

Brooks Dynamite Academy
Box 35
Brooks, AB
T1R 1B2



Bassano Dynamite Academy

Bassano Key Stakeholders!

We are writing to you today, with the intent to express interest in the creation of an Early Learning & Child Care Program in Bassano. We have had some wonderful conversations with different community partners and hope this letter will provide more information and help expand that conversation.

We understand some of the key stakeholders in Bassano include Bassano Child Care Society, Bassano Farms, Canalief, Grasslands School Division, Global Power Technology, Historical Society, FCSS, Newell Furthering Education, Skill Metal, Subway, Town of Bassano and countless others. Please let us know if there are additional community partners we can share this information with, as we would love to expand this conversation. *We know parents will also play a HUGE role in creating partnership and look forward to including parents in conversations as this project continues.*

Brooks Dynamite Academy was established in September 2016. We opened with five educators and thirteen families and have since expanded to fourteen employees and over fifty-five families. *Prior to covid, we have roughly 80 children attending our program per week but have been forced to cut back.* Our program offers ELCC to children ages newborn to twelve years. In addition to child care, we also offer preschool programming. Brooks Dynamite Academy fosters ELCC programming in a play based environment.

A bit about our owners;

As our program director, Allison works on much of the program development including curriculum, staffing, training, communications with families, marketing, financials and more from behind the scenes. Allison is the Vice-Chair of the Brooks & County of Newell Early Childhood Development Coalition, an active member of the Medicine Hat & District Childcare Association as well as the Past President of the Alberta Cheerleading Association.

Some of Allison's previous experience includes coaching cheerleading from 2011-2018 with athletes ages 2 - 18, honoured as a Mentor with FCSS in 2013, and as an Honourable Mention for Jr. Citizen in Brooks also in 2013.

Prior to beginning this education path, Allison was on route to become an Elementary Teacher! With a passion for working with children, having roots in Brooks and the desire to share her enthusiasm for an active lifestyle, Allison and Heather put their experience, goals and abilities together to create Brooks Dynamite Academy! Heather and Allison are a mother-daughter team with experience as business owners together for over seven years! Allison also has a 17 month old daughter.

Heather moved to Brooks from Manitoba in 2003. She has four children, one grandson, and one granddaughter. Heather has always had a passion for children, she ran a day home for five years and worked in the public school system for seventeen years. Heather worked in the Pre-K program and has had the opportunity to work with a variety of students with different needs and abilities.

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Heather is our preschool teacher at BDA! Heather develops the curriculum, performs assessments, and teaches all classes. In addition to teaching preschool, Heather works on many tasks throughout our program including hands-on support to educators, communications with parents and some administrative tasks.

Heather loves to cook and spend time at the lake where she resides with Brooks Dynamite Academy's very own handyman Dave and their daughter Miley.

This pandemic has shown us how vital early learning supports are for the success of a sustainable workforce. We would like to explore the option of expanding our well established ELCC program from Brooks to Bassano and be a support in the communities economic development and recovery plan.

Dynamite Academy values transparency and would offer much information to the Town of Bassano and its community members to allow for a strong partnership in this expansion. Please reach out if you have specific questions.

Bassano currently only offers one regulated dayhome which can only sustain six children. As our province undergoes a Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation review, it is even more apparent that caregivers need to have the ability to choose regulated care.

The proposed Bassano Dynamite Academy, would provide ELCC to a minimum of 14 children for children ages 19 months - five years and employ three early childhood educators. The enrollment of children under 19 months would be considered however the reduced ratio does affect the staffing abilities which we may not be able to accommodate. Our program would consider opening with 10 children however the financial viability of the program does rely heavily on enrollment. Our program hours would initially be 7:30am - 5:00pm. *In order to remain in compliance with the current AHS guidelines, we would require shorter hours to complete the daily cleaning.*

The Alberta Government does provide subsidy on childcare fees based on the parents income of a maximum rate of \$644 for children ages 19 months - 5 years. Based on our programs fees of \$870 for ages 19 months - 3 years and \$820 for ages 3 - 5 years, qualifying parents would be responsible for fees of \$226 and \$176 respectively.

As Dynamite Academy is a for-profit program, we are not eligible for most grants through the government of Alberta or Canada, however municipalities and non-profits are. We would be interested in working with different organizations to obtain grants which would directly benefit parents such as subsidizing their fees in addition to the Alberta Government subsidy.

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The cost of running a program offers an extremely low profit margin which is why we hope the community and its key stakeholders will be a partner of Dynamite Academy to ensure a high quality ELCC program is accessible to the citizens of Bassano and surrounding communities.

We are hoping to obtain the following information to help push this project forward;

- How many employees and/or children your organization might have that would require ELCC support?
- We are looking for educators with ELCC credentials from Bassano and the surrounding area.
- We have inquired about a few locations but are in need of a facility of 1200 - 2000 square feet, with a kitchen and washroom facilities. Ideally, an outdoor space would also be available.

We look forward to continuing this conversation and expanding ELCC into Bassano.

Sincerely,

Allison Berg

Allison Berg
Brooks Dynamite Academy Inc.
Co-Owner/ Program Director

Heather Donaldson

Heather Donaldson
Brooks Dynamite Academy Inc.
Co-Owner/ Preschool Educator