
<b>NOC_64409</b>	Other customer and information services representatives	\$15.50	\$23.69	\$22.00	\$33.33	79.9%
<b>NOC_54100</b>	Program leaders and instructors in recreation, sport and fitness	\$15.50	\$23.39	\$20.00	\$35.00	39.3%
<b>NOC_65312</b>	Janitors, caretakers and heavy-duty cleaners	\$15.00	\$21.66	\$20.03	\$28.00	72.2%
<b>NOC_44101</b>	Home support workers, caregivers and related occupations	\$15.50	\$20.69	\$20.00	\$25.25	52.9%
<b>NOC_65210</b>	Support occupations in accommodation, travel and facilities set-up services	\$15.00	\$19.42	\$18.20	\$26.08	N/A
<b>Part of NOC_42202</b>	Level 1 early childhood educators	-	\$19.97	-	-	66.9%

**Table 7. Hourly Wages in Alberta for Selected Occupations Requiring a <Two-Year Certificate**

NOC Code	Occupation Title	Low Hourly Wage	Avg. Hourly Wage	Median Hourly Wage	High Hourly Wage	Percent with Benefits
NOC_63100	Insurance agents and brokers	\$23.08	\$36.24	\$31.70	\$54.95	95.8%
NOC_63102	Financial sales representatives	\$20.00	\$35.56	\$32.67	\$57.69	93.8%
NOC_13100	Administrative officers	\$21.00	\$32.92	\$30.77	\$48.08	88.4%
NOC_33100	Dental assistants and dental laboratory assistants	\$24.00	\$32.04	\$32.00	\$38.00	73.9%
NOC_43100	Elementary and secondary school teacher assistants	\$17.00	\$23.00	\$23.66	\$30.22	74.6%
NOC_33103	Pharmacy technical assistants and pharmacy assistants	\$15.05	\$20.48	\$20.00	\$25.60	N/A
Part of NOC_42202	Level 2 early childhood educators	-	\$23.35	-	-	66.9%

**Table 8. Hourly Wages in Alberta for Selected Occupations Requiring a Two-Year Diploma**

NOC Code	Occupation Title	Low Hourly Wage	Avg. Hourly Wage	Median Hourly Wage	High Hourly Wage	Percent with Benefits
NOC_32120	Medical laboratory technologists	\$25.00	\$42.33	\$45.79	\$50.00	100%
NOC_42200	Paralegals and related occupations	\$25.96	\$40.34	\$33.65	\$55.00	72.7%
NOC_12100	Executive Assistants	\$26.92	\$38.32	\$35.00	\$48.08	96.6%
NOC_32102	Paramedical occupations	\$27.00	\$37.26	\$35.70	\$50.00	92.7%
NOC_32101	Licensed practical nurses	\$25.80	\$31.58	\$32.00	\$36.00	99.6%
NOC_62101	Retail and wholesale buyers	\$19.23	\$29.08	\$28.73	\$38.46	N/A
NOC_42201	Social and community service workers	\$18.00	\$26.54	\$24.32	\$37.21	81.8%
Part of NOC_42202	Level 3 early childhood educators	-	\$29.01	-	-	66.9%

**Table 9. Hourly Wages in Alberta for Selected Occupations Requiring a Four-Year Degree**

<b>NOC Code</b>	<b>Occupation Title</b>	<b>Low Hourly Wage</b>	<b>Avg. Hourly Wage</b>	<b>Median Hourly Wage</b>	<b>High Hourly Wage</b>	<b>Percent with Benefits</b>
NOC_41220	Secondary school teachers	\$32.97	\$47.43	\$47.12	\$60.44	97.4%
NOC_31301	Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses	\$30.00	\$44.99	\$47.50	\$54.49	91.7%
NOC_41221	Elementary school and kindergarten teachers	\$24.62	\$38.77	\$38.46	\$52.75	95.5%
NOC_31121	Dietitians and nutritionists	\$32.33	N/A	\$46.24	\$57.46	N/A
NOC_41300	Social Workers	\$23.97	\$38.62	\$39.60	\$51.24	90.3%
Part of NOC_42202	Level 3 early childhood educators	-	\$29.01	-	-	66.9%

**Table 10. Hourly Wages in Alberta for Selected Supervisory/Administrative Occupations Requiring a Minimum Two-Year Diploma**

NOC Code	Occupation Title	Low Hourly Wage	Avg. Hourly Wage	Median Hourly Wage	High Hourly Wage	Percent with Benefits
NOC_31300	Nursing coordinators and supervisors	\$32.81	N/A	\$49.75	\$61.43	100%
NOC_40030	Managers in social, community and correctional services	\$25.00	\$47.75	\$46.67	\$72.58	88.8%
NOC_12011	Supervisors, finance and insurance office workers	\$26.65	\$39.34	\$36.06	\$59.37	100%
NOC_12101	Human resources and recruitment officers	\$24.04	\$38.31	\$34.62	\$55.38	93.2%
NOC_12010	Supervisors, general office and administrative support workers	\$24.00	\$33.00	\$30.00	\$44.30	79.4%
NOC_12200	Accounting technicians and bookkeepers	\$20.00	\$32.94	\$30.00	\$50.96	77.9%
Part of NOC_42202	Level 3 early childhood educators	-	\$29.01	-	-	66.9%

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