



	REPORT No.: 2018-58
MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2018	DATE PREPARED: AUGUST 17, 2018
SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF LITTLE LIONS WALDORF CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE CLARKE STREET LOCATION	

RECOMMENDATION

For information only.

REPORT SUMMARY

To provide The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board) with information pertaining to the closure of Little Lions Waldorf Child and Family Centre Clarke Street location.

BACKGROUND

On July 25, 2018, the Chief Executive Officer of Little Lions Waldorf Child and Family Centre (Little Lions), informed TBDSSAB (Attachment 1) of its Board's decision to close the Clarke Street location, as of December 31, 2018, based on staffing shortages.

This location is licensed for 47 children, ranging in age from infant to before-and-after school-aged children. Current Clarke Street staff will be reassigned to other sites within the organization. The Clarke Street location will become a training centre for Little Lions.

COMMENTS

To support a smooth transition and mitigate disruption to children and families, the following strategies were identified and/or completed relative to the impending closure:

- As of August 2, 2018, all impacted families, enrolled at the Clarke Street location, have been notified of the site's planned closure, via hand-delivered letter, and personal discussions with the Centre's Supervisor. Families were provided assurance that Little Lions and TBDSSAB are working together to best support the families during the transition;
- On August 7, 2018, TBDSSAB issued a letter to all licensed Child Care Providers, notifying them of this closure. TBDSSAB will work to relocate children who are unable to obtain a space within existing Little Lions sites. To date the following are the tentative relocations:
 - 2 children are tentatively relocating to Woodcrest School location.
 - 1 child is tentatively relocating to Little Lions Valley Central location.

Some of the families have expressed interest in other child care centres. TBDSSAB will be directly contacting those child care centres identified;

- On August 13, 2018, families on the waitlist for Little Lions Clarke Street location were notified of the December 31, 2018 planned closure. There were 319 children on the waitlist for the Clarke Street location, with preferred start dates from 2018 to 2020;
- Little Lions and the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board are exploring the possibility of using St. Paul’s School as a temporary site for children that cannot be placed, until spaces become available at existing sites;

TBDSSAB Administration will be working closely with Little Lions to ensure that all enrolled children are placed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS



Since the closure is effective December 31, 2018, there will be no financial impact in the 2018 year. The closure will be considered in the 2019 TBDSSAB Operating Budget which will be presented to the Board for review and approval.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that Little Lions Waldorf Child and Family Centre has decided to close its Clarke Street location and TBDSSAB will support children and families through the transition.

REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED

Attachment 1: Letter dated July 25, 2018, from Lindsay Gaw-Martin, CEO, Little Lions Waldorf Child and Family Centre

PREPARED BY:	Louise Piercey, Manager, Child Care and Early Years Programs The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
APPROVED / SIGNATURE:	
	Georgina Daniels, Acting Director – Client Services Division The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
SUBMITTED / SIGNATURE:	
	William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board



LITTLE LIONS WALDORF
Child and Family Centre

July 25, 2018

Dear Georgina, Louise and Michelle,

I am writing this letter as a follow-up from previous conversations with you regarding the future of our Clarke Street location. After much discussion and thought, the Board of Directors has made a final decision to close this site at the end of this year. Looking at our organization as a whole and seeing that many of our sites are often struggling for staff they have decided that it would be best for us if we close this site and utilize those staff elsewhere in our organization. We have always maintained that we needed to move forward with a training centre in order to continue to maintain our Waldorf status and doing this now offers us the opportunity to embark on that in the new year.

Since stepping into this role at the beginning of the year I have often seen my supervisors stretched too thin and this decision will give them the time they need to properly complete their supervisory duties without constantly having to be in program instead.

All of my staff at Clarke Street know of this closure as do all of my supervisors from other sites. I have already met with them multiple times to begin the process of trying to accommodate our families at one of our other locations. We should be able to offer other placements to many of our families and some may even be happier as their new location could prove to be closer to their homes and/or work. As we mentioned at a previous meeting with you the majority of our families do not actually reside in the neighbourhood. We do already know that not all children will be able to be accommodated by us so we are hopeful that you will work with us throughout this process as well. There may need to be some reaching out to other child care providers to see what spaces they have available in the hopes that no child will be required to go back on a waitlist.

A letter to all our Clarke Street families will be going out this Friday to make them aware of this decision and to let them know that we will be doing our best to accommodate as many of them as possible.

We all see this as a positive move for Little Lions and I am excited to see the progress at all sites once we have a full compliment of staff. I am hopeful that you can understand and respect this decision and I look forward to a continued good working relationship between your organization and ours.

Sincerely,



Lindsay Gaw-Martin

Chief Executive Officer

Little Lions Waldorf Child and Family Centre