

# STATE EMPLOYEE CHILD CARE CENTERS 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Janel L. Forde  
Acting Director



## 2019 Annual Report on State Employee Child Care Centers

### Overview of the Act

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.

### Childcare Center Annual Report

#### **I. 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 27th successful year in September 2019. The Center offers spacious classrooms including a separate Discovery Room designed by Kohl Museum, and a large outdoor playground located on the deck of the 21<sup>st</sup> Floor of the Bilandic Building which was replaced in October of 2012.

Early Child Care Services, Inc. Director, Stacy Olszewski, has managed the Center since 1997. The center has been accredited for over 20 years and received the Gold Circle of Quality by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Ms. Olszewski holds a bachelor's degree and is credentialed as a director, preschool and infant/toddler instructor.

The Center is licensed to care for children from ages two through 12 years. The hours of operation are 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday to align with most operational hours of State offices. There are five preschool classrooms all year and one school-aged summer camp group.

The average enrollment is 73 children per week, 38 of which are children of State employees. The non-State families are employed with the City, Cook County, or Federal government. There is a current waiting list of 20 children; a) 10 children whose parents work for the State but are not eligible due to age; b) 10 children whose parents work for other government agencies.

Priority enrollment is given to children of State employees. When there is space available, the Center provides care on a day-to-day basis for children who are not enrolled at the Center full-time, but their primary care giver is unavailable. The rates for full-time and the summer camp program are listed below:

<b>Full-Time Rates (based on age of birth)</b>	
2 years old	\$225/week
3-4 years old	\$215/week
Preschool/Kindergarten	\$215/week

<b>Summer Camp Program Rates (based on age of birth)</b>	
6 years – 10 years	\$225/week

In 2004, the Center began offering a robust summer camp for school-aged children, which is known as the “Green Group”. During this camp, children visit many museums and libraries as well as participate in special events located in and around the Chicago area. The summer program has proven to be a huge success as it offers parents an option to have high quality summer care for their children that includes both fun and educational opportunities.

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 turnover rate is impressively low with an average length of employment of eight years. All lead teachers possess a bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education. The innovative curriculum, based on the belief that children learn through play, includes whole language, math their way, 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 Partnership 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.

The current contract (18-416-CMS-BOSS4-P-1380) for childcare services with Early Child Care Services, Inc. expires on May 15, 2022, with an additional 4-year extension option. This contract was awarded through the procurement system at Central Management Services.

## II. Capital City Learning Center, Department of Revenue

Capital City Learning Center opened its doors on July 11, 2016. The Center is a sister company to Kountry Kids Learning Centers located in New Berlin and Rushville, Illinois. Owned by Kris and Stephanie Neuman, the Center provides professional quality care to the Springfield area with an emphasis on learning. Ms. Neuman holds a master's degree in Early Childhood Administration. Combined, the Neuman's bring years of experience in the field of early childhood learning, as well as business administration to the City of Springfield.

The Center cares for children from ages six weeks through five years-old. The hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday to align with most operational hours of State offices. The average full-time enrollment is 38 children, with a capacity of 40. There is a waiting list for enrollment comprised of approximately 60 children. The rates for full-time and part-time are listed below:

<b>Full-Time Rates (based on age of birth)</b>	<b>Part-Time Rates (based on age of birth)</b>
6 weeks – 15 months old \$225/week	6 weeks – 15 months old \$56.25/day
15 months – 24 months old \$215/week	15 months – 24 months old \$53.75/day
2 years old \$205/week	2 years old \$51.25/day
3-5 years old \$195/week	3-5 years old \$48.75/day

The Center's Director is Lori Rice. Ms. Rice holds an associate's degree and over 15 years of early childhood education experience. Ms. Rice is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree. The current staff consists of seven teachers, all of whom have associate's degrees.

The educational program is based on the Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold standards. The Center renewed their Silver Circle of Quality recognition by the NAEYC and is currently working to achieve the Gold Circle of Quality along with obtaining accreditation through the National Accreditation Commission.

Capital City Learning Center strives to meet the needs of children and their families each day while at the same time building solid, positive relationships. One way it achieves that goal is hosting a variety of fun, community and family-friendly activities. Some of the activities include hosting an annual Halloween Parade, participating in and attending the Festival of Trees, and going on field trips to the Apple Barn, Pumpkin Creek Farm, Ergadoozy, Children's Museum and the Scoville Zoo.

The current contract (REV17Z4000) childcare services with Capital City Learning Center expires on June 30, 2020. This contract was awarded through the procurement system at the Illinois Department of Revenue.

### **Dependent Care Assistance Program**

Both Centers accommodate State of Illinois employees by accepting payments through the flexible spending program. The flexible spending program allows for employees to set aside up to \$5,000 tax-free, per year through payroll deduction in order to pay for dependent care expenses.

The Illinois Department of Central Management Services reports strong employee participation since the program's inception in 1987. In calendar year 2019, an average of 2,300 employees statewide participated in the flex-spending program with contributions totaling approximately over \$8.2M.