



May 27, 2019

Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children and Family Development  
Honourable Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care  
PO Box 9057, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Conroy and Chen,

I write on behalf of First Call's Early Childhood Development Roundtable to reinforce the call for a more urgent focus on the issue of fair compensation for early childhood educators (ECEs) in government's work to develop a universal child care system for BC.

As noted in your government's Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy, child care providers have pointed to low compensation as the main reason they have difficulty recruiting qualified staff. As the strategy also notes, meeting the expansion targets for licensed child care in BC will require an additional 12,000 ECEs and other child care professionals over the next ten years.

In the face of these challenges, First Call acknowledges and appreciates the significant new investments the provincial and federal governments have made in a comprehensive workforce development strategy that includes bursaries, opening more training seats in post-secondary institutions, and a variety of ways to increase access to professional development and support.

We also appreciate the initial wage enhancement program that will see a \$2-per-hour increase for eligible ECEs by April 2020. However, even with this increase, median ECE wages remain low for this predominantly female workforce, frustrating government's goal to improve both recruitment and retention in the child care sector.

We are, therefore, calling on the provincial government to accelerate the wage enhancement program through the development of a provincial ECE wage grid that helps to bring the lowest paid educators up to the current average, followed by additional wage enhancements across the grid. This will help government achieve the recommended goal of reaching an average wage of at least \$25-per-hour plus benefits for the ECE workforce as soon as possible.

We are also aware that many ECEs who are not working in child care remain underpaid and we will be following up with another letter noting our concerns for them as well.

**putting children and youth first**

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We thank you for your attention to this important issue as your government continues its work to build a high quality universal child care system for our province's children and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrienne Montani". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Adrienne Montani  
Provincial Coordinator

Copies: Allison Bond, Deputy Minister, MCFD  
Christine Massey, Assistant Deputy Minister, Early Years and Inclusion, MCFD