



Robin Pilkey

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January 10, 2017

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, M.P.P.
Premier of Ontario
Room 281, Main Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON. M7A 1A1

Members of the City of Toronto Budget Committee and Executive Committee,
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Premier Wynne, Members of the City of Toronto Budget Committee and Executive Committee,

As Chair of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), I am writing on behalf of the Board of Trustees to express our deep concerns about the proposed elimination of the Childcare Occupancy Grant and the freeze to fee subsidies in the City of Toronto Budget 2017.

Serving 246,000 students in 584 schools each day at the TDSB, we know the great impact that the elimination of this grant and a freeze of subsidized spaces would have on families in our city. We know that these cuts will make licensed childcare less affordable, less accessible, and be detrimental to the quality of care in Toronto.

For childcare centres within TDSB schools alone, 60 percent of children would experience an increase in fees. The removal of the occupancy grant would make regulated childcare even more expensive and put it farther out of reach for many families. Childcare is already too costly for many parents in our city. A recent study showed that 75 percent of families in Toronto find licensed childcare unaffordable.

In addition, the City budget proposes freezing subsidized childcare spaces. With more than 18,000 children currently on the waitlist for subsidies, freezing the number of spots while making school-based care more expensive, will make quality care less accessible for many families.

At a time when the Government of Ontario has committed to creating 100,000 new childcare spaces across the province, the City should be looking at ways to expand licensed childcare to be accessible to more families.

School Boards are partners in building and supporting early learning and childcare. The TDSB is committed to working together to provide high quality, affordable and accessible childcare for children and families in Toronto.

However, the responsibility for funding school-based childcare rests with the City of Toronto and the provincial and federal governments. We look forward to working with you to find ways to ensure that the childcare needs of students and families can be met.

Providing the families of our city with safe, affordable, accessible and high quality childcare options is essential to ensure children have the best possible start in life.

On behalf of the TDSB Board of Trustees, I urge you to reject the proposed elimination of the Childcare Occupancy Grant and the freeze of subsidized childcare spaces in the City of Toronto Budget 2017.

Thank you for your time and attention,
Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robin Pilkey', with a long, wavy horizontal line extending to the right.

Robin Pilkey
Chair of the Board

Cc: Angela Kennedy (Chair, Toronto Catholic District School Board)
Jean-Francois L'Heureux (Chair, French Public District School Board)
Melinda Chartrand (Chair, French Catholic District School Board)
Members, TDSB Early Years Advisory Committee
Members, TDSB Parent Involvement Advisory Committee

Copy: Child Care Centre Tenants