

## COMMUNICATION 136026

**Received From:** Tracey Freill, Manager of Carleton Place Childcare Services  
**Addressed To:** Committee of the Whole  
**Date:** March 25, 2025  
**Topic:** Proposed Summer Closure Week for Carleton Place Childcare Services

### SUMMARY

This report proposes the implementation of an annual summer closure week for Carleton Place Childcare facilities beginning in **2026**. The closure week will bring several benefits, including cost savings, guaranteed staff time off, and the opportunity to carry out necessary facility upgrades and maintenance. This initiative will become a regular practice each year, ensuring both operational efficiency and enhanced service for the children and staff.

### BACKGROUND

Carleton Place Childcare Services used to close for a week in the summer however, the practice was stopped in 2010 when kindergarten moved to full day. When kindergarten moved to full day, the Childcare Centre lost a revenue stream as a result, and it was made up by no longer having a closure week.

### COMMENT

The closure week will provide several key benefits for both the facility and staff, including costs savings, staff well-being, and the opportunity for facility upgrades to be completed.

- **Supply Cost Reduction:** The closure week will result in reduced supply costs as no childcare services will be provided during this period. Supply staff would not be required to backfill full time staff who work directly with the children or in positions that require coverage. This will also help in conserving operational expenses for the facility such as food, minor program supplies, etc.
- **Lower Parent Fees:** As we have joined CWELCC the daily cost for parents continues to decrease. It is proposed that parents would still be charged the reduced rates for the closure week which continue to be manageable.
- **Staff Well-Being:** The closure week will ensure that all staff members receive a guaranteed week off during the summer, allowing them time to recharge and enjoy a well-deserved break. Currently, due to the number of staff at the two (2) centres, not all staff are able to have a week of vacation in the summer. A guaranteed week off will contribute to staff satisfaction and reduces burnout. It will help to increase morale and retain staff.
- **Facility Upgrades:** With no children or staff present, a closure week presents an excellent opportunity to perform facility upgrades and maintenance with no disruptions in service or having to work around the children and staff. As all rooms are currently full, there is no opportunity to move programs from one room to another making it difficult to undertake facility repairs/upgrade/renovations which refresh a well-used environment, ensuring that the facilities remain safe, modern and welcoming. Currently, the Centres are closed for the week between

Christmas and New Year's, but it is difficult to find contractors to undertake facility repairs during this during this week as they are also off during this period.

- **Informing Parents:** If approved, parents will be notified well in advance each year about the upcoming summer closure week. The communication will be clear and will highlight the reduced fees at the newest CWELLC rates. This will allow parents to plan accordingly and understand the benefits of the closure. Parents will be able to plan for vacation time in advance and spend quality time with their children. In addition, the Parent Handbook will be updated to reflect the new yearly closure week as required.

Staff propose that the closure week would occur the week immediately preceding the long weekend in August (civic holiday).

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The County Children's Service Manager, Katie Mitchell, has confirmed that the Town is permitted to charge fees to parents/guardians during a closure period, thus there would be no financial loss to the Center.

As childcare costs continue to decline due to CWELCC funding, the cost implications to families are significantly lower than if this change had occurred prior to CWELCC funding.

All Staff would use five (5) vacation days without the need to backfill the majority of positions with supply staff. The cost for supply of 70 staff for one (1) week is approximately \$68,000.00.

In addition, there would be savings in other operating costs for the week's closure of approximately \$4,500 for food and other programming supplies.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council approves the summer closure week for Carleton Place Childcare Services as outlined in the report by the Manager of Childcare Services dated March 25, 2025.