

requires different curriculum for different ages. While this may make sense for centers, where there are classrooms of children of different ages with multiple staff to lead these separate classrooms, FCCs are often run by one main caregiver with no additional staff and serve children of multiple ages. They need a curriculum that reflects how they are teaching and caring for mixed ages.

FCCs are not given the resources to support the DOE’s curricular expectations. FCCs are all individual businesses, and they are given a daily rate, which barely covers their business costs. Any additional materials required comes out of their daily rate, and this includes any materials needed for children with special needs. Though we appreciate the compensation rates were recently increased, they still do not match the costs or the increased requirements from the DOE, which is a major reason why we are losing providers.

FCCs are also not given resources for appropriate training or advanced notice or explanation for changing requirements.

Finally, FCC providers have never had an opportunity to talk to DOE about these changes. Childcare is not one-size-fit-all, and the family childcare providers and networks need a seat at the table for decision-making. All partnerships need to have a level of trust, and the DOE’s lack of transparency leads to networks losing the trust of our providers and families.

On the family-centered side, our experience is that families are still struggling to use the MyCity portal. We, along with other FCC Networks, continue to submit applications through the manual system because MyCity is not user-friendly and therefore difficult for families to navigate. While we appreciate that the city has attempted to offer the portal in multiple languages, the translations are insufficient and unclear. Families are often offered options that they are not eligible for, which leads to confusion and frustration.

We were excited for MyCity to reduce the amount of time and back-and-forth that our Family Workers spend guiding families through the application, but we have found that it has been less time-intensive to revert to the older, manual system because MyCity does not tell families why their application is rejected or what the application status is. We have often had to completely redo applications that families have submitted through MyCity, which takes time and delays the process.

MyCity needs to provide a clearer explanation of what families are eligible for, a way to track the application, and the reasons behind application rejections.

Beyond the Family Childcare Network, we join other organizations in calling for salary parity for early childhood educators and the restoration of \$170 million cuts to early childhood education. As living costs escalate in NYC, this is a time when we need to invest in our City’s childcare system, not divest. NYC needs to be affordable for all families, no matter their income level, and currently childcare is unaffordable to almost everyone but the very wealthy. This means that families are stretched thin,

