

KRG wants Nunavik childcare fees kept low^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The Kativik Regional Government council says it's opposed to proposed amendments to Quebec's Educational Childcare Act that includes a plan to hike daycare fees for certain users.

Bill 28, introduced last fall, proposes that Quebec families begin to pay for childcare on a sliding scale in 2016, based on their annual household income.

Under Quebec's subsidized system, parents currently pay \$7.30 per child, per day for daycare.

While that will stay in effect for families with a total income of less than \$55,000, the fee will climb as high as \$20 per day for households whose annual income exceeds \$150,000.

KRG council passed a resolution Feb. 24 asking the province to maintain its current contributions to Nunavik's childcare program, to keep its daily fees at \$7.30.

The KRG's department of sustainable employment, which oversees the region's 19 childcare centres, has already sent a brief to Quebec's department of families outlining Nunavik's position, said its director, Margaret Gauvin.

"We provided information on the cost of living here and explained that childcare centres play a more vital role in Nunavik than they do in the South because we use the childcares centres as a way to address poverty and malnutrition," Gauvin told KRG council meetings in Kuujuaq Feb. 24.

Almost three quarters of Nunavik households earn less than \$32,480 annually, the KRG points out in its resolution.

And changes to Quebec's childcare funding would be felt particularly hard in a region where families are larger on average than the rest of the province, the resolution said.

The KRG council also requested modifications to the province's Bill 27, which proposes that childcare providers sign a contract with its users, its contents determined by the province.

But the KRG wants to oversee that contract itself so it can be offered in three languages, not just English or French.

"We're saying that parents need a contract in Inuitut in order to understand it," Gauvin said.

Today, the KRG delivers care to just over 1,000 Nunavimmiut children at its 19 centres. They employ about 250 staff.

Nunavik didn't count a single public daycare centre until 1982 when the region's first childcare centre opened in Kuujuaq.

It wasn't until the Quebec government launched its family policy in 1997 that Nunavik's other communities saw their first childcare centres built. The subsidized program meant parents only paid \$5 a day for childcare back then.

Today, parents and caregivers pay \$7.30 a day for a child's place in one of Nunavik's 19 childcare centres which now include three new centres in Inukjuak, Puvirnituq, Salluit and Kangiqsualujuaq.

The waiting list for child care spaces in Kuujuaq has risen to as high as 90 families this year while the KRG waits on Quebec to fund a third centre in Nunavik's largest community.

Region: Quebec^[3]

Tags: subsidy^[4]

funding^[5]

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/15/03/krq-wants-nunavik-childcare-fees-kept-low> [2]

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