

# Spruce Grove Playschool Society

City Council Meeting, June 26, 2023



Spruce Grove Playschool Society  
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Spruce Grove Playschool



We teach  
Minds to think,  
Hands to do,  
And hearts to love!

## A BRIEF OVERVIEW

# Spruce Grove Playschool Society

**Operating in Spruce Grove Since 1976**

Our school has provided early education to the children of Spruce Grove for 45 years. We have been located at the log cabin for 13 years, and took tenancy of the building after it sat vacant for many years.

**Building a Strong Sense of Community**

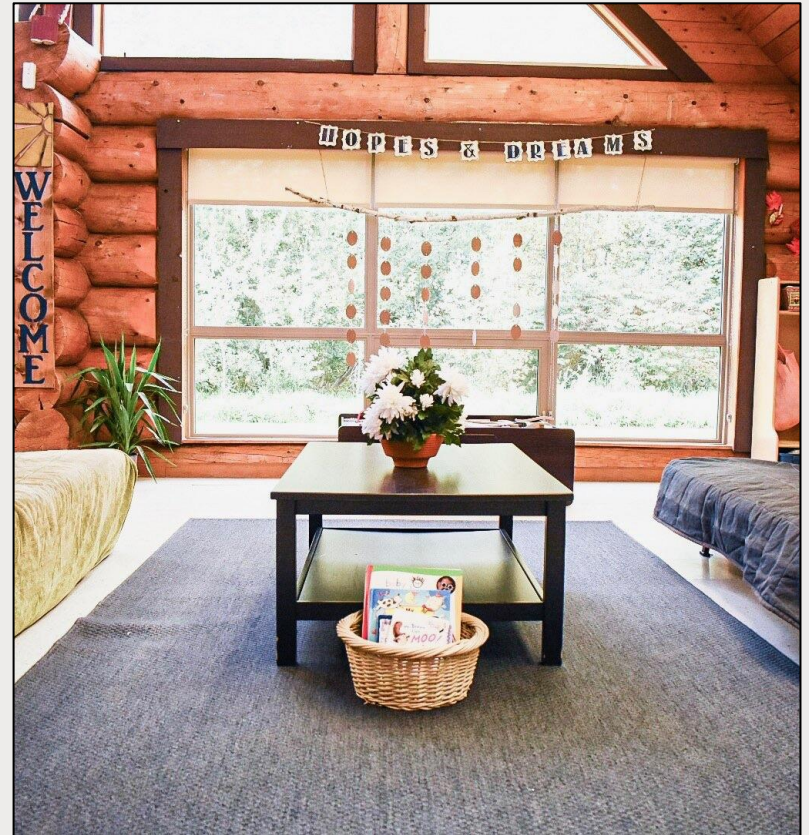
Licensed to provide programs to 106 children. Parents are an essential part of the children's learning in the classroom. Every class has a parent volunteer, creating stronger bonds in the community.

**Good Caretakers**

Our school was responsible for funding the much needed renovations to the cabin which took nearly 2 years to complete. We take great pride in caring for the cabin and the surrounding area.

**Non-Profit, Parent Run Cooperative**

Spruce Grove Playschool Society is a non-profit, parent run cooperative that puts all of its funds back into the school. This structure aligns everyone to work towards creating the best possible environment for the children.





## REGGIO EMILIA - SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

## The importance of the environment as a third teacher

This school of teaching places a large emphasis on the environment being a “third teacher,” which makes the current location of SGPS essential to the success of the school. The natural playground, trails, field, and cabin aesthetic create a very natural environment where kids can learn through play and let their creativity take the lead.

### Spruce Grove Playschool Society Highlights

1. Natural light and materials
2. Warm and welcoming environment
3. Walking distance to local library and community gardens
4. Surrounding environment encourages open exploration
5. Lays foundation for children's success in their school career
6. Focuses on the child as a whole (family + environment + community)





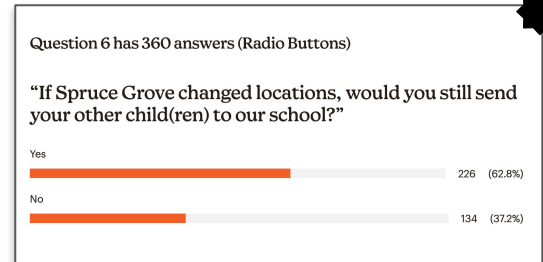
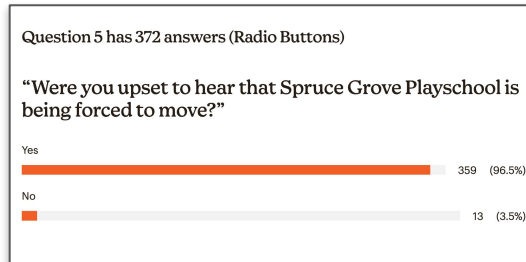


# Survey Highlights

In response to the city's decision to not renew the school's lease, we reached out to our community with a survey to gauge their response to the news.

We heard from many families and community members (past and present) about the role our school has played in their lives and in the community as a whole over the past 4 decades.

**Note**  
Every Council Members will receive a copy of the survey results



## SELECT SURVEY QUOTES

**Topic: Ideal Location**

*"The log cabin is a perfect place for a play school. Being that SGPS is a nature-based play school, it just makes so much sense for it to be nestled into the park system. I have had two kids attend for three years, and another one will be attending this fall, and it's such a beautiful, peaceful, inspiring place for the children."*

*"It is an ideal spot in the center of Spruce Grove and a beautiful rustic space for the learn through play classrooms. It is a quiet location and they made use of the walking trails for their outdoor time and I think that is what attracts many families to the school."*

*"The log cabin is such an iconic location for our children's first experience with school & learning. It is set in such a nature friendly location with a natural park, walking trails, community garden and wildlife right at the children's inger tips. Hoping the city of Spruce Grove will take these factors into consideration and realize the importance of this building in the play school community."*

*"The current location of this playschool makes it unique in our community. It's ideal for its purpose and fosters a love of the outdoors in our children."*

*What a great (SUPER COOL!) location for a playschool. Shows kids that they are important and special and so connected to nature (with most child care places being in strip malls, surrounded by parking lots, liquor stores and shops... it is so refreshing to have a location removed from that. So much more natural and kid friendly."*

## SELECT SURVEY QUOTES

**Topic: Ideal Location Cont'd...**

*"The playschool has put so much love, attention and TLC into the log cabin to make it what it is today. They are community driven and they have touched so many families over the years. It is the perfect location for a playschool with the forest paths and nature playground attached. I am so sad that my little one will miss out on the wonderful opportunities my oldest had at this wonderful playschool. "*

*"This school is an integral part of the community. Its location is perfect as it's close to the forest to allow for nature learning and set back off the main road making it safer for littles and families. I request that Spruce Grove Playschool be granted this location to continue to teach our future generations. "*

*"Continuing to send my children to the playschool would greatly depend on where they are forced to move. The current location is so ideal with the playground, the forest, and the green space right there."*

*"The log cabin that Spruce Grove Playschool is located in gives it character. The set up that they have there is absolutely amazing. It is the perfect size for the amount of students that attend. Spruce Grove Playschool is located in the perfect spot. The atmosphere is perfect. They are in the right location for their outdoor nature walks, trips to the public library and even have the park there for them to play on. It's absolutely wonderful. Please, City of Spruce Grove, reconsider your location for Spruce Grove Playschool. Thank you."*



## SELECT SURVEY QUOTES

## Topic: Importance of Log Cabin

*"We love the log cabin playschool! We love that the location is close to both a playground and the forest trails, which both enhance outdoor time at school. The location of the school is also ideal as it is located so centrally in Spruce Grove. This makes accessibility quite easy which is important to our family. We will greatly miss this location if the playschool is forced to move."*

*"I truly believe it is not in the best interest of our community and our communities children to move their school. Most children at this young age are just learning to be away from their caregivers, to change their routine will present unnecessary challenges and anxiety for many. Many of our children thrive at this location and we as parents feel at ease knowing our children are safe here. Changing locations creates uncertainty about our children's safety and mental health..."*

*"The feeling and atmosphere that has been created at this location feels so cozy and comforting. We also love the access to nature and the space outdoors that gets utilized. This was also a deciding factor in putting our kid in this program - the fact that it felt integrated in nature and not just a playground in a busy parking lot."*

*"The log cabin is a perfect location for the play school. Inside is the perfect setup for two classrooms and an area in the middle for Moms and Dads to connect."*

*"The log cabin school is a unique and celebrated part of the tri-municipal area, not just Spruce Grove. The affordable pre-school option gets families into the city centre daily, and enjoying beautiful building and its architecture."*

## SELECT SURVEY QUOTES

## Topic: Importance of Log Cabin Cont'd...

*"The log cabin has long been used as an educational site welcoming families local and from afar. Having SGPS central in town is one of the back bones of our community and community's history. SGPS's Reggio inspired and natural environment programming is unique in our community and as such should remain in a unique and natural space."*

*"The log cabin has the perfect set-up/lay-out for this amazing playschool. I recommend the place to all friends and families with little ones looking for playschool. Not just because of the teachers and the experiences the children have but also the building, the park and forest that surrounds it. This playschool is one of the longest operating playschools in the City of Spruce Grove. They offer something unique that goes above and beyond many of the others in the area..."*

*"It is so disappointing that the lease has been terminated. This is literally the only playschool in the city that allows for outdoor play every single day. The log style structure is so inspiring to our little people and gives a sense of the deep history of our amazing city. I have had 2 of my kids attend SGPS, and plan to return if they stay in this location."*

*"The mission, in conjunction with the location and physical setting of the school, was what sold us on feeling overjoyed with trusting Spruce Grove Playschool with the life and wellness of our only child. The warmth my husband and I immediately sensed due to the homey setting inside and outside the log cabin made us feel like moving in as well.. this feeling is not something you can easily integrate into building plans because it's something intangible. Yet, I believe that such a central and homelike, warm building is integral to the social and emotional well-being of little humans. "*

## SELECT SURVEY QUOTES

## Topic: Differentiated Programming

*"Spruce Grove Playschool and its teachers set a high standard for early childhood education in our city. Their use and understanding of Reggio Emilia philosophy and focus on outdoor play is superior throughout Edmonton and area. These preschool also acts as a community site for children with PUF funding, diagnosed with severe language delays, autistic children and children with chromosomal disorders. For a city that has a true shortage of quality early education programming, especially for children coming out of the COVID pandemic, I'm extremely disappointed in the City of Spruce Grove for making it more difficult for this pre-school to provide its essential programming."*

*"There is no other playschool like this in Spruce Grove or even in Edmonton. People travel from Edmonton, Stony Plain and surrounding areas to attend here. That brings traffic that is exclusive to Spruce Grove. This city needs to keep setting themselves apart from Edmonton and other areas by having these different types of business which makes us a unique city for people to come live and start families here."*

*"SGPS's Reggio inspired and natural environment programming is unique in our community and as such should remain in a unique and natural space. Being Reggio inspired means focusing on families as a whole not just the child; so allowing the playschool program to stay in this perfectly fitting unique space is not only supporting early education but also also many local families. Reggio also means being able to be outdoor learning from and about our natural environment. The location of this school is perfect for that with the trees, trails and distance from any major roadways. The location keeps the children safe while they learn."*

## SELECT SURVEY QUOTES

## Topic: Differentiated Programming Cont'd...

*"The reason we loved SGPS so much was not just the amazing teachers, but also the log cabin and the attached park with adjacent trails. This is the only not-for-profit Playschool in spruce grove, as well as I'm aware and even with the child care subsidy, the other schools would be too expensive for us. It's a shame to evict a great school out of this building for no good reason. The city could be eliminating a successful not for profit in our city, with this decision."*

*"Spruce Grove Playschool, a non-profit parent cooperative playschool is an affordable option for many families, and losing this location would be a terrible loss for many children and families..."*

*"Moving the playschool will potentially have devastating effects on the school considering the volunteer/parent involvement. Moving locations could mean losing the children (and volunteers) due to a lesser convenient location. Not to mention the tuition fees are much more likely to increase with the need to relocate and start all over, with today's commercial rental market."*

*"Our family was absolutely heartbroken to hear that the city is not renewing the lease for SGPS. The teachers create a wonderful learning environment for our son and the school/space itself acts as a third teacher. It's welcoming, emergent, and gives our son the confidence to learn and grow alongside his peers."*



We are going to **make a mess**  
We are going to **make some noise**  
We are going to **have a lot of fun**

✱  
**Most of all, we are going to LEARN**



Thank you.



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