

Current Context

- A tight labour market for K-12 education is a reality not just in B.C., but throughout Canada and internationally.
- At the same time, we've seen a record number of people choosing to call B.C. home over the last two and a half years. While welcoming that many new British Columbians has put pressure on services such as schools, it also provides opportunities for new people to join the workforce and fill labour gaps in key sectors like education.
- We know schools and districts are facing recruitment and retention challenges, and these challenges are impacting students, staff, and communities.
- While labour pressures look different across B.C., the [Labour Market Outlook 2023](#) is forecasting that the system will require 19,620 K-12 teachers and 7,110 education assistants over the next 10 years.
- To identify a responsive and sustainable path forward, the Ministry of Education and Child Care has convened sector partners to collectively work on the development of a K-12 Workforce Plan for B.C.

Working Together: The K-12 Workforce Plan

- Since the spring of 2023, the Ministry of Education and Child Care has been working with partners to discuss the current state of the K-12 workforce and shape a provincial plan.
- Representatives from employer groups, school districts, independent schools, Indigenous organizations, unions, post-secondary institutions, the BC Teacher's Council, and government have been involved in a consultation process at the executive level and through working groups to collaboratively develop a K-12 Workforce Plan focusing on four areas:
 - Attracting and retaining talent through desirable workplaces and rewarding careers
 - Offering flexible, accessible, and robust post-secondary education and career pathways
 - Supporting adult well-being and professional growth
 - Fostering cross-sector collaboration for an agile education system
- Ultimately, this plan will aim to support a stable, qualified, and engaged K-12 workforce now and into the future.

Guiding Principles:

- This work is guided by the vision of a high-quality and inclusive K-12 education system, delivered by an engaged workforce empowered through rewarding and valued career opportunities.
- This work is conducted with a deep commitment to equity, diversity, and reconciliation.
- This plan is meant to consider teachers, support staff, administrators, and encompass all stages of recruitment and retention, from attraction into the workforce and post-secondary education, to supporting career growth and recognition.

Moving Forward

- Now that a draft Plan has been developed, Ministry staff are working with sector partners on the creation of a Road Map that will outline specific initiatives, timelines, and accountabilities to allow the system to reach the vision and goals in the Plan.
 - Consultation sessions with K-12 partners took place in February 2024.
- Later this school year, executive members of K-12 sector partners will reconvene to continue to refine the Plan and finalize the Road Map.

Initiatives Implemented So Far:

- Since 2018, the Province has invested \$4.1 million to create more than 400 new seats in teacher education programs.
- Through the StrongerBC Future Ready Action Plan, the Province is providing \$12.5 million to support the recruitment and retention of Indigenous teachers, as well as to boost the recruitment and retention of teachers in rural and remote districts.
- Initial initiatives include:
 - Investments to create/expand teacher education programs that deliver a substantial portion of the program online to support accessibility and flexibility.
 - Bursaries for practicum placements in rural schools in Northern BC.
 - Hiring incentives to recruit teachers in some of the most remote schools in BC.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care has reduced processing times for teacher certification applications.
- The BC Teachers' Council has updated the teacher certification standards to allow for a higher number of internationally educated teachers to work in B.C.'s K-12 classrooms.
 - The Ministry of Education and Child Care is now working on identifying ways to streamline the immigration and certification processes for internationally educated teachers.
- As the Ministry and sector partners continue to work on the development of the Plan and Road Map, more initiatives will be implemented with the understanding that while recruitment has received a greater focus in preliminary efforts, retention activities will be emphasized as the work progresses.