

EEC January Board Meeting Public Comment

Name/Organization	Topic/Comment
Darlene J Howland, Wellesley Community Children's Center	<p>Agency Staffing: I would like to ask that EEC consider hiring an additional person or persons to work in the Teacher Qualifications Unit. This unit processes applications from educators who are seeking Early Childhood Education Teacher Certification. The office is currently 3 months behind in processing applications. The impact on programs as we wait for assistant teachers to be certified as teachers (T PS or T I/T) is especially unacceptable and program impactful.</p> <p>I am sure the unit is working as hard as they can, but clearly don't have the personnel to manage the volume of applicants and the issues that each application may bring. Please see the communication below that one of my teachers received.</p>
Cilisa Menzinger, Educator	<p>Health Document Requirements Hello , a lot of our teacher want to know why is this the only job that ask for your latest physical especially if you are a Floater staff or part time or do not receive health insurance from them it seems like a violation of privacy . We understand immunizations for safety but personal checkups his personal .thankyou</p>
Dr. Nichole Rich-Byrne, Enriched Learning, LLC	<p>Rate Reimbursement Dear Members of the Board,</p> <p>On behalf of my program, I would like to thank you for your recent vote for the increase in reimbursement rates for programs that accept childcare vouchers.</p> <p>That being said, two large concerns still remain: the untimeliness of the payments and at times, not being able to count on when we can receive funds. I liken this issue with funds being released to telling my staff who just provided quality childcare service that they must wait 45 days before they receive their pay. It would be unacceptable, I would be reported to the labor board, and staff would quit, causing me to close my center.</p>

	<p>Second, the rates are still disproportionate for programs on Cape Cod & the Islands in relation to the cost of renting or purchasing space. My program operates in Sandwich, MA where the rent I pay is \$16/sq. ft. During my 6-month search for a place to lease, this was the lowest rate I could find for a suitable space to operate childcare.</p> <p>I can say with 100% certainty that this is double from what other commercial space "over the bridge" in other Region 5 communities charge. My family owns several retail centers that house childcare programs where rent ranges from \$5/sq ft to \$8/sq ft. in towns such as Norton, Lakeville, and Franklin. My only thought is that the legislature cap rent for childcare programs and provide tax incentives to landlords with childcare programs in their buildings. I realize that the board has no control over this, but the disparity needs to be recognized.</p> <p>While the grant is supposed to help offset this, another issue is also raised. When I first opened my program in Fall 2024, I was told that the enrollment average would be adjusted as my base each month because there was nothing to compare my average to. This has not been the case. My enrollment average still shows 14, which is the number of children enrolled as of November 1. My enrollment is 22 and continues to climb instead of going down. 14 is an incorrect average.</p> <p>This is a serious issue in childcare. As a dedicated educator for over 25 years, I am disheartened to see how many other owners have been talking about closing their programs as a result of the issues I've just detailed. The news of the increase is wonderful. However, there are other issues that are being felt and not addressed that significantly impact the field.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p> <p>Dr. Nichole Rich-Byrne</p>
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<p>Heidi Maggio</p>	<p>Staffing It is extremely difficult to find assistants for licensed family child cares. Extremely.</p> <p>I propose a new category of assistants for FCC's called "JUNIOR FCC ASSISTANT".</p> <p>This assistant would be the SAME as a "regular" and "certified" assistant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. they must be fingerprinted/CORI'd 2. they must complete all online EEC trainings 3. they would be able to be counted in the FCC ratio as a provider <p>This assistant would be DIFFERENT than a "regular" or "certified" assistant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. they would be 14-17yrs old &/or not yet have the required experience with young children to qualify as a regular or certified assistant 2. they would not be able to be left alone with enrolled children for any length of time- they must always be under the direct supervision of the licensed FCC provider or certified assistant <p>Center-based childcare's are already allowed to employ high school aged kids to assist with their programs. They are allowed to "count" them in their ratios as well.</p> <p>I believe FCC's should be able to employ willing 14-17yr olds as well.</p> <p>Working in a FCC is a very different experience than working in a center. I'm sure there are teens (& adults) looking to work with children, but in a less overwhelming environment than a center.</p> <p>Please consider this new JUNIOR FCC ASSISTANT position in addition to the regular & certified assistant.</p> <p>I would love to hear some feedback on this idea.</p>
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