



# LELC Annual Report 2022

Supporting families, investing in children

Kim Randall  
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Warman, S0K 4S0

# KIM RANDALL – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## Welcome to LELC's 2022 Annual Report

This year has been a year of research and growth. In 2022, members of LELC have kept busy researching, planning and implementing various opportunities for growth and expansion. I am grateful and honored to lead a strong and dependable management team. They motivate and provide me the strength to face any obstacle placed in our path to greatness and growth.

As organizations recover from the pandemic, strategic plans are amidst the thoughts of organizational leaders. Since Saskatchewan signed the National Childcare Agreement, lines of succession, organizational growth sustainability, and financial stability are at the forefront of my mind. Although a fantastic advancement for the ELCC field, a professional promotion for educators and significant financial support for parents, the unknown factors of the process in which the plan will roll out is unsettling for those of us at the forefront of early learning operations. Therefore, sustainability and strategic planning is imperative.

After many months of exploration and research on potential opportunities for expansion, an unexpected opportunity arose in Martensville. Our focus had been on finding suitable space in Saskatoon and Hague so when both projects had come up empty handed; a quick glance through Martensville properties had come with a shock. Considering Miss Tasha and I have been watching for suitable property in Martensville for years, 135 Centennial Drive actually looked promising! After 2 months of leg work to remove a long list of conditions, the property became ours. We are looking forward to working with ADA Architecture to begin the schematics for the newly renovated 54-space center to open in the summer of 2023.

Even though suitable building options in Saskatoon and Hague were not found this year, I am still in pursuit of affordable properties for these projects. There is work on the horizon that is too premature to share at this time. Just know my efforts will never halt!

Lastly, welcome to our newest LELC families and educators. We are always eager to develop meaningful and long-lasting relationships with you. I look forward to what 2023 has to hold for LELC and hope we will have the opportunity to meet many new families in the near future!

Many blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "K. Randall".

# ABOUT US

## OUR MISSION

The mission of LELC is to nurture and care for children in the development of heart, mind, body, and spirit in a Christian environment, involving parents and community through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## A VISION

LELC will be recognized as an exemplary partner within our communities as well as a team of caring and dedicated professionals who – through a commitment to our philosophy and core values – provide unique, Christian early learning environments and childcare services that are measured by the growth and development of each individual child.

## HISTORY

Lutheran Early Learning Centers has been in operation since 1997, when a small group of ambitious members of different Lutheran congregations gathered together with an enlightened idea. After attending a LWML workshop they were informed of the high need for childcare in Saskatoon, and soon the committee was formed with the plan to create a preschool that would help children experience the love of God.

Within a short time, our first preschool location, in Grace Lutheran Church, was holding an open house. After the success of the preschool, the committee received the initiative they needed to continue their work and build a child care center. In 1999, after the hard work and labor of the committee and many volunteers, the center was ready to open its doors to Mount Royal and surrounding communities.

Since that time, LELC has expanded both the Child Care and Preschool programs to the City of Martensville in 2005, and the City of Warman in 2015. In 2022, we added our 4<sup>th</sup> 54 space center in Martensville.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## COMMITTED TO OUR COMMUNITY

**Darlene Heide**  
Chairperson

**Bob Keleman**  
Treasurer

**Josh Richer**  
Saskatoon Parent Representative

**Jacqueline Goosen**  
Warman Parent Representative

**Harmony Domes**  
Director of Staffing

**Helen Riggs**  
Member at Large

**Vacant**  
Member at Large

**Vice Chairperson**  
Vacant

**Genelle Larsen**  
Secretary

**Autumn Regier**  
Martensville Parent Representative

**Sheri Haichert**  
Christian Education Liaison

**Pastor Peter Knelson**  
Pastoral Advisor

**Megan Williams**  
Member at Large

## PASTOR PETER KNELSON – PASTORAL ADVISOR

Over the past year I have had the honour of reading stories to the children of the LELC and teaching them about God's love for them in Jesus. I typically read a story for the Martensville and Warman centers once every month and will continue to uphold this schedule.

I was also able to attend and present at the Professional development day for the staff of the LELC on September 30th. I am grateful for the opportunity to connect with the staff a little more this year. I have also been having conversations with St. John's Lutheran Church on how we can best support the LELC staff and children. The Church currently prays for the staff and children of the daycare each Sunday during the service and we are exploring other ways to show our appreciation for the staff of the LELC.

# DARLENE HEIDE - CHAIRPERSON



## Message from the Chairperson, Board of Directors

This October marks one year since I was elected as Chairperson to the board of directors for Lutheran Early Learning Centers! It was a leap of faith to which I felt called and I have been climbing up a steep learning curve ever since. Thank you to all the great staff and board members who have welcomed me as part of this amazing team of volunteers. I will continue to watch and learn, and at times I'm sure, ask way too many questions. Your patience is appreciated.

Learning some of the history that has grown LELC over these past 20+ years has revealed to me the fascinating work this board is able to review and approve. Much discussion, thought and prayer has led the work of this organization in the past and will continue to direct its future.

Our most recent past has been navigating the COVID 19 pandemic these past couple of years. This virus remains in our communities and continues to affect families. We will remain diligent in supporting healthy environments for both staff and children.

The collaboration of the Federal and Provincial Governments to improve childcare opportunities for families has led to a couple significant changes of a financial nature for programs such as ours: the Staff Wage Enhancement and the Fee Subsidy. This continues to be a time of adjustment as LELC adapts to this ever-changing schedule of wages and fees.

This fall, the preschool opened again at Grace Lutheran Church, Saskatoon. There had been consideration and much investigation over several months in an attempt to relocate the Saskatoon Centre from McMillian Ave to Grace Lutheran or a suitable area nearby. A decision not to relocate was the outcome. To ensure the ongoing safety of the children and families who attend this centre, building renovations and yard upgrades mean an exciting year ahead!

I am very thankful for the support of Rev. Peter Knelson, Pastor of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Warman. Pastor Peter connects regularly with staff and families and most especially with the children during monthly story times. Members from this congregation have been meeting regularly this year to review its partnership agreement with LELC. This co-operation has led to projects such as the separation of one of the larger rooms into smaller, more comfortable spaces and the insulation of the ceiling in the infant room so they can get their much-needed sleep during the day.

This summer, property became available and has been purchased in Martensville! This growing community will welcome its second center, once renovations have been completed at 135 Centennial Drive. Martensville's School Age program has moved out of our current facility to Horizon Senior Center and the preschool program is now at Venture Heights School. I celebrate this expansion and pray for its positive reception by the community.

My heartfelt thanks to all of the LELC community for supporting our mission to "Nurture and care for children in the development of heart, mind and spirit in a Christian environment, involving parents and community through the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Blessings,  
Darlene Heide  
Chairperson



# JENNIFER MILLIKEN BELL - ACCOUNTANT



## Accountant's Report 2022

The summary financial information presented here is derived from Lutheran Early Learning Centers Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2022. Detailed audited financial statements are available upon request.

The fiscal year of July 2021 to June 2022 was another year of unprecedented change for both LELC and the entire childcare industry in Saskatchewan. The implementation of the *Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement* has provided invaluable support to families and childcare facilities in the form of both fee reductions and wage support.

Fiscal 2021-22 started out still feeling the impacts of Covid such as vacant spaces and altered staffing needs. LELC's eligibility for the covid-support programs CERS and CEWS ended in the fall of 2021. The announcement of the *Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement* helped to fill vacant spaces in all the centers. LELC was also fortunate to be granted new childcare spaces spread over three different facilities.

Childcare revenue is approximately \$52,000 lower than the previous year, impacted by the fee changes resulting from the new fee reduction grant. Combining the fee reduction grant funding with the parent-paid fees results in total revenue of \$1,131,065; the highest level of childcare revenue since fiscal 2019 (prior to covid) when childcare revenue totalled \$1,011,005, an increase of 12%. Preschool revenue is also the highest it has been since before the pandemic; at \$91,213 it exceeded the fiscal 2019 total of \$84,205, an increase of 8%.

Payroll expense is approximately 29% higher than in the previous fiscal period, impacted by the return to full centers and partially offset by the wage support funding and enhanced accessibility funding for eligible children. Operating expenses are approximately 10% higher than the previous fiscal year. Significant increases occurred in food and materials and supplies, as well as property taxes. Tuition saw a significant increase as well, offset by the tuition reimbursement grant.

Fundraising efforts were very strong in 2021-22. Thank you to our families for supporting the various fundraising opportunities as funds raised help LELC to provide great programming for our children. The excess of revenue over expenses of \$4,538 represents a return to a more typical financial result for LELC. LELC looks forward to exciting new ventures in 2022-23!

# The Motivation of LELC

LELC is made up of a strong Management team with huge ambition and goals for the organization. However, without our families utilizing the programs we offer, LELC would cease to exist. It is our honour to provide inclusive, affordable and equitable early learning and childcare programs to 196 families this year. We strive to expand our accessibility to as many communities as we possibly can with our most recent focuses placed on Hague, Martensville and East Saskatoon.

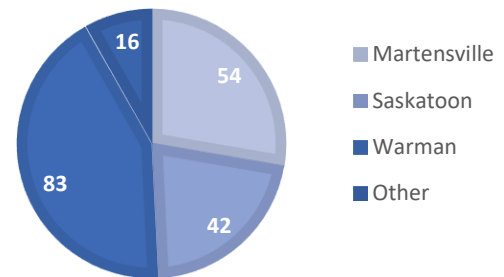
LELC's Waitlist for childcare continues to grow exponentially. Our Directors report calls coming in daily from parents desperate to find licensed childcare. Submissions to our waitlist from our website are added each week.

Due to the high demand for licensed childcare, the pressure on organizations such as ours to expand their services is higher than ever. The National Childcare Agreement has reduced parent fees by 70% making licensed childcare more affordable for all families that are lucky to obtain a space. Sadly, at this time, there are not enough spaces to go around nor are there enough certified educators to operate the spaces required within the province. The Saskatchewan government has recognized these issues and is working at resolving them the best they can.

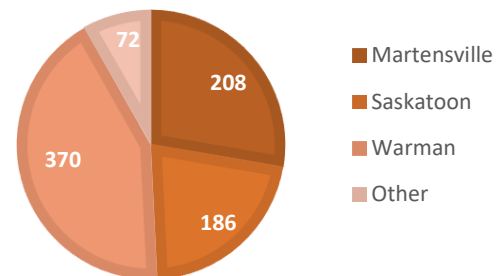
What the government has not taken into consideration is the amount of spaces Kindergarten children utilize for only half the time. Unfortunately these children are falling into a predicament where parents still require care for them when they are not in school, therefore will not give up their full time childcare space as they still require it half time, during school days off and holidays. As well, these kinder children become ineligible for the parent fee reduction upon turning 6 years of age. Turning half of their school year into a fee nightmare for parents having to pay full daycare rates on off school days, plus school age rates on school days.

A solution the Saskatchewan government needs to consider is to begin providing full day kindergarten or kindergarten programs along with the school age programs. This would free up a massive number of preschool aged spaces within childcare centers to provide to the many families that sit on waitlist after waitlist. Parents of all ages, I urge you to advocate for this vital change to our education/childcare system!

## FAMILIES SERVED



## FAMILIES WAITING



# LELC DIRECTOR REPORTS



Hello everyone: My name is Krystina Micucci and I am the ELCC Director at our Saskatoon location. I have been with the organization for 1 year and 5 months. The past year has been a year full of research regarding the center's plan for increasing Saskatoon's childcare spaces by relocation or renovation.

We investigated and exhausted a couple different options, mainly building in partnership with LELC Grace and the possibility of a home conversion. We have most recently gotten a contractor to consult on an interior renovation to allow for an additional ~12-13 more childcare spaces in our current building. We are still waiting to hear back from him.

We saw enrollment growth and a very dramatic waitlist growth as a result of the announcement of the Childcare Fee Reduction. Since our last AGM, we have since grown to 30 enrolled, with only one open part time preschool space and a single school age space.

Our staff base has changed as well. At this time last year, we had 4 full time ECEs, a cook, a one-on-one EA, and myself. We now have 6 full time ECEs, a cook, a one-on-one EA and myself in Saskatoon, as well as our Preschool Educators at Grace. We have 3 full-time staff currently enrolled in ECE courses at Great Plains.

We had completed our licensing requirements and received our renewal. We have fixed some building damage done as a result of Vandalism. We have utilized a lawn maintenance company who have helped to keep up the yard and will begin to do snow removal for November.

We had 7 families not meet fundraising goals by June of 2022 and several more have opted for Donation option for this year. We have started fundraising with a Raffle and Burger Night Fundraiser and it has been going great so far! The Burger Night and Raffle Draw Date is October 21<sup>st</sup> so at the time of writing, I do not know the total profit of this fundraiser. DFS Fundraiser just went out on October 11<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to using some profits to replace some replacement furnishings and equipment.

COVID-19 had certainly presented a challenge to the Saskatoon location at the beginning of the year. However, the widespread availability of rapid tests and lessened restrictions have certainly made it easier to manage.

We are very fortunate to have some long term-staffing to provide support for the new educators that have joined their rooms. I really appreciate our dedicated staff going above and beyond to offer the best possible services. We will continue to look forward to another successful year of growth and to providing the best quality services in childcare.



Krystina Micucci  
ELCC Director



Hello everyone. My name is Natasha Merko and I am the ELCC Director at our Martensville location. I have been with the organization for 10 years.

This year has been a busy one! We have continued to develop our outdoor space and used some of our fundraising money earned from our raffle to purchase a gazebo for shade, as well as a new outdoor cedar playhouse. We also developed a bit more garden space for the children to grow their own food. The choice of what to plant was the children's. They worked hard helping the Educators tend the 2 garden boxes throughout the summer. They loved picking food to eat when they needed a snack during their fun outdoor play.

We received an accessibility grant, which allowed us to complete some much-needed projects that included the paving of our parking lots and side street area and the removal and clean up of bushes and weeds from our back area along the fence. We removed the old ramp and stairs to our Tiger room and replaced it with a new, bigger option that will be usable space for activities such as outdoor story times and a great spot to picnic!

Our Educators are doing wonderfully! We had 2 of our Educators complete their level 1 ECE, and 1 more enrol in courses for the upcoming fall. We also have 1 ECE working to complete her Level 2, and 1 working to complete their last course of their Level 1. Most of the staff have now been with LELC for over a year! These Educators have worked hard to create a safe and caring learning environment and continue to build a great team framework to help support and encourage each other to grow and learn.

Our School age saw a big change to start their summer! We signed a rental agreement with New Horizon's Senior Center to utilize their space for before, after school, and on holidays. It has proved to be a great location, giving the school kids more freedom and flexibility in their choice of activities. They are enjoying have their own space as well as the bus ride to and from school.

For the coming year, we are so excited to be planning our expansion into our newly purchased space. We look forward to providing the City of Martensville and surrounding communities with additional licensed, quality childcare. In our current building, we are hoping to do some much needed kitchen renos to make the space a bit more functional.

I would like to take this time to thank all of our Educators for each day that you show up for our children and families. I am blessed to have such an amazing team of Educators that work tirelessly to grow and learn in this field. Thank you to the Board for supporting Martensville LELC and for volunteering so many hours to help our Organization grow.

Sincerely and God Bless,

Natasha Merko  
ELCC Director

## Martensville Lutheran Early Learning Centers



We have been in operation in Warman since February 2, 2015. Currently we provide 79 Early Learning spaces to children ranging from 6 weeks – 12 years (9 Infant, 20 Toddler, 35 Preschool, and 15 School Aged). We currently have 14 full-time educators; 1 fulltime nutrition coordinator; a full-time preschool teacher and assistant and 3 substitutes.

This year we completed the soundproofing in the infant nap room. It has made such a difference and we have seen our infants napping much better. We have been consistent with nine infants and have not had to enroll children from other age groups due to infants transitioning the age categories nicely. We have been able to provide care for several new families

and look forward to watching their children grow as they grow through the rooms at the center.

In our preschool-aged classroom, we completed the wall in the center of the room and added an additional sink for handwashing. This has split the class into two smaller classrooms. This change has shown us an increase in attention span, less stimulation and more opportunities for child-led activities. We recently did some painting in the classroom that brightened it up and looks much more aesthetically pleasing. In the coming year we hope to continue painting the room.

We have had several new staff join our team this year. They have joined our long-term staff seamlessly to provide the quality care we strive to offer at LELC. We had two educators complete their Level III ECE through distance, and others further their ECE with courses and working towards either Level II or III completion.

Our school-age program was able to participate in some exciting field trips this summer: Wanuskewin, Clip n' Climb, Bowling, the fire hall, Warman Small Animal Hospital, the library and spray park. At the end of summer, the children got to enjoy Warren the Balloon guy.

We had a busy and successful year of fundraising. We started our fundraising year with the Farm to School veggie order that was a huge success. We also did a new fundraiser through Growing Smiles, which kicked off everyone's spring planting. Many of our families participated in the fundraisers rather than opting to donate. We look forward to using the profits made through fundraising towards materials and supplies to further the programming for the children at the center and to continue to develop our outside spaces.

In closing, we are so thankful for the support we receive from the community by opening their doors for us and supporting the programs we are offering the children by collaborating with us in various ways. We are also thankful for all our families who volunteer their time with outings, attending our activities, and volunteering their time on our board.

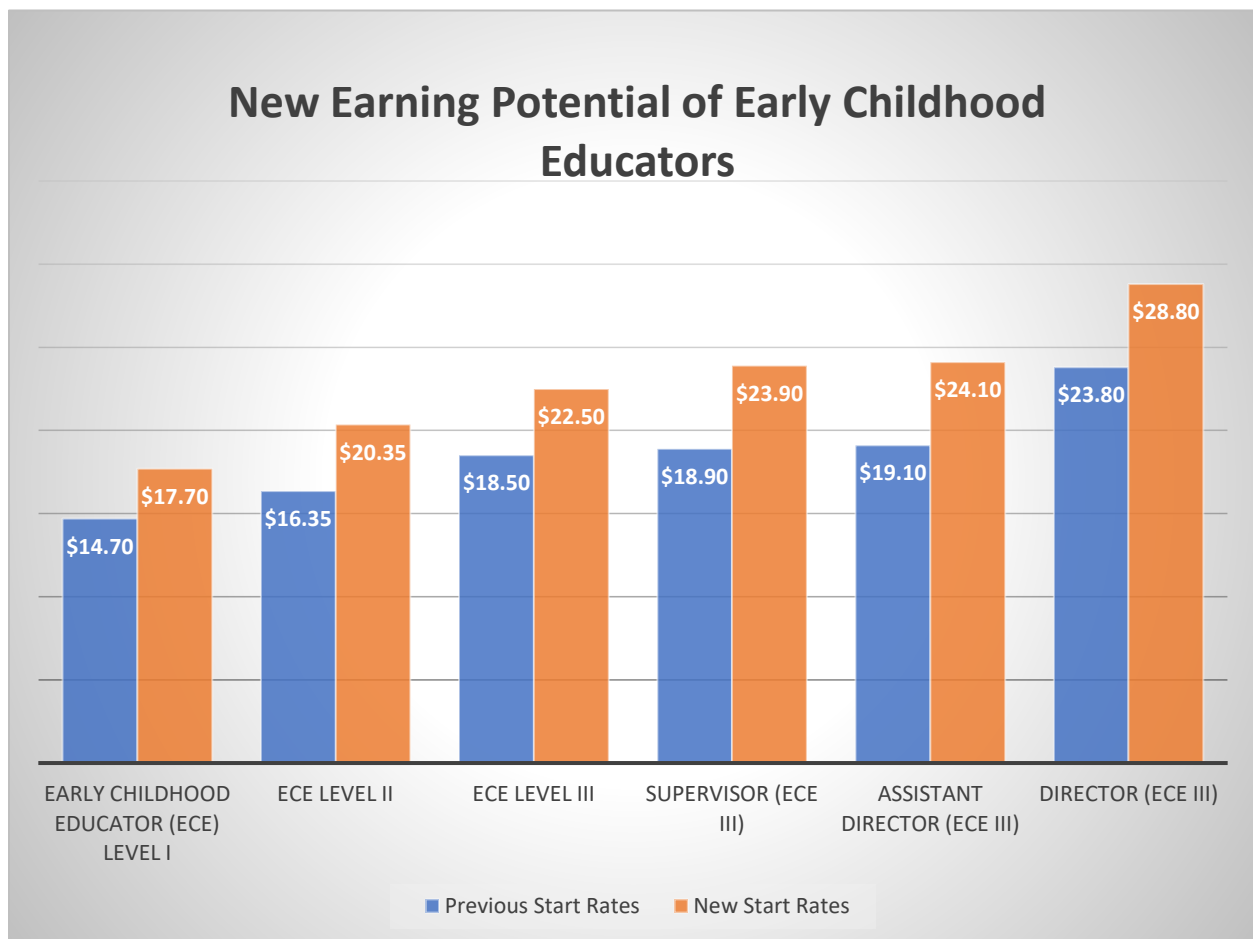
Kristen Mantyka  
Warman Director

# Vital for Early Learning and Childcare Sector

Last year I wrote about the lack of acknowledgement and support provided to the Early Learning and Childcare Sector. This year, I am very pleased to write about the appreciated and respected advancements to our field since the provincial government signed the National Childcare Agreement. Since the beginning of the pandemic, it had become clear to society how essential childcare is to the economy. The government has responded!

In November of 2021, ELCC organizations received information that due to the National Childcare Agreement, all certified Early Childhood Educators were to receive a newly developed wage enhancement. The funds were provided and distributed over the course of multiple months as the enhancements were backdated to July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2021. Since then ECE's across the province have received wage enhancements according to their level of education between 3 and 5 dollars per hour. This grant is titled the Wage Enhancement Fund (WEF)

Amongst this grant, others have been provided to enhance the benefits for ECE's across Saskatchewan. These include: (WEG) Workforce Enhancement Grant, (TSG) Training Support Grant, (SEG) Skills Enhancement Grant and finally the (TTG) Tuition Top-up Grant all to which provide additional support for employers to recruit, retain and encourage further professional development within their workforce.



# Strategic Plan

- Mission:** To expand our organization to enhance the quality of life for all families seeking meaningful Christian Early Learning programs in our communities.
- Values:** LELC is committed to providing an enriched learning environment that enhances children’s growth and development, creates a life-long love of learning, brings a sense of belonging and security to children and their families, builds positive community relations and is accessible to all.
- Vision:** To become the organization of choice for parents seeking early learning and childcare programs and for Early Childhood Educators searching for a career path in central Saskatchewan.

## Short Term Goals

- \*Replace remaining windows and doors in Martensville
- \*Relocate the Saskatoon centre.
- \*Increase our savings to support future expansions

## Strategy

- \* Secure grants or sponsorships to help complete necessary renovations to all locations
- \*Seek out companies willing to provide discounts on materials

## Long Term Outcome

- \*Save a cash reserve of 4 months operating expenses to support the financial security of LELC.
- \*Obtain an above average wage grid
- \*Develop a 5th Centre

# LELC SPONSORS

Fundraising and grant opportunities play an integral part in allowing LELC to continue offering high quality early learning and childcare services. We'd like to express our gratitude and appreciation for the support we receive from community organizations! Without the additional support, we would take much more time to obtain our project goals.





# WILLING TO SPONSOR?

## Thank you for your interest in Lutheran Early Learning Centers!

Lutheran Early Learning Centers Inc. (LELC) offers early learning and childcare services to approximately 200 families per year and employ approximately 50 dedicated individuals. We care for your employees' children while they are hard at work for you!

### Why invest in LELC?

LELC provides a unique service to the communities of Saskatoon, Martensville and Warman. Not only do we provide high quality early learning and childcare services, but we are a loving and nurturing Christian environment. Our children are introduced to Christianity through developmentally appropriate stories, songs and prayer. Most of all, our children are experiencing the FUN of learning through play and exploration. LELC has a talented team of educators that are passionate about providing an environment full of learning experiences that enhance each child's development socially, physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually.

Our services are an integral part of the ever-expanding communities we serve. Young families, businesses and communities continue to benefit from the enriched care we provide. Children are our future and our most valuable resource. Investing in their early learning, is investing in your future!

### LELC Capital Projects up for sponsorship:

Our goal is to ensure the comfort and quality of the environments the children spend their days in remain safe, healthy, comfortable and enriched with learning opportunities. In order to maintain and enhance our environments regular upgrades are essential. Everyone in our LELC family benefits from a welcoming and safe place to work or to leave their precious children while they work! The estimated costs of our project goals are as follows:

Project	Funds Required	Raised
<b>Saskatoon Relocation Project</b>	<b>TBD</b>	\$168,000
<b>134 Centennial Drive Renovation</b>	<b>\$560,000</b>	\$432,000

If you want to get behind an organization that supports your employees' ability to come work for you, let's talk!

# Our gift to you for your support

We gratefully accept contributions of any level and will work with your organization to provide adequate recognition for your contributions. Some gifts we can offer you for your support include:

- Social Media shout out
- Handcrafted thank you card
- Share your promotional materials with LELC families
- Prominent logo recognition on LELC's webpage
- Charitable donation receipt
- Customized painting created by the children at LELC

## Did we miss something?

We are open to creative ideas. If you have a sponsorship idea for the organization, please contact us.

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