

# College getting out of day-care business <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Benner, Allan

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## EXCERPT:

WELLAND - Niagara College is hoping another operator will take over its child-care centre, because the college can no longer afford to pay the bills.

The college, which recently completed about \$80 million in upgrades in Welland, announced this week that it plans to cease operation of the day-care centre at its Woodlawn Rd. campus on April 30, 2013, due to the increasing costs of running the facility.

But before that happens, said the college's vice-president of communication Gord Hunchak, the school is hoping to find another organization or business interested in taking it off the college's hands.

Hunchak said the day-care centre has incurred deficits over the past several years, including a deficit of more than \$100,000 incurred in 2011.

"The child-care centre at Niagara College does operate under a higher cost model than most day cares do," he said, adding staff there fall under the college's collective agreement.

"The view at this point is others taking over the day care might have a different costs structure."

Although that day-care centre has been a top location for students from the college's early childhood education program to learn their professions, Hunchak said students are also placed in day-care and child-care centres across the region.

"It's one of many," he said. "It's no doubt it's the closest one, but once the college ceases operation of it in April 2013, the plan is to find someone else to run that as a day-care centre and we'll continue to have the arrangement for students to be able to use it for observations and placements."

He said the college is working with Niagara Region to find another operator. The region, itself, operates several day-care centres.

Hunchak said a formal request for proposals for prospective operators of the day-care centre will be issued this fall.

Although some parents of children at the centre have expressed concerns about the college's plans, Hunchak doubts it will close.

"We're confident we'll be able to find a new operator for the centre. It's a great facility built in 1995 specifically as a child-care centre," he said. "We think it will be an attractive day-care centre for those looking to operate another space."

-reprinted from St Catherines Standard

**Region:** Ontario <sup>[2]</sup>

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