

City of Windsor report recommends closing municipal daycares ^[1]

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Source: Windsor Star

Format: Article

Publication Date: 22 Jan 2010

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

City staff are recommending the closure of municipal daycare centres in Windsor and Essex County to trim more than \$740,000 from the annual budget beginning in 2011.

The recommendation comes in a report from Debbie Cercone, the executive director of housing and children's services. The report is to be made public Friday and will be dealt with at the Feb. 1 meeting of city council.

The closure of the seven municipal early learning and child care centres and two satellite programs would result in the elimination of 115 jobs represented by CUPE Local 543.

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"I think it's premature," said CUPE Local 543 president Jean Fox of the proposed closures.

"I would hope that council would take a look at how the full-day learning program is going to be instituted, implemented, and that it's only five per cent. Five per cent the first year. It affects 25 per cent of the students in the daycares. What about the other 75 per cent?"

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Management have worked hard to keep costs in line for the past five years, the report says, but enrolment continues to decrease with the exception of the Jefferson Boulevard centre.

There have been 28 new child care centres open in Windsor, 13 in Tecumseh and seven in Amherstburg since 2005, the report says, having "also contributed to the lower enrolment trends as parents have more choices."

Fox said the city-run centres are subsidized and are located along bus routes for easy access by low-income families.

"Where are they going to take their kids?," said Fox.

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Fox noted that the city-run centres also specialize in dealing with special needs children.

The report also notes that as a result of the 101-day municipal workers strike last year many parents found alternative arrangements for daycare and did not return to the municipal system after the work stoppage, resulting in a 24 per cent overall drop in enrolment since April 2009.

The city will not be able to place all of the laid-off staff into other jobs and there will be layoffs once seniority bumping is complete.

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The closures would result in savings for other city departments such as facility operations, risk management and information technology, the report says.

- reprinted from the Windsor Star

Related link: City of Windsor's report re: closure of all municipal early learning and child care centres ^[2]

Region: Ontario ^[3]

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Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/10/01/city-windsor-report-recommends-closing-municipal-daycares> [2] <http://www.windsorstar.com/pdf/childcarereport.pdf> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/budget> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8166>