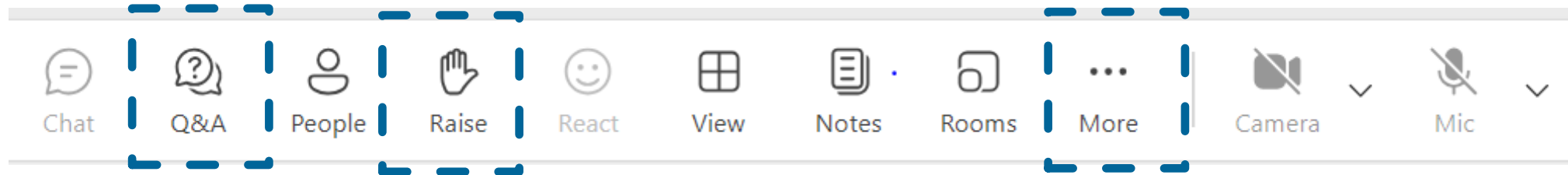


A top-down view of a group of children and adults gathered around a table, engaged in a large-scale drawing activity. The table is covered with a white sheet of paper featuring various line drawings and colorful illustrations. The children are using rolling pins, cookie cutters, and other tools to create their artwork. The scene is bright and collaborative.

Early Learning and Child Care Sector Call

January 30 & February 4, 2025

Call Functionality



Click here to access the Q&A feature and post your questions here **anytime**

Click here to raise your hand **during the Q&A portion**. We will enable your mic.

Click here to enable captions - select **More>Language and speech>turn on live captions**



This call is being recorded.

Communication Standards

When asking questions, please:

- Introduce yourself and indicate your role in the sector
- Be kind
- Be professional
- Be respectful of differences





We would like to begin by recognizing that the land upon which we work, live, and gather is the traditional territory and ancestral homeland of the Mi'kmaq Nation. Our relationship is based on a series of sacred and historic Peace and Friendship Treaties. We pay our respect to the Mi'kmaw People, and recognize in Nova Scotia, we are All Treaty People.

We acknowledge the existence of people of African descent in Nova Scotia for over 400 years. May we honour and offer gratitude to the ancestors who came before us to this land and their commitment to not let this history be lost.

Agenda

- **Updates:**
 - Engagements (Lead: Erika)
 - Space Creation Initiatives & Progress (Lead: Krystal)
 - Workforce (Leads: Hoa and Ryan)
- **New Funding Agreements 2025-26 (Lead: Ryan)**
- **Operational Funding Model (Lead: Limei)**
- **Q&A**

Engagement



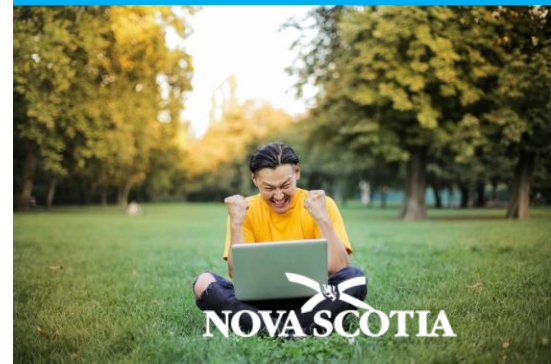
Engagement

Minister's Engagement Table

- Meets quarterly (Saturdays), typically in-person
- **16 returning** members and **6 new** members – you can check out the member list online here: <https://childcarenovascotia.ca/engagement-table>



Meeting summaries are posted quarterly



Space Creation Initiatives & Progress



Space Creation to Date

Program Type	Spaces Opened								
	2021-2023 ⁽¹⁾	2023-2024				2024-25			
	July 13, 2021 - March 31, 2023	Q1 Apr 1 - Jun 30	Q2 Jul 1 - Sep 30	Q3 Oct 1 - Dec 31	Q4 Jan 1 - Mar 31	Q1 Apr 1 - Jun 30	Q2 Jul 1 - Sep 30	Q3 Oct 1 - Dec 31	Q4 Jan 1 - Mar 31
Licensed child care centres	377	310	302	108	200	348	253	147	
Licensed family homes	546	100	150	108	198	120	294	132	
NS Before-and-After Program (NSBAP)	768	0	804	288	264	41	627	57	
Total	1691	410	1256	504	662	509	1174	336	
Cumulative Total	1691	2101	3357	3861	4523	5032	6206	6542	

www.childcarenovascotia.ca



Space Creation Initiatives

Expression of Interest

Launched in December 2021
50 projects, 1500 spaces
App. **1000** opened, 500 remain under development

Minor Infrastructure

Ongoing Program, **11 applications** received, **6 projects** approved
\$1.2M and **175 spaces** to be created

Major Infrastructure

Launched June 2024
26 projects completing feasibility assessments

Family Home Start Up Grant

Launched in December 2024
132 applications received, **\$1.3M** provided, and **112 homes** licensed and operational



Our space creation progress is posted at the end of each quarter at www.childcarenovascotia.ca/families/child-care-spaces



Workforce



Workforce Update

- Over **\$5.5M investment** in training and professional learning in 2024-25 (fiscal year)
- As of April 1, 2024:
 - ✓ **250** new ECE graduates (185 diploma, 65 degree)
 - ✓ **305** sector staff upskilled (208 diploma, 57 ECA, 14 RPL, and 26 Administrative Leadership)
 - ✓ **395** bursaries awarded
 - ✓ **154** ECEs received Continuing Education funding
 - ✓ **98** Students in Pathway program for Newcomers
 - ✓ **61** Students in Virtual program for hard to recruit areas
 - ✓ **1200+** ECEs participated in professional learning
 - ✓ **300** ECEs participating in Active for Life Program
 - ✓ **104** licensed centres participated in AQI pilot



ELCC Pension, Group Benefits & Payroll

- Onboarding is complete for all licensed and provincially funded child care centres and family home agencies.
 - ✓ More than **3,500** eligible employees have been enrolled.
 - ✓ Over **\$4M** has been provided as part of the one-time retroactive contributions to support employee pension contributions.
 - ✓ Over **30,000** health and dental claims have been paid to employees and their families since last May (2024).
- Most centres and agencies have decided to use HANS Payworks Payroll Services. If anyone wishes to explore using this service in the future the opportunity remains available.

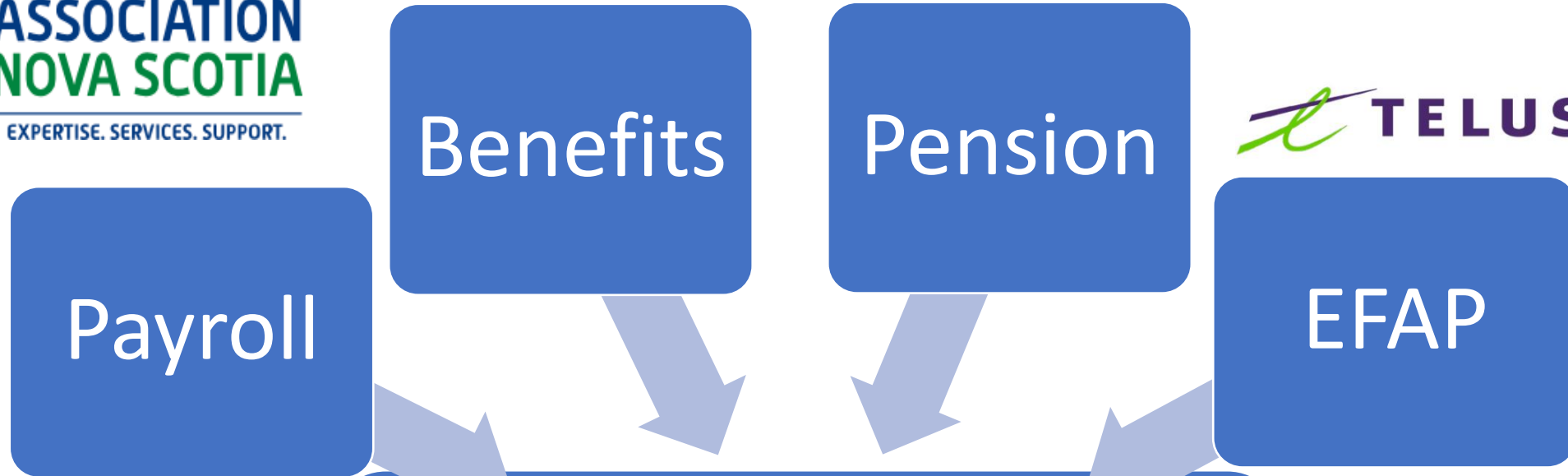


HANS Payworks Payroll Services

1.855.336.5621/ecepayroll@healthassociation.ns.ca



Who do I contact?



childcarenovascotia.ca/benefits
Under 'Resources'

25-26 Funding Agreements



Overview

- Process and documentation will look and feel very similar to last year.
- Few changes for 25-26 as EECD stays the course while the Operational Funding Model is developed.
- **Good news:**
 - **2% increase** for ECE wages (Wage Scale)
 - EECD will fund this increase **plus 15% MERCs**
 - Attendance monitoring is simplified
 - Discretionary operating grant is offered again (March and September instalments)



Key Dates

- **January 31** – Agreement templates/documents forwarded from EECD to the sector
- **February 10** – Family home child care providers must submit RRSP Contribution Receipts to agencies
- **February 28** – Family home agencies must submit completed grant application forms to EECD (in relation to RRSP receipts)
- **March 7** – Completed agreement templates/documents due back to EECD
- **April 1**
 - First quarter payments/instalments due for applicable grants
 - Effective date for agreements (payments for 25-26 cannot be made unless all applicable documentation received)



Accountability

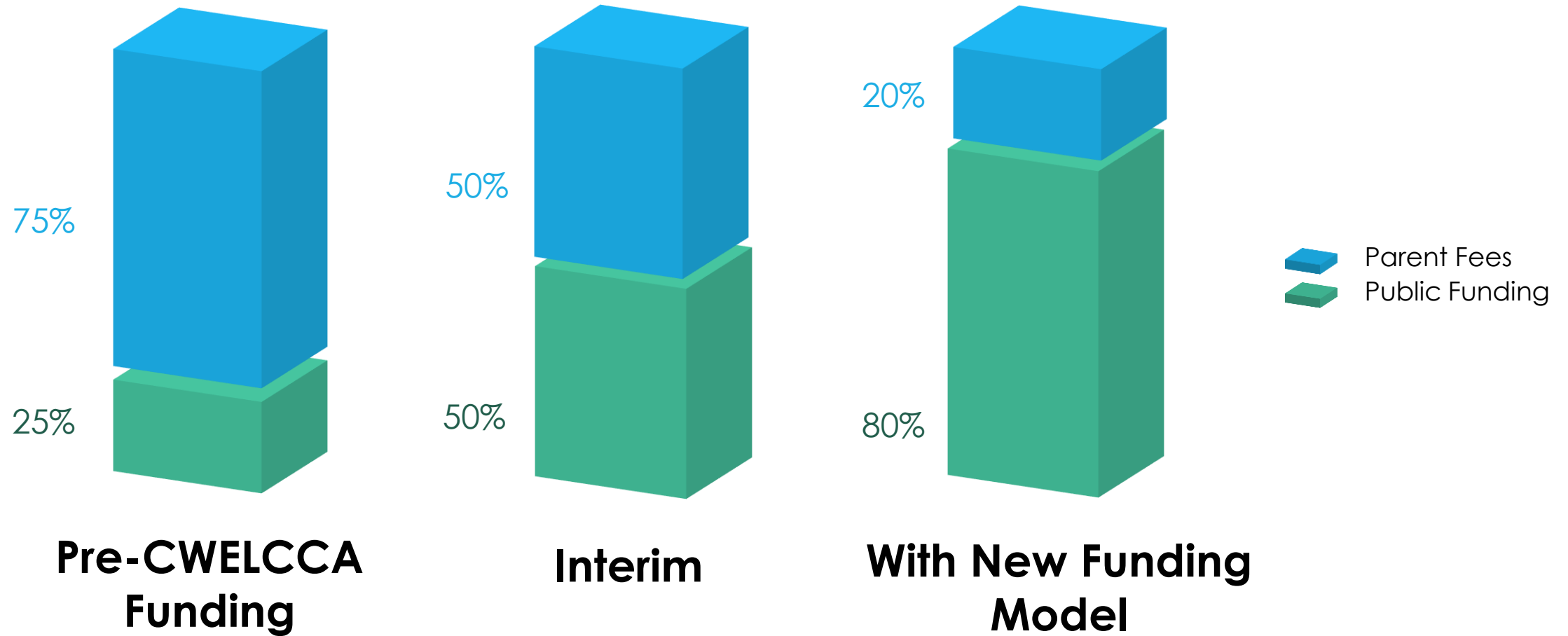
- Thank you for your time and effort to provide annual reports and provide EECD with requested information
- We understand this can take time
- It's a necessary process as EECD is also subject to reviews and audits, and must have processes in place to determine compliance with funding agreements
- Efforts are under way to expand work in this area
- Compliance with agreement requirements is critical to ensuring uninterrupted funding, and smooth processes



Operational Funding Model

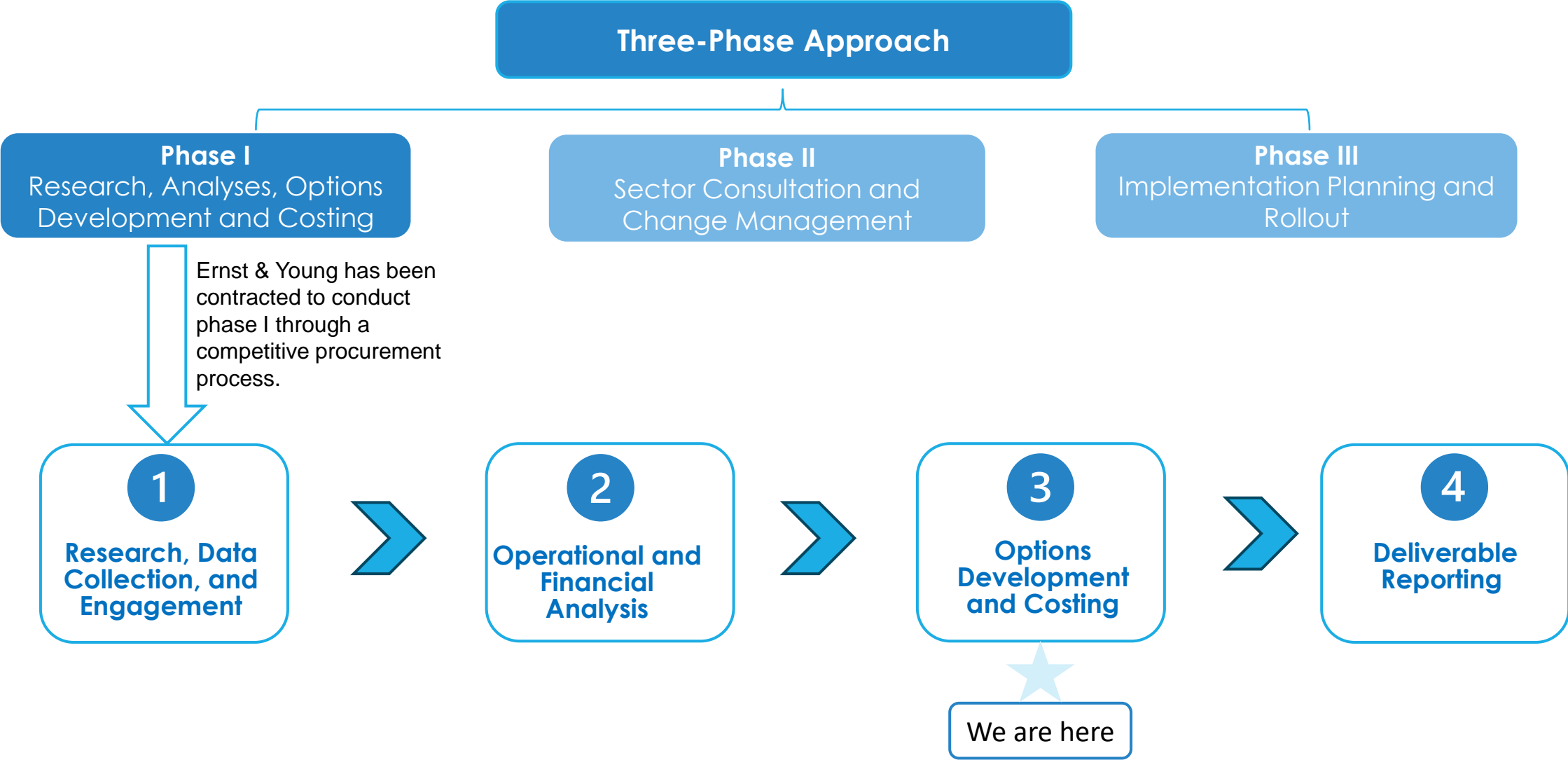


Shifting From Market Based to Publicly Funded Model*



*For illustrative purposes only

Our Approach



Engagement with Service Providers in Phase I

Two working groups (internal and external) were established to help understand the costs of delivering child care and policy implications for the government

- **Internal working group:**

- consists of 12 front-line staff
- expertise in policy, early childhood education, licensing, subsidy, funding administration, and financial budgeting.

- **External working group:**

- 52 applications received, including 14 from for-profit organizations and 38 from not-for-profit organizations
- 16 representatives were chosen based on their experience in the sector, communities served, and a balance of operator type and locations (*note: 1 representative opted out due to availability*)

Organization type	# of representatives
For profit	6
Not-for-profit	10

Region / communities	# of representatives
Urban	8
Rural	8

Service Scope	# of representatives
Single service	10
Multi Service	6

What we heard from working groups

- **Examples of discussion topics:**

- Perspectives on current funding system, key areas cost pressure and variability
- Line items in operation, cost categorization, and cost drivers
- Testing and validation of new funding model design on principles, approach, theory, architecture, distribution mechanism, etc.

- **Feedback from the working group has been themed under the following 6 areas, summarized below:**

Funding Alignment	Align funding to actual costs to support service providers in managing budgets and working capital.
Operational support	Consider timing of payments to ensure sufficient working capital and avoid additional costs.
Flexibility	Provide flexibility within the funding model to cater to different operational circumstances.

Engagement and testing	Continue close engagement with the sector on funding model options, manage expectations, and test and pilot changes.
Cost reduction	Support service providers in reducing costs by leveraging buying and procurement power and providing alternatives where possible.
Model development	Establish a comprehensive understanding of funded costs and consider eligibility for school-aged care funding within licensed childcare funding guidelines.

What to expect in the upcoming months

- The project team is currently conducting more internal workshops and doing cost analysis on various funding scenarios and options.
- We will have more information to share with the sector in Spring 2025

Q&A



Poll!

- Planning for the next Sector Call (April – date TBC) will begin soon
- To assist us with scheduling:
 - **Poll 1** asks you to vote on your **most preferred day** of the week
 - **Poll 2** asks you to vote on your **most preferred time** of day



Note: We had 200 people register for the Jan 30th call, and 105 people register for the February 4th call.



You Asked!

Funding

Will there be changes to funding this year to address inflation, professional development, additional inclusion supports, etc.?

Space Expansion

How is NS going to reach 9,500 spaces when we still have a ways to go?

CWELCCA

Will federal funding continue if there is a change in federal government? Has there been any change to allowing private operator expansion?

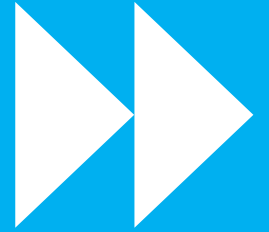
Communication

Are there more or better ways the department can communicate information to the sector?



What's Next

1. A copy of the sector call recording, transcripts and an FAQ document will be posted here
<https://childcarenovascotia.ca/operators>
2. Identify a date and time for the next sector call (TBD April 2025), based on input received during the live polling Thursday and Tuesday



THANK
YOU!

Reach out to us at
ECDServices@novascotia.ca