



Report To:	Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
From:	Donna Moroso, Director of Integrated Social Services Ray Hannah, Children's Program Supervisor
Date:	October 25, 2012
Re:	Our Children, Our Future Best Start Hubs - Issue Report

RECOMMENDATION

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB approves the reallocation of \$50,000 previously approved in September 2011 to Our Children Our Future for an elevator upgrade at École St. Joseph in Espanola.

Our Children Our Future has presented the Board with a plan to see these funds be reallocated to the renovation of a Best Start Hub space in École St. Joseph at a cost of \$25,000.

In addition, Our Children Our Future has developed a plan to move the Best Start Hub from Sacred Heart to A.B Ellis in order to maintain the Best Start Vision. This plan to relocate the Hub will cost Our Children Our Future \$25,000.

Background:

On September 21, 2011 staff presented the Program Planning Committee with the [LaCloche Best Start Hub Elevator - Issue Report](#) in which the LaCloche Best Start Hub was asking for \$50,000 to upgrade the proposed lift in École St. Joseph in Espanola to an elevator. The cost of the lift is \$95,000 which Conseil Scolaire Catholique du Nouvel Ontario (CSCNO) is prepared to pay for in the construction of the new school which will include the All Star Child Care Centre and a Best Start Hub room. The cost of an elevator is \$145,000 and Our Children Our Future, the hub lead, is asking that the DSB assist with the \$50,000 for this upgrade.

The Program Planning Committee supported this request and at the Sept 22, 2011 DSB Board meeting, the CAO was directed to approve this one-time expenditure under Program Accessibility – Best Start Ongoing which is funded by the province at 100% as it falls within the 2011 Board approved DSB budget.

The \$50,000 funding was provided to Our Children Our Future in the fall of 2011.

Update:

The original renovation plans, at École St. Joseph, included the costs associated with the Hub to be covered by the school board with the exception of the elevator costs. However, the school board has been faced with the reality that the Ministry of Education will not provide capital funds for the creation of Best Start Hubs within new or existing schools. Based on the decision by the Ministry of Education, the School Board had to revise its plans to exclude the Best Start Hub. Since construction is still taking place at this school, the approved funds are no longer required for an elevator under the new plan.

Although the School Board was not approved capital dollars to build the Best Start Hub within the new School, it was prepared to provide space within the existing school for the Best Start Hub. The New School construction incorporates the existing school building. The new plan consists of the Hub space being relocated to a space requiring renovations. Renovations in the new plan, [as per attached letter](#) from Our Children Our Future, will cost approximately \$25,000.

In addition, the Hub space currently located at Sacred Heart will require relocating as well. Sacred Heart is scheduled for replacement in 2013 and the original plans included a replacement of the existing Child Care space and the Best Start Hub, however, provincial funding provided excludes the replacement of the Best Start Hub space.

On July 17, 2012 the DSB sent a [letter to the Premier](#) requesting that funds be made available for the inclusion of a Best Start Hub space within the construction of the new Sacred Heart School. On August 3, 2012 the [Premier replied](#) indicating the matter was referred to the Minister of Education. In a [response from the Minister of Education](#) dated September 28, 2012, the Minister indicates they are working towards a vision of seamless and integrated system to support families and children but the leadership for the Best Start Strategy remains with the Ministry of Children & Youth Services. The Minister of Education forwarded our information to the Minister Eric Hoskins, Ministry of Children & Youth Services.

Since capital for Hubs does not fall under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education, and no response for capital has been provided by the Ministry of Community and Youth Services, an alternate plan has been developed. Our Children Our Future has developed a plan to move the Best Start Hub from Sacred Heart to A.B Ellis in order to maintain the Best Start Vision. This plan to relocate the Hub will cost Our Children Our Future \$25,000.

Funding Parameters:

This one time funding reallocation, in the amount of \$50,000, previously came from the Child Care Budget under the ongoing childcare program development – Best Start Ongoing.

Conclusion:

In order to maintain the Best Start Hub Developments and achievements to date, and to continue an invaluable service for families and children in the community, it is recommended that the \$50,000 approved in 2011 for an elevator upgrade be reallocated for the purposes set out in the report. Since Our Children Our Future already utilizes the A.B Ellis site for outreach Hub services, and it's within the same community, it is believed that the relocation will be a positive transition.