



Business Plan

2023-24

**Education and Early
Childhood Development**

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Education and Early Childhood Development

2023-24 Priority Actions in Support of Government's Business Plan

Introduction

The success of our province relies on the important role of child care, early learning, and a strong pre-primary and P-12 education system. In 2023-24, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) will continue to: work with key partners, including Regional Centres for Education (RCEs), and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP); invest in the Nova Scotia public education system; build a quality, affordable, accessible and inclusive early learning and child care system; and implement policies and administer programs that benefit all people living in Nova Scotia.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

To support the ongoing implementation of inclusive education, in 2023-24 EECD will:

- Review and update the Special Education Policy, incorporating the results of the equity assessment of Individual Program Plans by the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism.
- Continue to invest in Assistive Technology Supports in classrooms.
- Provide professional development and training opportunities/resources for all school staff, including specific options for mental health literacy training.
- Continue to work with the Accessibility Directorate to advance work related to the *Accessibility Act* and Education Standards.
- Work to increase awareness and understanding of the over 1000 inclusive education positions that have been added since 2018.
- Release updated guidelines for Mi'kmaw/Indigenous Student Support Workers and Native Student Advisors, and African Nova Scotian Student Support Workers.
- Continue to publicly report on the status of [inclusive education](#) in the province, including releasing the next report from the independent developmental evaluators.

STUDENT WELL BEING AND ACHIEVEMENT

To improve school programs, services, and policies to support students' well-being and academic achievement, in 2023-24 EECD will:

- Review and report on results of consultations with students, staff, families, and the public to determine a governance model for pre-primary and P-12 education that allows increased local voice in education policy and decision-making.
- Fully implement the Physical Activity Framework in September 2023 with the support of key partners including the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and RCEs/CSAP.
- Review and update the School Food and Nutrition Policy.
- Develop Nova Scotia Leadership Standards for school administrators and other educational leaders targeting implementation in the fall of 2023. The standards will create cohesion across the province, improve performance, and will develop and support leaders.
- Administer the next [Student Success Survey](#) in spring 2023 (grades 4-12) to help EECD and RCEs/CSAP plan for and improve student well-being and achievement at school.
- Revitalize the 'Network Schools' initiative, which supports research related to implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy and encourages the sharing of best practices and ideas among educators, teachers, administrators, and support staff.

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- Complete an evaluation of the Tuition Support Program, which provides funding for eligible students to access specialized programming and services outside the framework of the Nova Scotia public school system.

PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM

To review and update curriculum on financial literacy, civics, environmental stewardship, physical activity, healthy living and diversity, including education on Residential Schools, in 2023-24 EECD will:

- Pilot three new high school courses, in English and French: Contemporary Canadian Studies 11, Career/Health 11, and Netukulimk and Environment 12.
- Expand skilled trades programming to 6-11 schools without skilled trades centres.
- Introduce the Launch Program, which engages students in career exploration and community-based learning with a focus on sector-related knowledge and skills.
- Develop a skilled trades resource and marketing campaign for families and students to increase awareness of skilled trades electives and encourage students to explore skilled trades courses while in high school.
- Deliver Treaty Education professional learning for grade 5 and 6 teachers. Resources will be available in French and English.
- Provide professional development to all RCEs/CSAP Treaty Education Lead Teams.

EARLY YEARS

To continue to make early learning and child care accessible, affordable, and inclusive for all families, in 2023-24 EECD will:

- Continue to take steps to implement the [Canada – Nova Scotia Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement](#) by developing a 2023-2026 Action Plan and outlining the approach to move toward a \$10 a day on average child care by 2025-2026.
- Develop a space expansion strategy to inform the next stage of growth within the sector.
- Evaluate and expand the Quality Matters initiative, with a plan for full rollout across the sector, including family home child care and before-and-after care, by 2025-2026.
- Release the revised Early Learning Curriculum Framework and Educators' Guide in English and French in fall 2023.
- Continue to develop and transition to a certification model for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs).
- Fully roll-out the Advanced Practitioners' Program; a post-diploma certificate program to advance ECE knowledge and competence in a specialized area of practice, such as infants and toddlers, young children, outdoor play, or pedagogical leadership.
- Extend professional development opportunities currently being provided through EECD and support sites to family home child care providers.
- Launch the first in-person French-language ECE diploma program through Université Sainte Anne.
- Work with the sector to establish a standardized level of health benefits and retirement benefits for ECEs in 2023.

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Departmental Financial Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary (\$ thousands)			
Programs and Services	2022 -2023 Estimate	2022-2023 Forecast	2023-2024 Estimate
Senior Management	1,121	1,340	1,156
Strategic Policy, RCE Liaison and Research	4,303	4,421	4,441
Early Learning	178,527	170,436	218,025
Childcare and Licensing	74,338	68,126	58,437
Centre for Equity in Achievement and Well-Being	3,719	3,471	3,807
Education Innovation Programs and Services	15,670	20,045	84,246
Student Services and Equity	2,223	2,043	2,293
African Canadian Services	6,246	6,104	6,314
Mi'kmaq Services	1,369	1,165	1,389
French Programs and Services	10,844	19,677	16,938
Corporate Services	4,734	4,738	5,144
Public Education Funding	1,270,014	1,286,380	1,289,106
Teachers' Pension	98,063	103,653	101,151
School Capital – Amortization	80,109	78,293	81,058
Total - Departmental Expenses	1,751,280	1,769,892	1,873,505
Ordinary Recoveries	137,929	130,853	183,898
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Department Funded Staff	212.8	193.2	211.8

Note:
For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1

