



Main Centers

CLC Palmer's Hill
64 Palmer's Hill Road
Stamford, CT 06902

CLC William Pitt
195 Hillandale Avenue
Stamford, CT 06902

CLC Maple Avenue
90 Maple Ave
Stamford, CT 06902

Classroom Sites

CLC Lockwood Wing
93 Lockwood Ave
Stamford, CT 06902

CLC Martin Luther King
40 Stillwater Ave
Stamford, CT 06902

CLC Franklin Commons
141 Franklin Street
Stamford, CT 06902

CLC Westover
412 Stillwater Road
Stamford, CT 06902

CLC Lathon Wider
137 Henry Street
Stamford, CT 06902

BOR Finance Committee Operating Budget Comments 2022-3

April 21, 2022

Marc E. Jaffe

CEO

Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County, Inc. (CLC)

Budget Line Item of \$98,500—unchanged from prior year

Due to COVID-19, 2021-22 has proven to be another extraordinary year. CLC has been fully opened for almost two years although under enrolled for the first time in our 120 year history. We are currently serving approximately 850 children ages 0-5, 51 weeks a year, 10 hours a day from our 8 sites located in Stamford. We remain the largest center based early childhood education (ECE) program solely focused on ECE in the state of CT.

That being said, it continues to be extremely challenging. Overall the industry is in desperate shape with approximately 63% of programs running in a deficit and on the verge of closing. About 89% of programs including CLC are having difficulty recruiting staff. We have more vacancies (approx 28) and a higher turnover rate (about twice as usual) than in my 8 year tenure. ECE has been systemically underfunded...forever and it continues to be to this day. Minimum wages will have increased 60% from 2015 to 2022 while our main funding stream, a per student reimbursement from the state, has remained flat resulting in wage compression, under funding, an inability to attract staff and increased pressure to raise funds in the private sector (from about \$650K when I joined CLC in 2014 to \$2.2MM this past year).

We will have lost approximately \$2MM due to significant decreases in major revenue streams such as parent fees and Care For Kids and added expenses due to strict COVID protocols. Thankfully, that has been made up by \$2.15MM in PPP \$\$\$. We are making a concerted effort at the state and federal level to advocate for increased funding. We have not provided a budget for the upcoming year because there are various pieces of legislation in process which may significantly affect our revenues. However, due to PPP and ARP funding, we are in a decent cash position for the foreseeable future.

That being said, CLC has not laid off any staff (approximately 220 employees), many of whom are Stamford residents. We are currently at about 215 employees. We recently allowed our parents to re-enter our building for the first time in 2 years. We continue to provide our children two meals and a snack a day, 80% of their nutritional



requirements, nearly 500,000 a year, making us the largest food provider to young children in SW CT.

Despite the many challenges, CLC has strengthened through the crisis developing greater flexibility and cross agency collaboration. We invested significantly in enhanced technology capabilities and introduced **BPK**, Blended PreK, which allowed us to support our families and children remotely while remaining engaged with our parents.

We have also recognized a growing mental health crisis in our society and schools and with our children and families. As a result we have invested in and expanded three programs which address mental health challenges: 1) reintroduced training on the **Pre-K Ruler program** with Yale's Center for Emotional Intelligence which CLC pioneered with Yale 10 years ago; 2) expanded our very successful partnership with Columbia Medical School and their Nurture Science Program. We introduced their **Family Nurture Intervention (FNI)** which is a two generation program to support emotional connection between mother and child resulting in improved behavior of the child and less depression by the mother. Due to the pandemic, we reformatted it in a virtual environment. Lastly, we expanded our partnership with **Child Guidance Center (CGC)** to introduce diagnostic and clinical services for our children and families while training our staff on better managing children with dysregulated behavior.

Lastly, our partnership with the Stamford Public Schools continues to grow and strengthen. We are collaborating more on professional development. We are benefiting from itinerant services. We are sharing data on outcomes.

We do not anticipate curtailing any programs in 2022-23 but quite the contrary.

Despite our challenges being myriad, the importance of ECE and its profile has risen through the pandemic. We hope that funding will follow allowing CLC to serve more and more children in our community, especially those infant/toddlers ages 0-3. Needless to say, funding from the city of Stamford is important to our ongoing operations.

Marc E. Jaffe
Chief Executive Officer
Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County
www.clcfc.org



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BOR Finance Committee Capital Budget Comments 2022-3

April 21, 2022

Marc E. Jaffe

CEO

Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County, Inc. (CLC)

Capital Budget Line Item of \$67,500

CLC serves over 900 working class and lower income children ages 0-5, 51 weeks a year, 10 hours a day from our 8 sites located in Stamford. We remain the largest center based early childhood education (ECE) program solely focused on ECE in the state of CT. Over 95% of our children attend SPS upon leaving CLC. About 35-40% of the children entering SPS are from CLC.

Children are dropped off in the morning and picked up in the afternoon by parents. CLC has 3 large sites. Two of them, CLC Palmer's Hill and CLC William Pitt serve about 188 and 345 children, respectively utilizing our large parking lots. CLC William Pitt is owned by the city, Palmer's Hill is owned by CLC.

Both parking lots are in grave need of repaving. We have already been cited by our insurance company and there have been slipping incidents which have resulted in legal action. The parking lots have not been significantly repaved or repaired for 23 and 17 plus years. Most of the funds (approx. \$340K of the \$410K) for this work have been previously approved and bonded.

I believe the monies will be made available through the ARP funding. This work, which has been in process for a number of years, should not be delayed any longer. Nor is CLC in a financial position to underwrite the expenses having endured two years of COVID with its significant revenue decline and increase in expenses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marc E. Jaffe

Chief Executive Officer

Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County

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