

SECTION 3



Provide Universal Access to Before and After School Care on School Grounds

In 2011, the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the Early Childhood Educators of BC created the *Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning*, popularly known and widely supported as the \$10aDay Plan. Ten years later we released our Roadmap; a framework detailing the next steps of \$10aDay implementation.

Now, with significant new \$10aDay child care commitments from the provincial and federal governments, we have updated the Roadmap and made it more accessible through individual, policy focused sections. This section details how government can provide universal access to before and after school care on school grounds.

The entire Roadmap to \$10aDay can be found at 10aday.ca/roadmap

THE PROMISE TO WORK TOWARD universal access to school-age care on school grounds is an urgent and doable first step on the road to universal access for all children under 12 whose families choose it. It has multiple benefits and allows school districts to begin delivering child care for an age group they already know and serve.

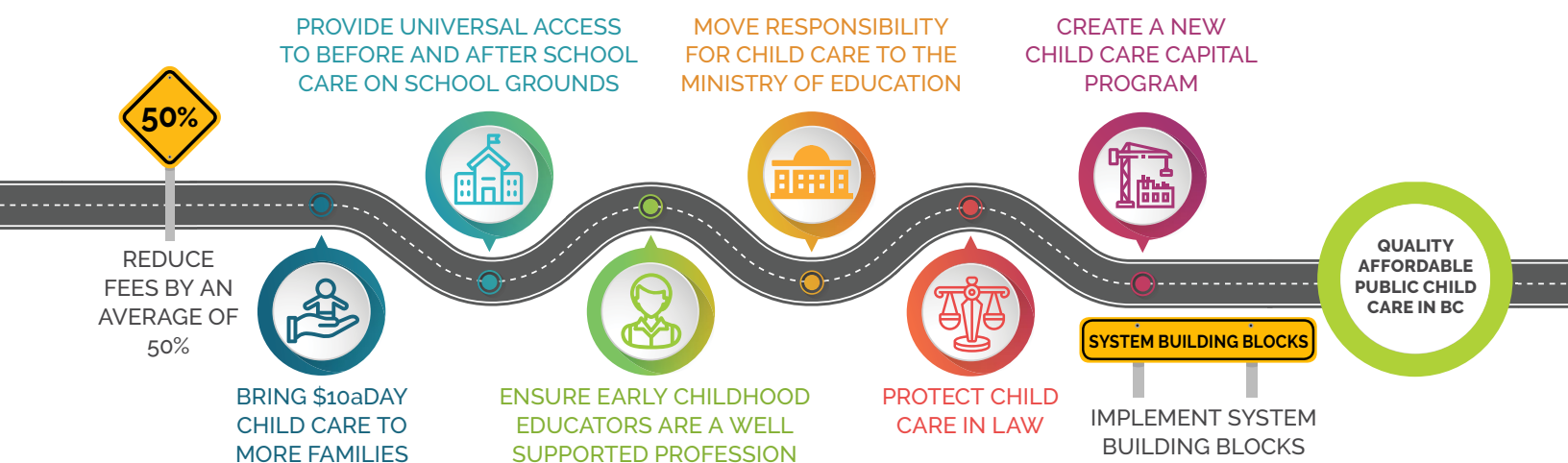
As government meets its election commitment to universal child care it is in the school-age sector where the greatest number of new spaces will be required (based on population data) and where there is the most opportunity for rapid successful expansion through existing elementary schools.

Children, including those with extra support needs, will have fewer transitions between their before and after school care and their school day. As promised during the election, parents will “know their children are safe at one place for the full work day.” Educators delivering school-age care will deepen their relationship with teachers as they implement the Early Learning Framework, and communities will make more effective use of public facilities.

Regrettably, the recently signed bilateral agreement between BC and Canada only addresses the child care needs of children under the age of six. This means that BC is now responsible for delivering on this crucial election commitment.

As school-age care is an integral part of the \$10aDay Plan, government should transition eligible and willing school-age programs in public and non-profit owned facilities into the new system under the same conditions outlined for other child care programs (see Section 2 of the

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The Roadmap providing a level of policy detail required to create a quality system for BC. Download it at 10aday.ca/roadmap

Roadmap). Issues should be resolved for programs in privately owned facilities as outlined in Section 7. The success of government's commitment to build the \$10aDay system depends on a multi-year capital budget and community plans plan for building public and non-profit owned facilities.

To effectively deliver on this school-age care promise, government must:

- Establish a legislated mandate for school districts to develop and deliver on-site school-age care;
- Develop new on-site child care programs delivered, wherever possible, directly by school districts or, where this is not possible, by an experienced, non-profit, child care organization selected through a transparent process;
- Move away from landlord/tenant relationships for those programs currently renting space in schools to partnership agreements that support the integration of school-age care into the broader education community;
- Establish and provide access to appropriate educational qualifications and wage rates for those working in school-age care; and
- Implement the four system building blocks (see Section 8 of the Roadmap).

And, to ensure that older children have access to programs that respond to their needs and interests, BC must develop a learning framework for 9–12 year olds that supports the integration of school-age care for these children within the broader learning community.

We propose a **four-pronged approach** to providing universal access to school-age care:

1. Expand use of existing kindergarten/primary classrooms for before and after school care;
2. Transition existing on-site school-age programs into the \$10aDay system;
3. Open new publicly delivered school-age programs on school grounds; and
4. Engage with existing off-site school-age providers to support their integration into the broader learning community.

1. Expand use of existing classrooms for before and after school care

The most effective way to quickly extend access to school-age care is to license existing kindergarten/primary and other appropriate classrooms for child care with resulting new programs operated directly by the school district. This will require:

- The new province-wide expedited **licensing protocol**, developed with the Ministry of Health which enables the use of spaces that are safe for children from 9 am to 3 pm to be deemed safe for their use before and after regular school hours. The licensing protocol must respect existing group size, child/staff ratios, and other quality provisions.
- **Respectful dialogue** with teachers and the BC Teachers' Federation to ensure that collaborative use of classroom space is voluntary and builds on examples of success where shared space is working well.
- **Understanding** that the child care program is as necessary and as welcome in the school community as kindergarten and other permanent programs in the Ministry of Education.
- **Minor capital funds** for appropriate equipment and modifications to the space, to address the unique needs of quality school-age child care programs.

Once classrooms are licensed, school districts can deliver **two models of school-age care**:

- **Extended day:** This model provides before and after school early learning and care programs in existing kindergarten/primary classrooms. For the most part, staff providing these programs would be employees of the school district, although an on-site school-age child care provider could — through a partnership agreement — increase capacity to deliver and staff an extended day program.

- **Seamless day:** This model, initiated in School District 53 and now expanded to over 20 districts, provides before and after school early learning and care in kindergarten and Grade 1 classrooms. Two early childhood educators, employed by the school district, partner with the teacher. One ECE begins the day's program for children whose families require care before traditional school hours, and remains with the class for the morning. The second ECE joins the class for the afternoon and continues the child care program for children whose families require care after traditional school hours.

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In some districts, the extended day model may be an easier place to start. The decision about which model to begin with should take into consideration: the readiness of the school district to deliver child care; the relationships between ECE professionals and teachers; the potential impact on the ECE workforce, the age of the children, and the status of existing school-age programs in the district. The seamless day supports an integrated implementation of BC's Early Learning Framework and strengthens professional partnerships between ECEs and teachers. As such, it should be the province-wide goal for kindergarten and Grade 1.

Given the severe and worsening recruitment and retention crisis in the ECE sector and the expansion of school-age programs, a transition strategy¹ for staffing will need to be implemented. This transition must be time-limited and incorporate pathways for those working with school-age children to articulate their lived expertise and existing credentials toward completion of an ECE diploma.

2. Transition existing on-site school-age programs into the \$10aDay system

By definition, all existing school-age child care programs located in public schools already operate in publicly owned facilities.

These programs should be integrated in the same way outlined in Section 2 for transitioning all child care programs in publicly owned facilities into \$10aDay sites, including:

- **A consistent funding formula** based on a maximum parent fee of \$7 per day for part-day care and \$10 per day for full-day care provided during school breaks and/or PD days, along with an educator wage grid. As with a funding formula for younger children, the school-age formula will cover the key operating costs: human resources, programming, facilities, and administration.
- **Consistent policies and procedures** appropriate to school-age care.
- **School-age care participation** in community/neighbourhood child care networks.

Where appropriate, existing operators could choose to transfer their license to the school district. This will lead to a more cohesive system of on-site school-age care. Where this is not appropriate, school districts should enter into partnership agreements (see Section 8 of the Roadmap) with existing providers.

3. Open new publicly delivered school-age programs on school grounds as \$10aDay sites

To deliver universal access, government will need to increase the capacity for participation in school-age care. This includes the following actions:

- **Invest capital funds** to build child care into new public schools, renovate existing school space for child care, and purchase custom-designed modular units to place on public school grounds; and
- **Open all new programs as \$10aDay sites** (\$7 per day for part-day care) under the same conditions outlined above for new programs for children before they enter kindergarten.

4. Engage with existing community-based school-age providers

Engaging with existing community-based school-age providers will support their integration with the broader learning community. Expansion should focus on unmet needs without eroding current programs. Existing school-age care providers not located in or on school grounds must also be supported as the new system evolves. Current programs should transition to \$10aDay under the same opportunities and conditions outlined in Section 2. Care must be taken to ensure that existing providers and the School Age Child Care Association of BC are engaged in the community planning process.

¹ Section 4 outlines a recommended transition strategy to address the recruitment and retention crisis in the sector.



FOUR SYSTEM BUILDING BLOCKS (see Section 8 of the Roadmap) are also required to integrate new and existing school-age programs:

- An equitable funding formula;
- Common operating policies and procedures;
- Community/neighbourhood child care networks; and
- Partnership agreements between school districts and child care providers.

Government needs to establish a prompt cut off date, after which programs that open in privately owned facilities or outside of a community plan will not be guaranteed access to \$10aDay new operating funds. This date needs to be clearly signalled well in advance, giving potential operators ample time to make informed decisions. Consistent information about this cut off date needs to be communicated by licensing officers, child care resource and referral programs, and on government websites.

TIMELINE for universal access to before and after school care on school grounds

PHASE 1 (January to December 2022)

Given that school-age care is not covered by the new bilateral agreement, BC must ensure adequate funds in BC Budget 2022 and beyond. Working with school districts, these funds should be used to:

- Develop annual targets, informed by community plans, for expanding access to new school-age programs and license existing school space and/or new modular buildings to meet these targets;
- Open new non-profit/public school-age facilities that receive public capital funds as \$10aDay programs;
- Reduce fees in school-age care by an average of 50 per cent by December 2022, by extending the CCFRI to school-age programs;
- Include school-age care in the equitable funding formula and common policies and protocols;

- Develop partnership agreements between on-site school-age providers and school districts;
- Begin development of a learning framework for 9–12 year olds;
- Expand access to the Introduction to School Age Child Care² course as an initial qualification standard for new school-age educators; and
- Develop an appropriate provincial wage grid for school-age educators.

Until school-age programs are able to transition into \$10aDay sites, government should continue to provide operating funding to those currently receiving it, with annual cost of living increases provided. Families using these services will remain eligible for the Affordable Child Care Benefit.

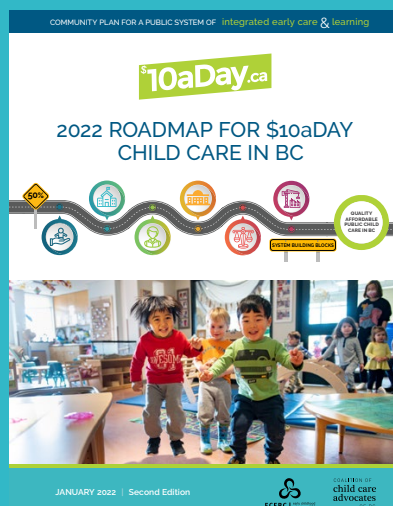
PHASE 2 (January 2023 to March 2026)

- Complete and implement the new learning framework for 9–12 year olds.
- Through the public post-secondary articulation process, integrate the provision of school-age education into the core curriculum of ECE diploma programs with advanced credits for those who have already completed the introductory course.
- Before April 1, 2026, government needs to make long-term policy and funding decisions about its relationship with licensed child care programs that choose to operate outside the new \$10aDay system. ■



Download the full timeline for the Roadmap at 10aday.ca/roadmap

- 2 This course, currently offered through Vancouver Community College, should be available for credit at this and other public post-secondary institutions across the province and online.



2022 ROADMAP FOR \$10aDAY CHILD CARE IN BC

Second Edition | January 2022

We put the Roadmap forward in full support of the rights and jurisdiction of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples to design, develop, and deliver early care and learning services that meet their needs. We commit to listen and learn in our ongoing work to decolonize our own practices and perspectives.

COALITION OF
**child care
advocates**
OF BC

ECEBC | early childhood
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Download the full Roadmap at
10aday.ca/roadmap

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