

July 6, 2022 Webinar Directors Transcript

00:00:07

Carmen Zubin

Good afternoon, 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 afternoon's webinar for directors on the implementation of the ELCC wage grid. This afternoon's webinar will be presented by Michelle Stephen Wiens, Executive Director. 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. ELCC staff are on site to document the questions submitted for review and in the event that we do not have time to answer them all tonight, they will be recorded. I'm going to turn it over to Kathy who has some housekeeping updates and then we will turn it over to Michelle.

Kathy Rogozik

Hi everybody, we just wanted to let you know that if you do have some trouble hearing if you go to the bottom of your screen, you will see the mute and unmute button right here, if you click the little arrow a little box will pop up and you click on your audio settings and then another box will pop up, this box will pop up for your audio, so if you go down here, you can suppress background noise, so it auto defaults to this setting right here, so we suggest you put it at least to a medium and you can also turn up your speaker level up here again it defaults to a lower settings so that might help you if you're having trouble hearing us. Thank you.

Michelle Stephen Wiens

Good afternoon, everyone, this is Michelle Stephen Wiens and I welcome you this afternoon and looking forward to our time together to talk about the wage grid, we're going to start off with a presentation and a slide deck first, hopefully that may either answer some of your questions, it also might help you generate some new questions and that's a good thing too, because we will be doing a Q&A section after the presentation slide deck is done.

Before we get started today I also want to give a little bit of a housekeeping message. As we were setting up our webinar today we had some technical difficulties on our first webinar in terms of the volume and sound and that's why Kathy identified some steps that you can take to troubleshoot some of that so that's very important, but we also know we've been having some issues with the government platforms today where we've been losing our wifi connections and our internet connections as we've been setting up here. There's a significant migration of information happening to government today I don't know if that's what impacting us but, in the event that it does and something is cutting out or you can't hear us, could you please let us know in the chat bubble, and then either we'll mute down and try to troubleshoot it, if it's something unfortunate that we cannot fix we may make a decision to reschedule rather than try to troubleshoot and lose our time, we feel like this information is really important, but the interruptions we know can be disruptive so we just want to keep an eye on that and just because our setup was a little bit unconventional this afternoon, I just wanted to give that warning in advance in case we run into some troubles.

00:04:24

With that I'm going to start off with our presentation today, it is about the implementation of the wage grid and this webinar is specifically for directors. We're actually doing now five webinars so two that are exclusive for directors and the information that you need to know in your roles, and as a first time we've got two webinars in the evening scheduled exclusively for board members and the reason for that is, as board members are the legal entity of the non-profit corporation and have all the legal authority for operations, including the finances and programming, so part of what happens here and the implementation is really connected to board decisions and related to the development of individual scales for facilities. So that's really why we're wanting to have those

separate times with board members so they can ask their questions as well, and then to bring it all together we've now scheduled a summary webinar for next week on July 15 that will be again exclusively for directors and what will be presenting at that time is a summary collection of all the questions and the things that were elevated through both the directors webinars as well as the webinars for the board members so that will be an opportunity for the directors to get that information. Finally, after all of that is completed, all of this will be posted the slide decks will and the recordings will be posted on the website, we will be doing summary documents of the questions, we're looking at the development of a tool kit for the board members after last night's webinar, so after all these webinars are completed information will continue to flow that we hope will be very helpful to you all in this implementation.

00:06:30

So with that we'll go on to the actual presentation itself, so the early learning and child care wage grid, just for background information it's a commitment under the Canada Manitoba Canada Wide ELCC Agreement that was signed last August. It was one of the hallmark terms and critical priority items that Canada wanted to see, so Manitoba, as well as all the other jurisdictions, we received term sheets from Canada about certain things that had to be in our action plans and had to be negotiated as part of this agreement and one of them was a wage grid. The other condition that we had for Manitoba was for our first action plan to be just a two year action plan as opposed to the full term of the agreement itself, which is five years, knowing that that would give us the flexibility, based on the first two years to then submit it and negotiate our next plan, and then build on those initial initiatives and foundational steps when we're taking in the first action plan for the first two years. So, consequently, this wage grid was part of our first action plan and an expenditure for 22-23 and that's why it's being implemented now.

So the cost to implement the wage grid is in total \$37 million just for this year. Of that, \$34.7 million is coming from the federal agreement and federal funding and it's directed to staff that are working with children under the age of seven years. You may know that one of the conditions under all our bilateral agreements is that there are the expenditures and the supports are supposed to be focused on child care services for children zero to six or under the age of seven, so that means we can only use Canada's funding for those spaces and so consequently those improvements that we want to see also happen for our school aged children and school age services become a provincial expenditure and so with this implementation of the wage grid \$2.3 million is being supported in provincial funding and that's so that we can have this wage grid extend to the full workforce, so those working in childcare centers that have infant, preschool and nurse care as well school aged centres.

So the reasoning behind having a wage grid is really, we know that fair and equitable wages are essential for building on the workforce, and we know that is a critical element for Manitoba and across Canada. So, having a well compensated workforce results in higher quality ELCC services, because we will have trained staff and be able to recruit and attract trained staff, it stabilizes and strengthens the ELCC sector because we're able to have a consistent workforce and then attract new talent to the workforce, it addresses the labor market shortages that all sectors are seeing right now but, in particular, we know that the labor market shortages in early learning and childcare did start in advance of Covid but many started as a result of the pandemic, we've certainly seen an impact of seeing that increase. It helps to support the retention of current staff and then also the recruitment of new individuals to consider early childhood education as a career path for them. So those are all the things we want to see improvements on over the course of the next five years, and of course into the future but what we're talking about today and the wage grid in this initial investment is to kick start all of that.

Facilities, as you know, they operate as independent businesses and with their boards of directors, as the legal entity and responsible for all operations, they establish staff wages and although that's

our governance structure and how Manitoba has operated for many, many years and decades what it has done is it's resulted in a very large range of wages for sector staff dependent upon the facility, classification, position and often where it's located and we're going to talk about that a little bit more, the analysis we've done in that area and why we believe some of that is occurring, but I think the important thing to keep in mind here is the wage grid is our first step out to try and correct some of this.

00:11:27

So this gives you an idea of the range of diversity in wages being paid out in our sector right now. This is a roll out from 2020- 2021 and the wages on display here, we do this analysis every year, and they represent the required reporting coming in from our licensed non-profit facilities, so through your annual reporting budget plan statements and then your annual financial statements, your audited financial statements we roll out the information that's related to the wages paid, so we can do analysis every year on those averages of what's happening in the sector, and so, consequently, you can see there's quite a bit of diversity in what's being offered so the red bars are showing the maximums being paid, and then the green is our averages, so you can see there's a big difference between maximum averages, and the minimum, which is the blue, so this is something that we know needs to be addressed, and it also was one of our challenges when you're looking at establishing a common or even in the future, perhaps a regulated wage scale and a comprehensive one, so this was certainly one of our barriers that we know, over the next period of time we're trying to correct and address.

So our approach to increasing wages and working towards more equitable common and fair wages in Manitoba is implementing the wage grid operating supplement. So the supplement will provide facilities with ongoing revenue to direct towards increasing staff wages, and so this was negotiated in the Canada Wide Agreement and the supplement has been negotiated as an expenditure that Canada wants to see committed to wages exclusively. So the way we were able to build this was to add that wage grid operating supplement to your existing operating grants and so on our announcement on this 27th of June this is what we were talking about and the announcement was announcing the new wage grid, the increased operating grants as a result of this supplement and that this would be taking effect as of July 1, 2022.

So these tables give you an idea of the new operating grants that are happening as a result of the increases and they really are quite significant. The new operating grant per infant space is \$13,676 and that's up from \$11,375 previously, preschool is going up to \$5331 that's up from \$4801, school age is up to \$2277 up from \$1664 and then our nursery school works in sessions, and so our base amount for nursery school previously was a \$1090 and it's up to \$1495 and then for each additional session offered they get an additional \$299 per session per space. So these increases are really in a percentage on just the operating grant probably the largest increases we've ever seen, so what they mean is a percentage increase on infants spaces of just over 20%, for preschool it's an increase of 27.5%, and for school age spaces it's an increase of 36.8%, so almost 39%, nursery school spaces, we are seeing a 43% increase to their operating funding.

So similarly we've also done some increases for home based providers and that's really to build in the sustainability for our funded child care homes and so these go along the same line of thinking of the overall revenue increase to better support homes and that home business, and so the infant spaces are going up to \$3709 per space, \$2884 for preschool spaces, and \$1399 for school age spaces, so in terms of the percentage of operating grant increases for homes it's 37.7% increase for infants, 39.5% for preschool, and 59% for school age spaces.

So the unit funding model is what we've based operating grants always, since 2001 and the wage grid operating supplement was built into this unit funding model approach. So provincial operating

grants for centers are based on a unit to provide a revenue per unit, based on grants and parent fees so those units are established in regulation and what they are comprised of is a unit for infants is four children, for preschool children it's eight and for school age it's 15 children. And so we will have a common revenue per unit and that's how we've always looked at providing the adequate funding for operating and for supporting those operating costs. So when we're looking to increase for the wage grid supplement, we were looking at the unit as a whole, not just the operating grant and so, this represents the percentages, I talked about that you'll see on the increase of the actual operating grant is actually a 12% increase on the daily revenue per unit and so that's how we were able to arrive at this and those large increases are on the operating grants themselves.

So I kind of already mentioned this, but it bears repeating, and so what we're hoping with the wage grid is that it will be our foundational first step to moving forward with the development, ongoing, as we continue with our work forward to develop a more comprehensive grid, hopefully, containing a full wage scale through future action plans. As I mentioned earlier, our first action plan was only for two years, so it was for 2021-22 and then this current fiscal year of 22-23, and so the good news is that that means starting in 23-24 we have a new action plan, and that gives us the opportunity and the flexibility to continue to build on what we have here, make modifications that we feel will be even more helpful and hopefully will address some of the changes that were unexpected when we negotiated this first grid. Our negotiations happened in the summer of 2021 and so that feels like quite some time ago and it was, and it was really difficult in this pandemic environment and then now other things that have happened since to forecast what the world was going to look like we did our best job that and other things that come into play that were completely unexpected, like rate of inflation and other types of things and so now, knowing that we have a new action plan for 23-24, those are the types of things we can look at as we go forward.

So changes to the wage grid that I'm referencing that we have the flexibility to make they'll be informed by consultations, we do with the ELCC sector, including boards of directors and we'll also be looking for feedback from the minister's consultation table and the subcommittees and then other stakeholders, so we won't be having this exclusive just at those tables, we will be doing a further, deeper reach after we implement this, and when we start discussing how we continue to move forward and build, and we when I say build, this will be a phased approach over the course of the agreement, so there isn't no one implemented and done, this is something that will happen over time and then steps and really to get some consistency across the province.

So the wage grid was developed, taking into consideration a number of factors, so one we've already talked about a fair bit, and that was the range of wages currently being offered in the ELCC sector. We also looked at comparable wages paid in the public service requiring similar qualifications, and potential increases to the provincial minimum wage. So what we intend with wage grid is we really want it to provide guidance to boards of directors in developing equitable wage scales across the employee, classifications and position. I'm going to ask Pam just to go through the next bullet well I deal with the frog in my throat, so there's a technical difficulties that we absolutely did not expect.

00:21:51

Pam Wever

Okay, so the ELCC wage grid provides a starting point for the hourly wages, based on the position and classification of employees. And then there's a target wage for the different positions and classifications province wide. And so, that is an average wage that we would like to see for that position and the funding that you're provided through the operating grant increase will be sufficient to get you your staff to that target wage.

Michelle

So here we have the actual wage grid itself, and I think the thing that's most notable on it, is it looks a little bit different from the wage grid that we have in our action plan that's been published by Canada and that's part of our agreement, and so what we have done is made changes to the entry level positions and it's kind of referencing back to the previous slide and what Pam is talking about and it was really to address what we anticipate it's going to happen with Manitoba's minimum wage, so our entry level positions for a CCA that is trained with their 40 hour course and an entry ECE have been increased to reflect what we anticipate may happen. So the CCA starting point, that means the wage to be paid for any new CCA where they should start with their wages, and the starting points will be looking at, and we expect to see that in people's budgets and confirmed in their audited financial statements, so that is going to be \$16.05 going forward and the entry level for an ECE is \$19.53. And as Pam said, the target, on the other column is actually an average target so that is the wage we want to see minimally that you hit as an average across that classification and position, so it isn't a wage we necessarily expect to see, but when we do the analysis on your budget submissions and on your audited financial statements that you are required to submit to us, we'll be doing calculations to make sure that you are at least meeting those average targets for that group of staff in the wage scales that you're offering.

So the implementation of the wage grid and developing a wage scale that supports facilities is going to be a lot of developmental work and some analysis and we realize that and it really is the work or the decision that belongs to the board, however, directors, we know play a very important role and will probably be and should be involved in a lot of this development and in consultation with their board members. So, although the wage supplements coming to you now we've actually pushed out those increased operating grants in these this next quarter payments they should be arriving those operating grants by the end of this week and early into next week, that's how it rolls out with our payments, so you already see the money there but we don't expect you to quickly have a new wage scale and start offering those higher wages, we realized that takes development. So what we're asking from facilities is to develop their scales, implement it when you can, as soon as possible of course, but those wages should be retroactive to July 1 when the new operating funding became available.

So for directors, it's important to remember that the Board of Directors is the legal entity of the non-profit child care center, so the boards are the ones responsible and accountable for decision making related to the centres' business, programming, staffing and finances. And so, ultimately, the scale and the wages that are offered and paid out by the business, is a board decision. So how directors help in this, is they may assist boards by providing information and support to make their administrative decisions related to wages, and that could be analysis based on what's currently being paid and how to hit the targets, how you might develop a wage scale that's going to fit with the starting points and making sure that the average target wages are paid out across a line and then bringing into all their other expertise about when you develop those steps in the wage scales, things that might want to be considered in relation to compensation, such as years of service.

So also directors will be really integral in helping board of directors to understand the requirement for funding facilities to implement the wage grid, like there is no question, we're looking for the wage grid supplement that's been added to the operating grants, based on our commitment to Canada, to be directed to wages and so that has to be a very clear understanding. Annual budget submissions from funded non-profit centers must demonstrate that this additional revenue from the operating grant increase must be used on wages, we'll be looking for that in your budget submissions and we'll be making notes to see and have that validation confirmed when your subsequent audited financial statements come in. Implementation of the wage grid to support the increase wages must be reported in those annual financial statements, as stated. And we'll be tracking that all along the way. This is a compliance issue for continued funding, so the reporting needs to reflect, and we need to see that there's been implementation of this and then continued funding really will be dependent upon it.

I'm a little bit shocked I guess that's it I was ready to say more, but I guess I will have that opportunity because we're going to move into question and answer, but just in general, if you want to learn more about the early learning and child care initiatives and the Manitoba action plans there's a link here for you, when we send out the slide deck it'll be an active link so you'll be able to connect with them very quickly and we know that this has been a very busy time for facilities and for all the directors, with all the different initiatives being rolled out some are longer term, some are developmental like this one, and some are one time we appreciate the effort that's gone forward and we know there's so much more work to be done. But I think we all can agree that this is important work and we're really excited about beginning, just beginning to address this really important issues. So with that I'll turn it over to Carmen.

00:29:33

Carmen

We have a question from Chris, what if a position we have does not line up with the wage grid list so example if they have different titles?

Michelle

So that's a really good question, much like other wage grids and an example would be the MCCA market salary scale, we kind of done the grid based on classifications and position types that we typically see in the budgets and the financial statements that come in, we do realize that sometimes different titles will be used in different facilities, I think the important feature here is the classification and the role and responsibilities. So one thing we know will probably be very important for directors and working with their boards is looking at those position descriptions reviewing what the responsibilities are and having it line up with one of the roles within the grid and making that decision, which will be a board's decision about what compensation is really required for the level of responsibility in the role that that position within the facility itself.

Carmen

We have a question from Cathy in regards to the operating grant payments and when the new funds can be expected to be received.

Michelle

Okay Kathy thanks, I mentioned it, but it could have been when I had a frog in my throat so maybe it didn't come out very clearly, but, those are going out, the increases are part of your next quarterly payment and those should be starting to be received in different facility's bank accounts, most have auto deposit now, and they should be received by the end of this week beginning of next week and that's pretty typical with our second quarter payments.

Carmen

Thank you, we have two questions kind of related from Harmeet and Diamond in regards to unfunded non-profit programs, one, if they are not funded how are they expected to maintain these salaries and two, how does the wage grid affect private sectors?

Michelle

Okay, so we have two questions here, and so, in terms of the funding of your spaces, very recently, we put out funding to really address all our unfunded spaces that were on the waitlist, so in terms of unfunded spaces, who wanted and requested funding, most of them should be funded. Now we did that as a housekeeping item before we implemented the grid, so if you have unfunded spaces and we need to do some planning around that or you had unfunded spaces and some facilities have made this choice and you've refused funding for whatever reason, I encourage you to get a hold of your child care coordinator, so we can start some discussions around that. So that would be your first step.

In terms of our for-profit centers, for-profit centers because they're for-profit and not eligible for operating grant funding, they are not receiving any supplement to this of this nature. Our hope is that our for-profit providers will look at providing similar wages as our outline here, but because there are private businesses with an owner operator, they have no obligations to give any type of financial reporting to us because we are not funding them, so in some ways they're kind of on their own to make their own decisions as they always have been. That being said, we have had some inquiries from for-profit operators wanting to know about becoming a non-profit incorporating as a non-profit business, and we certainly are open to helping any child care facility look at that option again your point of contact to start that conversation would be your child care coordinator, they really are our best information navigators in our in our program and so when you come to them with an inquiry, they will be able to connect you with the right people at Early Learning and Child Care, when necessary, to answer all your questions.

Carmen

Thanks Michelle, we have a couple questions in regards to childcare assistants in training so, for example, workplace program from Victoria, Anna and just an initial 'c', so just about is our wage scale for CCA in training?

Michelle

So no, is the answer to that one, but this is again a variation that board of directors, have the discretion and can make a decision about on their own. And so, when I talked about, we're pointing out just the grid to give guidance, then it comes up to a board decision about the compensation and the steps and what they will be compensating for. So when I talked about developing a fuller scale and steps in a scale and my only example at that point in time was years of service, this is another example of something you may want to compensate in those steps. So I think in response to this, I would say, this is a board decision, it's at the discretion of the board and what they want to develop and compensate in the wage scale they implement based on the guidance here, and so this might be a good point of consultation for directors to have with their boards.

Carmen

So we have some questions coming in about ISP funding, so from Karen and Milum will there be an adjustment ISP funding to cover the increase in wages?

Michelle

Yes, and so that's when I talked about how there will be time for development, boards will need to come up with their new wage scales and there'll be retroactive payments in a very similar way. We're doing our homework too, so we will be providing retroactive payments increasing those ISP payments to reflect the starting points on the wage grid and the same will also happen for our staff replacement grants as it relates to workplace programs and CCA's involved in the workplace programs. So we don't need to see anything from you on that you don't need to do any new submissions, if you have already an approved to grant and either of those programs we're doing the background homework and we will be making those adjustments and when we're about to push them out or send them out to you will certainly give you some communication in advance, so that those adjustments we will let you know they are coming.

Carmen

Thank you. From Tanika and Katie is there a starting wage or a targeted wage for a CCA without their 40 hour course.

Michelle

So an untrained CCA as we call it, is not on the wage grid and to be quite honest, that was an intentional thing. So, as you know, in regulation, and for all our training staff requirements and our certification requirements we know that CCA's can start prior to completing their 40 hour course but to be in compliance, there is a requirement for them to complete it within their first year of employment, so this is why we've started the wage grid with this trained CCA because we really want to give an incentive to make sure that those that are coming into the system complete that 40 hour course within their first year of employment. So what that means for the untrained CCA wages is that again is up to the discretion of the board and honestly, it can range anywhere from the current minimum wage, up to the starting point of \$16.05 per hour. So it can be anywhere in that range it's a board decision and at their discretion.

Carmen

We have a question from Sheena about the expectation that we use the target average wage as listed on the wage grid, but that facilities are independent businesses with different positions and structure so, is it the board's final decision on specific wages for positions and responsibilities?

Michelle

Yes, is simple answer to that, I mean we know there's some variations will be looking at that and giving advice, but we certainly can help in the planning when there's some kind of variation of this nature that you want to try to work out that's again a good time to call your child care coordinator and engage us and helping you work through those very unique issues now and we're here for that, we want to have this make sense, and we know there's some variation but we are looking for generally those average targets, to do the math that's how will be measuring compliance, it's a way for us to get common and equitable wages across sector and we need that to continue to build on this grid and come up with a more comprehensive wage scale in the future. So, I guess the bottom line to this one is if there's variations or questions about what you include or a type of position based on the position description and where it may fit, please do call your child care coordinator put that very unique question that's related to your facility to them and they will connect you with the right people or engage the right people here at ELCC to help you figure that one out with your board.

00:40:36

Carmen

Thank you, we have a question from Cindy regarding group family childcare, how does the main licensee fit in these wage grid numbers who operates with 2 staff?

Michelle

Thank you for the question Cindy it's a great one, as I love the model, I don't have as many group child care providers out in the province that I would like to see Cindy and hopefully this will provide some bit of an incentive, so that being said, you as the owner operator hiring staff, essentially, which was an amendment we made to the regulations, opening up that opportunity for group home child care providers, this is your decision at your discretion. I know we're open to having a conversation, because every group home childcare provider's a little bit unique, we have some still operating with multiple licensees and others that have chosen to have a single licensee and employ staff, we want to see those staff that you're that you've got into your facility and that you've employed that their wages lining up with the starting points and averages, I guess, based on their classifications but we know it's a unique model, so please reach out to us and we'll kind of work through that with you and likely, along with the financial analysts. So, not a very clear answer, kind of muddy, but please do like reach out to your child coordinator and, as we know that every family group providers really got a unique business model at this point of time.

Carmen

We have a question from Susan, is it a board decision to set wages for casual staff or subs or is it expected that they follow the starting wages for each classification?

Michelle

This is for everyone, it's for every kind of classification every type of staff so we would like to see them at those starting points based on their classification and position they're substituting too.

Carmen

Thank you. Just a question from Sharon, prior to July 1 can you just remind us what the preschool amount for operating graphs was.

Michelle

\$4180

Carmen

Thank you.

Michelle

I feel like that was a jeopardy question!

Carmen

Okay from Lori, are professionally audited financial statements and submitted budgets required for all non-profit nursery schools now?

Michelle

So we are requiring the annual financial statements, they're not audited. We have a template for nursery schools that's a little bit different, we can get those out to you and remind people we made some of these changes when we went to the single funding model approach and so lots has happened since then and with that, so what we'll do to refresh everybody's memory, I'm looking at Carla and she's nodding at me, so we'll recirculate those information and those templates out to all our industry school providers, I think that'll be really important as they reopened for September.

Carmen

Okay, a question from Karen, what are we to do for operating grant increase does not cover the amount needed to reach the target wages?

Michelle

So we've done some pretty careful calculations, based on the unit funding model that exists, the funding that was already being given and based on what has always been the expectation and budget submissions that wages should be about 80% of your operating revenue so with those calculations and the increases that have been offered in the analysis, is this should work. That being said, if you're struggling with this that's again a good time to contact your child care coordinator, get others involved to help you and your board work through these financial pieces and we're actually very happy to do so because there is such a diverse range again out there there's no one answer for everyone, but we know there can be some really exceptional circumstances as well, so please in that situation if you find that you can't make it fit and we know that it should, please contact us and we'll help you work through that.

Carmen

A question from Carrie from the two years experience is that the same center or as just as an ECE 2?

Michelle

So for us we've been looking at this as the two years experience as an ECE 2, so generally when you hire staff, I know that when I do it as part of our hiring process we understand what they're bringing to the table and their experience and then even when we hire in government in the public service we do the same. So we often give credit for past experience and move them up in the public service wage scales on steps based on those years of experience so when we implemented the wage grid, two years of experience is two years experience of being an ECE anywhere in the system and I'm assuming that usually, when you hire folks that you're looking at what has been their past experience in order to make a decision about whether they're going to be a right fit for your facility.

Carmen

Thank you, Michelle just a comment from Samantha and a question, could you please repeat what you said regarding the wage grid and the ability to make some decisions based on years of service.

Michelle

So, certainly so the wage grid is guidance for boards to develop a wage scale for their business and usually wage scale includes steps and lots of things can be considered for that additional compensation and usually that's represented by the steps which are increments and one of the core things, typical things that are usually honored through that is years of service so with every year of service you move up to another step in the public service, our wage scales can have anywhere from five to on average about seven steps and usually our increase per step is 3.5%. That's kind of one option and an example out there and so that's how years of service will come into play, perhaps in the development and that's up to the discretion always wage scales and wages paid, that is the decision for boards to sign off on that, they have the legal authority to make those business decisions, but you as a director you're there to give that administrative support and consultation as they work through that development.

Carmen

Thank you, so one more question Michelle about the grid, the question comes from Sheena, is the grid guidance or expectation.

Michelle

So I'm not quite sure I understand, but I'm going to answer it this way. It is guidance, so the grid represents guidance for boards to develop their own wage scales for the facility they're legally responsible for. The expectation attached to the grid is that those wage scales and the wages paid in different classifications and positions are minimally, they have to be at that starting point and all along a certain classification of position that all those positions need to minimally hit that average targets, so those are the two things we'll be doing analysis on to ensure that one, there's been implementation of the wage grid and that there's compliance, so it's a little bit of both, I hope that answered your question.

Carmen

Thank you, we have next question from Kathy what is the expected timeline to reach the target wages?

Michelle

So the average targets, there's no timeline on that is it's an average, so we expect that if you have one employee in a classification and they're brand new we're going to expect that we would expect, and it would be reasonable for them to be at the starting point. If we see that employee, two years later, that same employee, they're still at the starting point we're probably going to start asking you some questions because there should be a wage increase and then, at that point, we should see them moving up to that average target or we expect you to start getting to that average target. If you have more than one employee, so floor staff for instance, you're going to have more than one

ECE in that classification and that job position the collective of all of those ECE floor staff, we want to see their collective wages minimally hit that average target, so I hope that makes sense. In terms of the additional operating grant and those increases, we based it on every position being in that average target range and so that's why I'm saying that we know that there should be sufficient funds to implement these increases and the guidance that this grid offers.

Carmen

Thank you, next question is from Tracy we answered part of Tracy's question already, but she did have a question here about the Canada summer jobs program

Michelle

Absolutely, so the Canada summer jobs program is one of our little exceptions here and it's an exception for a couple of reasons, those are very time limited positions that are based on funding from the grant program from Canada for the summer. The other reality is this wage grid and the implementation of the new wage scales related to this guidance unlikely will be implemented through by the end of summer or while that person is still in your temporary employment, so based on your application to Canada and whatever your submission was in terms of that wage for that summer temporary employee you pay them based on what Canada has approved and there's no requirement to give them any kind of retroactive pay. However, and this sometimes happens, if that summer grant employee you decide is going to stay on as a regular employee for you, after the summer is done, then they should come into your new wage scale and then be eligible for retroactive pay as of that date when they become a regular employee, so it is a little bit just because of the grant program itself and the temporary nature of employment, the rollout of our actual wage grid, that is one of the exceptions. I hope that was clear enough to answer, but I know I did an email on this and it seemed to go over well with somebody I gave it to so I'm happy to send it to you as well.

Carmen

Thank you. And a question from Bonnie, since our center accommodates full time, part time and casual they have 56 children enrolled in a 38 space center, where do you place the director on this grid?

Michelle

So your center and the size of your center is based on your licensing not enrollment, your funding is based on your license and not your enrollment so that's where you would place them.

technical error break

00:53:55

Carmen

We have a question from Cathy in regards to the July operating grant installments, just wondering if the new amount should have been included in there, as it was the same as last year's.

Michelle

So it should have been Cathy, and so it should have been that's my answer, so if, for some reason it didn't change for your facility, please get a hold of your child care coordinator we'll definitely look into that, there's always glitches sometimes it could be based on your annual reporting and how CCO pushes out the payments, but we want to know about that make the correction as soon as possible, so if that has occurred, please contact your child care coordinators.

Carmen

Thank you, question from Jacqueline, why is the CCA starting point so close to the ECE entry level?

Michelle

Well I think what you'll notice is, that typically does happen throughout the wage grid guidance and so we would assume and it is the at target averages for a CCA who's been there for many years, there's a difference, we really want to see and encourage people who are trained CCA eventually pursue an ECE certification and go for that additional training, but we know, sometimes that's a personal decision it doesn't happen. And we have lots of CCA's that remain in the sector and are employed and providing really important quality services to our kids for many, many years and so there has to be room for them to grow, too, and so in particular in rural facilities and sometimes that's because we don't have the availability of training programs, the way we do in our urban centers, so it may be more challenging for CCA's to then advance and go for any kind of ECE training, so we have to give some recognition that we have long term CCA that are trained and they have to be compensated for those years of service as well.

00:56:17

Carmen

A question from Leona, will we be receiving the same amount or an increase of operating grant each year or sorry, or will it slowly increase each year?

Michelle

Okay so great question Leona, and so this goes back to the conversation or where I started in this conversation and that is, this is a developmental piece, this is absolutely our first step out our next action plan that starts in 23-24 allows us the flexibility to not just to potentially make increases, but also to build on what we've started with this guidance. So, the intention is for us to continually have this grid and the guidance go up to reflect changes and cost of living and other things the new action plan for 2023 allows that us the flexibility to do that and negotiate that out with Canada, which I think they're very receptive to. So that's one piece, but also we want to continue to build this to get beyond guidance, so when we come out and do our sector consultations that will be part of what we're engaging you in a conversation is to figure out how do we do this and how to build that comprehensive scale and keep it and maintain it and ensure the sustainability going forward for the sector that's absolutely what we want to see so its part of that larger plan and something that will be involving you all in to plot out how we move forward with that.

Carmen

Thank you. And we have one more question about group family childcare, so if family members are working together how are we supposed to implement the wage grid?

Michelle

So again, I've talked about the group family childcare model having a number of variations now and then also it being quite unique to every provider because we don't have, unfortunately, a large number of family group childcare providers in the province so each situation and each model right now stands is fairly unique. So, in order to figure out the implementation and the unique circumstances of your home business, again, we know that it's unique, so please contact your child care coordinator, so we can look at all the dynamics to work through that with you in a way that makes sense for the sustainability of your home business.

Carmen

We have time for one more question, from Chantelle are we able to distribute these funds as we are currently staff or should we keep in consideration if we are not fully additional staff that would be needed for that?

Michelle

I think this goes back to my previous response, so how operating grants are being paid out right now and how the operating supplement has been distributed is based on your license spaces, not

your current enrollment. And we know, right now, your staffing levels may be down because of enrollment being down, you pay people for the work that they complete, but the money and revenue is there, based on your full licensed capacity and so you're getting operating funding and the wage grid supplement for each of your license spaces.

1:00:49

So very interesting, I think we had some questions that were quite unique and different from our first webinar with directors which really places the value in having our summary webinar on July 15. So, like I said, we want to make sure everybody gets as much information as possible, so, first of all I want to encourage you to register for the July 15 time, so we can get together another time for all this fun. We will be sending out the slide decks once all the webinars are as complete as I said, posting the recordings on our website and we are documenting all the questions and we'll create some summary documents related to that as well.

It's very interesting to me how I think I've heard all the questions, but you guys are really you kept me on my toes I really do feel like I'm on a game show sometimes and yeah you made me think, I really just want to let I appreciate that, and it really keeps us very much in tune with all the things we have to consider as we continue to work together and plan so I look forward to our next meeting together. I think it's a nice day out there, I hope, once we all go home, we can enjoy some nice Manitoba summer weather and have a lovely afternoon everyone thanks for joining us today.