

HB 7020 AAC Early Childhood Educators and Initiatives

March 19, 2015

To: Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischman, and members of the Education Committee.

My Name is Mary Cecchinato. I am the Executive Director of the Torrington Child Care Center Inc. who receives funding from the OEC for our State Funded Child Development Center and School Readiness. The center was established in 1979 to help working families with affordable child care and a quality learning experience for their children.

I am writing to you today to ask you to look beyond the 14 approved colleges and accept teaching degrees from regionally accredited institutions of higher education and or programs that are NCATE/NAEYC approved.

**Currently, there are only 14 ECTC approved colleges in Connecticut.**

**Nine of those colleges grant only Associates Degrees including Gateway, Housatonic, Tunxis, Goodwin, Capital, Naugatuck, Norwalk, Quinebaug and Three Rivers; only Goodwin, Post, Charter Oak, UConn, ECSU grant Bachelor Degrees. The ECTC for infant toddler teachers is an even smaller pool of institutions including only six approved colleges, five for Associates and only one at UConn for a Bachelor Degree.**

We are a center in the Northwest part of Connecticut. There are no schools close to us that are ECTC approved for staff to attend to earn their degree. We often get resumes and job applications from our neighboring states of Massachusetts and New York but we cannot hire them after July 1, 2015 because of this OEC regulation; these teachers will not qualify. This policy is creating barriers for hiring qualified staff.

I am asking that you look at the current system for teacher approval and accept degrees from regionally accredited institutions to help widen the pool of qualified teaching staff rather than the restrictive system in place.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Mary Cecchinato, Executive Director

Torrington Child care Center Inc.

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