



## City of Toronto Budget 2017: Proposed Elimination of Childcare Occupancy Grant

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### BACKGROUND

As part of the [City of Toronto Budget 2017](#), Child Services is recommending eliminating the Childcare Occupancy Grant to school boards to support childcares.

Through this grant, the City of Toronto provides funding to childcares located within schools for leasing costs. Without this occupancy grant, school boards will have to recover costs directly from childcare centres. In turn, this will result in fee increases for parents, as childcares will have to recover costs directly from families.

Recently, Mayor John Tory announced that the City is committed to creating 300 new childcare fee subsidies. With more than 18,000 children on the waitlist for subsidies in the City of Toronto, this is a step in the right direction.

However, half of the funding for these new subsidies will come from the Childcare Occupancy Grants, which will put the burden of costs onto parents.

In addition, the budget proposes a \$700,000 cut to student nutrition programs and the elimination of funding to support three pools located in TDSB schools.

### FACTS

The elimination of the City of Toronto childcare occupancy grant will have a direct impact on affordability, accessibility, and quality of childcare in Toronto.

**Affordability:** With the removal of the occupancy grant, fees will increase further, making childcare even more expensive. A recent study showed that 75 percent of families in Toronto already find licensed childcare unaffordable. Childcare centres within TDSB schools have estimated parents could face increased costs ranging from \$15-\$121 per month.

**Accessibility:** Increasing costs for childcare will result in spaces becoming even less accessible for many families. Licensed childcare is already inaccessible for many families in Toronto due to high fees and lack of availability of subsidies. There are currently over 18,000 children on the waitlist for subsidies in the City of Toronto.

**Quality:** An increase in operating costs will put additional administrative stress on childcares, make less money available for improving and expanding programming, while putting financial strain on families.

The City of Toronto needs to work with the Province and school boards to continue to provide childcare that is accessible and affordable for all families. TDSB Trustees are working within their communities to urge city councillors to reject these cuts. [Read the Board decisions \(pages 5-7\)](#).





# FACT SHEET

**Student nutrition programs:** The budget proposes a \$1.58 million cut to public health spending. This includes a \$700,000 cut to student nutrition programs. There is a direct relationship between healthy nutrition and academic achievement for students. Nutrition programs are vital to support all children and youth to be ready and able to learn in our classrooms.

**Elimination of funding for 3 pools:** The budget proposes eliminating funding to support three pools located in TDSB schools. This is in addition to last year's city funding reduction for three other TDSB pools. Swimming is a key part of physical education and supports students' social, physical, mental, emotional and academic well-being. Cutting funding to more pools will reduce opportunities for more children and families.

## **ACTION**

**Share this information.** If you are concerned about the City of Toronto's elimination of the childcare occupancy, reductions in student nutrition funding and the elimination of funding for three TDSB pools share this information and speak with friends, family and other parents in your network and encourage them to take action. [Connect with your TDSB Trustee for more information.](#)

**Speak up.** Write to your local [City Councillor](#) and [Member of Provincial Parliament \(MPP\)](#) to voice your concerns.

