



REPORT TO: Co-Chairs and Members of the
Public Health and Social Services Committee

SUBJECT: Selection of Way to Grow Daycare Inc., St. Catharines
to operate St. Martin Catholic Elementary School Best Start
Child Care Site, West Lincoln

RECOMMENDATION

That this Committee recommend to Regional Council that this report be received for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Through an Expression of Interest process, a new child care operator was selected to operate the 46 spaces at St. Martin Catholic Elementary School in West Lincoln resulting from the closure of the Family and Children's Services Niagara (FACS) Best Start child care program
- Way to Grow Daycare Inc., an existing service provider operating two sites within the Region (St. Catharines and Fonthill) was selected as the successful applicant
- The selection process for the new operator followed the criteria set out under Best Start and included a community consultation. An independent panel reviewed proposals and made recommendations to Children's Services
- A joint communiqué was issued by Children's Services and the Niagara Catholic District School Board to parents and families of children attending St. Martin Catholic Elementary School Child Care Centre enrolled for September 2008.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

PURPOSE

This report has been prepared to apprise Committee and Council that Way to Grow Daycare Inc. St Catharines has been selected to provide child care at the Best Start site located at St. Martin Catholic Elementary School in West Lincoln.

BACKGROUND

A key element of the Provincial Best Start Initiative is the expansion of licensed child care spaces with a priority in school settings. As part of a comprehensive site selection process, St. Martin Catholic Elementary School in West Lincoln was identified for new child care spaces under Best Start. Through an Expression of Interest process, FACS was awarded operation of the new child care. FACS' decision to cease operation of its program as of June 30, 2008 (COM 28-2008) at St. Martin Catholic Elementary School in West Lincoln necessitated the request for proposal for a new service operator to provide continued child care at the location. Children's Services undertook consultation with families of children attending the child care, the school Principal and the primary child care provider in the area of the school to set priorities for the selection of a new operator.

REPORT

Through an Expression of Interest process, licensed child care operators from across Niagara were invited to submit a proposal to operate the site. Support from Children's Services was offered to any interested child care operator to assist them in preparing their business case. Two operators put forward business cases for review by an independent panel that made recommendations to Children's Services. Stabilization of existing services, sound business practices, and governance by a board of directors were all priorities considered by the panel.

Way to Grow Daycare Inc. St. Catharines, a locally owned and operated child care provider since 2003, was the successful applicant. Children's Services has had a contractual purchase of service agreement with Way to Grow Daycare Inc. since its inception in 2003. It operates two sites (St. Catharines and Fonthill) with a licensed capacity of 124 spaces. The addition of the St. Martin site has increased its licensed capacity by an additional 46 spaces, for a total of 170 child care spaces within Niagara Region. Way to Grow Daycare Inc. is an active participant in Quality Child Care Niagara ensuring developmentally appropriate programs for children in its care.

A joint communiqué was prepared between Children's Services and the Niagara Catholic District School Board for distribution to parents and families of children attending the daycare and St. Martin Catholic Elementary School.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Brian Hutchings
Commissioner, Community Services

Mike Trojan
Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared by Jean McBrain, Manager, Children's Services with input from Kathryn O'Hagan-Todd, Director Children's Services.

Appendix I - Service Provider selection announcement
Best Start child care site – Smithville



COMMUNITY SERVICES
2201 St. David's Road
P.O. Box 344, Thorold, ON L2V 3Z3
Tel: 905-984-6900 Fax: 905-641-2729
www.regional.niagara.on.ca



NIAGARA CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NIAGARA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
427 Rice Road
Welland ON L3C 7C1
Tel: 905-735-0240 Fax: 905-734-8828
www.niagararc.com

June 23, 2008

**To: Parents and families of children at the
St. Martin Elementary School Child Care Centre**

**Subject: Service Provider selection announcement
Best Start child care site – Smithville**

We are pleased to inform you that Way to Grow Daycare Inc. has been selected as the Service Provider for the operation of the St. Martin Elementary School Best Start site in Smithville, Way to Grow Daycare Inc. was selected following an Expression of Interest and an independent panel review of proposals submitted by current Niagara Region child care providers.

Way to Grow Daycare Inc. has been offering quality child care in the Niagara Region for more than seven years at locations in St. Catharines and Fonthill, providing care for children 18 months to 12 years of age. Way to Grow Daycare Inc. actively participates in Quality Child Care Niagara training and is committed to providing the best possible child care to children and families. They will complement the other child care services available in the community and work in partnership with the St. Martin school staff and families as well as the Smithville community.

Way to Grow Daycare Inc. is expected to begin operating the St. Martin Best Start site as of September 2, 2008 offering 20 preschool spaces and 15 school aged (6-12 years) spaces; however, families with children currently enrolled in the program or those scheduled to start in September are encouraged to contact Way to Grow to discuss their immediate and future child care needs. Please contact Pam Edward, Supervisor, Way to Grow Daycare Inc. at (905) 684-1110 or waytogrow@bethelstcatharines.com

Children's Services, the Niagara Catholic School Board and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services are committed to supporting Way to Grow Daycare Inc. in this endeavour.

Sincerely,

Kathryn O'Hagan-Todd
Manager, Children's Services