

Teachers: Alternative Careers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Teachers: Alternative Careers

In BC, elementary school and kindergarten teachers teach basic subjects such as reading, writing, arithmetic, science and social studies, or specialized subjects like special education or second language instruction. Secondary school teachers prepare and teach academic, technical, career preparation and specialty subjects in secondary schools.

You may find that your international training and experience as a teacher are not immediately accepted in B.C. The skills you have acquired as a teacher (patience, understanding, strong communication) can be used in these alternative careers:

- Early childhood educators and assistants
- Elementary and secondary school teacher assistants
- Instructors of persons with disabilities

Alternative Careers:

Early Childhood Educators and Assistants

[NOC 2021: 42202 / NOC 2016: 4214]

Also referred to as: daycare teacher, childcare worker, preschool teacher

You provide care and organize activities for children from birth to age twelve. You work in licensed child care centres, preschools, kindergartens, after-school care programs and in other agencies that provide childhood education services.

Duties Include:

- provide care and guidance to preschool children
- lead children in activities to encourage their intellectual, physical and emotional growth
- design and lead learning games and activities, use arts, crafts, and music to help children learn

Requirements:

- college diploma in early childhood education (ECE) or a bachelor's degree
- Certification as an Early Childhood Educator or Assistant
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/early-learning/teach/training-and-professional-development/become-an-early-childhood-educator>
- a clear criminal record check

Skills:

- should be creative, flexible and patient
- able to respond with warmth and spontaneity to the challenges that very young children can present

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$18.00

Source: WorkBC (Early Childhood Educators and Assistants)
<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/early-childhood-educators-and-assistants>

Elementary and Secondary School Teacher Assistants and Special Education Assistants [NOC 2021: 43100 / NOC 2016: 4413]

Also referred to as: supervision aide, student support assistant; educational program assistant, teacher's aide

You assist elementary and secondary school teachers and counsellors. You work in public and private elementary and secondary schools, special schools and treatment centres.

Duties Include:

- help students with lessons
- monitor and report student progress to classroom teacher
- help prepare learning materials and environment
- accompany and supervise students during activities in school gymnasiums, laboratories, libraries, resource centres and on field trips
- help special needs students, such as those with mental or physical disabilities, with mobility, communication and personal hygiene

Requirements:

- completion of secondary school
- completion of a 10-month college program in teaching assistance or educational assistance is usually required
- assistants who help students with special needs usually require specialized training and experience
- a clear criminal record check

Skills:

- strong communication skills
- patient and understanding

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$24.85

Source: WorkBC (Elementary and Secondary School Teacher Assistants)
<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/elementary-and-secondary-school-teacher-assistants>

Instructors of Persons with Disabilities

[NOC 2021: 42203 / NOC 2016: 4215]

Also referred to as: special education teacher; special needs teacher

You teach children and adults with physical and developmental disabilities communication techniques such as Braille or sign language. You teach rehabilitation skills to increase independence and mobility. You work in rehabilitation centres,

specialized educational institutes and throughout the elementary and secondary school system.

Duties include:

- develop education and intervention plans based on special needs of client
- teach those with physical disabilities and their families to use prosthetic devices, wheelchairs and other equipment
- teach blind or visually impaired students to read and write Braille and use special equipment
- teach deaf or hearing impaired students to lip-read, finger spell and do sign language

Requirements:

- completion of a college program in special education, rehabilitation, visual impairment, hearing impairment or intellectual disability
- bachelor's degree in special education or a related field such as social work or psychology may be required

Skills:

- strong communication and organizational skills
- patience and perseverance; mental, physical, and emotional energy
- strong communication and leadership skills

Wages:

- median hourly wage: \$25.00

Source: WorkBC (Instructors of Persons with Disabilities)

<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/instructors-persons-disabilities>

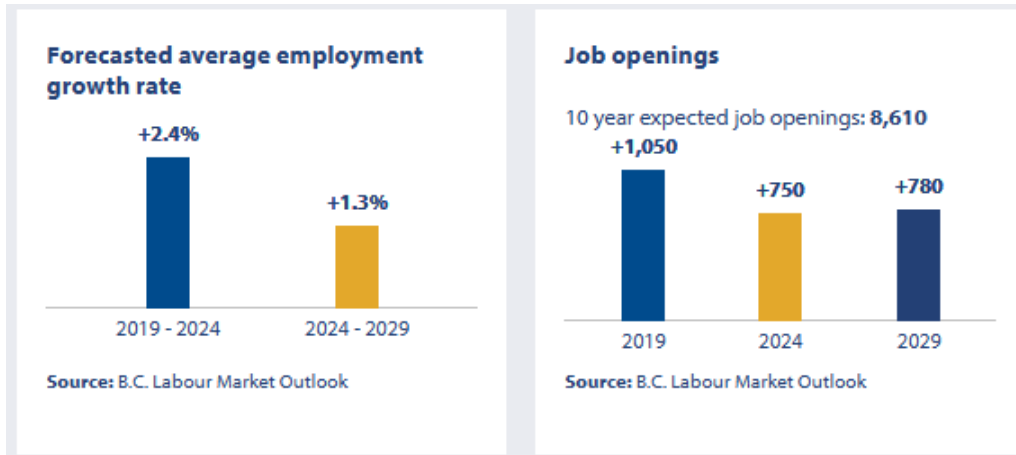
2. Employment Outlook

The physical and emotionally challenging nature of this work tends to create short term careers and constant job openings. A decrease in the number of people enrolling in recognized early childhood care programs in some areas of the province

has increased demand for workers. In particular, the northern rural communities in B.C. are experiencing a shortage of qualified workers.

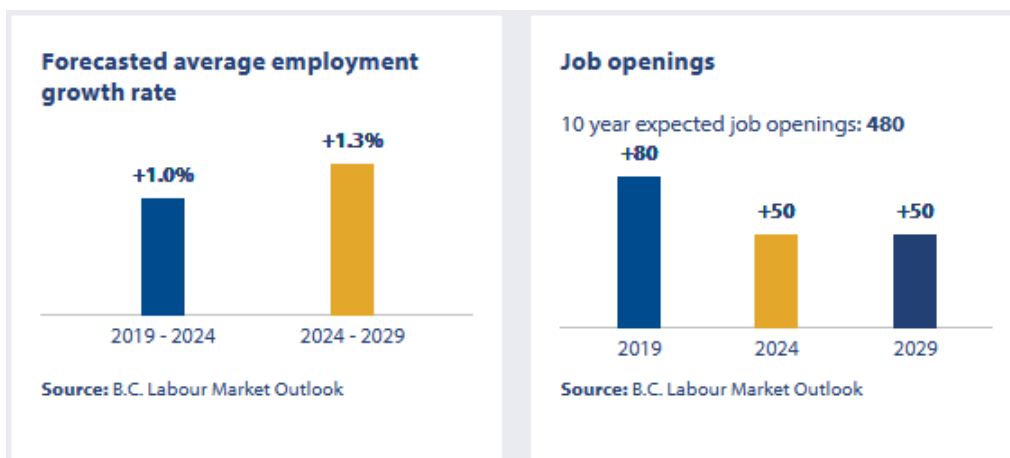
There are also good job opportunities if you provide daycare for special needs clientele and infants.

Early Childhood Educators and Assistants - Job Openings Outlook in BC



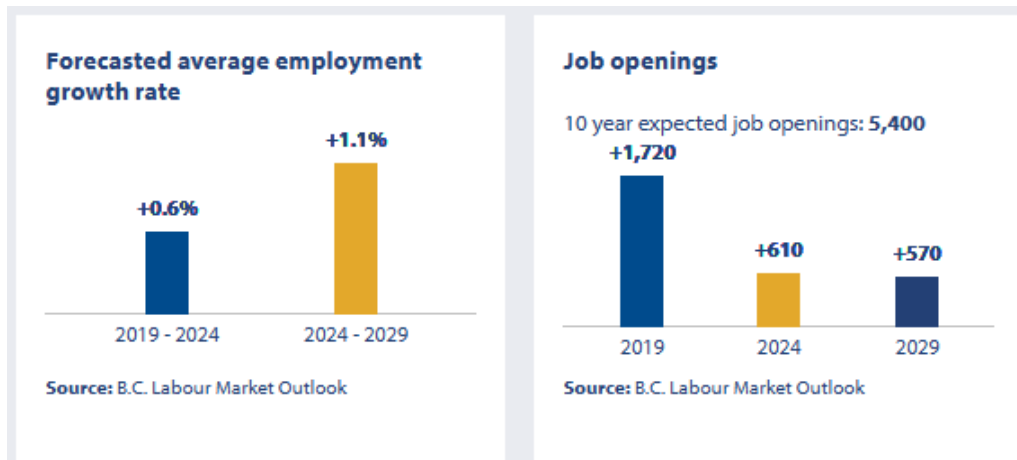
WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/>

Instructors and Teachers of Persons with Disabilities - Job Openings Outlook in BC



WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/>

Elementary and Secondary School Teacher Assistants - Job Openings Outlook in BC



WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/>

3. Retraining

Listed below are just some of the short term retraining programs available for alternative teaching careers. There are many other schools offering programs.

Capilano University - Education Assistant (EA) certificate

<https://www.capilanou.ca/programs--courses/program-profiles/education-assistant-certificate/>

Kwantlen Polytechnic University – Education Assistant Program

<https://www.kpu.ca/arts/edas>

Langara - Education Assistant, certificate or diploma program

<https://langara.ca/programs-and-courses/programs/education-assistant/index.html>

Vancouver Community College – Early Childhood Care & Education

<https://www.vcc.ca/programscourses/human-and-family-services/early-childhood-care-and-education/>

4. Searching for Jobs

Make a Future: Careers in BC Education

<https://www.makeafuture.ca/>

Official job board of British Columbia school districts

BC Government Job Postings

<https://search.employment.gov.bc.ca/>

Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS)

<https://www.cais.ca/careers>

Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese

<https://cisva.bc.ca/employment/>

Early Childhood Educators of BC

https://www.ecebc.ca/job_postings/search

Independent Schools Association of BC – ISABC

<https://www.isabc.ca/employment/>

Society of Christian Schools in BC

<https://scsbc.ca/employment/>

Indeed.ca

<https://ca.indeed.com/>

5. Volunteering in the Field

Volunteering can help you to explore a new career and learn more about the education system in BC. You will meet new people and build a network of contacts that can lead to information on job openings and inside connections with potential employers.

The following organizations accept volunteers:

Family Services of Greater Vancouver

<https://fsgv.ca/volunteer/>

Go Volunteer.ca

<https://govolunteer.ca/>

Pacific Immigrant Resources Society – PIRS

<https://pirs.bc.ca/join-us/volunteer-programs/>

Volunteer BC

<https://volunteerbc.bc.ca/>

6. Helpful Resources

British Columbia Public School Employers' Association – Support Staff

<https://bcpsea.bc.ca/support-staff/>

Early Childhood Educators of BC

<https://www.ecebc.ca/>

Teachers of Inclusive Education British Columbia

<https://www.tiebc.com/>

Click on 'Job Search Resources' at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic> for help on:

- resumes & cover letters
- getting Canadian work experience
- networking for employment
- online social networks
- Canadian workplace culture

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic>.

