



ECE PD BURSARY

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BURSARY FUND

YEAR 2 REPORT



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BRITISH
COLUMBIA



WCCRC


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Executive Summary

This report illustrates how the ECE Professional Development Bursary Program (Bursary Program) supported capacity building and improved access for early childhood educators to engage in ongoing professional development throughout British Columbia from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. In Year 2 of this phase of operations, the Bursary Program supported 4,855 educators to participate in ongoing training for free or at a significantly lower cost. The Bursary Program has also addressed the common barriers faced by educators, such as the expenses incurred to participate in professional learning, particularly for those educators living in remote areas. Notably, 24% of Bursary Program recipients reside in rural and remote regions, and 10% are Indigenous early learning and care professionals. This aligns with the Bursary Program's objectives to improve access to and affordability of professional development for diverse communities. Testimonials from those who have received funding highlight the transformative impact of the Bursary Program on personal and professional growth. Educators express appreciation for this financial support that has made professional development opportunities accessible and affordable, especially during this period of high inflation.

The Bursary Program's success is rooted in its commitment to building trust and rapport with those responsible for organizing professional development in their community. Relationship-building with community leaders who understand the distinct needs of educators in their region continues to foster strong connections and support relevant training for educators throughout British Columbia.



*We prioritize relationships with children and families
and prioritizing relationships with early childhood
educators and the organizations that support them
—that's what changes the field—
that's where change is going to come.*

Nicky Byres ~ Community of Practice Mentor

Looking ahead to Year 3, the Bursary Program aims to support training programs that span multiple sessions over an extended period of time. Feedback indicates that ongoing training over several weeks or months leads to deeper understanding of practice and stronger relationships among educators. Additionally, the Bursary Program will encourage training organizers to share their insights beyond their immediate communities, showcasing their expertise through presentations or publications. This aligns with the Early Learning Framework's vision for educators as collaborators and researchers.

Uptake and Reach of the Bursary Program

4,855

People supported with Bursary Program Funds.

Those eligible for this funding are people who work in the following roles:

- Early childhood educator
- Early childhood educator assistant
- School-age child care provider
- Licensed family child care provider
- Registered license-not-required child care provider
- Those care providers who have completed the Responsible Adult course

1,109

People living in rural or remote communities.

People living in rural and remote regions of British Columbia represent 24% of all bursary recipients in Year 2 of the Bursary Program.

531

People from Indigenous communities.

People who identified as First Nation, Métis, or Inuit represented 10% of all bursary recipients in Year 2 of the Bursary Program.

Living on the Northwest Coast of BC is challenging at times. New professional development opportunities can be difficult to find. Living in a rural area makes it even more difficult because resources are limited, and travel is incredibly expensive. I am appreciative and thankful for being able to attend this conference!

Professional Development

Popular Topics

36% Indigenous Customs & Traditions



This was the most popular subject of exploration, and especially in communities of practice.

14% Trauma-Informed Care



Two conferences with researcher Orah Chaye and multiple workshops were hosted on trauma informed care.

14% Illuminating Care



The book *Illuminating Care* by Carol Garboden Murray was the most popular resource used in communities of practice in Year 2.

11% The Early Learning Framework



The Early Learning Framework continues to be a popular topic and was the theme of two eight-month-long workshop series held in Salmon Arm and Parksville.

11% Reggio Emilia



The Bursary Program provided support for the Reggio Emilia International Conference in October 2022. Several workshop series also presented the concepts of Reggio Emilia philosophy and practices.

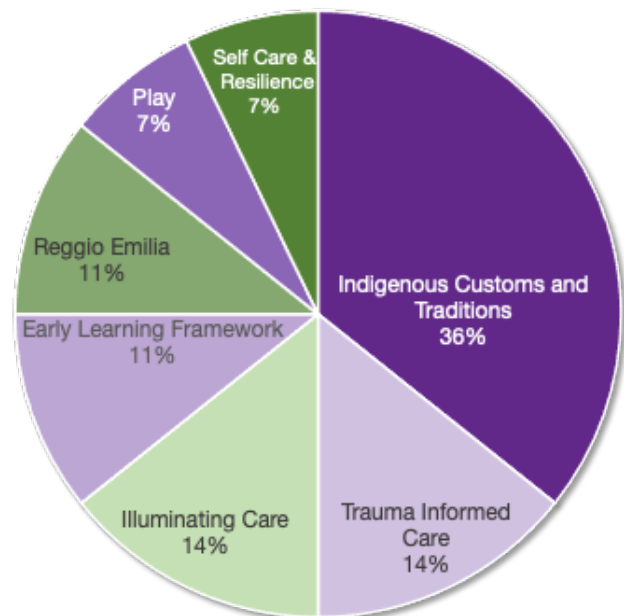
7% Play



Play, particularly outdoor play, is a popular subject in communities of practice and workshops.

Year Two: Most Popular Topics of Professional Development

Supported by The Bursary Program



7% Self-Care and Resilience



There have been many inquiries about resources to help educators practice self-care and build resilience, both in themselves and in the children they care for. Self-care and resilience have also been integrated in other topics such as trauma-informed care and in conversations about the book *Illuminating Care*.

Professional Development

Formats and Locations

22 Communities of Practice

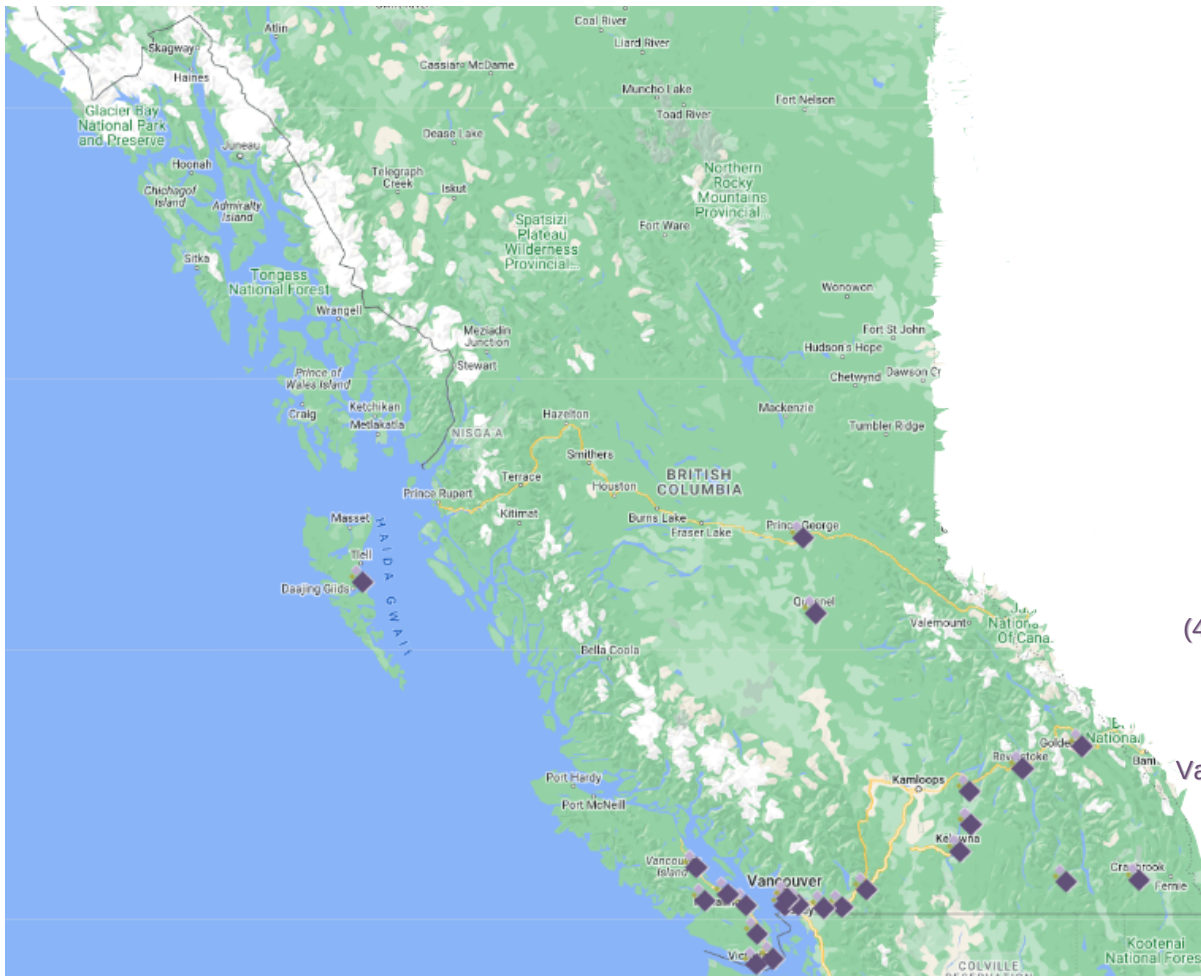
15 Conferences

21 Workshops

8 AMCC Cohorts
Administration and Management for Child Care

As a single mother of five children, money to upgrade and educational opportunities are sometimes not available to people in my situation in life. Through the community of practice, I have been able to upgrade and gain knowledge with a community of people who are uplifting and accepting. I have been given opportunities I may never have had otherwise.

Locations and Number of Events

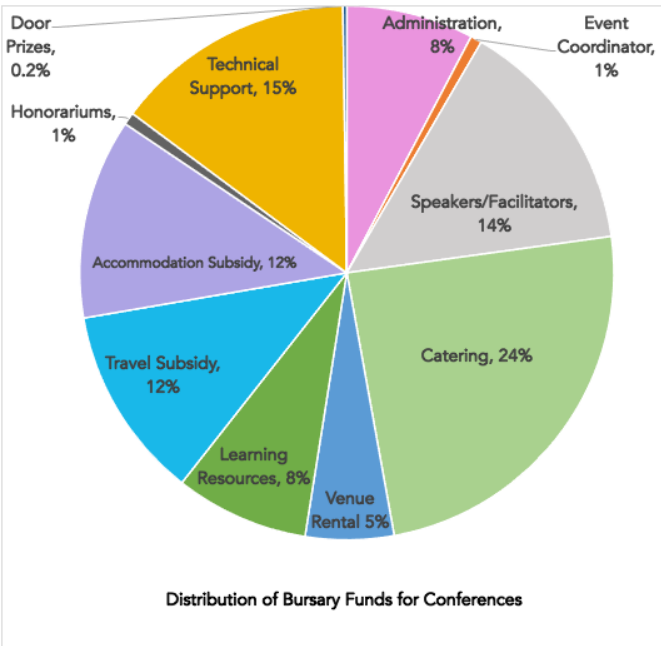


- Campbell River
- Chilliwack
- Courtenay
- Cranbrook
- Duncan
- Golden (3)
- Haida Gwaii (2)
- Kelowna
- Mission
- Nanaimo
- Nelson
- Parksville
- Port Alberni
- Prince George (2)
- Quesnel
- Revelstoke (2)
- Richmond
- (4 ~2 Hybrid, 2 Online)
- Salmon Arm (4)
- Sooke
- Surrey (5)
- Vancouver (7~ 3 online)
- Vernon (2)
- Victoria (3)
- William's Lake (3)

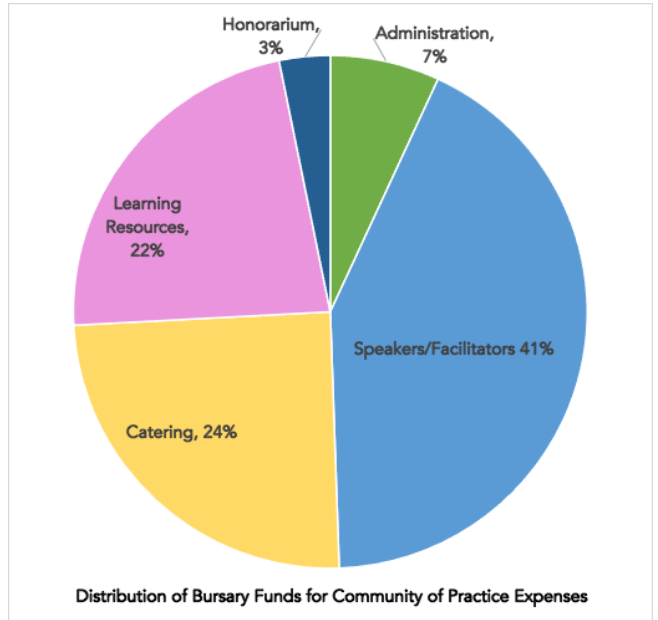
Funding

Having the opportunity to travel to a conference after so long felt wonderful. I appreciate the financial support in being able to do that. I have worked in the ECE field for 25 years and have recently changed jobs. My colleagues are spread province-wide, and this opportunity gave me a chance to meet them in person for the first time and have the opportunity to learn and grow with them professionally.

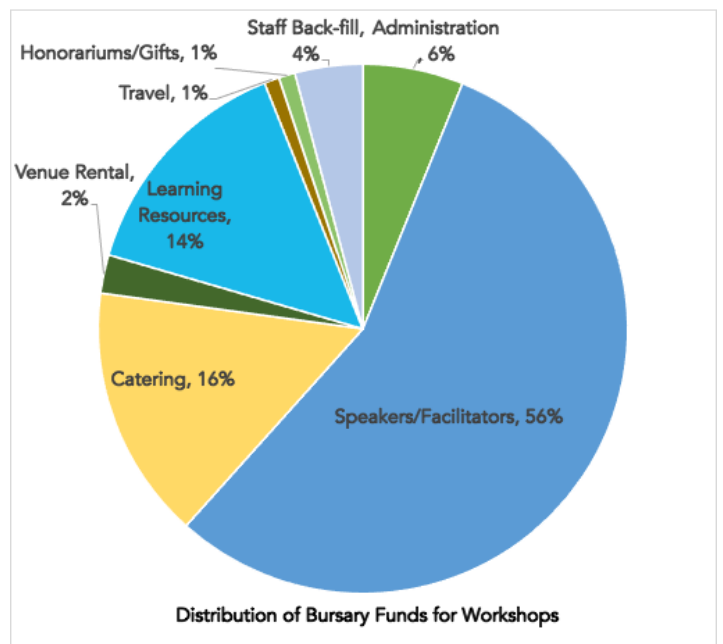
Communities of Practice



Distribution of Funding



Conferences



Workshops

Funding

Registration Fees and Expenditure Summary

Registration Fee Reductions

The average registration fees for training were reduced by the following percent in each funding stream:



Expenditure Summary

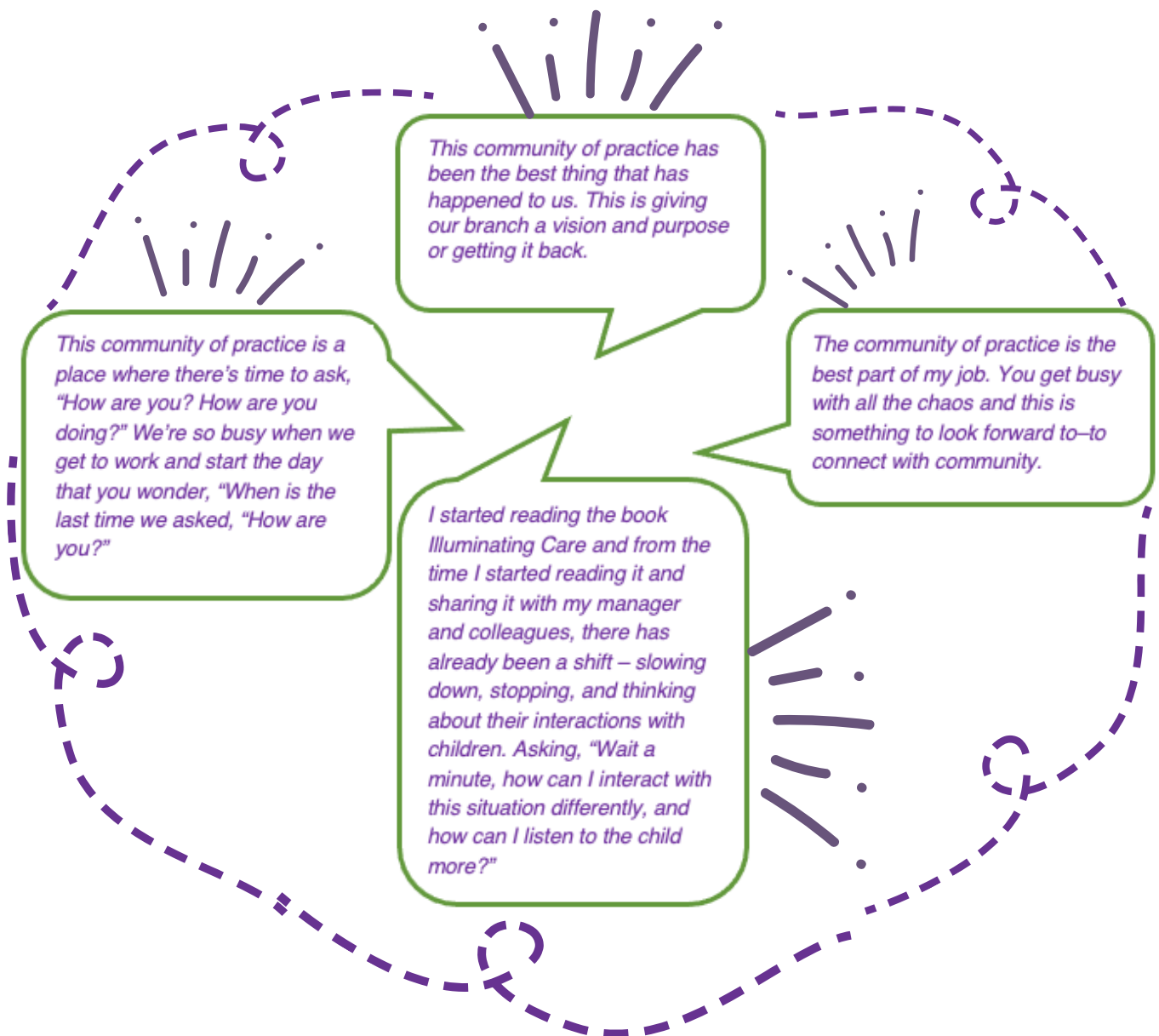
Categories	*Amount
Communities of Practice	\$ 128,018.26
Conferences	\$ 607,556.96
Workshops	\$ 190,241.59
AMCC Course	\$ 71,000.00
Westcoast Administration	\$ 120,000.00
Operations (consultants, technology, communications)	\$ 127,680.85
Total Year 2 Expenditures	\$ 1,244,497.66

*Official audit of Year 2 to be completed by July, 2023.

Impact

Capacity Building

The following quotes from recipients of the Bursary Program provide insights into capacity building and the impact of reducing barriers to ongoing professional development. The feedback suggests that communities of practice act as catalysts for a shared vision and renewed purpose. These testimonials highlight the transformative potential of consistently engaging with a group of educators to foster personal connections and facilitate a shift in mindset and practice.



Impact

Capacity Building

Capacity to Explore Truth and Reconciliation

Communities of practice have provided valuable opportunities for educators to engage in discussions and explore the Truth and Reconciliation document. These gatherings have allowed educators to come together as a supportive group, both personally and professionally, creating a space where they can openly discuss and reflect upon reconciliation without the pressure of finding definitive answers or striving for perfection. These conversations have been characterized by an understanding that reconciliation is an ongoing process, and the focus lies in sharing thoughts, experiences, and perspectives. Through these discussions, participants have the opportunity to reconsider their own identities and contemplate their role in the reconciliation process.

Having a safe place to talk about the harder aspects of reconciliation in an honest way has helped me rethink who I am and what my role in this process can be.

These conversations are helping me to be more comfortable in dialogue about reconciliation and my journey with this. Hearing others' doubts, triumphs, struggles, and humility has been inspiring and given me hope that reconciliation is possible.

Capacity to Learn as a Team

Bursary funds have been utilized to decrease registration fees, allowing teams of educators from the same workplace to engage in professional development. Learning together provides an opportunity for teams to discuss and strategize the application of new concepts and ideas within their child care centers. By reducing financial barriers, bursary funds facilitate a work environment of continuous growth and improvement.

I had three different managers tell me how important the conference is to their programs, as it not only was an opportunity for their staff to access quality professional development but it also created the space for their program staff to connect and team-build which they do not get a chance to do very often.

This session will really help us find common ground and move forward on the same page as we shift our program.

Impact

Capacity Building

Increased Capacity for Facilitators and Organizers

The Bursary Program has had a significant impact on developing the capacities and skills of facilitators and organizers. One recipient highlighted the transformative experience for weavers and beaders who had never led workshops for adults before. The Bursary Program gave them an opportunity to build confidence and discover their ability to teach, resulting in a rewarding experience where the participants connected through sharing their stories.

The weavers and the beaders had never led a workshop before for grown-ups. It was cool to see their confidence build ... then when it finally happened, it was just about being together, and stories that needed to be shared just happened. The facilitators got an opportunity to teach, and they didn't know they could do that, so that was really amazing.

Another community of practice organizer reflected on their own personal growth, expressing how leading a community of practice challenged their perceptions of what they were capable of.

I have never really liked facilitating, but I've never led a community of practice. It made me think differently about what I can and can't do. There was a feeling that we're all in this together as we read the book, and I felt like I was part of a community, and I really liked it.

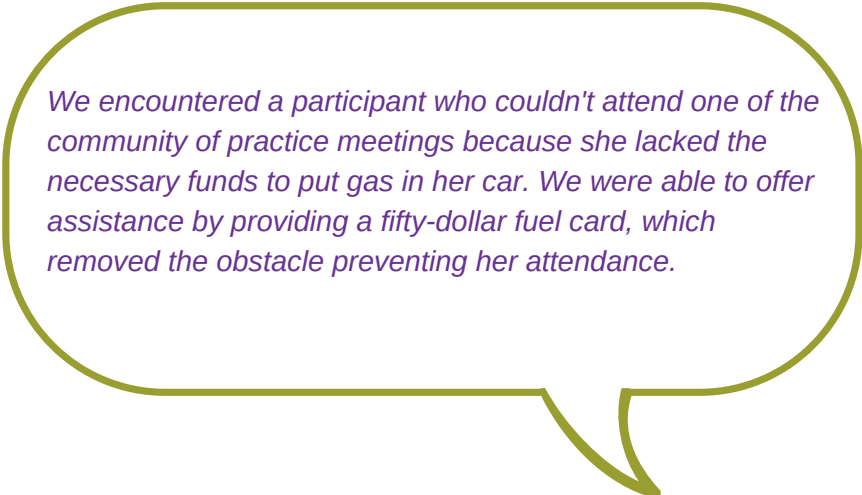
The Bursary Program provided relief to one conference coordinator by alleviating the stress of organizing a high-quality conference while being mindful of costs. This enabled them to fully engage and develop relationships with child care staff.

Not only did staff benefit from this conference but as conference coordinator, the bursary funds helped decrease the stress of how to provide a quality conference in a cost-conscious manner. This allowed me to be more present at the conference and create or deepen my relationships with child care staff, which is critical to my role.

Challenges

One of the primary challenges facing the Bursary Program is the significant increase in costs associated with hosting in-person professional development sessions, particularly for educators residing in rural and remote regions. These escalating costs have made it difficult for Bursary applicants to accurately estimate their budgets, specifically regarding travel and accommodation expenses. With additional guidance from Bursary staff, applicants have been able to improve their ability to predict the necessary expenses for organizing an in-person training event.

Another notable challenge is the very limited personal discretionary funds available to educators to pay the costs of professional development. The feedback suggests that the impact of rising inflation has significantly affected educators, leaving them without funds to cover basic living costs, let alone afford the modest fees associated with professional development. A training organizer shared the following comment, which exemplifies this situation:

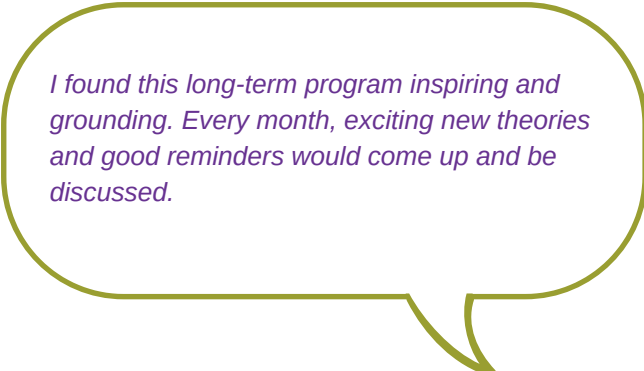


We encountered a participant who couldn't attend one of the community of practice meetings because she lacked the necessary funds to put gas in her car. We were able to offer assistance by providing a fifty-dollar fuel card, which removed the obstacle preventing her attendance.

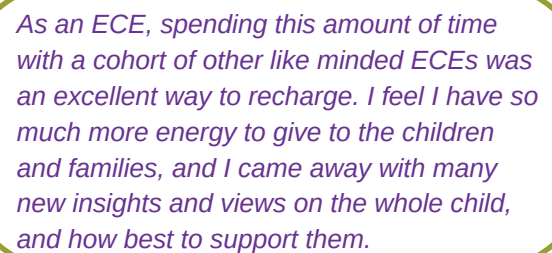
The increasing costs of living have put additional pressure on educators, potentially impeding their access to ongoing professional development opportunities. As a result, many training organizers have chosen to utilize bursary funds to provide professional development sessions free of charge to educators.

Plans for Year 3

There has been a growing trend among bursary applicants to organize training programs that span multiple sessions or extended periods of time. This includes year-long communities of practice or workshop series scheduled over several months. The feedback suggests that sustained training and interactions over a longer period of time offers numerous benefits, including a deeper understanding of new concepts and the development of stronger supportive relationships among educators. Feedback from educators who have engaged in professional development over an extended time period indicates a significant shift in their perceptions of the child, their worldviews or their own professional practices. In Year 3 of the Bursary Program, plans include encouraging applicants to consider professional learning opportunities that span multiple sessions.



I found this long-term program inspiring and grounding. Every month, exciting new theories and good reminders would come up and be discussed.



As an ECE, spending this amount of time with a cohort of other like minded ECEs was an excellent way to recharge. I feel I have so much more energy to give to the children and families, and I came away with many new insights and views on the whole child, and how best to support them.

The Bursary Program has received remarkable stories from training organizers, highlighting transformative learning experiences among educators. In Year 3, the Bursary Program will encourage and support training organizers to publish or present their findings to wider audiences beyond their immediate community. By amplifying the expertise of those directly engaged with children and other educators, this initiative aligns with the Early Learning Framework's vision of educators as collaborators and researchers.

The uptake and reach statistics as well as feedback from educators and training organizers strongly affirms the effectiveness of the Bursary Program in achieving its goals in Year 2. By effectively reducing financial barriers, the Bursary Program has successfully supported capacity building within the child care field and significantly improved access to professional development opportunities for early childhood educators throughout British Columbia. In Year 2, the Bursary Program has played a pivotal role in advancing the field of child care in the province by providing crucial financial support to educators to engage in high-quality professional learning experiences.