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The Nova Scotia government has the power to fix the problem. As the regulator of the entire child care system, it sets both fees and wages. Join us in telling Zach Churchill, the minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, to work with unions and

**HELP US MAKE THE SYSTEM MORE EQUAL**

employers to bring in equal pay for equal work, particularly to those working in the non-profit sector. You can contact his office by phone (902) 424-4236 or email [educmin@novascotia.ca](mailto:educmin@novascotia.ca).



# Fair treatment for all early childhood educators in Nova Scotia

ALL early childhood educators in Nova Scotia have the same professional training and credentials, use the same curriculum, and are regulated by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. That's true whether they work in a non-profit child care centre or a pre-primary classroom that's part of a centre for education (formerly known as a school board).

All children enter into a flexible environment that promotes learning through play. The standards and regulations in child care centres are every bit as stringent as those in the pre-primary program.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS DO NOT RECEIVE EQUAL PAY**

Compensation for early childhood educators varies, depending on whether they work in a child care centre or the pre-primary program, even though they are doing the same job.

Experienced early childhood educators are leaving child care centres to work for centres of education. This is causing a shortage of workers and other problems for child care centres.

### **EQUAL TREATMENT IS AFFORDABLE AND DOABLE FOR NOVA SCOTIA**

Extending health and dental benefits to staff at child care centres to the same level as what is offered at centres for education would add approximately \$1.3 million each year. That's less than a tenth of 1% of the province's \$1.4 billion education budget.

The Department's funding to non-profit child care centres should be increased by \$1.3 million annually to ensure that all early childhood educators, across the province, receive the same compensation package.

There is no good reason for the disparity in wages and benefits, since the Department is the regulator of the entire child care system.

- Most early childhood educators currently working in child care centres are paid less than their counterparts in the pre-primary program and will retire in poverty.
- Most early childhood educators working in child care centres do not have pensions.
- While they have health benefits, they are less affordable than those received by early childhood educators working in pre-primary classrooms.

These disparities have also created problems for Nova Scotia's early childhood education system as a whole. The difference in compensation at child care centres versus centres of education has created an unstable situation in the sector.

By doing so, Minister Churchill will be demonstrating his commitment to equality, fair compensation and respect for women.

### **EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK**

Early childhood educators are overwhelmingly female workers and their work has long been undervalued. It's unacceptable to provide lesser compensation just because the work is done mostly by women.

All early childhood educators in Nova Scotia deserve equal treatment, good wages and access to the pension and health benefit plans administered by the province – regardless of whether they work in a child care centre or the provincial pre-primary program.