

Catch up with the AECEO!

Spring 2025 Policy & Community Update



THE AECEO FIGHTS FOR RESPECT & RECOGNITION FOR EARLY YEARS PROFESSIONALS



Established in 1950, the Nursery Education Association of Ontario (NEAO) was a response to the lack of government regulation and formal training for day nursery staff. Between 1950 and 1965, the NEAO was a key player in developing and expanding training courses for preschool teachers, including programs for those already working in the field. In the late 60s, the organization was officially renamed the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario (AECEO) to better reflect the scope of the work. As a professional association, our role is to **represent the interests of the ECE profession** in policy and decision making spaces.

Through our government relations, public education, and community building initiatives, the AECEO is working towards the **systemic change needed to achieve professional wages and better working conditions for all** early childhood educators, child care workers and early years professionals in Ontario. While a lot has changed since our foundation 75 years ago, **our work remains dedicated to supporting YOU**, the professionals who make early learning & child care (ELCC) possible.

Access to **this seasonal newsletter will soon become exclusive to members**. Starting this Fall, following the release of the newsletter, AECEO members will be invited to join seasonal **Membership Community Check-ins**, where we will discuss recent policy changes, answer questions and offer opportunities for members to get more involved with our work. Sharing information about the policy developments that directly affect ECEs and the ELCC sector is a important element of our role as your association. If you find our policy and community updates helpful, [become a member today!](#)

SAVE THE DATE: AECEO MEMBERS RETREAT MAY 29TH TO 31ST, 2026!

Now is a great time to **join or renew your membership!** Not only are we updating our website and adding new perks to membership plans, we're also planning the first ever **AECEO Members Retreat in May 2026!**

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!](#)



FEDERAL UPDATES

RECAPPING THE FEDERAL ELECTION

A new federal government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Mark Carney, was elected on April 28th. In May, Prime Minister Carney announced the new federal cabinet and introduced the roles of Secretaries of State to provide dedicated leadership on key issues and priorities within their minister's portfolio. The AECEO would like to congratulate the Honourable Patty Hadju on her appointment as Minister of Jobs and Families, Anna Gainey on her appointment as secretary of state for Children and Youth, and Leslie Church on her appointment as parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Jobs and Families and to the secretary of state for Children and Youth. We look forward to working with the new minister and secretaries of state **in advancing decent work and professional pay for the ELCC workforce.**



We are encouraged by recent indicators that the new federal government will continue to support ELCC system-building across Canada. In their election platform, the federal Liberal party declared they would **"Ensure ELCC providers have good wages**, which is *critical* to keeping child care centres staffed. We will work with provinces and territories so that workers have predictable wage increases and investments in pensions and benefits programs." Further, the Speech from the Throne, which sets out priorities for the current government, indicated that the government will continue to protect programs like child care in order to build a more affordable Canada.

In March, Prime Minister Carney announced the elimination of the Minister for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) in his new cabinet. The goal of WAGE is to "advance gender equality, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression through the inclusion of people of all genders in Canada's economic, social, and political life". While WAGE is not the department directly responsible for ELCC, the elimination of a cabinet position specifically dedicated to advancing gender equality was cause for concern for advocates: not only is ECE a *highly feminized* profession, the lack of appropriate ELCC services *disproportionately impacts women*. More than 200 women's groups and organizations came together to speak out in opposition of this decision. **Advocates won:** in May, the position was reinstated.

Why federal politics matter to early childhood educators: While education and child care fall under the responsibility of provincial and territorial governments, the introduction of sustained federal funding for ELCC through the \$10aDay system means that **changes at the federal level can have a significant impact on educators and their workplaces**, including those not working directly within the system.



The AECEO brings YOUR perspectives to decision-makers! On ECE Appreciation Day 2024, the AECEO & the OCBCC hosted a members-only webinar where then Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, the Honourable Jenna Sudds, participated in a roundtable with RECEs. **Watch the recording here!**

IMPORTANT UPDATES FROM OTHER PROVINCES & TERRITORIES

MANITOBA INTRODUCING WAGE GRID FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS



In May, the Manitoba Government announced **increases to ECE wages and the introduction of a recommended wage grid**. Through the Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, the governments of Canada and Manitoba will provide an additional \$60.4 million (\$56.2 million from the federal government, \$4.2 million from the province) to support the wage increase for both ECEs and child care assistants. **Manitoba's new wage grid sets target wages** for various positions within the early learning and child care sector, and will **provide guidance to employers in developing equitable and competitive salary scales** across employee positions/classifications. A provincial wage grid helps ensure consistent and better wages because it **sets standards for how much staff are paid** based on their position/classification. In addition, the policy also states **the funding provided must be used to increase wages**.

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE ACT PASSES IN THE YUKON

Amazing news from the Yukon territory: on May 1st, 2025, the Yukon Legislative Assembly approved Bill No. 48, the Early Learning and Child Care Act (2025). Developed through extensive collaboration with early childhood educators, families, Yukon First Nations, and stakeholders, the new *Act* enshrines in law the principles of quality, accessibility and inclusivity. This is the first time Yukon's early childhood educators and the process for their certification are officially recognized in law. The new legislation also includes **measures to ensure licensed child care providers pay educators fair wages**, with regulations outlining how wages are calculated.

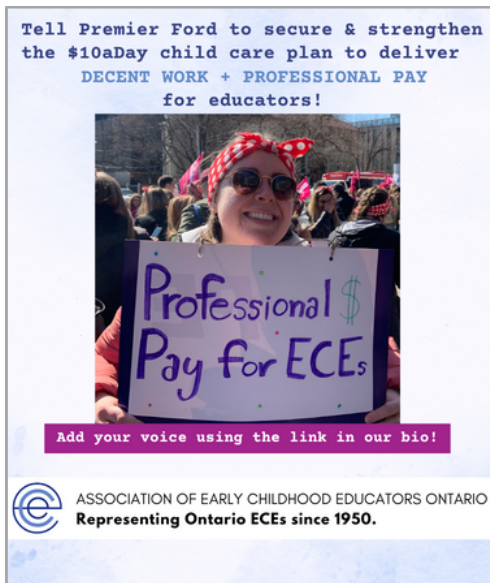
Why this matters to ECEs in Ontario: Manitoba's new wage grid and Yukon's new legislation are examples of what can be achieved when provinces and territories **work in collaboration with the federal government to support the ELCC workforce**. The AECEO is thrilled for Manitoba and Yukon educators, and we hope to see more **policy changes that prioritize ECEs in ELCC system-building** in other jurisdictions across the country. Huge congratulations to our colleagues at the Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) and the Early Childhood Educators of Yukon Territory (ECEYT) on these *historical achievements for the ECE profession* in Canada. These wins would not be possible without the outreach, consultation, and research done by these organizations.

Coming together in community matters. Professional associations, like the MCCA, the ECEYT and the AECEO, bring the perspective of the workforce to the policy table. When you get involved with your local association by participating in research projects, taking surveys, and connecting with peers at events, you are contributing to shaping the future of ECE in Ontario! Join the movement for better wages and better jobs in ECE by becoming an AECEO member today!

PROVINCIAL UPDATES

\$10ADAY AGREEMENT UPDATE

Following the Ontario election on February 27th, the AECEO, the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC) and the child care community jumped into action, calling on the newly re-elected provincial government to guarantee the **\$16.77 billion in ELCC funding** being offered by the federal government to extend the \$10aDay program until 2031. In just *under four days*, our open letter to Premier Ford was *signed by over 100 provincial ELCC organizations*, including child care programs, and policy/advocacy groups.



Within a few days of the start of our campaign, the federal government announced successful negotiations of \$10aDay funding extensions with 11 provinces and territories, noting that Ontario had stated that while further discussion was needed, an agreement-in-principle had been reached. However, due to the federal election and caretaker convention, conversations between the federal and provincial governments about this matter were not possible. There was some confusion regarding the status of the negotiations between the two governments, but it has now been clarified that Ontario has not formally signed on to the extension. Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan are the *only provinces* that did not sign onto the funding extension. The AECEO will continue to work with provincial and federal officials to bring up to date information about the negotiations and help our community navigate any changes.

Why this matters: the recent wins in Manitoba and Yukon show us that when governments work together, they can develop **policies that provide educators with the support they need to do the work they love:** good wages, benefits, pension plans, and improved working conditions.

The AECEO engages in extensive consultation with the workforce, sector stakeholders and policy experts to develop policy recommendations that address the issues impacting ELCC. In our most recent publications, we explore policy solutions like a publicly-funded salary scale and outline success criteria for a child care funding formula. When you participate in AECEO activities and share about your experiences, you are directly contributing to our policy work!

ONTARIO BUDGET 2025

This year's provincial budget, titled A Plan to Protect Ontario was released on May 15th. While we were pleased to see that the province appears to continue including child care in plans for new school builds, announcing \$30 billion over 10 years for new schools and child care spaces, we are concerned by the lack of clarity on the plan to address the staffing shortages impacting both ELCC and public school boards. The AECEO is committed to working with government officials and community partners to advance measures that support ECEs in child care, full-day kindergarten, before & after programs, EarlyON and beyond.



Supporting ECEs is the main goal of everything the AECEO does. Follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) & [TikTok](#) to stay up to date on new publications, events, and opportunities to grow your ECE network!

AECEO UPDATES

PETERBOROUGH COMMUNITY VISIT

Alana, Erin and Jess from the AECEO, along with Carolyn from the OCBCC, had a jam-packed schedule for their trip to Peterborough in May! In just three days, our team of advocates toured two municipal child care programs, hosted an ECE meet-up, presented about our work to the Peterborough Early Years Planning Network, joined students and faculty for a class chat at Fleming College, *and* supported a Parents 4 Child Care event!



PETERBOROUGH EARLY YEARS MEET-UP

Huge thanks to everyone who joined us at Dreams of Beans on May 28th for our ECE event. We had the opportunity to connect with educators working in community programs, municipal child care, kindergarten, and family support services. Being together in joyful and meaningful ways is key to **building our power as a community and creating the hopeful worlds ECEs deserve!**

Our team is so appreciative of folks making time to join us, especially after a work day. It was a great evening of building relationships, sharing resources, creating art, and talking about what ECEs want for the future of their profession. Check out pictures from the event on the AECEO [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages.



The AECEO is planning more in-person events in 2025. Want to know when we're coming to you?

[Sign up to our email list to learn about future community visits!](#)

CELEBRATING ECE POWER THROUGH THE YEARS

For the AECEO's 75th anniversary, we're inviting the ECE community to participate in a very special project! We are hoping to **document the history, stories, and the legacy of those who built early childhood education and care** in our province. Over the next few months, we will be collecting documents and testimonials to help bring the history of the AECEO to life!

If you have access to photos, journals, publications or documents you would like to add to this project, you can send them directly to us via info@aeceo.ca (including date, location, people involved, etc). Please share this info with your network and help the AECEO connect with possible collaborators: long-serving ECEs, retired early years professionals, child care advocates, and historical centres and programs that have been in operation for many years.



AECEO UPDATES

THE AECEO TEAM IS UNIONIZING!

Big news from the AECEO team: we're unionizing! Our team is super excited to be joining the 600+ ECEs and child care workers organized with [CUPE local 2484](#)! Hear all about it on episode 6 of our podcast, where Amber, Jess and Rachel share their experience negotiating our team's first ever collective agreement! Stay tuned for more episodes discussing this topic, including a chat with our executive director about what the unionization process was like from the employer's perspective. Want to learn more about unions? **Check out our [Unions 101 resource](#)!**

Listen to [Circle Time with the AECEO](#) on [Spotify](#) and [YouTube](#).



CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER!

AECEO Community Organizer (and all-around awesome human) **Erin Filby** was awarded the **King Charles III Coronation Medal** for her work advocating for ECEs, and her contributions to advancing ELCC in Ontario and in Canada. This a much deserved honour and our team was beaming with pride! Huge thanks to MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam for welcoming us to Queen's Park for this very special event (pictured on the left).

COMING SOON: THE AECEO SUMMER CHALLENGE

Make new ECE pals, build community, and win! In the AECEO Summer Challenge, you will have opportunity to participate in different kinds of advocacy activities for multiple chances to win prizes throughout the summer! Join us on **July 14th at 7PM** at the (virtual) launch party to get a sneak peek at the challenge, and find out how you can *win the whole summer* by taking part in fun, easy tasks each week to get the chance to win awesome prizes.

[Click here to register for our event on July 14th!](#)



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