



	REPORT NO.: 2018-26
MEETING DATE: APRIL 19, 2018	DATE PREPARED: MARCH 22, 2018
SUBJECT: CHILD CARE EXPANSION FUNDING WORK PLAN - UPDATE	

RECOMMENDATION

THAT with respect to Report No. 2018-26 (Client Services Division), we, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board approve the 2018 Preliminary Expansion Funding, and the Canada Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Funding Work Plan, as presented;

AND THAT the Board authorizes the Director – Client Services to commence negotiations with the selected proponents to expand child care services in accordance with the Expansion Plan funding;

AND THAT the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer are authorized to sign any required documentation upon completion of the negotiations;

AND THAT Administration provide an information Report to the Board after the final confirmed Child Care Expansion Plan results are determined.

REPORT SUMMARY

To present The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board) an update relative to the next phase of plans to utilize the Child Care Expansion Funding, and the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Expansion Funding.

BACKGROUND

In June 2017, the Ministry of Education introduced additional funding (Expansion Funding) to service system managers to expand child care opportunities for children aged birth to 4 years, in their communities. The additional funding must be allocated for one or more of the following priorities:

- To support additional fee subsidy; and /or
- To increase access to child care spaces; or
- If these two priorities cannot be met due to local circumstance, broadly reducing licensed child care fees and increasing affordability.

TBDSSAB was eligible for a Provincial allocation of \$1,254,752 related to this Expansion Funding.

In addition to the Provincial commitment, TBDSSAB was eligible for an allocation of \$784,179 from the Government of Canada (through Ontario). This Federal funding, the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreement Funding, can be used for children aged birth to 12 years of age to further support additional fee subsidies and increased access to licensed child care.

For children aged birth to 6 years, this funding can also be used to create and support new not-for-profit community-based capital projects, excluding capital projects for child care programs that run during school hours for kindergarten and school-age children.

At its July meeting, the Board approved Report No. 2017-52, Child Care Expansion Plan Priorities, and Before and After School Recreation Program Support, which approved the allocated funding, with a further report required to identify details related to how the Expansion Funding would be utilized.

At its October meeting, the Board approved Report No. 2017-72, Child Care Expansion Funding Work Plan, with the details for how the Expansion Funding for 2017 would be utilized.

Due to timing of receipt of the funding, and the strategic allocation of funds to maximize these funding opportunities, \$1,511,800 of the Expansion Funding (Provincial and Federal) was carried forward into 2018; an additional \$3,136,800 of Expansion Funding (Provincial and Federal) was allocated to TBDSSAB for 2018, for a total of \$4,648,600.

COMMENTS

Since the October, 2017 Report, Administration engaged in a series of activities to develop strategies to expand child care opportunities to increase access based on the identified needs within the service system.

TBDSSAB met with all Child Care Service Providers to discuss the possibilities for expansion in late 2017. In February 2018, an Expression of Interest (EOI) for expansion was issued to all current child care operators to identify any opportunities to expand within existing licensed capacity.

The EOI requested the following information:

- Program description and details, with a focus on expansion for birth to 4 years of age;
- Waitlist data by program;
- Relevant financial information to demonstrate sustainability;
- Resources required to start up, if any; and
- Any other risk management information.

In response to this request, TBDSSAB received six (6) submissions for possible expansion.

SUMMARY OF SUBMITTED PROPOSALS

Proposal #1

Little Lions (Clarke Street Location) - Proposed moving from the current Clarke Street location into Algonquin School. Aligning with the Ministry of Education priority to have child care programs in schools as well as increase their child care spaces for the birth to 4 years of age programs. Proposed increase in capacity as follows:

Age Group	Current Enrollment	Additional New Spaces	Waitlist Data
Infants	6	4	156
Toddlers	10	5	92
Preschoolers	16	8	59

Proposal #2

Little Lions (Valley Central School Location) – Proposed an expansion for the Valley Central location to meet the needs of the families. The census data for this area has shown an increase in the birth to 4 year old population. Proposed increase in capacity as follows:

Age Group	Current Enrollment	Additional New Spaces	Waitlist Data
Infants	0	2	*
Toddlers	0	10	31

*No waitlist data as Little Lions (Valley) does not currently offer Infant Care

Proposal #3

Shkoday Abinojiwak Obiwedoon - Expansion to include infant spaces and Special Needs Resourcing Services expanded to The Aboriginal Head Start Program. Proposed increase in capacity as follows:

Age Group	Current Enrollment	Additional New Spaces	Waitlist Data
Infants	0	6	*
Special Needs Resourcing (Preschoolers)	0	20	**

*No waitlist data as Shkoday does not currently offer Infant Care

** Request to expand Special Needs Resourcing into this Centre

Proposal #4

Step by Step - Expand toddler program to respond to their waitlist demand and families need. Proposed increase in capacity as follows:

Age Group	Current Enrollment	Additional New Spaces	Waitlist
Toddlers	22*	15	170

*Reflects current sites – Arthur St & Bayberry Cres

Proposal #5

Schoolhouse Play Care Centre – Proposal to open a new child care centre in response to the waitlist for their Centre. This would be dependent upon finding a suitable location that would meet all the criteria set out by TBDSSAB. Proposed increase in capacity as follows:

Age Group	Current Enrollment	Additional New Spaces	Waitlist
Infants	15*	9	212
Toddlers	17*	10	142
Preschoolers	31*	16	144

*Reflect two of four current sites – St. James St & Grey St

Proposal #6

Kinderplace Childcare Centre – Proposal to open new child care centre in response to the waitlist for their Centre. This would be dependent upon finding a suitable location that would meet all the criteria set out by TBDSSAB. Proposed increase in capacity as follows:

Age Group	Current Enrollment	Additional New Spaces	Waitlist
Infants	6	6	146
Toddlers	10	10	91
Preschoolers	15	16	50

Total Expansion Possibilities:

Age Group	Total Number of Possible New Spaces	Number of Children Currently Waiting for Child Care as of Feb. 2018	Total Number of Children on Waitlist as of Feb. 2018
Infants	27	176	498
Toddlers	50	350	509
Preschoolers	60	416	512
Total for 2018	137		
Total new spaces for 2017 (previously approved by TBDSSAB)	17		
TOTAL (2017 & 2018)	154		

The Province has provided TBDSSAB with an expansion target number of 170, of which Administration has to enhance the child care spaces to within 10% of this number, or 153 spaces, to utilize all of the funding.

Administration will be completing a comprehensive analysis to determine the impact that the additional possibilities will have on the TBDSSAB service system.

Key areas within the evaluation will include:

- Financial sustainability of the proposal
- Neighbourhood population in the proposed area
- Centre waitlist data for the birth to 4 years of age
- Early Development Instrument (EDI) scores for respective neighbourhood where centre is located
- Personnel requirements
- Quality Assurance Scores
- Serious Occurrence Reports.

CONTEXT FOR EVALUATION

In preparation for this 2nd phase of the Expansion Plan, Administration updated its analysis and information relative to the current birth to 4 years of age child care occupancy levels to determine the possibilities within the current system to fill spaces. In that regard, as of January 31, 2018, for Centres operating within the [geographic] City of Thunder Bay, occupancy is at approximately 82% for the birth to 4 years age category. Data from areas outside the geographic Thunder Bay area was excluded from this particular analysis to provide a context for those proposals received.

Administration followed up with each Centre that was operating below capacity to gather further information related to the context for the current occupancy/ utilization data.

The following were some of the barriers identified:

- Workforce challenges. Finding and retaining qualified staff.
- Space could not accommodate adding more children. The Centre has utilized all of its square footage space; for example, one Centre has a license for 16 infants but only has space for 10.
- License numbers. Approved licenses are based on square footage, not legislated children-to-staff ratios. Other factors need to be considered in ensuring quality child care, not simply square footage of the space.
- Manageable mix. Centres have children with high needs requiring additional support from staff. Staff are better able to meet the needs of the children where the number of children is lower.

To the extent possible, Administration will consider the above context in its evaluation of the submitted proposals.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Administration will continue to engage in discussions with Child Care Operators as well as School Boards to determine which schools have space for child care programs. Any proposal that cannot be acted upon, during this phase, will be held for future expansion plans.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A total of \$4,648,600 is available to TBDSSAB for child care expansion plans (\$1,511,800 of Provincial and Federal funding carryover from 2017, and \$3,136,800 in new 2018 funding).

The actual level of utilization of the Expansion Funding will be based on the final negotiations relative to the six submissions. All amounts will be allocated to maximize the funding opportunities for TBDSSAB.

As these allocations are 100% funded, there is no net cost to TBDSSAB related to this Expansion Funding.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the child care service system would benefit from enhancing access to licensed child care spaces, and that the proposed activities will address this priority, and should be approved.

REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED

None.

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SUBMITTED / SIGNATURE:	 William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board