



Child Care Training Institute
Community Building Children's Center
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November 27, 2017

Dear Center Directors, Program Owners, Students, and Friends,

It is with great sadness that we announce that Blueprints for Learning will not be holding a CDA + Mentoring Program in 2018. We have come to this decision after much deliberation and many conversations with leaders at DEL, Washington Scholarships, and members of the Negotiated Rule-Making Committee. We will continue to offer the 30 Hour Basic Training (see our website for scheduled dates) and other trainings as we are able and as the need arises.

CDA + Mentoring has been a community supported and funded program for the last 15 years at Blueprints for Learning (in the six years prior to that it was supported by the Spokane Regional Health District). In 2015, Washington Scholarships of Child Care Aware recognized our program as worthy of scholarships because of its equivalence to 12 Early Childhood Education credits at Washington State Community Colleges AND its value and contribution as an in-person early education program for professionals in the Spokane area.

In the last year three things have emerged as challenges to our delivery of this program. Any one of these by itself could have led us to the decision to suspend the program, but in light of all three issues, the choice has become more immediately clear.

1. As of July 1st, and with no communication to us at the time, DEL made the decision to discontinue any scholarship funding for CDA programs across the state. We were not made aware of this decision until mid-October. This was well past any window in which we could have secured other funding to deliver the program at no cost to students.
2. As many of you are aware, since last fall there have been proposed changes to the WACs that govern the educational requirements of Early Care and Education Professionals in licensed programs. These proposed changes, which do not recognize the CDA Credential as a valid certificate, greatly reduced the number of students who were interested in our program last year. We have seen an even greater reduction in interest this fall, with only ten individuals applying for our program.
3. In addition to this decision by DEL, it also came to our attention that as of July 1st Spokane Falls Community College would only articulate the CDA Credential for seven credits instead of twelve credits. It was explained to us that this move by SFCC is an effort to align standards across the state at all community colleges.

We know that many of you are very active in supporting sensible requirements for teacher education and will continue to advocate for keeping options open for our teachers to gain the knowledge and competency they deserve to be great Early Childhood Educators. If the time comes when the true value of these options is recognized and 1) DEL restores scholarships for CDA students, 2) DEL approves WACs that acknowledge the CDA Credential as a stand alone equivalent to the initial certificate, and 3) the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges reinstates twelve credits for the CDA Credential at Community Colleges, we could consider reinstating this program.

We are so grateful for all of the support we have received from our funders (United Way, Women Helping Women Fund, Empire Health Foundation, Child Care Aware of Washington Scholarships) and our community of program directors, owners, staff, and students over the years. Thank you for sending your staff to us for trainings and advocating for full scholarship funding for your staff. Your continued support has been critical to the success of our program. It has been a great honor to have served over 300 CDA students and the early education programs in which they worked. This journey has been one of mutual growth and learning and has enriched all of our lives as a result.

Most sincerely,

Anita Morgan – Executive Director
Bobbi Cobb – CDA + Mentoring Instructor
Monica Bertucci – Deputy Director

