



The Wallingford Community Day Care Center, Inc.

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Testimony for the Education Committee Public Hearing
Friday, February 15, 2013

In support of HB# 6359

Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Kathy Queen. I am Executive Director of Wallingford Community Day Care Center, Inc., an accredited, state funded child care center serving 125 low and moderate income working parent families. I am also Co-chair of the State Funded Child Development Centers Directors' Forum and on the Steering Committee of the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance.

Over the past few years, we must commend the legislature for responding to new evidence that investing in a child's earliest years would net permanent results and ultimately reduce the achievement gap. We have made progress over the last two years with the Governor's Early Childhood Planning Office and the ground work the legislature has laid. While there are still many details to work out, we must praise the office of the Planning Director and the Governor's Office for this bold and forward move, and urge the support of the Education Committee.

To bring the work of several different state agencies under the direction of the Office of Early Childhood will help ensure that the interests of every child and parent in Connecticut will be protected. Our youngest citizens deserve the best we can offer them, and an office devoted to all the services they may need will hopefully make the best use of the limited funds available. Working out the details to maximize federal funding and philanthropic dollars, and ensuring that all the federal requirements are met, the OEC may be able to really improve on an already robust early childhood system. We are very proud of Connecticut's dedication and support of early childhood. From our State Funded Day Care Program funded uniquely through municipal grants since 1968 to School Readiness Programs funded since 1997, to Child First, a trend setting home visitation program, to our Family Resource Centers. Connecticut has led the way for many years. This Office of Early Childhood will help coordinate those efforts and more. We would encourage the OEC to report to the legislature and the Governor. Our children and families need HB#6359. Thank you.

Kathleen M. Queen, Executive Director
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