

INTERIM Press Release

The City of Saco, the Saco School Department, and Toddle Inn Day Care, Inc. have come to a tentative agreement regarding the leasing of Toddle Inn's 5 Willey Road property to the School Department to operate a pre-K program.

When the School Department and Toddle Inn began collaborating on this project, their common goal was to secure a state of the art environment for the City's youngest students as they begin their education journey. Toddle Inn's facility was built specifically for children's needs and will help them adjust to their first public school experience by offering a safe and welcoming atmosphere. When the building was constructed, all classrooms and playgrounds were intentionally designed with the young child in mind and will meet the developmental needs of the City's Pre-K students. Time spent in a smaller setting also supports the emotional, social, and academic development before children move onto kindergarten and are integrated with students two and three years older on buses and playgrounds. This separate space will also have a positive impact on enrollment and programming in other school buildings by not placing an additional stress on already limited classroom and land space. Instead, the use of Toddle Inn's facility will increase dedicated school space for children in the community and allow more room for all teachers to successfully provide a positive education experience for their young students. Lastly, busing will be simplified as well, with routes for the youngest children being restricted to one location.

All sides have made concessions to make this agreement possible for the children and families of Saco. As it has done for more than a decade, Toddle Inn will continue to pay all real estate taxes as well as personal property taxes on their property that remains with the building. And, the Schools will enjoy a lease of 5 years on the Toddle Inn property. The Lease will save the taxpayers of Saco the significant expense of purchasing, or building out, comparable space for its Pre-K children. No "modulars" will be necessary, as the current Premises can house all Saco's Pre-K Children.

Prior to finalization of this tentative agreement, the use of the Toddle Inn property by the School Department as a Pre-K facility for the City of Saco will be reviewed by the City's Code and Planning Offices. Once that process is completed, the parties intend to issue a final public statement with respect to this matter.