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NEW CHILD CARE FUNDING

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, February 5, 2004, from the Commissioner of Community Services and Housing:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Commissioner of Community Services and Housing be authorized to receive and allocate one-time Provincial 100% child care funds according to the Provincially set guidelines and using the distribution formula as per Table 1.
2. The Commissioner of Community Services and Housing be authorized to sign Service Agreements on the Region's behalf, with licensed child care operators regarding the implementation of health and safety improvements and the purchase of new equipment, subject to prior review by the Regional Solicitor.
3. Staff be authorized to do all things necessary to give effect hereto.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to allocate one-time Provincial 100% child care funds to address health and safety improvements and the purchase of new equipment by licensed non-profit child care operators serving children under age six. This funding is 100% Provincial.

3. BACKGROUND

On January 7, 2004, the Ontario Minister of Children's Services announced that the Ontario government will strengthen child care and early learning by making \$9.7 million in Federal funds available in their fiscal year 2003/2004, to child care operators through their municipal service managers.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Licensed Capacity

There are 7,269 licensed non-profit child care spaces in York Region for children under age six. Of these, 6,728 are centre-based while 541 are home-based.

The \$9.7 million is to be shared proportionately with licensed non-profit child care centres across the Province that serve children under age six. Licensed child care

operators are required, under Provincial guidelines, to use these funds to make health safety improvements and purchase new equipment.

4.2 Distribution of Surveys

Staff of the Family and Children's Services Division will distribute one-time funding surveys to licensed non-profit child care operators in York Region.

Non-profit operators will be required to provide a detailed funding request within their funding allocation. They will be advised that concerns documented by the Ministry Program Advisor should be addressed as the first priority for this one-time funding.

The results of the survey will determine the level of need for this one-time funding in York Region. It is expected that the available funding will be fully utilized.

4.3 Funding Allocation/Distribution

Available dollars will be allocated as indicated in the following table but only for identified eligible costs.

Table 1
Breakdown of Funding Allocation

Amount per Space per Child Under age Six	Allocation
\$120	licensed non-profit centre-based child care
\$60	licensed non-profit home child care agency
\$40	licensed non-profit nursery school

4.3 Relationship to Vision 2026

The distribution of this one-time funding supports the following action areas of Vision 2026:

- Responding to children in need.
- Enabling access to services that aid in early child development.
- Partnering with community agencies to provide more and better services.
- Working with Federal and Provincial government partners.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no tax levy implications associated with this report. Funds to be distributed are 100% Provincial. This additional funding will be included in the revised and final draft of the 2004 Budget submitted to Council.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Non-profit child care operators, in each municipality, who are licensed under the *Day Nurseries Act* and serving children under age six will be able to address health and safety improvements and purchase new equipment using these one-time funds.

7. CONCLUSION

Child care environments that are well designed and well maintained support safety and injury prevention and are essential to the healthy development of children. One-time funding to non-profit child care operators will support them in providing a safe and healthy environment, which supports the optimum development of the children they serve.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.