

East Kootenay ECE Roundtable

Monday 27 October 2025, 10:00 – 10:45am MT



Attendees

Robyn Peel (facilitator, CFEK), Cheryl Anderson (Summit Community Services), Glenda Newstead (CCRR Interior Region), Kristie Krisher (COTR), Laura-Lee Phillips (School District 5), Londa Morris (Kootenay Employment Services), Norma Sherret (COTR), Theresa Wood (Columbia Valley Economic Development)

Roundtable Updates

- College of the Rockies (COTR) is having their Open House in the gymnasium of the Cranbrook Campus on 5 November 2025, from 5-7pm. There will be a table promoting the ECE and ECEA training opportunities. Make sure to share with interested individuals - <https://cotr.bc.ca/about-us/open-house/>
- The Dual Credit program will not be running with COTR next February, due to not having the 10-12 students needed to run the initiative.
 - There was a discussion around ways that organizations could support to help ensure dual credit is able to support those interested individuals. As if we had 5-6 people interested, we may now have lost them to this sector, which is a big loss.
 - COTR are going to look at different formats to meet student needs.
- The next face-to-face ECE cohort at COTR (including both international and domestic students) has been moved to Fall 2027.
 - There is a need for more practicum spaces (especially in Infant Toddler rooms) in order to support more local training opportunities.
 - There was a brief discussion about funding and supports that could be offered to allow students to go to nearby communities for the practicums. And funding to support paid practicum opportunities (as students are looking for paid practicum opportunities).
 - There was a discussion around the large number of new spaces (over 300 in total in Creston, Cranbrook and Fernie) that are hoping to open in late 2027 or 2028 and the workforce needs this will bring. Are there plans from COTR in how to support this need across the region?
 - There was also a brief discussion about understanding and promoting the possibilities where an ECE certificate or diploma can lead, rather than just viewing it as only being able to work as an ECE.

- The [Kootenay Childcare Initiative](#) is ready to support childcare providers across the Kootenay region and has been officially launched. Around 10 providers have completed their intake meetings and are in the process of being linked with appropriate supports.
 - Please continue to share this support opportunity with the childcare providers you work with. Providers need to complete the [application form](#) and then CFEK will do an intake discussion with them to understand their needs. As a reminder, the initiative helps providers by:
 - Recruiting passionate Early Childhood Educators to our region. There is a recruitment consultant available to help providers find, vet and choose candidates that are right for them
 - Supporting childcare business development through expert coaching, training, mentoring and guidance
 - A promotional video was filmed at providers in Fernie, Kimberley and Creston in early October. This video will help support the recruitment focus of the Kootenay Childcare Initiative. The video will be finalized and released early in the New Year, and we'll share it for you to share out too.
- The playground upgrades at Little Summit have been completed, thanks to funding through KalTire, the [BC emergency centre maintenance fund](#) and [RDEK ReDi funding](#). It cost around \$40,000, so is a large project but it is looking great.
- The Justice Education Society is looking to run in-person training across the region in early 2026. When we have more details, we will share them out.
- The Rocky Mountain Childcare Facility in Invermere is hosting its open house today (27 October) from 4-6pm. They are hoping to open the centre before the end of the year – congratulations to all involved.
- Robyn shared data from Columbia Basin Trust and COTR on ECE training ([see here](#))
 - There were 15 East Kootenay-based students who graduated from COTR in June 2025 with the ECE diploma (either Infant Toddler or Special Needs). It is encouraging to see these numbers.
 - For those receiving the CBT training wage, they are working in facilities in the East Kootenays and are upgrading their credentials. 13 have completed their Infant Toddler or Special Needs diploma since October 2022. Again, another encouraging statistic as the need for Infant Toddler educators is high.
 - In the current school year (starting Fall 2025), there are 14 East Kootenay-based students doing the ECE certification and 6 working towards the diploma.
 - There was a question regarding how many people in our region have accessed the specialised training grant from ECEBC. **Action:** Robyn to follow up with ECEBC to see if we can access that information.

Next Sharing Roundtables:

- **Tuesday 13 January 2026, 11:00 – 11:45am MT**