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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education and Child Care

### **Courtenay families benefit from two new child care centres**

COURTENAY – Families in Courtenay will have access to child care spaces located at Arden and Glacier View Elementary schools.

“Child care on school grounds has a real impact on families’ lives,” said Mitzi Dean, Minister of State for Child Care. “By providing high-quality child care directly on school grounds, children receive the best start on their early learning in a familiar, nurturing environment, while making it easier for busy parents to balance their professional and personal responsibilities.”

School District 71 (Comox Valley) received almost \$8 million in provincial funding through the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund to build new child care on school grounds. Seventy-five new spaces at each school will be created for a total of 150 new spaces. This includes 24 spaces for infant-toddlers, 32 spaces for kids aged three to five and 94 new spaces for school-age care on school grounds.

“These two new child care facilities represent a significant step forward in providing accessible, affordable and high-quality early-learning environments for families in the Comox Valley,” said Michelle Waite, board chair, Comox Valley Schools. “The centres at Arden and Glacier View will help parents with supporting their families and pursuing their professional and educational goals with the confidence that their children are receiving excellent care and education.”

To help fast track the creation of child care spaces on school grounds, the Province developed a funding pathway for B.C. school districts interested in creating or expanding access to licensed child care in schools. Applications are still being accepted for the 2024-25 ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund.

“BGC Central Vancouver Island is excited to be part of child care expansion in the Comox Valley along with our partner School District 71,” said Corey Sugiyama, acting executive director, BGC Central Vancouver Island. “Recognizing the growing need for affordable and readily available child care, we are excited to be adding the new Arden and Glacier clubs, bringing our total up to 16 club locations and complementing our existing Aspen Park and Brooklyn clubs in the beautiful Comox Valley.”

Since 2018, ChildCareBC-accelerated space-creation programs have helped fund the creation of more than 37,000 new licensed child care spaces in B.C., including more than 690 in Courtenay and the surrounding area. Funding the creation of new child care spaces is part of the Province’s goal to build access to affordable, quality, inclusive child care as a core service for families.

“These new child care spaces on school grounds will be a wonderful resource for families as Courtenay’s population continues to grow,” said Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA, Courtenay-Comox.

“Having child care at schools reduces the number of transitions students have in a day, which is easier for them and their families. These much-needed spaces will go a long way to help relieve some of the stress on working families and greatly support our community.”

**Learn More:**

For information about the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund, visit:

<https://gov.bc.ca/childcare/newspacesfund>

For information about ChildCareBC, visit: <https://gov.bc.ca/childcare>

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