

October 1st, 2021

Board of Directors
Garderie Bernadette Child Care Centre
100 Thomas More Private
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Dear GBCCC Board of Directors,

Child Care Now - Ottawa is a group of parents, educators, and allies based here in Ottawa, and we advocate - mainly at the municipal level - for child care that is universal, accessible and affordable for families as well as decent working conditions and wages for educators.

For a very long time in Ottawa, the cost of child care has been borne mainly by parents. Parents and community were the main drivers for opening child care programs, and have received little support from the municipal, provincial or federal governments by way of funding. The main cost of providing high quality child care and early learning is the cost of educator and staff wages. The tug of war between high fees and low wages has held back the child care sector, and created unhelpful tensions between employers - boards of directors like yourselves, who are often mostly parents - and child care workers.

With this letter Child Care Now - Ottawa is calling on the Board of Directors of Garderie Bernadette Child Care Centre to work together with the Bernadette Workers' Union to improve their working conditions. We believe child care workers when they say that their employer is not addressing their need for proper procedures and resources to support their physical and mental health, and that those workers have a right to make decisions about their working conditions. We call on you to recognize the Bernadette Workers' Union and engage them in good faith - their efforts towards unionizing show their commitment to the children, families, and communities they serve.

As a further show of good faith, we call on the Board of Directors to engage in advocacy in support of better funding for child care and early learning here in Ottawa. Here are some ways the Board of Directors can advocate on behalf of Garderie Bernadette and the educators who work there:

- Sign the petition calling on the Ontario government to sign a child care and early learning deal with the federal government. Such a deal should reduce parent fees, expand not-for-profit child care, and create a wage grid for educators.
(https://www.childcareontario.org/sign_the_child_care_agreement)
- Write to the City of Ottawa, and support efforts to plan for continued support for and priority given to not-for-profit and public child care.



- Communicate with the University of Ottawa, and request support and stability for a reputable child care service that university staff and students rely upon.

We understand that, as parents, you care deeply about the child care program where your children spend their days. We know too that the educators are what make those days safe, interesting and full of learning. We sincerely hope that you, as members of the Board of Directors, will work with the Bernadette Workers' Union to find solutions together. We believe child care staff should be treated with respect and should be valued by your organization, and will be following up with you to ensure progress is being made.

We look forward to working together for high quality, accessible, and affordable child care and early learning in our city.

Yours,

Child Care Now – Ottawa

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