



November 29, 2016

Dear members of the Community Development and Recreation Committee:

I am writing today on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Gledhill Avenue Child Care Centre (GACCC).

Like other child care centres, the GACCC continues to experience the effects of the implementation of kindergarten before and after programs, including:

- limitations on available space within the school where the GACCC is collocated;
- restrictions on the GACCC's ability to make modifications or improvements to the physical space without the support of the TDSB and use of TDSB-approved service providers, resulting in increased costs;
- challenges recruiting and retaining qualified staff in a split shift, resulting from the Toronto Children's Services' position regarding support for lunchtime supervision of kindergarten children enrolled in the B&A program.

These challenges have impacted on the quality of the GACCC's child care services and on the GACCC's financial viability, in addition to a number of other factors.

In addition to the implementation of the B&A program, the GACCC's financial viability has also been negatively impacted by the subsidy freeze that has been in place. While we understand that the freeze has been lifted in the ward in which the GACCC is located, the damage has been done.

The GACCC has significant vacancies in all programs – our overall enrollment rate is 87%. This is more than 10% lower than the City's assumed 98% enrollment on which per diems are calculated – a fact which also disadvantages the GACCC financially as our per diems do not recognize the reality in which we operate.

Prior to the freeze, there were a number of families that believed they would start at the Centre and were unable to do so – more than 50% of our current vacancies could have been filled had we been able to place those families, resulting in a **projected loss of approximately \$30,000** in the last quarter of the 2016 calendar year. As a consequence, we have been forced to operate at a reduced capacity and lay off staff in our preschool program, as there are not enough full-fee parents in our community to fill the available spaces. We have also explored other options to increase our efficiency in the face of these sustained vacancies, particularly given that at this point in the academic year the vacancies in the kindergarten and school age B&A programs are highly unlikely to be filled.

Despite the conscientious and aggressive measures we have recently taken, the impact of the subsidy freeze cannot be ignored – as a result of this and other recent challenges the GACCC is currently operating with a significant projected deficit and severe cash flow issues. We respectfully request that you take immediate action to support the GACCC and other child care centres whose viability have been affected by the subsidy freeze in a significant way.

We hope that we can count on your support as well as we continue to fight for the GACCC's ongoing viability. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions at all.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diamond".

Jessica Diamond
Chair, Board of Directors

cc: Councillor Janet Davis
Ms. Anne Farrell, Toronto Children's Services
Ms. Amanda Stanton, Interim Executive Director, Gledhill Avenue Child Care Centre