

For Immediate Release
April 22, 2021

KDSB and Red Lake Area Emergency Shelter collaborate to enhance services for clients

In response to the increasingly complex issues surrounding homelessness and the expansion of services being offered, the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) will temporarily assume all assets of the Red Lake Area Emergency Shelter (RLAES). The KDSB and RLAES will collaborate to secure a new shelter operator for the program with increased capacity and skills. The change comes following formal notice from the RLAES Board that they wish to end their service agreement as operator due to its volunteer-based capacity.

The RLAES Board has been providing services and programming to support individuals experiencing homelessness since 1994. During this time, staffing and programming has increased to include client services, housing, outreach, and food programming.

“On behalf of the Board of Directors, we would like to acknowledge and thank all of the Board members and employees that have served the RLAES over the years. The Board believes a change in structure would better meet the needs of the clients and programming. We have evolved from an emergency overnight shelter to protect people from our harsh environment into so much more. Before stable funding was secured, previous Boards and employees needed to fundraise to keep the shelter doors open. Together they showed great commitment, compassion and displayed the true embodiment of what being a member of a community means,” says Kelly Hall-Baranesky, Chair of the RLAES Board of Directors. She adds, “We look forward to working with KDSB in this transition. They have proven to be a great resource to our Board and share a common commitment to issues surrounding homelessness.”

The land, facility, and shelter will be transferred to the KDSB effective June 1st. There will be no disruption to services or staffing. The KDSB has worked to support the RLAES programming over the last 5 years.

“The RLAES Board of Directors have demonstrated what hard work, true caring, and the betterment of those in need is all about. Their tireless efforts in advocating, supporting, and allowing the RLAES to grow and thrive is a true testament to their compassionate nature in supporting everyone’s well-being. The KDSB looks forward to continued work with the Board and a smooth transition for those who access its services and programming,” says Henry Wall, Chief Administrative Officer of the KDSB.

In 2020, the RLAES supported:

- An average of 18 shelter guests per month
- An average of 160 overnight beds per month
- Provision of 25 meals per day (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)
- Support for 34 outreach clients

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The RLAES Board will restructure their group to focus on fundraising opportunities for the shelter and continue working towards ending homelessness in Red Lake. On behalf of the RLAES Board and the KDSB, thank you to the community of Red Lake for its ongoing support over the years with donations and efforts of so many directed at providing better outcomes for those in need.

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