

To: Connecticut General Assembly

Attention: Chris Coutu; Melissa Olson; Andrea Stillman; Andy Fleischmann; Beth Bye; Toni Harp; Toni E. Walker; Andrew Maynard; Ernest Hewett; Steve Mikutel; Tom Reynolds;

From: Cassandra Selby
Parent's Name

Subject: **Proposed Budget concerning DSS Funded Child Development Centers**

My child, Cay Vyeon Cross is enrolled in the TVCCA Little Learners Early Education Program located in Taftville. I am writing to request that you restore state funded childcare money to DSS until such time as an Early Childhood Department is created or a transition plan established.

Governor Malloy's proposed budget for the biennium, 2011-2013 transfers \$16 million (and the CCDBG revenue of \$16 million federal dollars) funding for DSS Child Development Centers to the State Department of Education from the Department of Social Services, ostensibly to be used to augment the School Readiness Program. DSS funded centers, created by statute (8-210 (b)) over 40 years ago are concerned about the movement of our program to SDE for a variety of reasons.

- DSS Centers serve at least 69 different communities. There are poor and moderate income WORKING parent families (with income less than 75% SMI) everywhere in Connecticut, not just in priority school districts. Many centers are located in non-school readiness communities.
- DSS Centers serve infants and toddlers as well as school age children in many communities School Readiness programs do not serve either group.
- School Readiness programs require residence in the community. DSS Centers can serve parents who reside any community.
- DSS Centers must have 80% WORKING parent families. There is no work requirement for SR programs.
- DSS Centers must provide for children's nutritional needs. DSS is full day (10+ hours) year round. Some SR programs are school day, school year.

DSS Funded Child Development Centers favor passage of a dedicated department of Early Education and Child Development such as proposed in Raised Bill # 1106. Until and unless such a department can be established, we urge the General Assembly to let our programs remain in DSS.

Comments: I have 2 children in this center.
One in infant room and one in pre-school.

Signed Cassandra Selby