

School boards shouldn't run daycare: Cambridge parents voice their outrage at meeting ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

School boards have no business running daycare at schools and should let third-party childcare providers continue offering quality, cheaper programs, say outraged Cambridge parents.

That was the angry message delivered to Waterloo Region District School Board top brass in a hotly-debated meeting at Preston's Ryerson Public School Tuesday night.

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The change is part of a province-driven early years education initiative that aims to provide seamless education programs for children who require before- and after-school daycare. It's also part of a phased-in plan to introduce all-day, every-day kindergarten for four and five year olds.

Mary Lou Mackie, executive superintendant of education at the school board, said the board's goal is to provide equal access to quality daycare to all families across the region. To provide that universal daycare, she explained, the board must operate its extended daycare programs in busy, high demand markets to help cover costs of running the programs in other markets.

The board-operated program at Ryerson will take business from the current YWCA provider, she acknowledged, but said that it's a necessary evil for the greater good of families in the region.

"It's great for you to have this great thing at Ryerson," she told parents. "It's important to know that 80 per cent of the region does not."

-reprinted from the Cambridge Times

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