

July 5 Boards Webinar Transcript

00:00:13

Carmen Zubin

Good evening everyone, my name is Carmen Zubin and I'm a child care coordinator with the Early Learning and Child Care Program. Thank you for joining us for this evening's webinar the implementation of the wage grid for boards of directors, as outlined in Manitoba's action plan under the Canada Manitoba Canada Wide ELCC agreement.

This evening's webinar will be presented by Michelle Stephen Wiens Executive Director of the Early Learning and Child Care Program. After the webinar, we will have some time for questions. At the bottom of your screen, you will see a Q&A speech bubble, please submit your questions here. We will try to answer as many questions as we can, please note that ELCC staff are on site to document all the questions submitted for review in the event that we did not have time to answer them all tonight. Kathy is just going to lead us with some housekeeping updates.

Kathy Rogozik

Hi everybody, we just wanted to let you know that if you do have trouble hearing any of our speakers you can adjust your volume on your zoom platform by going to the mute or unmute button at the bottom of your screen, there's a little arrow there click on the arrow and then you'll have a little thing pop up here that says audio settings and if you click that, this box will pop up in your audio and at the top, you can adjust your speaker volume here so that is your output level, so you can turn it up, because it does default low, as well as down here, you can change this to suppress any background noise, we did have a little bit of interference, at the last one, so we just wanted to let everybody know. Thank you.

Carmen

And with that will turn it over to Michelle.

Michelle Stephen Wiens

So welcome board members, this is a very exciting night for us, we've been wanting to do this for some time. Members of the board play such an important role in the delivery of child care services throughout our province and I've had the pleasure of meeting and number of you, not as many as I wanted to, when I've gone out to board meetings and to work with particular boards and communities, and so I know how challenging the roles are they are taking on so I'm hoping that this opportunity is the first of many, this is something we would like to do more, of in the future is connecting with the board members directly because of the responsibilities that you hold in the administration of the child care programs and being the legal entity for the business. So hopefully tonight's event will be the first of many to come, particularly as we roll out so many more important initiatives under our bilateral agreements.

So I'm hoping tonight with this dedicated time to board members that we can have a very frank and candid conversation, we've had that pleasure of doing that with our directors and so that's why we set up this exclusive evening for board members only. Just so you know we've made a commitment to the directors to have a follow up session with them that's been scheduled for July 15. And so we'll summarize some of our discussions that we have in our two webinar evenings with board members for the directors, but we did want this to be an opportunity for you to freely ask questions, burning questions that you may have as a board member without any kind of concern about who else might be listening in that it's just fellow board members and you might be, in fact, asking the question that they've always wanted to ask themselves.

So welcome and one little housekeeping reminder that I have for all of you in the hope that we can do more of this, what we would like to do is give you a little reminder that to have board members have their facilities update their email and contact information in the child care online system. So that's how we generated the invitations for tonight to get all the information out to you, and in doing so we noticed that a number of the contacts hadn't been updated or we're aligned and going to the facility, and that often can be a very good and coordinated way to get information to the board but in order to contact board members and in particularly chairs of the board or other executives of the board it would be good to have their actual contact information registered on child care online. So if you could talk to your facility directors about updating that information, it would be much, much appreciated.

00:05:55

So with that tonight what we're going to do is we're going to start with just a presentation and a slide deck, I know some people are already asking questions so that's good don't worry we're not going to lose them but I'm hoping the slide deck might generate even more, but hopefully will also answer some questions. So we're going to start with the presentation and afterwards, we will look to Carmen again to help me out moderate some question and answers for a period of time.

So with that, this is our first webinar for board members, our next one will be happening on the evening of July 7th so if there's somebody on your board who wasn't able to participate tonight's please remind them about the July 7 the opportunity. Our focus tonight is really talking about the wage grid, and this is a really important initiative that I also understand is really challenging perhaps for implementation we understand that and so much of that rests on boards to develop wage scales, along with the grid to implement in there in the facilities, so we're hoping tonight's presentation and question and answer experience will be able to provide you with additional information that gives you the support to know what your responsibilities are as it relates to the wage great implementation.

So the Early Learning and Child Care wage grid is a commitment that came under the Canada Manitoba Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with Canada, and this is the big agreement that people are aware of that was signed last August and really we have a two year action plan, although the agreement goes for five years. And one of the hallmark initiatives in the first two years is the implementation of a wage grid or the creation of a wage grid. And the reason why it's in our action plan is this was a term that was set out for all the jurisdictions from Canada to incorporate into their planning and a way to move everybody forward in a similar direction with that goal of developing a Canada wide system. So the implementation of the wage grid was targeted in our action plan for implementation in this year, so our first two years we're inclusive of 2021-2022 and now, this fiscal year of 2022-23, and this is where we're landing in the plan for this particular implementation.

So the cost right now for just this first year is an investment of \$37 million. \$34.7 million of that comes to support wages for staff that are working with children under the age of seven so that's coming from the federal funding and from the Canada wide agreement, but an additional \$2.3 million is coming from provincial funding for staff working with school aged children. So I'm not sure how familiar you are with our Canada agreements, but there are some restrictions into what we can do with the funding and one of the core restrictions is that all the funds that Canada provides for us have to go to programming that supports children for ages from ages zero to six, so all of the funds we get from Canada, none of that can go to older children or

school aged children, so throughout the presentation we'll probably talk about that a little bit more, but that is one of the features of both our agreements Canada okay.

00:10:32

Comment about chat bubble

00:10:55

And in terms of the wage grid, we'll go back, so what is the purpose behind it. So a well compensated workforce is really essential and we know that it's essential to support the delivery of high quality early learning and childcare services. We know that good, equitable and fair wages stabilize and strengthen the ELCC sector as a whole, having those wages in place supports the retention of the current staff, it begins to help address the labor market shortages that we're seeing in the system right now, noting that that isn't exclusive to just ELCC, we know that most sectors are experiencing some challenges with securing enough employees and having a stable workforce. So that's really important for us. The other thing that their wages and equitable wages will do is really support us in current and future recruitment efforts and we know that that's really critical because there's lots of commitments under the Canada Wide Agreement that we know we have to build our workforce and strengthen it, one that people know most often refer to is the net increase in spaces that Manitoba has targeted over five years so that's an increase of 23,000 childcare spaces and we know that in order to do that, we have to have the workforce in place to support those additional spaces. So the wage grid as a starting point and a foundational item to build from is really critical for all those different purposes.

So now for you as board members of childcare facilities, that you operate as independent businesses and as boards, you have the legal responsibility for the administration of that business, and that includes establishing staff wages and the wage scales and what we know from Manitoba and how we landed on this wage grid that we're going to look at closely today, is that there's a very large range of wages out for our sector. So across different classifications and job types, there is a huge variety of wages, so we could not ever establish a wage scale going out like a full wage scale right at the beginning, and the reason is because, with that diversity, there would be a number of people potentially who would see a wage loss of wage cut, and we really didn't want to have that happen, so this is why we've taken the approach we have that we're going to explain a little bit more in our upcoming slides.

So this slide is interesting it kind of gives you an idea of the diversity that I was just talking about, so this is our analysis from the hourly wages that we have had reported to us in 2020-2021. And on the sidebar you can see that is the amount of a person being paid per hour and the bottom shows the different types of jobs and classifications, and you can see from the different bar graphs that there's quite a range and quite a bit of diversity. So we look at our directors, we have a high of just under \$70 an hour and then a low to just over about \$21 or \$22 an hour. So that's what we're talking about the diversity, even on at the other end of the spectrum in our CCA category, we have a high of a childcare assistant being paid just over \$40 an hour and then we have we're seeing averages more in that \$12 range, so when we're talking about trying to figure out how to create this kick start, this very important work this had a huge impact on what we were able to do as a first step.

So how we're implementing the wage grid and how we're supporting facilities to implement it is we've added a wage grid supplement to your operating grants, so that's what was announced last week and as effective as of July 1, so what you will see in the coming days, actually because we've all posted this now, so the increases should be coming to your facilities early

next week, probably later this week for many, you will see an increase in your operating grant and that increase and that percentage increase is expected to go directly to wages, now we know operating grants support many other things, and the operations of the business, but this particular supplement increase is intended to be directed to increasing staff wages.

So these tables give you a bit of an idea of the current operating grants and the increases, so our infant operating grant now will be \$13,676 per space and that's up from \$11,375 so quite a significant increase. Our preschool is up to \$5330 per space and that is up from \$4,801 per space. School age is up to \$2227, and that is up from \$1664 our previous operating grant per space and then nursery school has also seen significant increases with our core amount of \$1495 which was \$1,090 previously and then for each additional session there's an additional \$299 offers per space. So to understand this and the amount of the percentage increase and the significance of it that increase for an infant space results in a just over 20% increase in funding, for preschool it's a 27.5% increase in funding and for school age spaces this the new level is that 36.8% increase in funding and for nursery schools, they will experience a 43% increase in funding. Homes are also seeing an increase, I know that we have board members here today, and so you aren't often involved with home based childcare but just so that also gives an example of the increases that are also happening to support our home base providers and have some better financial stability in their home based business.

00:19:03

So how we developed these increases was based on our current unit funding model and sometimes it's a very difficult thing to understand, but what we do is we provide our operating grant funding based on a unit that's connected, are linked, to our childcare ratios in our regulations, so a unit of infants is four children, preschool unit is eight children and for school aged children a unit is 15 children and how the unit funding model was developed, they said looked at the cost per day, per unit and so that cost used to be \$295 per unit, and now we have it looking at it being \$330 per unit, so that's how we work out the unit funding. So what we look at that unit funding model is not just the operating grant but also the parent fees because that's what brings us to the total revenue that can be associated with this space. So the wage grid operating supplement actually provides a 12% increase in the daily revenue per unit. So, considering the parent fees, as well as the operating grant we knew that we wanted to hit a 12% increase to support the increase wages. But what that does mean, as we see when we look at the actual operating portion itself those increases that they're coming as part of your operating grants are actually higher to reach that 12% daily revenue increase.

So I kind of mentioned this already, the wage grid serves as our first foundational steps moving forward with the development, of a more comprehensive grid containing a full wage scale through future action plans, so I noted earlier that under this agreement we're in our first action plan and it's only for the first two years, and so, starting in 2023-24 we will have a new action plan and we hope that we will continue to see continued progress with this wage grid development over the next action plan which we expect will be for three years, so from 2023-24 to 2025-26. So the changes that we do, and the next action plan and those future years will be informed by consultations that we do with the ELCC sector, and that will include yourselves, we'll certainly be reaching out to board members as part of that consultation. Some of it will also happen at our minister's consultation table and subcommittees and that's an appointed group that gives advice and information to the Minister. But we really know for this one, and because of the diversity of wages that are currently paid out by the sector, we need to reach out further than that so that's why we're looking at going on a bigger scale, talking to boards, talking to different groups throughout the province, and so you can anticipate hearing more from us as we try to develop this further.

So something that I know we get questions about for board members is the MCCA Market Competitive Salary Guidelines Scale, and so this is great work that the MCCA has been doing for a number of years it started back in 2007 and I know when I met with board members in the past they've often used this as a standard or a wage grid that they were aspirational or hoping to be in line with and some had understood it is being a requirement and we've already gotten questions about why are they different. So the MCCA Market Competitive Salary Guidelines Scale is created by the Manitoba Child Care Association to be a supportive tool for boards of directors, but it isn't a part of our regulation, it is different, it certainly gives a lot of good information absolutely, it gives us a lot of insight on how to develop an actual wage scale with steps and the types of classifications that could or should be considered, and so MCCA for many years, has put a lot of effort into the development of that. But what we know with the Canada wide agreement and where we're going in terms of Canada's vision for childcare is we're, quite honestly, moving from a market based system to a publicly funded system and so that would be where we were starting our focus in the development with Canada and the action plan to develop equitable and fair wages across sector.

So the development of the wage grid many things were taken into consideration and I've already mentioned some of them. So certainly that diversity of wages that are currently offered in the ELCC sector, we also looked at comparable wages just paid in the public service requiring similar qualifications, and then we also were taking into consideration potential increases of the provincial minimum wage. So it's important to remember that and this is unfortunately often how these agreements work we negotiate, after you finish your negotiations, then you head into implementations, so there's often some preparatory work to do before implementation on many of the initiatives that we negotiate and some of that preparatory work is looking at our legislation and regulations and any amendments we may need and that takes time and then the actual implementation itself takes time, so for the wage grid we negotiated this back over about a year ago, and we know and this seems to be the theme for all of us and what we're experiencing our worlds have been a little bit unpredictable and so over the last year we've all seen many changes as the pandemic, we've come out of the restrictions of the pandemic, but now new challenges are facing us that we're just not predictable when we did this negotiation, the good news for all of us is that because we're just at the beginning, point of this we will be looking to improve upon and build on the wage grid in future action plans and our next one starts next year, all these factors that have come into play, we can take into consideration as we move forward, but they were certainly things that were a challenge to predict when we were in the actual planning in negotiations with the Federal overnment.

00:26:55

Okay, so in terms of average sector wages and where we were looking at in 2021 the average wages of funded non-profit centers were \$17.66 for all ELCC positions and \$22.94 for all positions, including CCA's and that's a little bit odd but when you looked at the wage ranges and the number of staff that's how you end up with that discrepancy the negotiated wages to get this expected to support increases in average wages that will be at minimum \$25.89 across all ECE positions and \$24.92 for all positions, including CCA's, in fact, I think that might be wrong I'm just looking at my team here we've made some amendments to the wage grid, so I think those might we'll get back to you with a correction on that, I think our average wages are actually going to be higher than that.

So comparable wages in the public service, so this just gives you an idea of where things are at right now, so are our child care coordinators they're starting wages \$26.87 and average is

\$30.99, we have child development workers in the public service and that's \$24.62 and \$27.28 is our mid range and as supervisors \$34.22 and \$39.78. So that just kind of gives you an idea of all the different considerations, there was much more but it's like a snapshot. As you're working through developing your own scales, and if when you have questions, we certainly are going to be here to help you and provide some guidance because there were there was a lot taken into consideration. So what we're hoping with the wage grid is it will be the guide to increasing wages to have an equitable or common level across the sector and it will be a way to also address the range of diversity that currently exists and bringing that more into line, so we can actually look at the development of a more comprehensive wage scale.

So what we wanted to do was provide some guidance for boards of directors in developing the equitable wage skills, based on employee, classifications and positions. So what the grid does, it doesn't offer for full wage scale, but it does offer a starting point for hourly wages, based on the position and classification, so that starting point wage is what we will be looking to make sure that you are minimally paying anybody who's working in that classification and position in your center, so we don't want to see for any kind of classification of position wage just lower than that starting points. The target wages are the wages that we hope to see being paid on average for a particular position and classification. So that's where there remains some flexibility for boards, because we do know that there is such a range because we just want to see the target hit that means that you can still offer higher wages to those that are already making them or they those that you may want to, but based on the funding that's being provided, right now, if you hit those average targets, there is sufficient funds for you to increase your wages.

So this is the actual wage grid that we're implementing right now, there has been a slight change to the one that is actually in the Canada Wide Agreement. What we have done is we've raised the entry level positions wages for ECE and the CCA and that is one of my bullets that I talked about earlier that's based on what we anticipate may happen with a minimum wage in Manitoba, so we wanted that reflected now so that we didn't have to make some changes later on, that would be confusing. So this is our starting point with the grid and this is what will be building from in our future years, so what you can see is every classification and different type of position we given some guidance for those and we've also have it divided up in terms of the size of the facility as well, for your consideration. And so what we'll be looking for when facilities submit annual budgets to us their budget plans and as well as those annual financial statements and audited financial statements, we'll be looking for information that confirms that wages are happening for staff at the starting point and we will be looking to see that those average targets are being hit across different classifications.

So one of the big responsibilities for the Boards is going to be to develop an actual wage scale and scaling or increments in that or steps in a wage scale become pretty important and that's what we haven't developed yet. Once we get some stabilization across the sector with the wages being offered, we are hoping to do that, and that will be the next step build, but we know that you are going to want to compensate your employees based on years of service and other types of things that you want to give recognition for compensation. So that's usually, when a wage scale has its different steps, and so in the public service collective agreements, just an example that you might want to consider ways you're developing yours is that we generally see a 3.5% increase between our steps or increment levels. And then often we have anywhere from five to seven increment levels in general and the public service those wage scales are actually publicly available, so they're available on the government website under our collective agreements there is charts that are dedicated that tables that just have those easy to read, so they're there for you to look at and to give some consideration to as you're

doing your development. And then of course the MCCA scale is also something that you might want to look at and give consideration to as well.

Although where you are providing this increase, right now, and we do know this because we get the annual financial audit statements that we know we have some facilities that are with the funding and the funding approaches offered right now are at a deficit or breakeven budget and then, at the other end of the spectrum, we have facilities that have large surpluses and we know that there's large ranges in the wages that are being offered so we know that the model itself needs some tweaks and that's also something we're working on for the future, but again, we have to start somewhere, so we do know that this wage supplement increase that's being offered right now will support the starting points and the averages that are outlined in the grid for you to work with.

So here's just some scaling example and it's with what's on the grid right now, so, for instance, if you scaled up, based on a 40 hour workweek had a 3.5 level percent increase, so our ECE 2 floor staff are starting point wage is \$20.90 that equates to a \$43,000 annual salary, based on a 40 hour work week and then, if you scale up you see this scale up and where we hit, so this is just being given as an example and what the annual potential is for that classification to earn, so we have the ECE2 floor staff in comparatively the ECE 2 supervisor that we have starting as a starting point at \$23.32 and then the scaling up from there. Then we want to kind of have some consistency for you, so we have to ECE 2 assistant director that starting point hourly wage the 3.5% scale up, as well as the ECE 2 director of a small center. So this kind of gives you an idea of what you might want to build I think there's one more scaling example slide you want to just go to the next one yeah, this is the director ECE 3 to a small center. This gives you a bit of an idea, we are going to be sharing this slide deck with everybody, and it will also be posted so don't worry you're going to get this we're just going to be distributing all of this to everyone after we get through our next webinar on Thursday night so just hold your horses, it'll be coming but we just wanted to give you guys some ideas, what you can be thinking about and working with and this is the analysis that we were doing on to come up with the funding for this whole initiative right now in this first year.

00:37:23

So, as you know, the board of directors is the legal entity of the non-profit childcare center and you're responsible and accountable for the decision making related to the center's business, programming, staffing and finances, and that is a huge responsibility and establishing the wage scale and having the wage supplement go to increasing wages or establishing more equitable wages across the sector we know is a huge responsibility that we're asking of our boards and we know that you'll need to probably do some consultation with your directors and we have been doing separate webinars for all our directors groups, we have another one happening tomorrow and as I said, a summary webinar on the 15th with them as well, so we encourage you to have an open dialogue about what's maybe the best approach to make those administrative decisions related to wages. Although the wage grid supplement and the money is effective on July 1 and you'll be starting to receive that now we know that it might take a little longer to actually develop your scale and implemented, so what we are asking is that based on when the day you actually implemented that the staff be given retroactive wages to July 1st, because the funding is available to do that, so I know we've had lots of questions, how do we go and get this going now, there's no expectation, I think that would be unrealistic, but we want the funds available for you to start your planning and for you to be able to offer those retroactive payments based on July 1 effective date.

So some of what you might want to do as part of this activity is doing a review of your position description, some responsibilities and classifications, that's always very important in the operationalization of the business, but sometimes they change like this, or a good time to make sure we have all of that updated and really reflecting your business plan. It also would be a good idea to review and compare your facilities current salary scale against the wage grid and how to make that the smoothest transition as possible either to scale up the wages or for those wages that might be higher, or perhaps an outlier because we did see some outliers on that comparative grid and making a plan about how do you bring those back in mind for those staff, we've said here we've wanted to allow for some flexibility for boards to make those business decisions we didn't want to see people who've been earning a wage to see a reduction, but it might mean and this happens in most businesses and certainly happens in the public service, that sometimes when you're making more than what has been what is really out there for a particular classification, there's something we call red circling and that means that somebody's salary or wage gets red circled and doesn't go up until there's a catch up period for the rest of the wages in that classification, so that's a consideration as an option as well for boards. So based on all of this analysis, we encourage you to revise your salary scale that's reflective of supportive funding now in place, the parent fees and you'll have to embed that into your centers policies and information, certainly your HR policies and so that will be some work ahead. It will be important, I did identify individual staff whose wage rates require some adjustments based on their position and classification and as we've said that that's adjustments up because we know, based on the fact that we gave out another benefit, it was a wage bridge benefit to give some back pay to those positions that were making lower than the provincial average, so we know that there's adjustments up and there may be some other adjustments that, in general, just needs to be made for your business.

So part of this will involve a review of the facilities budget with the increased staffing costs, we've had some questions I know many facilities have already submitted their annual budgets, we're not asking you to resubmit or do an adjusted budget for us if we have it we've received it we're not asking for a new submission well we'll be looking for that the increased wages will be reflected in your annual financial statements that will follow, but if you haven't submitted your budget yet, then please do use the new wage grid to support your plan for the upcoming year and we want to see that those wages reflected that there are the change in wages.

Also, according to the facilities bylaws, policies and procedures it's important to review and approve the actual revised salary scale and you have to approve any kind of budget revisions internally. And then it's good to consider developing a communication plan for your staff and ensure that the staff again are paid retroactively at the point implementation to July 1 2022.

So the annual budget submissions provided non-profit centers must demonstrate their additional revenue from the operating grant increases used, as I said, if you've already submitted we're not looking for you to resubmit we don't want to add, we know we're asking a lot of people, so we don't add to that list but know you'll need to do it for your next submission for those that aren't how to get submitted their annual budget, please have it reflect the additional operating funding that's been provided to wages. Then your annual audited financial statements, we will be looking at for the reporting on the staff wages in those annual audited financial statements to confirm the increases or the averages and the targets being met in the skills that have been implemented.

So this is a plug so something we've done and maybe I don't know how many of you have been able to take advantage of this, but the Manitoba Child Care Association has developed an online training, The Basis of Effective Board Governance and it is a really good resource for

board members who just want perhaps to get a good reminder of the full scope and responsibilities of the board, but certainly we encourage any new board members to register and go through this online training because it's an online module you can do this at your own convenience and funding to the Canada Wide Canada Manitoba bilateral agreements we have been waving the fees, so it started, where we were getting 12 registrations per core board and management of a licensed center to go through the board training, but we continue to fund this and we've kind of wave that \$12 registration threshold, and we know that this is really important, and we're going to just continue to work with MCCA to make sure that the funding's in place to make sure that we can still offer this free of charge, right now, as we go through many of these make major changes so we really do encourage everyone if you haven't had the ability to do so or availability to do so please go and take advantage of that online training. And I just want to do this was a huge step forward for us as well, and we really are thankful for the MCCA for partnering with us, but that resources now available in French as well, so it's been translated and that was a long time coming, but we're really excited to say that it's now available for all our francophone facilities and sector as well to do that online training in French so please, please go look to that it is like I said it's a very good online orientation to the scope and responsibilities of a board and there's some additional modules and training also available through MCCA that they've built off this initial training.

We're at the question and answer period, like I said the slide decks will come out to you, if you're interested in more information about the bilateral agreements there's going to be the link to the basics of effective work governance.

00:47:51

Audio issues break

00:59:00

I'll turn it over to Carmen.

Carmen

Thanks Michelle, we have a couple questions related one from Genevieve and Catherine in regards to inclusion support staff. Will the inclusion support funding reflect the base wage on the new scale and just saying that it's not mentioned at this current scale.

Michelle

Inclusion support staff and the staff enhancement grants that come to the facilities will be adjusted and so based on what's been approved and adjustment will be made to the starting point for the most part, so we're doing that, behind the scenes, it's part of our retro and catch up so we're going to be doing that into categories, so all our inclusion support grants, so we will just be upping those, you will see retro pay essentially on those grants. So that will happen and we're doing it for the staff replacement grants as well in the same way, so that's sitting with finance at this point in time. When we actually have that all organized and it's coming out to you, we will send out a communication, so that is happening in advance so it's not catching you by surprise. But yes, we are doing that, behind the scenes, so those grants will reflect the starting points on the wage grid.

Carmen

Thank you, we have questions from Kelly, and an anonymous attendee. School age ECE's received the same training and certification and why they are not receiving the same compensation and what is the reason that only children under seven are being supported by the Federal government.

Michelle

Okay so first of all let's break the myth, so our child care workforce that are working with school aged children and school age facilities are included in this initiative. The operating grant increases if you go back to what when we showed it on one of our slides we've increased the school age operating grants by 36.8% to accommodate this so they are included, they are not funded, this funding is not coming from the Federal government so to support this that funding has come from the provincial government. So that's kind of for us the dance we do in the background of figuring out what we can fund from what finding allocation mind. School ages are going to be paid along the same wage grid and we're looking for the same kind of changes to be made. And then the last question, that is why aren't they included in the Canada Wide Agreement and that's great question its something that we've always wanted to come to the table with Canada we've tried to expand and get school age included in our agreements we haven't been successful. The focus for Canada is on early learning and so those services for children actually zero to five. Manitoba is actually only jurisdiction that was successful in the least negotiating six year olds, so we can accommodate that that kindergarten transition for all our young children so that's one bonus that we have but yes it's a great question. We are we haven't lost sight of the importance of school age child care and that's why the provincial investment boards, this is being made.

Carmen

Thank you. Michelle we have questions from Jennifer and Kelly in regards to private childcare centers so do we have any breakdown of wages for staff in for profit programs and does the wage scale include private sectors.

Michelle

So the so for-profit or private centers, as you know, are independent businesses owned by an owner operator, and so it is a very different model because they don't receive any provincial funding there's no requirement from those facilities to report any kind of financial statements to us, which would include wage information. So it's important to note that actually in Manitoba 95% of our child care centers are not for profit, so our for-profit sector is very, very small so that's one thing to note, so when we're looking at the analysis we've done on wages it's very much representative of the sector as a whole. So, in terms of what do we know about for-profit it's pretty limited, and so, consequently, are they included in this certainly, the information is out there for the for-profit providers to try and work with this wage grid as well, but there is no obligation for them to do so because they're not receiving any funding from us, if a for-profit provider, however wanted to convert and become a non-profit provider, they would then become eligible for this funding, and many of the other funding initiatives that we have with the province and as well under the Canada Manitoba agreements.

Carmen

Thank you, we have a question in regards to CCA'S and training and they're not being a level on the scale

Michelle

We've had this question a couple of times and, to be honest, that was very intentional, so the expectation and regulation for child care assistantc is, although they can begin working in a in a Center without completing their 40 hour course the expectation for compliance is that they complete that 40 hour course within their first year of employment. So, consequently, we want to really encourage and give an incentive for that 40 hour course and ensuring that our CCA's are trained CCA's in our child care facilities and so that's why the wage grid starts with a

trained CCA. So that does mean that it's up to the board discretion, as it always is with the wage scales right now within these parameters, but when it comes to the CCA who has not been trained and not completed their 40 hour course they can determine what the appropriate wage scale or wage should be for that employee. And really the expectation is that employees only in that untrained status for that one year to be in compliance with regulation. So you could pay them, it's a board decision, so you could pay them anywhere from the minimum wage up to that starting point for a train CCA and that's part of the flexibility that is there for boards to make these decisions based on what works best for their business and their community.

Carmen

Thank you, next we have a question from Christine the terms of the agreement required Manitoba to implement a wage grid in its first two years of the action plan, 2023 wage grid one year and another grid will follow in 23-24 if so when, can centers expect to receive.

Michelle

I'm not sure I quite understood the question, but let me try to answer, or it gives some more information about the wage grid and where we hope to go. So, as I mentioned before, this is the first step in what we believe will be an evolutionary process to get ourselves to the development of a full comprehensive wage scale. I think really our target, our hope is that we can accomplish that goal, under this first five year agreement, so it will happen in stages. I think what will happen is with the establishment of more equitable and fair wages what it will enable us to do is to give continued or regular increases that can be directed solely to wages and increasing those wages in a reasonable manner, so what does 23-24 hold for the wage grid, not completely certain right now. We know we want to advance it, we know we want to make improvements on it, but based on the implementation of what we have here in front of us today we'll be doing those consultations with the sector to figure out, what are the next reasonable next steps and so what I can confirm for you is this is going to be a building process, we're not done, we know that we're just we're at the very beginning and we'll be looking to engaging many of you and the sector as a whole, as we continue to advance this.

Carmen

Thank you, from Catherine and Lana we have question about the operating grants and whether they will continue to stay at this level, or will there be increases each year to reflect the cost of living.

Michelle

That's a great question, so I think I mentioned, so we were hoping to have regular increases to support the wage grid and going forward when exactly those will be coming, stay tuned, we do have some planning and we know that we want to keep up with cost of living increases how exactly we go about doing that typically, would do with operating grants until we have another model that's probably the mechanism that will use. I kind of mentioned before, that we are looking how facilities are funded in general on that analysis is still going on and really the reason that we have been doing, that is because we know that much like there's diversity in wages there's a lot of diversity in the financial health of our facilities out across the province where we have some under the current funding approach that are doing very well and seem to be quite stable, have healthy surpluses, but then we have others with that are running on deficit budgets, we need to figure that one out, we can continue to make operating grant increases to support wages, but there is that other problems still and we haven't lost sight of that other problem so for now, this seems to be the best way to support wage increases and to give you the funding to implement them so we'll continue with that, for now, but we know we have to get bigger, better solutions as a whole to bring greater stability to the sector.

Carmen

Thank you. From Donna, is the target the starting wage or the last step in the wage scale.

Michelle

So thank you Donna that's a great question, so the starting point is the starting wage. The target is an average target so it's not the end it's the target for the average of that classification and position so that you can use that target to figure out what is the scale range that you want to implement for your facility and taking into consideration the wages that you're already paying out to folks. So, like I said we couldn't implement the full wage scale and we want to give targets to get some equitable wages out there, common wages out there to then move forward with the full development of a comprehensive scale. And so the target allows the flexibility to not necessarily reduce anybody's wage but perhaps an outlier in not in a high wage category but for the board, then, to be able to identify it and make a plan around that so the target is the average target for that particular classification and position, and so the funding that you're being offered right now and it increases supports the average targets so it's based on making sure you have enough funding to have meet those average targets.

Carmen

Thank you, we have a question from Jill says the increased provided to centers reflect the gap in wage grid to current wages or is this a blanket increase to all centers, what if a center is already paying stop above or close to the grid already.

Michelle

So the wage rate was developed to support, like I said, we have diversity in wages, we have diversity in the financial health of the facilities so some are doing well and, yes, we have some that we know already are paying higher wages and also within the current funding approach are also able to have a healthy financial position and establishing a small surplus and contingency funds. But we also know, there are others who are not been that successful but they're receiving the same funding. So the wage grid an increase is based on the unit funding model, because that is the standard approach, right now, and so the 12% is going to everybody, so what we'll be looking for is that the wage increases and the money from the operating grant goes to seeing those wages go up and be consistent with the wage grid and hitting those average targets and that's really the guidance we have from now. We know that there's diversity, we know that there might be some more individual or specific questions, based on your facilities current situation, and so, for that reason, if you're wanting to have book in a more detailed analysis or guidance, our child care coordinators will be available to take your inquiries and then they're really our system navigators if you have an inquiry come into one of them they will go through our ELCC program and find the right people for you to consult with and talk with and that could be part of our financial team and our financial analysts, or it could be, based on your inquiry any one of our other staff that might be able to be supportive and help you, through your planning, so as stated before the increases are really based on the current funding approach and it's because transitionally right now it's the best way, and the only way that we can support increases across the board, through the province.

Carmen

You next question is the implementation of this wage grid affected at all by the goal of the \$10 a day fees, that that this increase has been taken into account with parent fees, but these are set to drop will operating grants be raised further to supplement

Michelle

So good question and I know this part is a confusing one I'm going to try, but I imagine it might it might result in more questions and that's okay too so our \$10 a day average out of pocket parent fee and Manitoba's approach to that has to look at parents fees that are based on a family or households ability to pay so based on their net household income. So the way to then achieve that and the way we're looking to do that is through our subsidy and financial assistance program. So what that means is that are parent fees, so the behind the scene parent fees are not changing so we have this regulated cap in our legislation and regulation for the maximum parent fees that can be charged for a particular type of childcare and those are made in place so even when a parent is paying lower parents fees, because they are subsidize that means through our child care subsidy program for making up the difference, so the facilities still get that full complement of parent fee so we haven't had needed to change that that unit funding scheme, and probably won't because we'll continue to have those cap fees in the background to work with, as we subsidize more and more household incomes so I don't know we certainly are welcome more questions, we know that that one it's a difficult one sometimes to wrap your head around, even when I say it out loud sometimes I'm wondering if I'm saying that clearly so if there's follow up questions like I certainly understand but whether the parent fee is coming directly from the parent or we're giving a portion of that parent through subsidy the parent fees in the caps haven't changed and those caps are what drive out the revenue and the unit funding model.

Carmen

Thank you, Michelle we have two questions related hear from Jeff what types of positions in the public sector requiring similar quality qualifications, were the ELCC wages compared to. And where did the stats come from the graph showing the salary ranges within Manitoba

Michelle

For sure, so that the comparisons are made against a number of different positions and our public service collective agreements, one were educational assistants, so we looked at the public service ranges under the collective agreements for those positions we looked at our health and social and service specialist classifications, as well as our series that also that my staff and my team here at Early Learning and Child Care paid under and that's what it's called the SP series so social service practitioner and that's where those set the wages for child development workers, our child care coordinators and all my staff come from as well, so we actually looked at quite a range of scales and then we also considered the provincial averages, and so we looked at, we know that there's quite a diverse range which you saw on the bar graph, but we are able to come up with those average or mean amounts. In terms of the ranges where did we get those from that's based on the reporting that we get from the facility so you're required reporting so it's an analysis from both the annual budget submissions as well the comparable against those audited financial statements that every facility is required to submit or annual financial statements for nursery school so that is where that analysis, so we collect that information annually, so we do collect wage information, we always have as part of your the required reporting and that's what we roll up every year to do set a bit of to do our wage analysis.

Carmen

Perfect Thank you, next question is the messaging that is being given to the directors, the same as what is being conveyed today, knowing what messages are being given to them will help and having those difficult conversations about salary expectations.

Michelle

Yeah like we talked about the starting point that targets, the flexibility that we want boards to have that the real goal here is to get fair, equitable and common wages across the sector, and we will be posting to be completely transparent we're just wanting to have all these webinars to be a place where people can ask candid questions, based on the respective roles they play. But we will be posting all the slide decks the recordings from the webinars on the website once they've been completed, so you can go back and will be distributing that information once it's posted so anybody can go back at any point in time and hear in detail what we discussed but yes, the information we're trying to be as transparent as possible we're trying to have the focus of the webinars be on a particular role and responsibility, board's role and responsibility is different than the directors roles and responsibilities, so we are cognizant of that and then also that's why we're going to have that summary session with the directors that kind of pulls it all together on July 15, but it will all be publicly available so and like I said we'll be sending out messages to let you know when that's posted.

Carmen

Thank you. We have time for one last question, and just a reminder to everyone that we will be documenting all the questions that have been submitted. From Christina does the increase in the operating grants have to be 100% spent on increases to salaries or if a new salary skills developed that significantly increases our staff salary is implemented, and they are still and there still some funds available, can a portion of the additional funding be spent on other expenses

Michelle

So we're really looking for these increases to go directly to wages. It's really that simple. That was our commitment to the Federal government, we have to make good on that commitment. And point well taken there is a range, many are we know there are some centuries that are likely paying wages that are reflective of the grid but that's also why we're talking about the flexibility, and so there could be options, you could develop out your scale to include more detail in terms of the steps and where you can go within a particular classification, we certainly are open to discussing and planning and helping you plan around that but we are looking for this increase to go away just that is the provincial commitment. But, and if we're happy to work with you to look at some how you can do that.

Carmen

Thank you, Michelle.

Michelle

So with that I don't know if we have a contact slide I'm looking at my team. Okay, we know that there's likely going to be questions and, understandably, they might be coming for some time, as you all enter into this work of implementation in developing this scale. What we would encourage you to do is get if you have any questions direct them to the child care coordinator that's assigned to your facility, as I said before they can navigate here at our ELCC program and get your question directed to the right person, so that you can get an answer, we are here to help you out as best we can, as we said we know this will take a fair bit of planning for most of the boards and that's why we're saying it's effective July 1 but we realize the planning and implementation may take a little bit longer and really just looking for you to provide the retroactive wages to your employees.

So with that I just want to thank you for joining us tonight like I said I hope this is first of many opportunities. We will be posting all this information once you've completed all the webinars on our website, we also will be sharing information on questions and answers we weren't able to

get to and those will be distributed as we will have to do our second webinar for our board members and then we'll compile that information and get it out to you as quickly as we can. And again we encourage you to remind the directors, that we will have that that summary session with them on July 15 as well.

Oh, and one final reminder for all of you, and that was that was just the housekeeping, and that is to update all your contact information on child care online your email and contact information so that we can have an invitation list that goes directly to board members so please check in with your Director of your facility to make sure that those updates occur.

So again, thank you so much for your time I know evenings and summer evenings are for us and Manitoba are few and far between so I don't want to take your full evening away from you, I hope you go and enjoy some fresh air and sunshine I'm assuming the sun is shining out there were in a room, with no windows, so I can't play 100% certain. But please do enjoy your evening, and thank you for joining.