



This year, the New Brunswick Child Care Coalition encourages NB voters to treat the provincial election as a 'job interview'.

Remember – the MLAs we elect work for us. Let's hire candidates that are willing to plan, develop and deliver the child care services that NB children and families need and deserve.

With that in mind, here are some questions to ask candidates who come to your door, call you on the phone or if you attend all-candidate meetings. Remember – at all-candidates meetings each person will only be allowed to ask 1 question – so plan in advance to get to the microphone and make sure your child care questions get asked.

It's always good to start with a personal story about your connection with child care. Then, you can ask:

- 1) If elected, what will the candidate do immediately to address the child care crisis? or If you are a parent looking for child care or have children in child care, ask "What will you do immediately to help my family find and afford a quality child care space?"**

Here you want to 'hire' a candidate who acknowledges that there is a lack of licensed spaces, that fees need to be lowered and has a plan to invest in a child care system.

- 2) What experience does the candidate have in planning, developing and delivering a publicly funded child care system?**

Here you want to 'hire' a candidate with a personal and/or political track record on child care. Look past the political spin for concrete, long term commitments and actions.

We know from the results of our past work with parents, as well as from New Brunswick's experience, that government investments go further when they are invested directly into licensed child care programs rather than attached to parents.

In addition to committing to increasing government investment in child care, candidates should also commit to increasing accountability measures to make sure that government funding delivers the expected results of lowering parent fees, creating more spaces and increasing staff wages and training.



3) If elected, how much will the candidate invest in child care and over what time frame?

Here you want to 'hire' a candidate with a 4 year plan to incrementally invest the funds needed to build a universal, quality system.

Expect some candidates to highlight that their political party has made record investments in child care in the past. While this is technically true, NB spends far less than the national average on child care.

According to the Childcare Resource and Research Unit's ECEC in Canada 2008, NB invests \$1,692 per licensed child care space, the Canadian average is over double that amount at \$3,560. Children aged 0-12 need access to licensed child care. NB invests \$274 per child aged 0-12 in licensed child care. The Canadian average is \$663.

To make a significant difference for NB children and families, the NB Child Care Coalition recommends an investment of \$348.8 million dollars over the next 4 years, with accountability criteria to lower parent fees, increase the number of spaces to 30,000, and increase staff wages and training.

Currently, there are just over 18,500 licensed child care spaces in the province for the over 90,000 children aged 1-12. The Coalition recommends investing the Canadian average per licensed child care space. Here is a breakdown of the \$348.8 million.

Year 1	19,000 licensed spaces	\$67.6 million
Year 2	22,500 licensed spaces	\$80.1 million
Year 3	26,500 licensed spaces	\$94.3 million
Year 4	30,000 licensed spaces	\$106.8 million
Total investment		\$348.8 million

According to economic research done by Economist Robert Fairholm, with the Centre for Spatial Economics, investing in child care is good for the economy. Every dollar invested in child care programs increases GDP (economic output) by \$2.30, one of the strongest levels of short term economic stimulus of all sectors.



4) What timelines and targets will the candidates commit to, for:

Lowering Parent Fees

Raising Educators wages and training

Building community owned quality child care spaces?

Here you want to 'hire' a candidate with clear time lines and targets for achieving these goals and a clear commitment to being accountable for meeting them. For example after one year, how much will parent fees have been lowered, how much will educators be paid and will they invest to support more training for the sector? How will they make sure that the community owns these new child care spaces and not big-box child care centres?

5) Will the candidates invest in the wage adjustments resulting from the pay equity program for child care staff and what timelines will they follow?

Here you want to 'hire' a candidate who knows that child care staff, child care operators and government representatives have been meeting for the past two and a half years to evaluate if pay inequity exists in the child care sector. The provincial government has committed to funding the necessary wage adjustments if the process finds wage discrimination.