

Big decision looms for private childcare centres in Nova Scotia ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Private childcare centres in Nova Scotia say they're being forced to make a business-altering decision by the province.

Owners have been given until March 18th to choose one of three options: receive a payout to join a new, centralized childcare organization, join a not-for-profit centre and sign over their license, or opt-out and lose government funding.

It's part of a childcare agreement signed by the provincial and federal governments last year.

Taylor Thibeau, assistant director with Lil' Jems Early Learning Childcare Centre in Yarmouth says they were blindsided.

She says she one day wanted to have her own centre.

"My future goals will be taken from me. Many other entrepreneurs are losing their businesses, and those that never had the opportunity to start one won't be able to," says Thibeau.

Thibeau says if centres choose to opt-out, they wouldn't be able to pay their employees what they deserve, and subsidized families would not qualify.

She wonders why there isn't space for both private and non-profit facilities.

"If the quality that we have been giving is seen as quality across the board, then there should be room for these women and entrepreneurs that have been giving their heart and soul into their businesses."

Thibeau worries about the philosophy of private centres being lost in the shuffle.

She says more time is needed to make a decision.

Last week, the provincial and federal governments announced a move to reduce childcare costs by 25 percent by April.

Region: Nova Scotia ^[3]

Tags: for-profit ^[4]

bilateral agreement ^[5]

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