

# School closures impact childcare spaces <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS

The impending closures of area schools will inadvertently reduce the amount of childcare services available in the region, according to a report from the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville.

In one of many letters submitted by municipalities to the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) ahead of its final meeting to decide the fate of 12 area schools, the counties expressed concern for hundreds of childcare spaces they provide at schools being considered for closure.

The UCLG is the municipal service manager when it comes to providing licensed child care and family support programs in Leeds and Grenville, said the municipality's director of community and social services, Alison Tutak.

She asked that the board consider the potential impact of school closures and consolidations on these "important and necessary supports to families and children."

In a final report to the board of trustees earlier this year, senior staff at the UCDSB recommended the closure of 12 area schools, with seven of those in Leeds and Grenville - and many of them with childcare services on site.

The report indicated that Toniata Public School has 56 childcare spaces, Maynard has 118, Commonwealth has 125, and there were 325 childcare visits at Benson Public School in Cardinal in 2016.

Prince of Wales and Commonwealth schools are recommended to consolidate, but both schools will close if funding for a new Toniata school is approved. Tutak's letter asks the board to take into consideration the childcare implications at not just the closing schools, but the receiving schools as well.

Tutak expressed concern about the childcare services throughout the region, in schools slated for closure and for surrounding schools that would deal with displacement of students as the result of consolidations.

"Where a school with a childcare or family support program is to be closed, it is hoped that space in the new or consolidated school will be made available so that the needs of families may continue to be met," Tutak said.

"Portables are seldom conducive to either childcare or family support programs due to the need for access to running water and toileting facilities."

Brockville's Prince of Wales and Toniata elementary schools are on the final list of schools being considered for closure, alongside Benson Public School in Cardinal, Rideau Centennial at Portland, Oxford-on-Rideau near Kemptville, Wolford in Merrickville and Maynard public schools.

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**Region:** Ontario <sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** spaces <sup>[3]</sup>

school system <sup>[4]</sup>

closure <sup>[5]</sup>

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**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/17/03/school-closures-impact-childcare-spaces>

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