



URGENT FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Subject: Sandcastle Early Learning Center Closure

Dear Sandcastle Families,

It is with heavy hearts that we share the difficult news that Sandcastle Early Learning Center will be closing its doors permanently **at the end of the school day on Friday, May 9, 2025.**

As you know, Sandcastle has faced significant operational challenges over the past several years. In 2024, leadership identified a critical need to restructure the center to ensure long-term viability and update to modern standards for early learning programs. Despite extensive efforts, the necessary changes were not successfully implemented at that time.

Earlier this year, a second attempt at restructuring was launched with a strong focus on maintaining safety, ensuring quality care, and continuing full compliance with all Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) requirements. However, during this time of transition, Sandcastle experienced an unprecedented wave of staff resignations—nearly half of our team. While our dedicated staff has worked tirelessly to teach and care for your children, uphold DHS staffing ratios, and provide a safe environment, we have now reached a point where continuing operations is no longer reasonable or responsible.

Sandcastle was long admired for its small classroom sizes and individualized approach to care. Unfortunately, as the early learning industry has evolved, the operational model that once defined Sandcastle became increasingly unsustainable. In today's regulatory and financial environment, smaller classes without corresponding funding increases or staffing stability are no longer viable.

This decision, while heartbreaking, is being made with the utmost integrity, prioritizing the well-being of children, families, and staff.

We are committed to supporting you and your family during this transition. In the coming days, we will share resources and recommendations to help you find alternate childcare arrangements. Our staff will also be available to assist in any way we can to ensure continuity of care for your child wherever possible.

On behalf of every staff member, past and present, we thank you for your trust, your partnership, and the honor of being part of your children's early years.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions or need assistance during this transition.

With gratitude,

Oona Myhre, Interim Administrator and Deacon Luis Rubi, Parish Business Administrator

Sandcastle Early Learning Center

info@sandcastlelearning.org



Sandcastle Early Learning Center Closure FAQ for Families

Why is Sandcastle closing?

Sandcastle has faced major operational and staffing challenges over the past year. After a needed restructure could not be fully implemented in 2024, leadership made a second attempt this year. However, during the transition, we experienced seven staff resignations.

While we have maintained required DHS child-to-staff ratios, the ability to provide stable, sustainable, and high-quality care is no longer viable.

Was Sandcastle meeting safety and licensing standards?

Yes. Throughout this transition, Sandcastle remained fully compliant with DHS licensing standards for staffing and safety. However, simply meeting minimum standards does not fully reflect the level of quality, stability, and care we believe your children deserve.

Why not continue operating with smaller staff or fewer children?

Sandcastle's historic small-ratio model, while once a defining feature, is no longer financially or operationally sustainable without significant and immediate structural changes. Continuing to operate under current circumstances would compromise quality and long-term viability.

When will Sandcastle officially close?

The last day of operations will be **May 9th, 2025**.

What happens to my child's care after Sandcastle closes?

We are compiling a list of local childcare providers and resources to assist you in finding alternate care. Staff members are also available to answer questions and offer support during the transition.

Will there be help finding new childcare?

Yes. We will be providing resource lists, and our team will be available over the next two weeks to help direct you to alternate options.

Will there be a way to say goodbye?

Yes. We are planning a small family gathering during the final week to honor the memories made at Sandcastle and thank the community for its support. More information will be shared soon.

Who can I contact with further questions?

Please email info@sandcastlelearning.org if you have questions or need support during this transitio