



**Affordable,
Accessible,
School-Based
Childcare**

Seamless Childcare



What is Seamless Childcare?

Seamless childcare is a model of before- and after-school care delivered inside public schools by trained support staff. These programs provide licensed care in familiar spaces where students already feel safe, supported, and connected.

Because pickup and drop-off happen in the same place every day, families face fewer disruptions and less stress. Kids stay in a familiar environment with adults they already know and trust.

This model is affordable, effective, and easy to scale. It's already working in school districts across BC, and it's ready to grow.



District-operated before- and after-school care creates a seamless experience for children in a setting where they already feel secure. It reduces transitions, builds on existing relationships, and offers our dedicated CUPE support staff extra hours and professional growth. It's a win-win for students, families, and staff.

**DIANE MCGONIGLE, DISTRICT PRINCIPAL,
EARLY YEARS AND CARE, SD 606**

School-based childcare works.

FOR FAMILIES

Less stress, more stability

One consistent location for pickup/drop-off

Affordable fees

FOR CHILDREN

Fewer transitions throughout the day

Familiar, trusted adults

More time for play and learning

FOR WORKERS

More paid hours for Education Assistants, Early Childhood Educators, and other school support staff

Reduced need to work multiple jobs

Stronger career paths in public education

FOR SCHOOLS

Supports staff recruitment and retention

Makes use of existing school buildings and classrooms

Builds trust and deepens community connections



Most of our Education Assistants (EAs) get less than 30 hours a week, so they need second or third jobs. When we started our childcare pilot, one EA told me the extra hours were life changing. It made her feel becoming an EA was the right choice. Offering this work so EAs can make a livable income is paramount to recruiting and retaining these invaluable staff.

Why It Works

JEFF VIRTANEN, PRESIDENT, CUPE 606

In 2024, the BC government funded 3 school districts to pilot before- and after-school childcare, delivered in public schools and run by school support staff.

These programs are already demonstrating that school-based childcare is:

1

Feasible

Using existing school spaces and staff

2

Flexible

Can be scaled and shaped to fit local needs

3

Sustainable

Affordable for families and viable for school districts, with provincial support

Nanaimo-Ladysmith (SD 68, CUPE 606)

- Grew from 2 to 10 sites in under 2 years
- Programs staffed by CUPE EAs in school classrooms, libraries and gyms
- Strong demand with growing waitlists, especially for after-school care



Getting a childcare spot at my son's school has been life changing for us. I've spent the last couple of years leaning on friends and juggling work while driving all over the place. Having this stable care makes the day much less stressful, knowing my son is safe at his own school.

RYAN WHITTALL, PARENT

Real Results



Chilliwack (SD 33, CUPE 411)

- Expanding to 8 before- and after-school sites
- Extra hours have stabilized work for many support staff
- Trusted school staff help students with diverse needs thrive in childcare



District-operated childcare has been a blessing for me as an EA. The extra hours mean I no longer need to work multiple jobs. The role also lets me build relationships with students and gives them the security of a familiar face. I love being part of this program.

BRIANNA ROCHE, EDUCATION ASSISTANT

Nechako Lakes (SD 91, CUPE 4177)

- Opened first district-run programs in Fraser Lake, Fort St. James, and Burns Lake
- Strong partnership between CUPE and the school district
- Focused on raising awareness to boost enrolment



In a smaller, northern district like ours, families face extra barriers accessing childcare. Having before- and after-school care delivered directly by school district staff has been a huge step forward. These programs need stable support so they can take root and truly meet the needs of our community.

DEVON GARDNER, PRESIDENT, CUPE 4177

Q: What will it cost families?

Affordability is a core benefit of seamless childcare. As part of the BC Coalition of Child Care Advocates' \$10aDay Plan, it's designed to make childcare more accessible and affordable. Fees vary by school district, but because seamless childcare uses existing public school spaces and qualified school staff, it costs less to deliver—savings that are passed on to families.

Q: Who delivers the care?

Seamless childcare extends the school day by integrating before- and after-school care into the public school system. Care is provided by existing school staff, typically an Education Assistant or Early Childhood Educator, under the supervision of local administrators who are ultimately accountable to elected school trustees.

Q: Why should childcare be delivered directly by school districts?

Parents trust public schools and the staff who work in them. District-delivered programs are accountable to elected trustees, staffed by qualified school employees, and focused on kids, not profit. That means more stability for families and stronger connections between schools and their communities.



MORE QUESTIONS?
VISIT OUR FAQ PAGE.

Let's bring seamless childcare to every community in BC.

Parents want it. Support staff are ready. The model works. It's time to move beyond pilots and make before- and after-school care a permanent part of our public education system.



ADD YOUR VOICE



Our Supporters

CUPE BC gratefully acknowledges the support of our partners and supporters.



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