

## SECTION 5

# Move Responsibility for Child Care to the Ministry of Education



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 move responsibility for child care to the Ministry of Education.

The entire Roadmap to \$10aDay can be found at [10aday.ca/roadmap](https://10aday.ca/roadmap)

### THE 2020 ELECTION PROMISE TO MOVE CHILD CARE TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

from the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) provided real hope that government is committed to system building. Given the history of colonization and the multi-generational impacts of residential schools, change must begin with the recognition that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples have the right and jurisdiction to determine the governance and delivery of their own, distinct child care services.

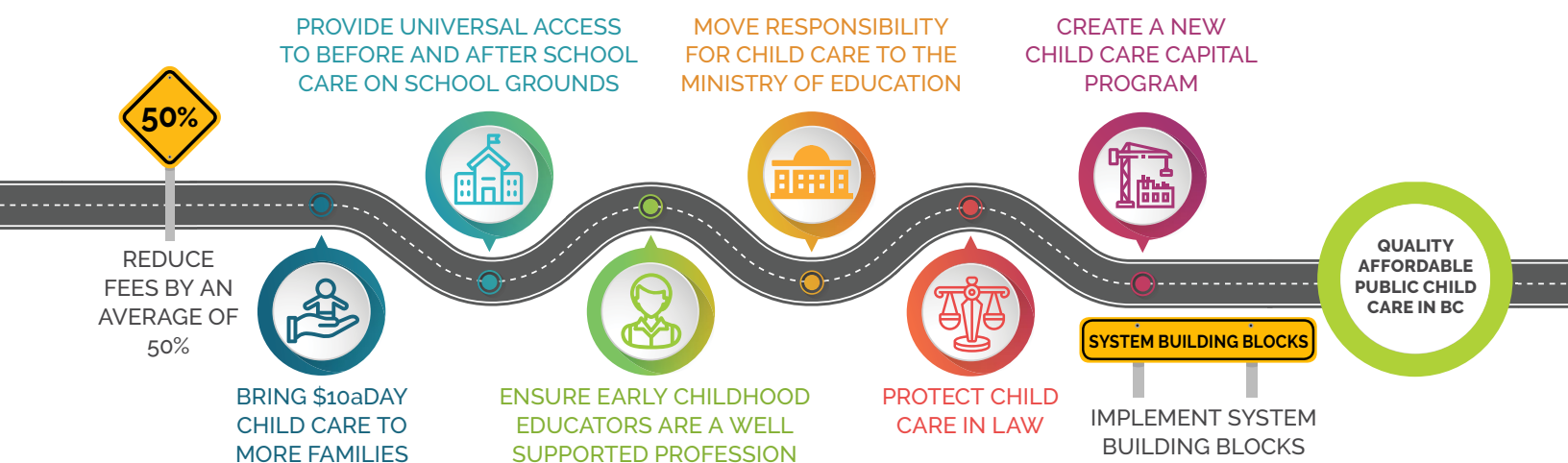
The ministerial mandate letters post-2020 election committed BC to moving child care to the Ministry of Education by April 2023. We recommend this necessary

move happen in 2022. Over the last four years it has become clear that, despite the efforts of dedicated individuals, the Ministry of Children and Family Development does not have the tools required to build a universal, public system. The

ongoing use of one-off, market-based approaches and business incentives led to unprecedented growth of for-profit child care and further fragmentation of the child care sector. The decision to delay the move to the Ministry of Education makes system building more difficult and poses real challenges for integrating child care with the broader learning environment.

Most recently, the BC government indicated it will create six regional offices within the Ministry of Education with responsibility for child care. We did not recommend this approach because school districts already have democratic governance, planning, and research infrastructure and the capacity to integrate child care into a public,

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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](https://10aday.ca/roadmap)

universal system. However, given this decision, it is essential that regional offices are established on an interim basis with the principal goal of supporting the full transition of child care as an equal partner at the school district level. Regional offices should be staffed by people with child care expertise and existing relationships with community-based child care programs. They should engage with child care resource and referral programs and local governments to begin proactive planning, development, and coordination of existing and new child care programs and help move the sector toward consistent provincial policies and procedures.

We will continue to evaluate this and other child care initiatives by measuring progress toward full integration of and respect for child care and early childhood educators as strong and equal partners in the K–12 system.

BC's K–12 public education system has the infrastructure, experience, and capacity required to build a public system of child care including: a legislated, universal right to participate; public funding for and democratic control of the system; a respected, highly educated workforce; and a high level of public

**BC's K–12 public education system has the infrastructure, experience, and capacity required to build a public system of child care including: a legislated, universal right to participate; public funding for and democratic control of the system; a respected, highly educated workforce; and a high level of public understanding of, and experience with, the system.**

understanding of, and experience with, the system. By implementing a strong transition plan, as outlined below, these foundational elements enable the Ministry of Education to "oversee delivery of all child care initiatives and funding, manage a capital investment program to build more new programs, and ensure quality care through ongoing curriculum enhancements" as outlined in the 2020 NDP election platform.

National and international research confirms that effective systems integrate child care and education as strong and equal partners. Government must ensure that the move to education honours and respects the rights of young children and the professionals who work with them. The move should be supported by dedicated early childhood pedagogists and public policy expertise with adequate public funding.

## Integrate child care into education with a transition plan

Transitioning child care to the Ministry of Education requires a thoughtful, engaged process based on an understanding that the move will require growth and change for all stakeholders. This suggests the need for a process comparable to the introduction of BC's new K–12 curriculum with multi-year implementation, flexibility, professional development, and the opportunity to learn as we go. The process needs to be accountable to those working in both sectors as it supports the readiness of school districts, staff, administrators, and communities to take on their new responsibilities in respectful ways. While the transition will begin with new regional offices, the goal must remain a strong and equal partnership between child care and public education at the school district level.

The \$10aDay Plan and recent position papers from ECEBC and SACCA<sup>1</sup> provide specific strategies to guide a successful integration of child care with the Ministry of Education. Clear and consistent communication from and with government ministries, the child care sector, the education sector, and all stakeholders will be critical to the success of this transition.

**Initial key steps** include:

- Establish, on an interim basis, regional offices with child care expertise, to begin system building with school districts;
- Amend the new Early Learning and Child Care Act to enshrine the right of access to child care in law, mandate school districts as the local democratic governing body of all licensed child care in their district, and recognize, support, and respect the profession of early childhood education — amendments should be based on the fundamental principles of a universal, public system and aligned with BC's Early Learning Framework (see Section 6 of the Roadmap);
- Move the Minister of State for Child Care, experienced provincial staff, and annual child care operating budgets into the Ministry of Education's Early Learning Division by April 1, 2022;
- Develop new 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;
- Initiate and support an ongoing dialogue between early childhood educators, primary teachers, and other educational stakeholders, through their respective organizations, about the strengths each profession brings to implementing BC's Early Learning Framework, and the recommended framework for children aged 9–12;
- Begin developing protocols by which early childhood educators and teachers will work together as strong and equal partners in integrated programs;
- Develop child care expertise at the school district level along with local child care councils,<sup>2</sup> a dedicated elected trustee on each board of education, professional development for administrators, teachers, and other staff, and community awareness campaigns;

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1 ECEBC, "Position Paper for: Integrating the Early Childhood Education Professional and Programs into the Ministry of Education," November 2020; SACCA BC, "Position Paper for: Integrating the Early Childhood Education Professional and Programs into the Ministry of Education," September 2021.

2 District child care councils would bring together public partners, elected officials, the child care sector, and community representatives to develop and implement district wide child care plans.

- Create a new, major capital budget for child care within the Ministry of Education, separate from the child care operating budget and from the capital budget for K–12 (see Section 7); and
- Support each district to develop multi-year plans for child care expansion based on needs assessments and recent child care planning undertaken by municipalities in conjunction with the Union of BC Municipalities.

Effective integration of child care and education is key to building the system that BC needs. For this reason, elements that support a successful transition to the Ministry of Education are reflected throughout this Roadmap. All actions taken while child care remains in the Ministry of Children and Family Development must lead toward the integration of child care into the broader learning environment: neither ministry should make unilateral decisions.

## **TIMELINE** for moving responsibility for child care to the Ministry of Education

### **PHASE 1** (January to December 2022)

- Establish regional offices on an interim basis.
- With support from regional offices, implement the initial steps outlined above with a priority on supporting the capacity of school districts to take on child care responsibilities.
- Provide adequate funds in BC Budget 2022 to expand and support school-age care (school-age care is not funded through the federal bilateral agreement).
- Begin to develop and implement the system building blocks for programs delivered by and through school districts (see Section 8).



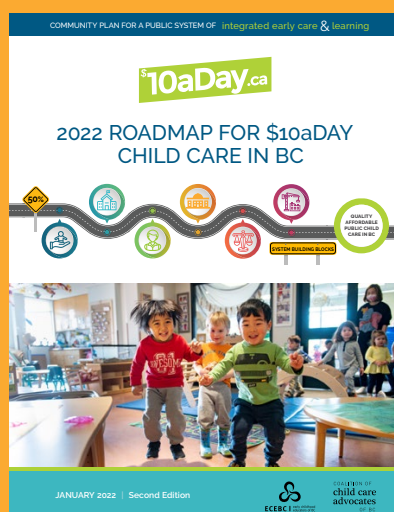


## PHASE 2 (January 2023 to March 2026)

- Move responsibility from regional offices to newly mandated school districts as the local democratic governing body of all licensed child care in their district, other than Indigenous governing bodies and organizations.
- Implement a child care major capital budget and planning process within the Ministry of Education, informed by community plans.
- Implement common policies and procedures for all programs.
- Implement partnership agreements with child care programs that are not directly delivered by school districts.
- Support and develop community/neighbourhood networks that bring child care providers (on and off site) into their local education system as strong and equal partners. ■



Download the full timeline for the Roadmap at [10aday.ca/roadmap](https://10aday.ca/roadmap)



## 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  
educators of BC

Download the full Roadmap at  
[10aday.ca/roadmap](https://10aday.ca/roadmap)

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