

February 12, 2019

Dr. Betty A. Rosa, Chancellor
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Board of Regents, Room 110 EB
Albany, New York 12234

Re: Early Childhood Direction Centers

Dear Dr. Rosa;

I hope this letter finds you well.

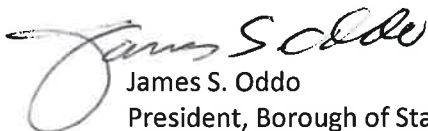
I am writing to express my opposition to the decision by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to eliminate Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs). I have been told by constituents that ECDCs are extremely valuable, and that if eliminated, parents and families will not have a main point of contact when they realize something is wrong with their child.

I would also like to point out that the cost of maintaining ECDCs is relatively small; on Staten Island the expenditure is only \$1.3 million over five years. This seems like a small price to pay for a service that, as one parent told me, "assists families during a stressful and often confusing process of obtaining needed services for their young children."

I have also been informed that the Staten Island Early Childhood Direction Center, sponsored locally by Staten Island University Hospital, Northwell Health, have been providing one-to-one assistance and trainings for the Staten Island community for thirty years. During that time, ECDC has assisted the parents and caregivers of over 17,000 children between birth and age five.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate my opposition to the elimination of this program, and urge you to reconsider. Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,



James S. Oddo
President, Borough of Staten Island

Cc: Commissioner MaryEllen Elia, New York State Department of Education
Regent Christine Cea, Board of Regents

