

May 22, 2006

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Paul Gray  
Office of the Chancellor  
200 California Hall, MC 1500  
Campus

Re: Faculty/Staff Parents' Response to the 2006 Bogy-Klinman ECEP Report

Dear Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Gray:

We write to express our appreciation for the time and energy invested by Professors Klinman and Bogy to investigate the state of the Early Childhood Education Program and to make recommendations to help make ECEP a stronger, more viable program that parents, teachers, and administrators can be proud of and secure with. We applaud a number of their recommendations, including the reclassification of the ECEP director's position to a higher level of salary and autonomy, a nationwide search for such a director, an open hiring process for the new director in which high level campus administrators, faculty, parents, and ECEP teachers are all involved, a halt in continuing the reorganization process until a new director can take charge, and finding new and creative ways to make ECEP more financially viable.

All of these particular recommendations – and your request for the report in the first place – represent a very positive first step in addressing the major problems that have faced ECEP for a number of years now. The response of AVC LeGrande and VC Padilla suggests that they will honor several of these recommendations.

With the intent of seeing this recent progress continue and to help shepherd it forward, we also write to call attention to several apparent misconceptions that senior program administrators responsible for ECEP have about the current turmoil in the program and which are propagated in this report:

- First, the impression is given in the report that only "several" parents have formally complained about their dissatisfaction with management at the program director level and above. On the contrary, 51 parents (not including parents without official university titles) have signed organized letters to you and to VC Padilla, in addition to a number of parents who have corresponded with you individually, demonstrating widespread dissatisfaction with management among the majority of faculty/staff parents.
- Second, the report suggests that parents were manipulated by "several" teachers into writing these letters as a means to resist the reorganization. This suggestion has no basis. Parents can and did independently evaluate management's competence and responsiveness to parent concerns, and parent complaints about the administration of ECEP began long before the proposed reorganization. Indeed, one of our primary complaints about the reorganization was that it appeared to us to be a strategy by administrators to avoid working on the majority of problems that were identified by the 2003 External Review and the subsequent management-sponsored Working Groups of parents and teachers, which we feel have not been meaningfully addressed.
- Third, based on our daily contact with *all* teachers in the faculty/staff centers, we feel it is inaccurate to suggest, as the report does, that only a few vocal teachers are frustrated with management practices. Many teachers are by nature not as outspoken as others, and some fear

retribution from management [The 2003 External Review indicates that this is not an unreasonable fear.]. It is thus understandable that few, if any, teachers would have voiced their complaints during the visits of Professors Klinman and Bogy to the childcare centers.

In summary, we are hopeful that a new and more autonomous ECEP director, selected by a committee constituted as recommended in the report, will bring improvements in the day-to-day functioning of the Early Childhood Education Program on our campus. However, if the misconceptions and inaccuracies noted above continue to be held and propagated by senior administrators, we fear that progress in restoring parent confidence in ECEP and in repairing the divisive rifts in our childcare community will be impaired.

As you do, we hope that the report can serve as a guide for a more collaborative environment among management, teachers, and parents as we all strive together to make the ECEP community a model for excellence in child care and a cornerstone in the foundation of the University's family friendly initiatives.

Sincerely,

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