



New Workforce Initiative from the Federal Government
What you need to know - August 2026

Written by Amber Straker and Bre Piccolotto - August 2026

Introduction

On August 10th, 2026, the federal government announced a [5.4 million dollar investment](#) aimed at supporting the early childhood education workforce, and meant to support the hiring and retention of ECEs and remove barriers across Canada.

For clarification, this investment is in addition to the [\\$5.4 billion to maintain the current Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care system \(CWELCC\)](#), announced by the federal government in June of this year.

Summary

This initiative will:

- Update the National Occupational Standards;
- Improve labour market information;
- Modernize workforce tools to better reflect the evolving realities of ECEs, and;
- Support career growth, mentorship, and professional development opportunities.

Who is leading this initiative?

- Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan);
- Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF), and;
- L'Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne (ACUFC).

What does this mean for ECEs and child care workers?

While this initiative will not have a significant impact on the day-to-day practice or compensation of those currently working in the ELCC sector, it is a sign that the federal government recognizes the importance of the ECE workforce in making CWELCC a long-term success. The AECEO welcomes this new initiative from the federal government, while also recognizing that more needs to be done to support the early childhood workforce.

[Join the Care Counts campaign](#)

The current Canada-Ontario CWELCC agreement is set to expire in a few months, and a new agreement is *still* being negotiated. **Canada and Ontario must sign a new agreement as soon as possible**, and that agreement must include funds specifically dedicated to improving compensation and working conditions. Through the [Care Counts campaign](#), the AECEO and the OCBCC are calling on the government of Ontario to pay



its fair share, and develop, implement, and fund a wage grid as part of a renewed Canada-Ontario child care agreement.

ECEs: with your care, knowledge, and skills, *you build the worlds* children and families experience every day. The AECEO is here for YOU.

Founded in 1950, the AECEO brings the voices of educators to the forefront. We advocate for fair wages, decent working conditions, respect, and recognition for all ECEs & child care workers in Ontario. [Join our mailing list](#) to stay informed about policy updates, professional learning and networking opportunities, ECE community events & more.

[Become a member](#) or [make a donation](#) to support the work of the AECEO!

As your professional association, the AECEO aims to build and support a strong collective voice for the Ontario early years workforce. Getting involved with your professional association is the BEST way to make sure ECEs lead the way in our profession, and create positive change that benefits workers, children, families, and communities.