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Graeff, Melissa

From: Wanda Walker <wandaleolady@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 15, 2018 6:13 PM
To: PW, CC Reg Changes; familycircleacademy@gmail.com
Subject: STARS regulations not fair or equal to all providers
Attachments: ocdale letter 2222.docx

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To Whom It May Concern,

STARS is about paperwork and credentialed teachers, not the passion and love for teaching children and inspiring young lives. Quality programs come in different styles. In some very disadvantaged neighborhoods, some of us will never be able to secure degreed certified teachers for any length of time. Who dares come to an impoverished neighborhood, get robbed as I have, have their car broken into, as I have, get paid less than school teachers and STARS employees and administrators, like I do? What workers stay with no benefits or health package in place, change diapers and wipe runny noses, all for the love of children and get paid less than a living wage of \$12.75 per hour. Hall monitors in public schools with GEDs get \$14.00 an hour. How do we compete with that, and meet the demands of taxes, overhead, etc... Demanding a singal mom to increase her credentials for less than a living wage is unrealistic.

I got into daycare to make a positive difference in the lives of children and the community I do business in. I did not get into daycare to follow blindly a system full of theories, politics and unnecessary paperwork I see failing our children constantly and increasingly. The more rules and regulations put in place, the more paper work, creates less teaching, touching and positive changes in the lives of children. I do not agree with many of the policies and practices that exist today created by STARS, and feel they are further dumbing down our children. I don't believe there is a need for more organizations to police daycares, especially ones whose financial recourses are monies that should go directly to ground zero. A listening ear and

common sense can change the quality and standards of daycare services and performances overnight without the need for more money. There are regulations that can be put into place that can save money, improve the quality of lives, increase revenues, increase learning and create stability in the early learning field. More education and training can be done on computers, lessening the need for STARS employees and other organizations that cost and lessen monies that should be going to where its needed the most, the daycare and early learning academies. Performance and incidences can be tracked using the PDR so problems can be addressed correctly, reduce the chances of reoccurring problems, stop daycare hopping, hold employees accountable and show work performance histories.

STARS is not organized or clearly understood by many. Their turn over rate is probably close to that of daycare turnovers; the process is long and unclear and open to interpretations by the STARS and Dvyace workers.

I personally tried to increase my STARS level and almost went bankrupt because of the unfair and slow process. To me, the process is cookie cutter with no room for common sense in many ways. Feel free to review my application 2015-2016 and the STAR people who were involved, unprofessional, bias, discriminatory, confusing, unclear and very long.

STARS makes promises of monies, but when it comes time to get paid there is always a problems that ends in less money that was promised. That was the case again in 2017-2018 when I Finally got someone to come out in 2017 and finish the process for the next STARS level 2. We originally qualified for over \$6000.00 but STARS ran out of monies (because they move so slow). Waited until July 2018 only to be told we would

not be reimbursed according to 2017 numbers (I already put money out accord to that grant and what was told to me). But then I was told after waiting 2 cycles, that because my numbers have dropped now, that I only qualify for half of the much-needed money promised. (My number went up 1 month later. I was not told of the decrease or why until months later). We could have chanced waiting until summer camp started, but was not told of the decrease until after everything was submitted. I received \$3200.00. Divided that by 2 years of waiting and that equates to \$1500.00 per year. That is equivalent to that of STAR 1 level money. Games and trickery. I have spoken to many other daycare owners who express the same concerns and issues. Many seem to be afraid to speak up in fear of retaliation. In my opinion, many seem to feel as long as they are finding a way to make it work for them; they don't care who else is struggling. My father didn't raise me to fear anyone or turn away from the truth. My fear is Ill go broke trying to meet the demand of a well-devised plan to close daycare down and not be able to feed my family or pay my bills. The closing of daycares will drive up unemployment in many of the poorest communities. Daycare providers create jobs and educate our kids at a success rate better then the public schools system, even with all the obstacles we face doing business in America. STARS want to make demands they cant support financially. Couple that with the cost that goes with more rules and regulations of the higher STAR level when having a center, while decreasing the rules, regulations and quality of home daycares, is helping to create the situation of situation of daycares popping up everywhere. I believe this is nothing less then an intentional travesty and an attack on centers. I refuse to believe that STARS is not systematically working against daycare providers in an effort to close as many as possible. Attacking providers systematically by forcing STARS on the 70% of private business daycare owners who

refused to take part in STARS intentionally, traditionally, historically, is unconstitutional. Using lotteries after a business has invested to not grant the investor permission to do business in their business community is steering; denying them business they would naturally get without STARS permission.

Any entity attaching themselves to a group or industry without the support of the majority and then taking control of the monies, gaining power over the voice of the majority and controlling their outcomes outside of agencies already in place like DHS, with the same authority an overkill and hostile takeover.

I personally wrote emails, called, and visited STARS supervisors at the JFK downtown Philly office in 2016 with my concerns and complaints. I personally gave answers to problems that would change quality over night without money needed, and was met with deaf ears and excuses. I've personally explained my views to politicians both state and city level and get positive feedback and complements. I will continue to do so until changes are made.

I want to be heard and understood. We need to come up with better ways to use STARS that is not giving STARS unproven, unfair, discriminatory powers over an already struggling good-great centers like mine. STARS should be critiquing not criticizing, supporting not shutting down. STARS is creating jobs for and asking for money for them, which is taking out of the mouth of daycare owners everywhere. STARS financial budget is stressing the educational monies needed for early childhood education centers needing solid resources like classroom equipment, better pay for daycare workers, learning curriculums and trainings. They are creating a need for their services by using their influence politically to put unfair rules

in places that are not fair, possible and or equal. All this screams of discriminations and unfair politics on many levels.

I would hope that someone will take my concerns seriously and make positive changes that are fair and rules and regulations that are achievable. I would also like to be compensated financially for the unfair way my center was treated during the STARS application process. It should not take a group of us seeking legal council for us to come to the table, be heard, respected, and make positive changes. We should be able to come to an amicable agreement by putting into places rules and regulations that make sense.

STOP saturation

Rules and regulation in place equal for all

Increase qualification for license holders

Stop unnessacary qualification for teachers

Use common sense during the STARS process

Put more training for process on computer

Reduce STARS staffing so our monies go to us at ground zero

Advocate for us, not police us

Reduce ratios that make sense (home daycare ratios are less)

Thank You,

Wanda Walker