

**Joint Meeting of the Early Childhood Policy and Budget Division and the Education  
Committee**

**February 15, 2005**

**3:00 p.m. Room 123**

**Chair, Senator John C. Hottinger**

**Chair, Senator Steve Kelley**

Present:

Hottinger, Chair  
Bob Kierlin  
Gary Kubly  
Sean Nienow  
Sandy Pappas  
Linda Scheid  
Dan Sparks  
Betsy Wergin

Absent:

Senator Hottinger called the meeting to order at 3:07

A quorum was present.

**AGENDA ITEM #1: Overview of the Minnesota Early Learning Standards**

- Karen Carlson and Betty Cooke, Department of Education, gave an overview of the Minnesota Early Learning Standards.
  - Those included indicators of progress, and what children should be able to do by kindergarten.
- Christine Fehst Ph.D., Early Childhood Programs Coordinator, and Karen Tadewald, School Readiness Program, both of Hopkins Public Schools, walked the committee through how these standards are implemented.

**AGENDA ITEM #2: S.F. 592 (Kierlin) Early Learning Standards**

MOTION: Senator Kierlin offered the A-1 amendment.

→ Motion Passed (unanimous)

- Senator Kierlin gave an overview of his bill.
- Todd Otis, Executive Director, and Zoe Nicholie, Public Policy Director, Ready 4 K, set the context for the two bills being heard today. They are both in favor of these bills. They emphasized a need for a basic infrastructure for a quality system.
- Jim Bartholomew, Minnesota Business Partnership, answered the question "What is school readiness?" Mr. Bartholomew explained the benefits of early learning standards.
- Barb Yates, Director of Child Development Services, and Deb Swenson-Clap, both of the Minnesota Department of Human Services, supported the guidelines (not standards).
- Nancy Johnson, Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association Child Care Financing Project, and Sarah Burks, Licensed Family Child Care Provider and member of the QRS Task Force, spoke about using the programs that already exist. Ms. Burks gave personal testimony about the need for person accountability.
- Dr. Karen Effrem, Ed Watch, voiced her opposition to the bill. Ms. Effrem explained that it is not the role of the government to education children; rather the parents should be doing that. She said the standards are subjective and based on faulty evidence.

The bill will continue to be discussed in committee.

**AGENDA ITEM #3: S.F. 906 (Kelley) Screening Provisions**

- Senator Kelley gave an overview of his bill, emphasizing that the sooner kids are screened, the better and more efficient the intervention.

MOTION: Senator Scheid moved the A-1 amendment. This is technical/clean-up amendment.

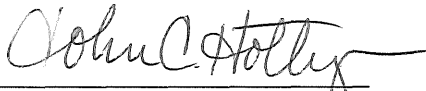
→ Motion Passed (unanimous)

- Todd Otis, Executive Director, and Zoe Nicholie, Public Policy Director, Ready 4 K, stated that 60% of kids aren't screened until two weeks before kindergarten. Kids would be better served to be screened earlier.

- Carol Miller, Deputy Director of Early Childhood, Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board, offered in more detail the screening process. Ms. Miller mentioned the “Screen by Three” campaign. She stated that this is an economically smart decision since there will be future cost savings.
  - Dr. Karen Effrem, Ed Watch, stated why she is opposed to this bill.
    - The screening is subjective
    - The screening would have many false positives and negatives
    - The screening uses faulty assessment factors
    - The younger the child, the harder to assess.
    - Lastly, there is no crisis in kindergarten readiness.
  - Senator Kelley concluded by clarifying that we are helping the family earlier.
- The bill will continue to be discussed in committee.

Senator Hottinger adjourned the meeting at 5:30

Respectfully submitted:



Senator John C. Hottinger  
Division Chair



Jane Bowman  
Division Secretary

**Early Childhood Policy and Budget Division  
Education Committee**

Sen. John Hottinger and Sen. Steve Kelley

**Tuesday, February 15, 2005**

3 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Room 123 State Capitol

**Overview of Minnesota Early Learning Standards**

1. Karen Carlson and Betty Cooke, MN Dept. of Education
2. Christine Fehst PhD., Early Childhood Programs Coordinator, Hopkins Public Schools
3. Karen Tadewald, School Readiness Program, Hopkins Public Schools.
4. Barb Yates, Director of Child Development Services, MN Dept. of Human Services

**S.F. 592-Kierlan:** Early childhood learning standards and quality rating system.

1. Todd Otis, Executive Director, and Zoe Nicholie, Public Policy Director, Ready 4 K
2. Jim Bartholomew, Minnesota Business Partnership
3. Nancy Johnson, Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association Child Care Financing Project
4. Sarah Burks, Licensed Family Child Care Provider and member of the QRS Task Force
5. Mary Dooley Burns, St. Paul Public Schools, Family Education Department
6. Dr. Karen Effrem, Ed Watch

**S.F. 906-Kelley:** Early childhood developmental screening provisions modifications; school readiness kindergarten assessment initiative.

1. Todd Otis, Executive Director, and Zoe Nicholie, Public Policy Director, Ready 4 K
2. Carol Miller, Deputy Director of Early Childhood, Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Bd.
3. Dr. Karen Effrem, Ed Watch