

Parents and workers launch public campaign to save Sioux Lookout children's centres ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Parents, workers, and community members are launching a public campaign to demand that the Municipality of Sioux Lookout reverse their decision to close Biidaaban Children's Centre and Sioux Mountain Children's Centre that provide quality child care to more than 200 families in the region.

"Many parents are rightfully concerned and disappointed by the actions of the municipality and the KDSB," says Stacey George, a parent whose child attends Biidaaban Children's Centre. "We have two wonderful child care spaces in Sioux Lookout that are now under threat of closure—we must do everything we can to keep these spaces open and to retain the dedicated staff who deserve to be treated with respect."

On February 3, 2022, all 17 child care staff at the Municipality of Sioux Lookout received layoff notices and were informed that both centres would cease operations. The layoff notices take effect March 31, 2022.

"Council must immediately reverse their decision to close centres and rescind the termination notices issued to frontline child care workers," says Kristin Wray, Vice-President of CUPE 2141. "Now that the KDSB has backed away from the transfer agreement, it's up to the Municipality of Sioux Lookout to ensure that child care remain in the region, using the same space and dedicated workers who've gone above and beyond to support families during these challenging times. With widespread staffing shortages, the parents of Sioux Lookout cannot afford to lose any more dedicated, highly experienced child care workers."

The union is concerned by the KDSB's refusal to accept qualified, experienced, deeply committed child care workers, and move forward with the service transfer and keep the existing centres open.

"The municipality has disrupted the lives of more than 200 families and dedicated frontline child care workers who just want to keep providing high-quality, accessible child care at Biidaaban Children's Centre and Sioux Mountain Children's Centre," says Wray.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

Tags: advocacy ^[4]

municipalities ^[5]

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