

Manitoba Early Childhood Educator Awards of Excellence 2026 Nomination Guidance Wednesday, June 24th

00:03

Jason Booth

Hi, good afternoon. My name is Jason Booth with Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Division.

Just make sure our audio is working today. We're in a different room than we normally are. So, if you're having trouble hearing us, please let us know in the chat.

Thank you for joining us for this afternoon's webinar, Manitoba Early Childhood Educator Awards of Excellence 2026 nomination Guidance.

00:27

Jason Booth

This webinar will be presented by Andrew Dvorak, senior policy analyst with ELCC, and Paige Mason, Policy and Program Analyst, also with ELCC.

Following the formal presentation, we'll have time for questions, which you are welcome to submit via the chat throughout the presentation.

We will try to answer as many questions as we can, and I will read them out.

ELCC will be documenting all the questions sent in to ensure even questions that are not answered live will be reviewed and considered and as a reminder, please limit your questions to the matter at hand.

01:01

Jason Booth

And with that, I'll read a brief land acknowledgement before I turn things over to Andrew for this afternoon's agenda.

We recognize that Manitoba is on Treaty 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 Territories and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Ininiwak and Nehethowuk Peoples.

We Acknowledge Manitoba is located on the National Homeland of the Red River Metis. We acknowledge norther Manitoba includes lands were and are ancestral lands of the Inuit.

We respect the spirit and intent of Treaties and Treaty Making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Metis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

01:49

Andrew Dvorak

Yeah, hi everyone. As Jay said, I'm going to run over the agenda really quick. So, we've broken this up into five parts.

We're going to go over the background of the awards, an overview of the awards themselves, how to prepare a nomination successfully, the recipient selection process, and then we're going to open the floor up for questions following, at the end of this presentation.

02:12

Andrew Dvorak

So, the early childhood educator awards of Excellence celebrate childcare professionals that exhibit standards of excellence in early childhood education and recognize home-based providers for their contributions to enhancing children's growth and development.

Following the first award season in 2025, this year's awards reception will be held in fall 2026. Each award recipient will be presented with a certificate of recognition and a check for \$500.

02:41

Paige Mason

There are six award categories with up to 15 recipients.

So, there is the Outstanding Early Childhood Educator Award. This will include a Francophone Indigenous and Rural and Northern subcategories.

There's also the community collaboration award the Lead, the Premier's Award for Early Childhood Education Excellence, and the Exemplary Home-Based, Early Learning Environment Award and there's also a new award this year, the Early Learning and Child Care Impact Award previous award recipients are eligible to be nominated again this year.

However, individuals who received an award in a previous year are not eligible to be nominated in the same award category.

03:29

Andrew Dvorak

So we'll be going over all six award categories for the 2026 iteration of the awards, opening up, we're going to start with the Outstanding Early Childhood Educator Award, which will be presented to five ECEs that work in a child care center and demonstrate exemplary professional standards, inclusive practices, and an ability to inspire children, families, and colleagues by going above and beyond expectations.

Within the five awards for the outstanding ECE, there are three awards subcategories presented to one ECE. One of the 5 awards will be presented to an early childhood educator who identifies as an indigenous person, be it First Nation, Metis, or Inuit, and incorporates high-quality, culturally specific Indigenous perspectives Language, land-based teaching, culture, traditions, and values into the daily curriculum.

One of the five awards will be presented to an early childhood educator working in a child care center that is declared programming status as Francois.

04:33

Andrew Dvorak

French aversion or bilingual with the early learning and child care division and is focused on the development and implementation of high quality early childhood programming that promotes the French language and francophone culture and new for the 2026 award season.

One of the five awards will be presented to an early childhood educator working in a rural or northern child care center who has contributed meaningfully to the development and delivery of high quality early childhood programming that responds to the unique needs of their community.

05:05

Andrew Dvorak

Each nominee must meet the criteria set for the outstanding ECE award category.

Criteria as follows.

They must demonstrate high quality early learning practices that support holistic development, build strong relationships with families and communities engage in ongoing learning and apply truth and reconciliation principles, and provide inclusive care for diverse needs and backgrounds.

05:35

Paige Mason

The Community Collaboration Award honors early childhood educator teams that collaborate with schools and or their community organizations to enhance early childhood learning and development in innovative ways.

These teams are based in licensed childcare facilities and developed an exceptional collaborative partnership to benefit the early learning and child care program and or the community. This will be one award with three to five recipients.

06:04

Paige Mason

So, to be eligible for this award, nominees must be part of a team of early childhood educators that demonstrate excellence in partnerships with schools or community organizations.

By working towards shared goals or sustaining ongoing collaborative practices that demonstrate effective communication and meaningful partnerships in support of children, families, and the community engaging and innovative partnerships to support or deliver services and ensure inclusion and encouraging diversity and support community efforts and continuous improvement of childcare practices.

06:43

Andrew Dvorak

The Leadership Excellence Award will be provided to one winner, recognizing a center director, assistant director, or supervisor who is certified as an EC2 or ECE 3 and embodies leadership by encouraging and guiding others displaying exceptional dedication, collaboration, creativity, and vision.

They must support the delivery of high-quality childcare in their work and specific criteria that will be evaluated is fostering a positive work environment, supporting continuous improvement and staff development, strengthening governance within the facility through either board or parent advisory support, utilizing innovative approaches to recruit, retain, and support staff well-being, and they must have at least two years of experience as a director, assistant director, or supervisor.

07:35

Paige Mason

The Exemplary Home-Based Learning Environment Award will recognize licensed home-based child care providers who demonstrate exemplary commitment to play-based programming that nurtures children's growth and development while promoting early learning.

The recipient will demonstrate professionalism in a home-based, high-quality, and inclusive environment that shows the utmost dedication to providing remarkable childcare services.

So, in order to be eligible for the award, the nominee must be a licensed home-based child care provider in good standing and they must demonstrate commitment to facilitating play-based learning that nurtures children while supporting their growth and development, demonstrating professionalism in a home-based inclusive environment, creating and maintaining a high quality and inclusive environment for children.

08:31

Andrew Dvorak

And the final award, which is, as Paige mentioned, new for the 2026 award season, we are introducing the Early Learning and Child Care Impact Award.

This award recognizes an ECE in the sector whose primary role is not within a licensed childcare center or licensed home-based setting.

For example, an ECE that works as a post-secondary instructor in early childhood education, a researcher, a sector advocate, and a health or community partner.

The recipient of the Early Learning and Child Care Impact Award demonstrates exceptional commitment to strengthening Manitoba's early learning and child care sector by advancing evidence-informed practice, supporting workforce excellence, and helping programs across Manitoba thrive.

09:14

Andrew Dvorak

Specific criteria that will be reviewed.

They must make meaningful contributions to support and strengthen Manitoba's childcare system and or workforce through research, education, advocacy, policy, and other forms of sector support.

They must support high-quality, inclusive early learning and child care through leadership, collaboration, or innovation and they build effective partnerships and share knowledge, resources and expertise across the sector.

09:48

Paige Mason

So, the Premier's Award for Early Childhood Education Excellence.

So, the recipient of this award will be selected from among the award recipients for the above-mentioned categories, and they must be classified as ETEs This ECE or team distinguishes themselves by their most remarkable contribution to early childhood education.

10:13

Andrew Dvorak

So now we're going to go over how to prepare a nomination. A nomination package includes two different components.

First, the award nomination form.

This form is essentially the application to be nominated includes both the information about the nominee and then is signed by the nominators of that nominee.

Then that is submitted to us as part of the whole package.

The second component of the package is the nomination description, which is required from each nominator.

So, nominators must complete award-specific questionnaires and use their responses to explain how the nominee demonstrates the criteria for the selected award category. All text must be typed and include the name of the nominee and nominator.

11:03

Andrew Dvorak

All packages must be completed and submitted by July 31st, 2026, and they can be submitted to the ECE Awards inbox at eceawards@gov.mb.ca or can be sent through the mail to the early learning and child care division office at 210-114 Gary Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C4B4.

11:30

Paige Mason

So, some instructions for nominators only respond to the prompts associated with the award category for which you are nominating an individual or team.

The required prompts have been included to guide nominations and support a clear description of how the nominee meets the intent of the award criteria. Responses should describe how the nominee or team consistently demonstrates excellence in their role.

Where excite means going beyond the normal professional expectations of ECEs.

Nominators are encouraged to reference as many specific examples as possible that illustrate ongoing commitment, creativity, and impact over time and focus your responses on describing how the nominee or team consistently demonstrate excellence and the word positively impacts children, families, educators, and the community.

12:24

Andrew Dvorak

So, for the nomination process and selection, the awards and nomination review panel assesses each submission to determine whether it meets all eligibility criteria for each award category.

The panel is comprised of representatives from Manitoba's Early learning and child care sector, including Manitoba Child Care Association, FPFM, Manitoba Metis Federation, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, and the Child Care Coalition of Manitoba.

12:56

Andrew Dvorak

A letter will be sent from Early Learning and Child Care to all of the selected award recipients and will include further details about the awards and the event to follow.

Each of the nominees' nominators, director, and board of directors, when applicable, will also receive a copy of this letter

13:16

Paige Mason

Your contact information, so if you need more information on details, the nomination form and prompts, they are available at manitoba.ca/eceawards. And for any additional inquiries, you can email eceawards@gov.mb.ca

All nominators will be notified by email when their nomination package has been received.

13:44

Andrew Dvorak

So yeah, now we can open the floor up to any questions. If anyone has anything else, they'd like to help us go over.

13:52

Jason Booth

Thanks, if you have any questions today, please type them into the chat and we'll address them as they come in.

I'm not seeing any questions, but we'll keep the line open there for a moment. If you're frantically typing.

14:11

Jason Booth

Once again, the email address to submit your nomination package or for your important questions, email eceawards@gov.mb.ca, and we put that in the chat as well and it's on screen as well.

Thank you.

14:32

Jason Booth

We'll just give a couple of minutes there in case people are desperately trying to put their important questions into words and

15:29

Jason Booth

All right, it doesn't look like we have any questions this afternoon.

Again, if you think of something 20 minutes from now and want to give us a shout, ecewards@gov.mb.ca.

Thank you, Andrew. Thank you, Paige.

15:45

Jason Booth

This has been Manitoba Early Childhood Educator Awards of Excellence 2026 nomination Guidance.

Today's presentation will be posted on our website under notices, Circulars, and webinars within the next two business days.

Thank you for your time today and have a great afternoon.