



The Global Child

An Early Childhood School and Care Center

Testimony of The Global Child

Karen Grisel - Director, Stacy Hyde – Site Supervisor, Caitlin Edwardsen – PreK Teacher, Katelyn Black-Toddler Teacher

Before the Appropriations Committee

February 16, 2016

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We are Karen Grisel, Stacy Hyde, Caitlin Edwardsen, and Katelyn Black, representatives of The Global Child in Norwich CT. We are a community early childhood center who provide care and education to children throughout Norwich and the surrounding areas. Our mission at The Global Child is the enhancement and promotion of development in children from all backgrounds. Part of this mission is fueled by the centers administration and staff reaching for excellence and raising the bar for expectations of educational standards and training for all of our childcare educators.

Our concerns regarding the recent budget proposal are as follows;

Firstly, the proposal of collapsing the line-items in the budget is concerning, as it suggests a lack of transparency in the spending of Early Childhood funding. At the same time, previously being able to clearly view the line items within the state budget allowed us to see and prepare for any impending cuts or changes. This will no longer be possible and the delegation of funding will largely remain an unknown variable in the planning and implementation of all Early Childhood Education Resources.

Secondly, we are incredibly concerned by the possible and probable minimalization or defunding of the School Readiness and Care 4 Kids programs. This is a brief profile of our center;

- We currently serve 56 children from Norwich and surrounding areas with a potential for 66 participants. Our center is State of CT. licensed, a School Readiness site and NAEYC accredited.
- Our center received \$288,000 in school readiness funding last year. This sum equates to roughly 29% of our center's budget.
- Our center also relies heavily on Care for Kids, as we receive 16% of our children's funding through the program.
- DCF provides funding to our center for four foster families with 6 children currently on the road to reunification or adoption.

Being that so many of our families rely on these programs, removing or diminishing School Readiness and Care For Kids funding is effectively denying underserved families the opportunity to receive high quality

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childcare. Being that our center serves families who reside in shelters, who take advantage of Jobs First, or who would otherwise be unable to work without childcare, removing funding for School Readiness and Care For Kids increases the chances of our families becoming unemployed or sending their children to less reliable and perhaps even negligible care.

The possible loss or designation of the State’s support will result in the loss of matching and program funds that are contributed through private donations and foundations. The potential total loss of all of these dollars will devastate our capacity to implement the changes and strategies detailed in our collaborative plan, will jeopardize our capacity to support a local system of early childhood services and supports, and will devastate not only our work across the community, but our capacity to work in unison with the State’s Office of Early Childhood and the State Department of Education. It is therefore critical that the line-item for Community Plans for Early Childhood be maintained and continued in order to support the work of local collaborative like ours.

Thank you for your attention and for offering us a voice. I am happy to answer any questions about the work of The Global Child or provide further details.

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