



ILLINOIS

Pat Quinn, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Malcolm Weems, Director

January 2013

The Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor of Illinois
207 State House
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Governor Quinn:

I am pleased to submit the 2012 Annual Report on State Employees' Child Care Centers. Working parents are faced with the challenging task of finding quality child care at an affordable cost. The State of Illinois is demonstrating its commitment to the care of employees' children through the operation of two on-site child care centers located in Chicago and Springfield. Each of these centers provides a valuable service and benefit to state employees.

The State of Illinois remains committed to its employees by helping them meet their child care needs. The state will strive to provide employees with the most innovative and high-quality work environment possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Malcolm Weems", is written over the typed name.

Malcolm Weems
Director



2012 Annual Report on State Employee Child Care Centers

Overview

Pursuant to 30 ILCS 590, known as the State Agency Employees Child Care Services Act, the Department of Central Management Services may authorize state agencies to contract for the provision of child care services for its employees. To that end, the State of Illinois presently operates two on-site child care centers, one located in Chicago and one in Springfield, as evidence of its commitment to provide a valuable service and benefit to state employees.

State of Illinois Child Development Center

The State of Illinois Child Development Center, located in the Michael A. Bilandic Building, 160 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois, celebrated its 20th successful year in September 2012. Early Child Care Services, Inc., Stacy Olszewski, Director, manages the Center. The Center was accredited in 2010 for the fourth time with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); this accreditation will expire August 31, 2013. This year, Ms. Olszewski received her preschool and infant/toddler credentials from NAEYC.

There are three full-time teachers in each of the four classrooms and an additional small classroom with one teacher and ten five-year-old children. Children ages two through five are provided full-time care with priority enrollment given to children of state employees. The Center has been running at near capacity since 2001. When there is space available, the Center provides care on a day-to-day basis for children who are not enrolled full-time in the center and a primary care giver is unavailable. The Center prides itself with very low turnover of teachers with the average length of employment of six years for lead teachers. Four out of five lead teachers have bachelor's degrees in Early Childhood Education.

In 2004, the Center began providing care for six and seven-year-old students with a cultural summer program. The children are able to take full advantage of the museums, libraries and special events located in the Chicago area. The summer program has proven to be a huge success as parents are offered high quality summer child care that includes fun and educational opportunities for their children.

The Center offers spacious classrooms, a separate Discovery Room designed by Kohl Museum, and a large outdoor playground located on the deck of the 21st floor of the Bilandic Building. The Center is staffed by dedicated and highly qualified early childhood teachers who provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum in a safe and nurturing environment. The innovative curriculum, based on the belief that children learn through play, includes whole language, math, science, social studies, art, music, movement, and computers. The children grow and develop socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically during their time in the Center.

In 2008, the Center became part of the Chicago Public Schools in the Community Partnership Program which has enabled the Center to:

1. Increase the employees' salaries based on their educational qualifications;
2. Financially assist Center employees to earn bachelor's degrees; and
3. Increase training opportunities for the staff.

By taking advantage of the program's opportunities to better educate, train, and compensate the Center's employees, the Center's children and parents are afforded higher quality child care and education.

Bright Horizons Child Care Center, Department of Revenue

Bright Horizons celebrated its 18th year at the Department of Revenue with Tracy Tiskos, the Director and Toddler Teacher, celebrating her 18th year as well. The staff consists of six full time teachers who either have associate's degrees or bachelor's degrees, and they continue to strive to make this program strong.

Bright Horizons has long viewed its responsibility to ensure that the children they care for have all the benefits of a curriculum that incorporates activities and programs focused on healthy habits and overall well-being. Last year, the Center joined the First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move* campaign. This year, Bright Horizons as a company, is proud to state that they are meeting all the challenges of the programs at about a 95% success rate. The Center has worked this past year to further improve the already strong menus provided in collaboration with Arena Food Service. The Center has completely eliminated offering juice in favor of serving water with snack. The Center has begun work on improving the large muscle development time using *Movement Matters* so that all children will be working on a formalized weekly exercise program. The Jr. Kindergarten program continues to thrive with another graduating class to kindergarten doing well. In checking with parents as the children started school, the Center received overwhelming feedback about the success the children were having. Many of the graduates have been placed into advanced reading and math

groups. The Center attributes this to the strong focus on teaching developmentally appropriate academic skills. This year also brought the introduction of a new guide for families about curriculum: *Helping to bridge the communication on learning to families*. As the Center ends the year, it begins the introduction of two new program extensions into the curriculum; *Handwriting without Tears* and *Everyday Math*.

The Center has had a long-standing relationship with community service. This year, the Jr. Kindergarten continued helping others, and starting in November 2012, the children collected coins to buy *Toys for Tots*. In 2013, the children will continue community service with a glove collection in January.

The Center takes its commitment to families seriously and strives to work on improving daily. The Center proudly received a 98% parent satisfaction score and 3.47 out of a possible 4 point score for employee satisfaction. The surveys are conducted annually as a way to evaluate and better improve quality for all. By taking advantage of the opportunities to better educate and train the Center's employees, the Center's children and parents are afforded higher quality child care and education.

Dependent Care Assistance Program

State of Illinois employees can pay for the care of their dependent children with tax-free dollars by utilizing flexible spending accounts. Employees may set aside up to \$5,000 annually through payroll deduction for this purpose.

The Illinois Department of Central Management Services reports strong employee participation since the program's inception in 1987. In calendar year 2012, 1,703 employees statewide participated in the program with contributions totaling \$6,581,149.01.