



12 Center Locations:

Ballard

Capitol Hill/Eastlake

Green Lake

Mercer Island (3)

Mount Baker

Queen Anne (2)

Rainier Beach

Seward Park

Wallingford

January 13, 2016

Rob Johnson, Councilmember
Seattle City Council
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

Dear Councilmember Johnson,

Last November 2015 I sent your predecessor a letter regarding the Seattle Public Schools putting on-site child care on notice that they could be facing eviction from their dedicated and/or shared use spaces at Seattle Public Elementary Schools. This letter is to bring your attention to the SPS board action that will be taking place at the SPS School Board meeting on January 20, 2016 which could give SPS administration the go ahead to evict 19 plus on-site child care programs.

The loss of on-site child care programs will be devastating to kids who need before- and after-school care, to low-income and working parents, to employers, to our entire community.

The impact on families, should the SPS school board members vote to eliminate at least 19 child care programs, will be enormous. Child care providers met with SPS staff members last Friday, January 8, 2016 in an effort to give them the full scope of the unintended and unforeseen damage that will be done should SPS move forward with changing the bell times, reducing class size and eliminating nearly 30% of child care spaces for families in the next school year. Community based providers who attended that meeting feel doubtful that the information presented to district staff will have any influence in SPS changing their plans to evict 19 plus child care programs from their dedicated space.

There are so many other considerations that the school board, elected officials and the public need to be made aware of before evicting child care programs from their on-site dedicated child care space.

Here are just a few of the unintended consequences:

- Child care centers that are moved from dedicated space to multi-purpose rooms could result in afterschool clubs and PTSA activities being displaced eliminating those child care options for parents.
- Many child care centers already use dedicated space, the gym, the cafeterias, the multi-purpose rooms so that they can meet the current demand for care and still many programs maintain a waiting list. How do you decide which families will lose their spot in the program if the dedicated space is taken away?
- Bell times changing, high schools getting out at 4 PM while elementary schools are getting out at 2 PM. That effectively eliminates the sibling care option for those working parents who have older kids.
- Potential increases in high school truancy because families may have no other options but to depend on older siblings for care.

January 13, 2016

Page Two

- A 2 PM release time for elementary students jeopardizes the safety of our younger kids because of longer, unsupervised afterschool time that also creates anxiety and worry for families.
- The demand for afterschool programs will increase due to the longer hours of care needed with a 2 PM release time.

You see, the problem is much bigger than creating classroom space. There are 69 on-site child care programs. In effect, eliminating at least 19 child care programs (could be more) reduces the number of on-site child care programs by nearly 30%. In numbers of kids served, well over 1000 kids will be impacted in the 2016/17 school year alone.

This problem is growing by the minute and the negative impact of such a move will be immediate and lasting for all of Seattle's kids and families.

On-site care providers are willing and able to be a part of the solution. Thank you for hearing our concerns and taking action to prevent the SPS from eliminating a system of school-based child care that has taken nearly 30 years to build.

With concern,



Susan R. Brown
President and CEO