

Capital Area Early Childhood Training Institute

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July 8, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to state my full support for each of the proposed changes named in the Department of Public Welfare's Child Care Regulation No. 14-519.

I support the gradual increase of annual training hours from the current 6 hours annually to the incremental increase over a five year period to participating in 24 hours of training annually. Research has proven that teaching staff with a focus on furthering their educational background and a commitment to continuous professional development increases the level of quality in services provided by the early learning program. Increasing the number of training hours required annually will help the teaching staff to be better equipped to provide for the safety and well-being of the children and plan appropriate learning activities for the ages of children they serve. Staff will also gain in understanding how to better communicate with parents and guardians in a helpful, positive way. Children's needs, especially in the area of healthy social/emotional development, are increasing rapidly and more than ever training is needed to prepare staff for working with children with special developmental needs. Having staff acquire these skills and knowledge are vital to the healthy growth of our young children.

I applaud the proposed change to require that the training received is through an approved instructor or agency. PQAS instructors go through a stringent approval process by the PA Key. Higher education institutions and approved professional development organizations are included in those named to be accepted as approved providers of instruction. This will help ensure that the training being delivered is of a high caliber.

The proposed use of the Professional Development Record also has my full support. The use of this tool helps guide individual teaching staff in making informed decisions on their future professional development plans.

I support the proposed requirement for new staff and directors to participate in a New Staff Orientation training program and a New Director Orientation training program, which will help provide the foundation of knowledge needed as they begin to work with children and families.

The Professional Development topics named will provide the fundamentals each year to build on staff and administrators' knowledge and skills in these vital areas of children's learning and growth.

These proposed changes named, as well as all additional changes named in the proposed child care regulations, have my full support. I think these new professional development requirements will go far in making our early learning program experiences safer, healthier and more developmentally appropriate for our children in child care programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Stennett, Director
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