

August 26, 2026

Dear Superintendent and School District Leadership,

As school districts across British Columbia continue to expand early learning and child care opportunities, we would like to share a reflection and an invitation.

The province has made a significant commitment to increasing access to child care, and we recognize the important role school districts are playing in making this vision a reality. Expanding access to high-quality early learning and child care benefits children, families, and communities.

At the same time, we believe it is important to ask an important question:

As we create more child care spaces, are we also protecting and expanding inclusive child care spaces?

The goal should never be to trade inclusion for access. A strong child care system must achieve both.

There is a real concern that, in the urgency to create new spaces, we may unintentionally prioritize quantity over inclusion. Without intentional planning, new child care spaces may not be fully accessible or equipped to welcome children with disabilities, creating new barriers for families who are already struggling to find inclusive options.

As your district plans and develops new child care spaces, we encourage you to reflect on a few key questions:

- Are new child care spaces and their outdoor play areas being universally designed from the outset to welcome children with disabilities, or is inclusion being considered only after the spaces are built?
- Are educators and child care providers receiving the training, resources, and staffing they need to support diverse learners?
- Are inclusion supports available consistently so that families can expect equitable access regardless of where they live?
- Do funding decisions recognize the additional collaboration, planning, and expertise required to deliver high-quality inclusive child care?
- Will success be measured only by the number of new spaces created, or also by whether children with disabilities are able to access, participate, and belong within those spaces alongside their peers?

These questions reflect more than operational considerations; they reflect our collective commitment to children's rights.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as Canadian human rights principles, children with disabilities have the right to participate in inclusive early learning and child care alongside their peers. Inclusion is not an enhancement to quality; it is an essential measure of quality.

British Columbia should not have to choose between creating more child care spaces and creating inclusive child care. The true measure of success is whether every child, including children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, can access high-quality, inclusive early learning close to home.

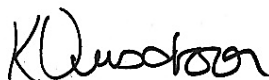
As leaders in public education and early learning, school districts have an extraordinary opportunity to build child care systems in which inclusion is embedded from the beginning rather than added later. By designing spaces, supports, staffing models, and partnerships with inclusion in mind, you can help ensure that every child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and belong.

As you reflect on our next steps to ensure inclusive child care in your school district, we encourage you to use the resources created to support the growth of inclusive child care and to help achieve the vision established in the [BC Inclusive Child Care Strategy, Where All Children Belong](#).

- [Inclusive Child Care Toolkit](#)
- The [Foundations of Inclusive Child Care](#) training
- [Behaviours in the Early Years](#) training and multiple resources for child care centres
- [Leaders of Inclusive Child Care](#) initiative, which also includes training and a Leadership Handbook
- [Creating Inclusive Playgrounds](#): A Playbook of Considerations and Strategies.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to creating welcoming communities for all children. We look forward to continuing to work alongside school districts to advance inclusive early learning and child care across British Columbia.

Sincerely,



Karla Verschoor
Executive Director
Inclusion BC



Brenda Lenahan
Executive Director
BC Complex Kids Society

