

Toronto Early Learning and Child Care Services (TELCCS) Projected Centre Closures 2018

Date: October 5, 2017

To: Community Development and Recreation Committee

From: General Manager, Children's Services

Wards: All

SUMMARY

During the 2017 budget process Council directed the General Manager, Children's Services to report to Community Development and Recreation Committee (CDRC) any proposed program or centre closures of directly operated child care programs prior to the 2018 and future budget processes. This report provides CDRC with information on proposed closures of Toronto Early Learning and Child Care Services (TELCCS) programs/sites in 2018.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Children's Services, recommends that the Community Development and Recreation Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The 2018 Operating Budget Submission for Children's Services includes the necessary adjustments to the Toronto Early Learning and Child Care Services (TELCCS) program as identified in this report.

The Lawrence East Early Learning and Child Care Centre (ELCCC) is scheduled to close in September, 2018, with a replacement centre, the Lawrence Orton centre, scheduled to open in early 2019. The closure of the Lawrence East ELCCC in September of 2018 will result in an expenditure reduction of \$0.042 million. This savings has been included in the 2018 Operating Budget Submission for Children's Services.

The opening of the replacement site will result in additional operating impact of \$1.179 million and will require 13.83 new FTE's in 2019. The budget impact of this change is included in the 2019 Outlook, and is included in the 2018 Children's Services Operating Budget submission.

Should Davisville ELCCC close in the last quarter of 2018, there would be \$0.204 million in savings to the City in 2018.

The Acting Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The 2015-2019 Child Care Service Plan supports equitable access, affordability and quality child care for families across Toronto. The mandate of TELCCS is to support vulnerable or underserved communities where families often face multiple challenges. In 2014, 95% of families using TELCCS centres were receiving financial assistance through a child care fee subsidy with approximately 60% being fully subsidized.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of February 15, 2017 Council, as part of the approval of the Children's Services 2017 Operating Budget, approved recommendation #138 which requested the General Manager, Children's Services to report any proposed program or centre closures of directly-operated child care programs to the Community Development and Recreation Committee prior to the 2018 and future Budget processes.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX22.2>

COMMENTS

Background

Directly operated by the City of Toronto, Toronto Early Learning & Child Care Services (TELCCS) is the public operator within the early learning and child care system and has been providing directly-operated services since 1948. TELCCS operates 52 child care sites and a licensed home child care agency. Together they serve approximately 3,000 children between birth and 12 years.

TELCCS' 52 licensed group care centres are located throughout the City and range in size from 20 to 154 licensed spaces.

From time to time, TELCCS will open or close rooms or centres, and on occasion relocate centres. Decisions to make changes to programs are based on a variety of factors including building condition, whether the property is up to or can be brought up

to current licensing and regulatory standards, enrollment in and demand for the program, and services and population in the local area.

As the municipal child care operator, TELCCS reviews and assesses its service locations to ensure that public funds are allocated in a way that helps contribute the greatest impact for Toronto families and that City, Provincial and Federal policies are supported.

Current influences on the planning of the TELCCS group care system include:

The Children's Services Service Plan 2015 – 2019 and the Licensed Child Care Growth Strategy that set the Municipal road maps for the child care sector in Toronto and envision the expansion of the infant, toddler and preschool programming throughout Toronto in a way that will increase child care accessibility and affordability for Toronto families.

The Province's Schools First policy that supports the shifting of kindergarten and school aged child care programming to school based setting including a recent directive supporting expanded access to school age programming within schools.

Commitments from both the Provincial and Federal governments for significant investments in early learning to support the creation of higher quality, affordable child care spaces.

Proposed TELCCS Centre/Room Closures 2018

Davisville Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 22) – Davisville ELCCC is located within exclusive space in Davisville Junior Public School with a licensed capacity of 42 spaces (10 Toddler, 32 Preschool). The kindergarten and school-aged child care program in this school is operated by a community agency.

Davisville Junior Public School is slated for redevelopment. Toronto District School Board (TDSB) staff have recommended that the school be relocated to the Vaughan Road Holding School for the duration of construction of the replacement school. The construction period is currently estimated at 2018 – 2020. This recommendation has been approved by the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee of the Board and will be before the full Board of Trustees on October 18, 2017.

Should the Board approve the relocation to the Vaughan Road Holding School, Davisville ELCCC would not relocate to that site.

The families at Davisville ELCCC are not part of the school population and Vaughan Road Holding School is at is at Vaughan Road and St. Clair Avenue which is not in geographic proximity to the current site (Davisville and Yonge). In addition, a child care centre offering infant and toddler care already operates within Vaughan Road Academy. This location would not support two child care programs serving the same ages in the same building. Additionally, capital investment would be required to support the

temporary relocation of existing programs in order to meet regulatory and licensing requirements.

Not relocating to Vaughan Road Academy would result in the closure of the 42 spaces at the Davisville ELCCC. Current enrollment is 36 children – 9 toddlers and 27 preschoolers. Seventeen of the preschoolers currently enrolled will leave the Centre for kindergarten in the fall of 2018. Should the program close, TELCCS and CS would assist families of the other 19 children in locating alternative child care as required.

When the school is redeveloped a child care serving infant to school aged children will be included. The kindergarten and school aged programs will be in shared space in the school and the infant to preschool programs will be located in exclusive space within the new school building. TELCCS could be one of the possible operators for this new site.

Because a final decision on relocation has not been made by the TDSB, full annual funding for the operation of Davisville ELCCC is included in the 2018 Children's Services Operating budget submission. The total annual budget for this site is \$.817 million. Children Services will make adjustments to its 2018 budget submission as appropriate based on the decision of the Board regarding relocation of the school.

Lawrence East Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 43) – Lawrence East ELCCC is a small program located in a Toronto Community Housing (TCH) building at Lawrence and Scarborough Golf Club Road. It currently serves kindergarten and school aged children with a licensed capacity of 25 spaces. The preschool room at this site was closed in 2013 due to low enrollment.

As with a number of TELCCS centres which operate in TCH sites, the existing centre operates out of converted apartment space. This centre is poorly situated at the back corner of the building and is difficult to access from the street and parking lot. The interior of the centre is dated and the concrete slab construction makes it difficult and expensive to retrofit to meet AODA requirements and current building and public health best practices. This child care program will be closed in September of 2018 and Children's Services will work with the TDSB to establish a third party kindergarten and school aged program in the local school.

This site will be replaced by a proposed built centre approximately 3 blocks east of the current centre. In 2016 Council received a report that identified two sites where Children's Services would partner with TCH on the development/re-development of child care centres. TELCCS is currently working with Toronto Community Housing on the construction of a new 54 space child care serving infant to preschool children at TCH's Lawrence-Orton site. This new centre would represent a net increase of 29 spaces. This site is slated to be completed in the third quarter of 2018 and it is anticipated that the Centre will be operational in 2019. There is an operating impact of \$1.18 million including 13.83 additional FTE's which is identified in the Children's Services 2018 Operating Budget submission.

Before and After School Programming

TELCCS supports the Schools First model of providing kindergarten and school age programming in school as described earlier in this report. TELCCS currently operates ten kindergarten and eight school aged programs in schools.

Kindergarten and school aged child care programs, whether they are located in centres or in schools, operate part time before and after school hours. They open from 7 am – 9 am and 3 pm – 6 pm on instructional days from September to June and full time on weekday non-instructional days and school breaks. This is in contrast to full time programs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers that operate full time and are available from 7 am to 6 pm Monday to Friday throughout the year.

It is difficult to operate part time programming efficiently within a centre. As the programs operate part time, the classrooms in the centres used for kindergarten and school aged programming stand unused and unoccupied from 9 am to 3 pm each day for approximately 10 months of the year. The requirement to escort children from the part time programs to and from their schools or to monitor bus drop-offs and pick-ups for school aged children creates additional staffing costs. Finally, the part time programs create part-time split shift schedules. These hours are not desirable from an employment perspective and have been challenging for TELCCS to staff.

With the introduction of full day kindergarten in 2012 TELCCS began to transition centre based kindergarten programs into shared space in schools where parent interest warranted the establishment of a program. Children's Services will work with the TDSB and Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) to continue this process and when new kindergarten and school aged programs are available in schools, TELCCS will discontinue in centre programming. This will be done incrementally ensuring that no families are left without care. Over time the relocation of these part time spaces has the potential to allow the creation of approximately 150 new spaces for children 0 – 4 years of age through retrofitting of existing rooms. Capital and operating implications of these changes will be addressed in future year's budget submissions.

State of Good Repair and Legislative Compliance

Over the next 10 years TELCCS will also face a number of challenges with its buildings related to state of good repair and compliance with the Access of Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Further, evolving Public Health standards and operational best practices mean that some centres are becoming dated and will need significant repair and retrofit, relocation or closure. Changes associated with these building issues will be identified in future capital and operating budget submissions or through reports to Council.

Conclusion

Two centres, Davisville ELCCC and Lawrence East ELCCC, have been identified for closure in 2018. The possible closure of Davisville is related to the closure of the school within which the centre is co-located. The closure of Lawrence East ELCCC is related to unsatisfactory physical plant and the development of a new and larger centre in close geographic proximity.

In 2018 and beyond, TELCCS will work with Children's Services, TDSB and TCDSB to continue the transition of part-time kindergarten and school aged programming to school based settings. When these programs are established, the rooms in centres previously used for part time school aged and kindergarten programs will be retrofitted for full time infant, toddler and preschool uses.

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SIGNATURE

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