

Parents tell Peel Regional Council – “Don’t close our child care centres”

Peel —As Peel Regional Council gets set to vote next Thursday on whether to close 12 city-run child care centres, parents from across the region are flooding local councillors with phone calls to urge them to vote no.

“All week, parents have been telling us that they did not know the child care centres were threatened,” said Andrea Calver, Coordinator for the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC), which has been alerting child care centres and parents about the upcoming vote. “It’s not right for the Region to try to ram this through; they should be consulting with the people most affected – the parents.”

The proposed closures were recommended in a report released today by Peel Region.

Calver said that despite it being a fast growing region, Peel has a lower percentage of child care than Ontario has a whole.

“That makes these centres even more important. They offer parenting support and high quality child care at a cost that many struggling families can afford,” said Lisa Martinez, parent. “If these child care centres close, then Peel Region will be targeting the most vulnerable.”

About 800 families will lose the current quality child care they are receiving from the municipal centres. The OCBCC estimates that about 200 good jobs in Peel will be lost if Peel regional councillors vote to close the centres.

“We have long memories. We will vote against any councillor who votes to close our centres – and we will organize to make sure they are not re-elected again,” added Lisa Martinez, parent.

Calver added that instead of stripping the region of much-needed high quality child care centres, Peel should join with other municipalities and advocacy groups to call on the Ontario government to adequately fund child care in the 2012 budget so that municipal and community-based centres stay open.

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