



City of
Peterborough

TO: Members of the Joint Services Steering Committee

FROM: Ken Doherty, Director of Community Services

MEETING DATE: September 9, 2010

**SUBJECT: Report CSSSJSSC10-005
Early Learning Update**

PURPOSE

A report to inform the Joint Services Steering Committee on the status of the implementation of Early Learning in Peterborough, the development of a Child and Family Centre pilot and the reinstatement of provincial Best Start funding.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Joint Services Steering Committee endorse the recommendation outlined in Report CSSSJSSC10-005 dated September 9, 2010, of the Director of Community Services, as follows:

That the Early Learning Update Report be received.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Ministries of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and the Ministry of Education (M Ed) recognized the pressures resulting from the cancellation of the Canada/Ontario Early Learning and Childcare Agreement and the province has reinstated the funding to continue supporting child care and the new Early Learning initiatives.

Recently, the Province has confirmed the funding for the Early Learning Child Development (ELCD) program (formally known as Best Start) for the 2010/11 fiscal year as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| – Operating | \$1,768,800 |
| – Wage Improvement | \$350,400 |
| – Fee Subsidy | \$190,300 |
| – Child Care Stabilization Funding | \$74,300 |
| – Extended Day Fee Subsidy | \$16,800 |
| Total ELCD funding | \$2,400,600 |

Acceptance of these funds has no financial impact on the City, as these are 100% provincially funded. The Director of Community Services has accepted this additional funding allocation of \$635,394 in accordance with his delegated authority. In recommendation (c) (i) of Report CPFRA08-008, dated March 31, 2008, Council approved delegating authority to the Director of Community Services to enter into agreements or extensions of existing agreements with various Provincial Ministries that fund Social Services program delivery, where 100% dollars can be accessed.

The total Best Start child care operating allocation for Peterborough for 2010 is now \$2,400,600 compared to \$847,075 in the 2010 municipal budget and \$2,345,800 in the 2009.

BACKGROUND

The Early Learning and Best Start Update Report CSSSJSSC10-04 was presented to Joint Services Steering Committee on April 8, 2010. In that report, the division committed to monitoring the local pressures due to the implementation of the Early Learning Program, continue dialogue with the Ministry of Youth and Children's Services and to support a community planning process. The following timeline outlines some of the activities and outcomes that have resulted since the last update report to committee.

April 2010

- The province announced the reinstatement of \$63.5 million funding across the province. As a result of the reinstated funding, a layoff notice directly related to the Best Start program was cancelled.
- The Province announced legislation to make full day early learning a reality and the responsibility for child care was transferred from MCYS to Ministry of Education.

- Some Child Care Stabilization funding has been allocated by the province to support those not for profit programs impacted by the first year of Early Learning implementation. Most of the funding is operational and supports fee subsidy (\$74,300), extended day fee subsidy (\$16,800) and a small allocation for minor capital projects (\$10,800). Childcare centres close to the Year 1 Early Learning Schools (Apsley, Havelock, Otonabee Valley, Prince of Wales and St Paul's, Peterborough) are potentially eligible for the stabilization funding. Further one-time stabilization funds are expected for centres impacted in years 2 through 5, though details are not available at this time.
- The province also announced that Dr Charles Pascal, the author of the initial report "With our Best Future in Mind – Implementing Early Learning in Ontario" will be working with MCYS to host community engagement tables and to chair a reference group to advise on the development of Child and Family Centres.

May 2010

- The second local Early Learning forum was held on May 5th to continue the community consultation and planning process for Children's Services in Peterborough.
- The planning and development of a pilot model for a local Child and Family Centre at Otonabee Valley Public School is being led by the Peterborough Family Resource Centre in partnership with the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPRDSB) and the Social Services division. A parent consultation meeting was held on May 12th and the new centre will open in the fall of 2010.
- At the end of the month, Jim Grieve, the Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, presented an update on Early Learning at a forum for community agencies. The forum was held at Otonabee Valley Public School and hosted in partnership with KPRDSB and the municipality. This provided an opportunity to showcase the Child and Family Centre pilot project.

June 2010

- In early June, Kawartha Child Care Services (KCCS) opened a childcare centre in the new Apsley Public School. This school is one of the Early Learning Schools in 2010 and KCCS will be available to provide before and after school care for the full day kindergarten children for the next two years. It is anticipated that before and after school care will eventually be delivered by the Board of Education.
- On June 16th the Ministry of Education announced the schools that will be offering full day kindergarten starting in September 2011. In Peterborough, the schools are Keith Wightman Public School and St. Alphonsus Catholic Elementary School. Just outside of our area, Hastings Public School will be

offering full day kindergarten and this may impact some of our child care operators in the eastern part of the County.

- On June 30th the 2010-11 Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan for the City and County of Peterborough (Appendix A) was submitted to the province. The document provides an overview of the local childcare system as well as a description of the municipal funding. It identifies the service priorities highlighted through the community consultation process and further identifies local pressures. Approval of the plan is pending from the Ministry.

Though much work has been accomplished, there are still concerns related to the impact of Early Learning on child care agencies and funding levels. As of August, there are 282 children on the fee subsidy waitlist. Many families have been offered fee subsidy, but the demand continues and therefore the fee subsidy waitlist has grown by 152 children since March.

In addition, child care agencies remain concerned about their financial viability as four and five year olds move into the education system, reducing agencies' revenue. In 2010, the impact of the first 5 schools is spread over many childcare centres (except for Havelock and Apsley) and therefore centres are managing with minor modifications. By year three (2012), the impacts will be significant for individual agencies, including municipal daycares.

Work continues to plan for the impacts of the implementation of Early Learning on the child care sector. Over the next 5 years, it is anticipated that additional funding, beyond the provincial allocation, will be required to stabilize the system. Given the April funding announcement to reinstate the financial support for the Best Start programs, the Best Start unconditional grant at a value of \$888,767 will no longer be required for a Best Start exit strategy and can now be used to stabilize the child care system during this transformation. The Division will bring forward a future report with specific recommendations for the use of the unconditional grant to meet the pressures and priorities as identified in the Child Care Service Plan after further community consultations and a business model review.

SUMMARY

Changes are occurring at a rapid rate within the children's services sector. Regulations have been written, Ministry responsibilities have been reassigned and funding has been returned to the municipalities. There are many competing priorities among ministries, levels of government, agencies and other stakeholders; but all these changes are intended to provide children with an opportunity for the best possible start in life. In working with the community stakeholders, the Social Service Division will remain committed to the "Children First" approach in supporting this transformation change process.

Submitted by,

Ken Doherty
Director of Community Services

Linda Mitchelson
Social Services Division Manager

Contact Names:

Nancy Fischer
Sr. Program Analyst
Phone – 748-8830 ext 3814
Fax – 748-8858
E-Mail – nfischer@peterborough.ca

And

Sandra Robinson
Children's Services Program Manager
Phone – 748-8830 ext 3495
Fax – 748-8858
E-Mail – srobinson@peterborough.ca

Attachments:

Appendix A - 2010-11 Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan