

**Senate Counsel, Research,
and Fiscal Analysis**

G-17 STATE CAPITOL
75 REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
ST. PAUL, MN 55155-1606
(651) 296-4791
FAX: (651) 296-7747
JO ANNE ZOFF SELLNER
DIRECTOR

Senate

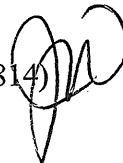
State of Minnesota

S.F. No. 3296 - Minnesota Early Learning Foundation

Author: Senator John C. Hottinger

Prepared by: Joan White, Senate Counsel (651/296-3814)

Date: March 20, 2006



S.F. 3296 modifies the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation (MELF) by requiring MELF to evaluate the effectiveness of the voluntary NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System. The NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System must:

- (1) provide information to parents on child care and early education program quality and ratings;
- (2) set indicators to identify quality in care and early education settings;
- (3) provide funds for provider improvement grants and quality achievement grants;
- (4) require providers to incorporate the early learning standards in their curriculum and develop appropriate child assessments;
- (5) determine the effectiveness of the NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System in improving child outcomes and kindergarten readiness; and
- (6) align current and new state investments to improve child care and early education quality with the NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System framework, by providing accountability and informed parent choice.

MELF is required to report back to the legislature by January 15, 2008, on the progress being made on the NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System

Section 2 provides a 2.5 million appropriation for purposes of section 1.

JW:mvm

Senators Hottinger, Bonoff, Kierlin, Kelley and Scheid introduced--

S.F. No. 3296: Referred to the Committee on Finance.

A bill for an act

1.2 relating to early childhood education; increasing the duties of the Minnesota
1.3 Early Learning Foundation; appropriating money; amending Minnesota Statutes
1.4 2005 Supplement, section 124D.175.

1.5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:**

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2005 Supplement, section 124D.175, is amended to read:

1.7 **124D.175 MINNESOTA EARLY LEARNING FOUNDATION PROPOSAL.**

1.8 (a) The commissioner must implement an early childhood development grant
1.9 program for low-income and other challenged families that increases the effectiveness
1.10 and expands the capacity of public and nonpublic early childhood development programs,
which may include child care programs, and leads to improved early childhood parent
1.12 education and children's kindergarten readiness. The program must include:

1.13 (1) grant awards to existing early childhood development program providers that
1.14 also provide parent education programs and to qualified providers proposing to implement
1.15 pilot programs for this same purpose;

1.16 (2) grant awards to enable low-income families to participate in these programs;

1.17 (3) grant awards to improve overall programmatic quality; and

1.18 (4) an evaluation of the programmatic and financial efficacy of all these programs,
1.19 which may be performed using measures of services, staffing, and management systems
1.20 that provide consistent information about system performance, show trends, confirm
1.21 successes, and identify potential problems in early childhood development programs.

1.22 This grant program must not supplant existing early childhood development programs
1.23 or child care funds.

2.1 (b) The commissioner must contract with a private nonprofit, section 501(c)(3)
2.2 organization to implement the requirements of paragraph (a). The private nonprofit
2.3 organization must be governed by a board of directors composed of members from the
2.4 public and nonpublic sectors, where the nonpublic sector members compose a simple
2.5 majority of board members and where the public sector members are state and local
2.6 government officials, kindergarten through grade 12 or postsecondary educators, and early
2.7 childhood providers appointed by the governor. Membership on the board of directors
2.8 by a state agency official are work duties for the official and are not a conflict of interest
2.9 under section 43A.38. The board of directors must appoint an executive director and
2.10 must seek advice from geographically and ethnically diverse parents of young children
2.11 and representatives of early childhood development providers, kindergarten through grade
2.12 12 and postsecondary educators, public libraries, and the business sector. The board
2.13 of directors is subject to the open meeting law under chapter 13D. All other terms and
2.14 conditions under which board members serve and operate must be described in the articles
2.15 and bylaws of the organization. The private nonprofit organization is not a state agency
2.16 and is not subject to laws governing public agencies except the provisions of chapter 13,
2.17 salary limits under section 15A.0815, subdivision 2, and audits by the legislative auditor
2.18 under chapter 3 apply.

2.19 (c) In addition to the duties under paragraph (a), the Minnesota Early Learning
2.20 Foundation shall evaluate the effectiveness of the voluntary NorthStar Quality
2.21 Improvement and Rating System. The NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System
2.22 must:

2.23 (1) provide consumer information for parents on child care and early education
2.24 program quality and ratings;

2.25 (2) set indicators to identify quality in care and early education settings, including
2.26 licensed family child care and centers, tribal providers and programs, Head Start and
2.27 school-age programs, and identify quality programs through ratings and ongoing
2.28 monitoring of programs;

2.29 (3) provide funds for provider improvement grants and quality achievement grants;

2.30 (4) require participating providers to incorporate the state's early learning standards
2.31 in their curriculum activities and develop appropriate child assessments aligned with the
2.32 kindergarten readiness assessment;

2.33 (5) provide accountability for the NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating
2.34 System's effectiveness in improving child outcomes and kindergarten readiness; and

3.1 (6) align current and new state investments to improve quality with the NorthStar
3.2 Quality Improvement and Rating System framework for accountability and informed
3.3 parent choice.

3.4 The Minnesota Early Learning Foundation shall report back to the legislature by
3.5 January 15, 2008, on the progress being made under this paragraph.

3.6 (d) This section expires June 30, 2011. If no state appropriation is made for purposes
3.7 of this section, the commissioner must not implement paragraphs (a) and (b).

3.8 **Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION.**

3.9 \$2,500,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of education
3.10 to be transferred to the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation for the purposes of
3.11 Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.175, paragraph (c). Funds will be used over a two-year
3.12 period to implement phase one of the NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System
3.13 including start-up costs, participation of 200 providers, parent information, and materials
3.14 and evaluation by the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation in conjunction with the
3.15 University of Minnesota.

1.1 Senator moves to amend S.F. No. 3296 as follows:

Page 2, line 1, strike "contract with" and insert "make a grant to"

1.3 Page 2, line 2, after the period, insert "Notwithstanding any laws to the contrary, the
1.4 private nonprofit organization may contract with the University of Minnesota for purposes
1.5 of implementing paragraph (a), clause (4)."

1.6 Page 3, line 1, after "improve" insert "the" and after "quality" insert "of child care
1.7 and early childhood settings"

1.8 Page 3, line 2, delete "for" and insert ", by providing"

How can Minnesota support school readiness child care?

Through the Minnesota **Quality Rating System (QRS)**

A QRS is a **consumer guide**,
a **benchmark for program improvement**,
and an **accountability measure for funding**

The Minnesota QRS will:

- Be market-based
- Pay for performance
- Provide clear, agreed-upon measures of quality
- Help parents make quality child care choices
- Increase quality program choices for parents
- Link investment in child care to school-readiness



The Need for a Quality Rating System

Over 520,000 children in Minnesota ages 6 weeks through 12 years attend child care in licensed family based or center settings. The proposed Quality Rating System (QRS) will give parents specific program quality information, will recognize and reward participating providers for their quality, and will link investment in quality with improving children's school readiness.

Minnesota has one of the highest rates of working parents in the country and child care has become an essential resource for families. Working parents as well as the state and federal governments spend millions of dollars for child care and early education programs.

Quality of Child Care Matters for Children's Development and School Readiness

A growing body of research has proven that quality in child care matters for children's school readiness and life trajectory. However, only one-quarter of centers in Minnesota had Total scores indicating Good quality, while 4 percent fell below Minimal quality, as reported in *A Snapshot of Quality in Minnesota's Child Care Centers*, a study released in September, 2005 by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Parents in Minnesota have no "consumer" guide or ratings to help them compare the quality of specific programs. Also, there is no clear path for child care and early education providers to achieve higher levels of quality. Quality rating systems are a new market based strategy currently used in ten states to provide parents' with program quality ratings and to link public and private investments in programs with accountability for children's development and learning.



"Quality Rating Systems improve the quality of early learning and empower parents to become savvy consumers and choose the best early education and care for their children... A QRS can also help policy-makers create policies that will improve quality... A state or community with a QRS is aligned around the best interests of its children and is on track to build successful schools, productive citizens, and a well-trained, well-educated future workforce to support long-term economic development."

—Brian A. Gallagher, President and CEO,
United Way of America,
Stair Steps to Quality, July 2005

What Will the Minnesota QRS Do?

A plan for a Minnesota Quality Rating System (QRS) has been developed by a citizens' task force headed by Ready 4 K and the Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association's Child Care Financing Project. The QRS Plan is a voluntary system of support, recognition and financial incentives for quality for participating licensed family child providers, centers, Head Start and schoolage care programs. The Minnesota QRS will also provide parents with program ratings to help them make informed choices for their children's care and education.

The Minnesota QRS includes voluntary provider participation, agreed upon indicators of quality, easy-to-understand ratings for parents to use when making decisions about their child's care and education program, benchmarks for program improvement, financial support and incentives for providers linked to quality and to improving children's school readiness.

How Will the QRS Benefit Child Care and Early Education Providers?

Child care providers throughout Minnesota are doing the important work of helping parents provide their young children with safe, nurturing environments and opportunities for learning.

For programs, the QRS will provide:

- A clearly defined pathway for achieving quality
- Access to improvement grants
- Annual Performance Awards based on the number of children and the rating level achieved
- Recognition in your community
- Training on using child observation and program environmental rating scales and on school readiness standards

Program Ratings Will Involve:

- Compiling documentation of meeting each indicator.
- Assignment of the rating.
- Monitoring for compliance.

Measuring Child Outcomes

Quality programs use ongoing child observation and assessment in their planning and improvement efforts. Also, child assessment data will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the QRS for improving children's school readiness. However, until the field has more valid and reliable instruments, individual child assessments are not being recommended to raise or lower a program's quality rating.

**For more information about the Minnesota QRS, visit the Ready 4 K website: www.ready4k.org
or email Nancy.Johnson@gmdca.org**

The ABCs of QRS

*Proposed Quality Rating System
for Minnesota Child Care Centers*

QRS Task Force, November 2005



What is the QRS?

Minnesota's Quality Rating System (QRS) is planned as a voluntary system of support, recognition and financial incentives for quality for participating licensed family child providers, centers, Head Start and schoolage care programs. The Minnesota QRS will also provide parents with specific quality indicators in the form of program ratings to help them make choices for their children's care and education.

Goals of the QRS

The QRS will focus on increasing resources and supports to help providers improve and maintain quality, increasing parents' understanding of quality, and increasing young children's kindergarten readiness.

The QRS task force facilitated by Ready 4 K and the GMDCA Child Care Financing Project included licensed family care child providers, centers, schoolage and Head Start programs, child care resource and referral, provider professional organizations, and other support organizations.

How Can the QRS Benefit Child Care and Education Providers?

Child care providers throughout Minnesota are doing the important work of helping parents provide their young children with safe, nurturing environments and opportunities for learning.

For providers, the QRS will provide:

- A clearly defined pathway for achieving quality programming
- Access to improvement grants
- Annual Performance Awards based on the number of children you serve and your rating level
- Recognition in your community
- Training on using child observation and program environmental rating scales and on school readiness standards

The Rating Process

Upon application, each provider will work with a QRS program specialist to help guide them through the rating and improvement process. As needed, programs will also be referred to consultants for specific areas of program improvement.

Program Ratings Will Involve:

- **Compiling documentation of meeting each indicator.** Depending on the criteria, this documentation may be submitted by the program, accessed from an existing database or collected during an on-site observation by trained QRS observers.
- **Assignment of the rating.** Once documentation has been submitted, the QRS will review and verify the information. When all criteria for a specific level are met, the program will receive a rating.
- **Monitoring for compliance.** To ensure the integrity of the rating system over time, participating programs will be monitored once per year if they choose to stay at the same level. More frequent monitoring may be triggered by changes in the child care setting or the program's request to be rated for a higher level.

Measuring Child Outcomes

The QRS recognizes that child observation and assessment are critical components for monitoring and improving programming. Quality programs use ongoing child observation and assessment in their planning and improvement efforts. Also, child assessment data from a random sample of participating QRS providers will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the QRS for improving children's school readiness. However, until the field has more valid and reliable instruments, individual child assessments are not being recommended to raise or lower a program's quality rating.

The Indicator Explained

The QRS covers seven categories of quality, selected because of the field's consensus and strong research base linking them to both program quality and to children's positive outcomes and school readiness.

For each of the seven quality categories, there are four graduated levels of quality with specific indicators to be met at each level. This "block" design means that a program must meet all the indicators in one level before receiving a rating for the next level.

The seven areas of quality covered by the QRS are:

- **Professional development and training**
- **Child-provider ratios**
- **Licensing compliance**
- **Learning environment**
- **Family partnerships and education**
- **Management and administration**
- **Program evaluation**

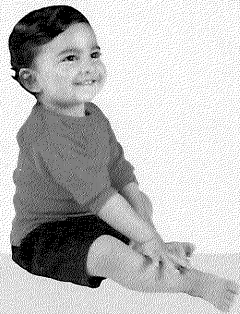
QUALITY INDICATORS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

LEVEL 1

LEVEL 2

LEVEL 3

LEVEL 4



All criteria under level 1, plus:

Professional development

At least 75% of classrooms have teachers with Child Development Associate degrees, or equivalent, or higher.

Licensing

No major substantiated negative actions within the past two years.

Learning environment

Daily activities and curriculum that are in line with Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress.

Family partnerships

Communicate with families daily about child's progress. Use one family communication strategy and one family education strategy.

Management/administration

At least one employee benefit and documented compensation plan.

Program evaluation

Obtain input from parents and staff for program planning.

All criteria under level 2, plus:

Professional development

Directors must be 21 or over, have at least 12 semester credits in higher learning, and every classroom must have teachers with Child Development Associate degrees, or equivalent, or higher.

Ratios

Same as licensing requirements, with the exception of toddlers.

Learning environment

Curriculum aligns with Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress, and program earns observed score of 4 or higher on Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale.

Family partnerships

Preschool screening information provided, parent in-take form includes cultural items, parent feedback collected, and at least two ways of communicating with families, and two family education strategies used.

Management/administration

At least two employee benefits, and survey staff annually about working conditions and compensation.

Program evaluation

Collect input from parents, staff and board to develop annual improvement plan. Child assessment information used in daily planning.



Accredited programs and Head Start programs that meet all of the Head Start Performance Standards are automatically recognized as level 4.

Programs may also achieve level 4 by meeting the criteria in level 3, plus the following:

Professional development

75% of classrooms have teachers with an AA, or equivalent, or higher, and the person in charge of the education program has a BA.

Ratios

Infants 1:3 or 4
maximum group size 6–8
Toddlers (12–24 mos) 1:5
maximum group size 10
Toddlers (24–36 mos) 1:6
maximum group size 12
Preschoolers 1:7
maximum group size 20
School age (5 yrs) 1:12
maximum group size 30
School age (6+) 1:15
maximum group size 30

Learning environment

Assess the progress of children and achieve an observed score of 5 or higher on the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale.

Family partnerships

Provide kindergarten transition activities, and use at least 3 ways to communicate with families and 3 family education strategies.

Management/administration

Program offers staff at least three employee benefits.



Licensing

Programs licensed by State or tribal governments automatically qualify for this level, as long as the program has not had more than one major substantiated negative action within the past three years.

For more information, email Nancy.Johnson@gmdca.org or visit: www.ready4k.org

Grants, training supports, and performance awards for providers participating in the QRS

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Improvement Grants	\$500–\$10,000	\$500–\$10,000	\$500–\$10,000	\$500–\$10,000
Priority for Existing Sources of Financial Support for Quality	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed
Annual Performance Awards		\$70 per child per year	\$100 per child per year	\$150 per child per year

QRS Preparation “Field Test”

From October 2005 through March 2006, Child Trends, a research and evaluation organization, has been contracted to develop the materials and procedures to operationalize the task force’s QRS plan. A small number of providers will help during this “field test” of the QRS plan.

Where Will Funding for the QRS Come From?

We will request funding from the private/public Minnesota Early Learning Fund as well as regional economic development funds, private and community philanthropy and from the state legislature.

For more information, email Nancy.Johnson@gmdca.org or visit: www.ready4k.org



The ABCs of QRS

*Proposed Quality Rating System
for Minnesota Family Child Care*

QRS Task Force, November 2005



What is the QRS?

Minnesota's Quality Rating System (QRS) is planned as a voluntary system of support, recognition and financial incentives for quality for participating licensed family child providers, centers, Head Start and schoolage care programs. The Minnesota QRS will also provide parents with specific quality indicators in the form of program ratings to help them make choices for their children's care and education.

Goals of the QRS

The QRS will focus on increasing resources and supports to help providers improve and maintain quality, increasing parents' understanding of quality, and increasing young children's kindergarten readiness.

The QRS task force facilitated by Ready 4 K and the GMDCA Child Care Financing Project included licensed family care child providers, centers, schoolage and Head Start programs, child care resource and referral, provider professional organizations, and other support organizations.

How Can the QRS Benefit Child Care and Education Providers?

Child care providers throughout Minnesota are doing the important work of helping parents provide their young children with safe, nurturing environments and opportunities for learning.

For providers, the QRS will provide:

- A clearly defined pathway for achieving quality programming
- Access to improvement grants
- Annual Performance Awards based on the number of children you serve and your rating level
- Recognition in your community
- Training on using child observation and program environmental rating scales and on school readiness standards

The Rating Process

Upon application, each provider will work with a QRS program specialist to help guide them through the rating and improvement process. As needed, programs will also be referred to consultants for specific areas of program improvement.

Program Ratings Will Involve:

- **Compiling documentation of meeting each indicator.** Depending on the criteria, this documentation may be submitted by the program, accessed from an existing database or collected during an on-site observation by trained QRS observers.
- **Assignment of the rating.** Once documentation has been submitted, the QRS will review and verify the information. When all criteria for a specific level are met, the program will receive a rating.
- **Monitoring for compliance.** To ensure the integrity of the rating system over time, participating programs will be monitored once per year if they choose to stay at the same level. More frequent monitoring may be triggered by changes in the child care setting or the program's request to be rated for a higher level.

Measuring Child Outcomes

The QRS recognizes that child observation and assessment are critical components for monitoring and improving programming. Quality programs use ongoing child observation and assessment in their planning and improvement efforts. Also, child assessment data from a random sample of participating QRS providers will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the QRS for improving children's school readiness. However, until the field has more valid and reliable instruments, individual child assessments are not being recommended to raise or lower a program's quality rating.

The Indicator Explained

The QRS covers seven categories of quality, selected because of the field's consensus and strong research base linking them to both program quality and to children's positive outcomes and school readiness.

For each of the seven quality categories, there are four graduated levels of quality with specific indicators to be met at each level. This "block" design means that a program must meet all the indicators in one level before receiving a rating for the next level.

The seven areas of quality covered by the QRS are:

- **Professional development and training**
- **Child-provider ratios**
- **Licensing compliance**
- **Learning environment**
- **Family partnerships and education**
- **Management and administration**
- **Program evaluation**

QUALITY INDICATORS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE

LEVEL 1

LEVEL 2

LEVEL 3

LEVEL 4



All criteria under level 1, plus:

Professional development

At least 40 hours training in the past three years, or be a trainer, or have six semester credits in early childhood-related coursework. Substitutes must have completed orientation training.

Licensing

No substantiated major negative actions within the past two years.

Learning environment

Provider self-study using the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS). Align daily activities with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress.

Family partnerships

Communicates with families routinely about child's experiences. Meet with parents at least two times per year. Use one way to communicate with families and one family education strategy.

Management/administration

Completed record-keeping, tax preparation and business planning training.

Program evaluation

Program plan developed and evaluated annually by provider.



All criteria under level 2, plus:

Professional development

At least 80 hours training in past four years, or be a trainer, or have current CDA or CBTA, or have 12 semester credits in early childhood-related coursework.

Learning environment

Accreditation or CBTA self-study completed, or program earns score of 4 or higher on Family Day Care Environmental Rating Scale, and activities align with Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress.

Family partnerships

Preschool screening information provided to families, parent intake form includes cultural items, formal parent feedback collected, and at least two ways of communicating with families, and two family education strategies used.

Management/administration

Provider policies are shared with parents and address paid vacations, sick leave, and professional development days.

Program evaluation

Collect parent feedback. Use feedback and child observation to plan daily activities.

All criteria under level 3, plus:

Professional development

160 hours training in the past four years, or trainer plus 80 hours training, or current CDA or CBTA plus 40 hours training or equivalent, or AA or higher in child development or related coursework, or AA or four year degree in another field and 12 semester credits in early childhood related coursework, or program is accredited.

Learning environment

Program earns score of 5 or higher on the Family Day Care Environmental Rating Scale or program is accredited.

Family partnerships

Provide kindergarten transition activities, and use at least three ways to communicate with families and three family education strategies.

Management/administration

Provider has at least the minimum insurance policy.

Program evaluation

Use parent feedback to develop a program improvement plan and a professional development plan.



Licensing

Program licensed by State or tribal governments automatically qualify for this level, as long as the program has not had more than one substantiated negative action within the past three years.

Grants, training supports, and performance awards for providers participating in the QRS

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Improvement Grants	\$500-\$10,000	\$500-\$10,000	\$500-\$10,000	\$500-\$10,000
Priority for Existing Sources of Financial Support for Quality	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed
Annual Performance Awards		\$70 per child per year	\$100 per child per year	\$150 per child per year

QRS Preparation "Field Test"

From October 2005 through March 2006, Child Trends, a research and evaluation organization, has been contracted to develop the materials and procedures to operationalize the task force's QRS plan. A small number of providers will help during this "field test" of the QRS plan.

Where Will Funding for the QRS Come From?

We will request funding from the private/public Minnesota Early Learning Fund as well as regional economic development funds, private and community philanthropy and from the state legislature.

For more information, email Nancy.Johnson@gmdca.org or visit: www.ready4k.org



The ABCs of QRS

*Proposed Quality Rating System
for Minnesota School Age Care Programs*

QRS Task Force, November 2005



What is the QRS?

Minnesota's Quality Rating System (QRS) is planned as a voluntary system of support, recognition and financial incentives for quality for participating licensed family child providers, centers, Head Start and schoolage care programs. The Minnesota QRS will also provide parents with specific quality indicators in the form of program ratings to help them make choices for their children's care and education.

Goals of the QRS

The QRS will focus on increasing resources and supports to help providers improve and maintain quality, increasing parents' understanding of quality, and increasing young children's kindergarten readiness.

The QRS task force facilitated by Ready 4 K and the GMDCA Child Care Financing Project included licensed family care child providers, centers, schoolage and Head Start programs, child care resource and referral, provider professional organizations, and other support organizations.

How Can the QRS Benefit Child Care and Education Providers?

Child care providers throughout Minnesota are doing the important work of helping parents provide their young children with safe, nurturing environments and opportunities for learning.

For providers, the QRS will provide:

- A clearly defined pathway for achieving quality programming
- Access to improvement grants
- Annual Performance Awards based on the number of children you serve and your rating level
- Recognition in your community
- Training on using child observation and program environmental rating scales and on school readiness standards

The Rating Process

Upon application, each provider will work with a QRS program specialist to help guide them through the rating and improvement process. As needed, programs will also be referred to consultants for specific areas of program improvement.

Program Ratings Will Involve:

- **Compiling documentation of meeting each indicator.** Depending on the criteria, this documentation may be submitted by the program, accessed from an existing database or collected during an on-site observation by trained QRS observers.
- **Assignment of the rating.** Once documentation has been submitted, the QRS will review and verify the information. When all criteria for a specific level are met, the program will receive a rating.
- **Monitoring for compliance.** To ensure the integrity of the rating system over time, participating programs will be monitored once per year if they choose to stay at the same level. More frequent monitoring may be triggered by changes in the child care setting or the program's request to be rated for a higher level.

Measuring Child Outcomes

The QRS recognizes that child observation and assessment are critical components for monitoring and improving programming. Quality programs use ongoing child observation and assessment in their planning and improvement efforts. Also, child assessment data from a random sample of participating QRS providers will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the QRS for improving children's school readiness. However, until the field has more valid and reliable instruments, individual child assessments are not being recommended to raise or lower a program's quality rating.

The Indicator Explained

The QRS covers seven categories of quality, selected because of the field's consensus and strong research base linking them to both program quality and to children's positive outcomes and school readiness.

For each of the seven quality categories, there are four graduated levels of quality with specific indicators to be met at each level. This "block" design means that a program must meet all the indicators in one level before receiving a rating for the next level.

The seven areas of quality covered by the QRS are:

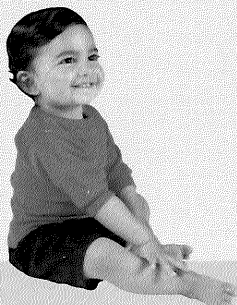
- Professional development and training
- Child-provider ratios
- Licensing compliance
- Learning environment
- Family partnerships and education
- Management and administration
- Program evaluation

QUALITY INDICATORS FOR SCHOOL AGE CARE PROGRAMS

LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2



LEVEL 3



LEVEL 4

Accredited programs will automatically reach level 4.

Programs that do not wish to become accredited may achieve level 4 by meeting the criteria in level 3, plus the following:

Professional development
Combination of age, experience and training requirements by staff position. For example, at least 75% of groupings must have a senior group leader with a minimum of a BA in relevant coursework or equivalent.

Learning environment
Programs must achieve a score of 5 or higher on the School Age Care Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS), and when Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress are available for school age, use a child assessment tool that aligns with the indicators of progress.

Family partnerships
Use at least three ways of communicating with families and three family education strategies.

Management/administration
Program must offer at least three employee benefits.

All criteria under level 1, plus:

Professional development
Combination of age, experience and training requirements by staff position. For example, at least 75% of senior group leaders must have at least 12 semester credits in relevant coursework or equivalent.

Ratios
K-1:12
maximum group size 30
Grades 1-6, 1:15
maximum group size 30
Grades K-6, 1:12
maximum group size 30

Learning environment
Observed School Age Care Environmental Rating Scale score of 3 or higher, and when Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress are available for school age, introduce them into curriculum.

Family partnerships
System of regular communication with families. Use one way to communicate with families and one family education strategy.

Management/administration
At least one employee benefit; documented compensation plan.

Program evaluation
Process for collecting feedback from staff and/or parents for program improvement.

All criteria under level 2, plus:

Professional development
Combination of age, experience and training requirements by staff position. For example, every grouping would be required to have a senior group leader with a minimum of an AA in relevant coursework or equivalent.

Learning environment
Observed School Age Care Environmental Rating Scale score of 3 or higher, and when Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress are available for school age, use to align with them into curriculum.

Family partnerships
Cultural parent in-take form used, formal system of parent feedback, and at least two ways of communicating with families, and two family education strategies.

Management/administration
At least two employee benefits, and survey staff annually about working conditions and compensation.

Program evaluation
Collect input from parents, staff and board to develop annual improvement plan.

Professional development

Combination of age, experience and training requirements by staff position. For example, senior group leaders must be at least 18, have 1,040 hours of experience and 6 semester credits in relevant training.

Ratios
Grades K-6: 1:15 and maximum group size 30

Learning environment
Self-study using School Age Environmental Rating Scale.

Family partnerships
Programs must have open door policy.

Management/administrative
Programs must provide staff orientation, maintain personnel policies and provide staff evaluations.

Program evaluation
Must have a formal grievance process for families in place.

Grants, training supports, and performance awards for providers participating in the QRS

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Improvement Grants	\$500–\$10,000	\$500–\$10,000	\$500–\$10,000	\$500–\$10,000
Priority for Existing Sources of Financial Support for Quality	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed	CCR&R Program Improvement Grants TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships - Bonuses Accreditation validation 50% of fees reimbursed
Annual Performance Awards		\$70 per child per year	\$100 per child per year	\$150 per child per year

QRS Preparation “Field Test”

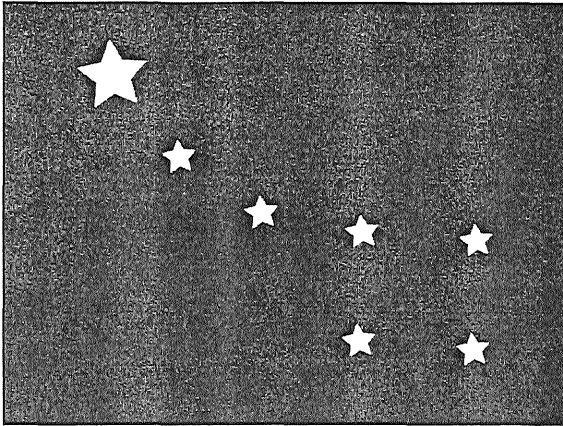
From October 2005 through March 2006, Child Trends, a research and evaluation organization, has been contracted to develop the materials and procedures to operationalize the task force’s QRS plan. A small number of providers will help during this “field test” of the QRS plan.


Where Will Funding for the QRS Come From?

We will request funding from the private/public Minnesota Early Learning Fund as well as regional economic development funds, private and community philanthropy and from the state legislature.

For more information, email Nancy.Johnson@gmdca.org or visit: www.ready4k.org






 **NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System**


Consumer Information for Parents

+ Early Education in Child Care Aligned with K-12


= *More Children Ready for School*

 **Are Minnesota's children on a trajectory for becoming our future workforce and contributing citizens?**


- 50% of Minnesota's entering kindergarteners are "not fully prepared" for success in school.
- There is overwhelming evidence that the quality of children's early care and education sets them on a trajectory for success in school and life.

 **Where are Minnesota's children developing and learning before kindergarten?**

- Three out of four Minnesota families use child care for their children under 13.
- Of 332,000 MN children birth to age 5, 192,000 attend regulated child care or Head Start programs while their parent(s) work or attend school.
- If Minnesota is to close the K-12 achievement gap, one strategy is to improve children's early education in child care.


 **Quality child care boosts school readiness**

- Attendance at accredited quality child centers is linked to school readiness. In a 2005 MN DHS study, 82% of children in accredited programs were ready for kindergarten, including children whose families earn low wages and whose parents have low levels of education.




Lack of quality options for parents to choose from

- Only 19% of child care centers and 7% of preschools and school age programs in Minnesota are accredited.
- The majority of child care centers in MN (71%) offer care meeting only minimal standards. Only one-quarter of centers reached the level of "Good" on a recognized scale of quality.




Parents value providers' training

- 73% of parents with children under 9 chose the "special training of the caregiver" as the top "very important" reason overall in choosing a provider.
- Of the licensed family child care providers in MN:
 - 1% are accredited
 - 31% have a Child Development Associate Credential or a 1 year Certificate
 - 4% have a 2 year child related degree
 - 8% have a 4 year child related degree




Parents want information and more quality choices

- 87% of MN parents say they would find it helpful if their community had a child care quality rating system.
- Increasing numbers of parents feel they "had to take whatever child care arrangement they could get," 29% of parents in 2005, up from 21% in 1999.




Quality Rating Systems

- 12 states have developed multi-tiered quality rating systems that provide:
 - a systemic approach to identifying quality
 - consumer (parent) information on specific programs quality
 - standards that align with K-12
 - financial investments in programs to promote quality, linked to child outcomes




The NorthStar QIRS

- The NorthStar QIRS was developed by providers and professional organizations, parents, researchers, child care resource and referral staff, educators, and licensors and a 6 month public comment period.
- The NQIRS starts with licensing and builds through 4 Levels to accreditation (or equiv).
- The indicators for each of the quality categories are aligned with Minnesota's Early Learning Guidelines.




NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System – Goals

- Infuse early education in child care settings
- Provide parents with information and access to more choices of quality programs
- Link increased public and private investment in children's early care and education with improving both program quality and children's positive outcomes and school readiness




Key Indicators of Quality

- Licensing compliance
- Child-staff ratios
- Professional development of staff
- Curriculum and learning environment aligned with state early learning standards and K-12
- Family Engagement and Involvement
- Management and administration
- Ongoing evaluation and improvement




Components of the NorthStar System

- Measure agreed upon indicators of quality to use in program ratings available for parents
- Provide outreach and information
- Provide financial support and market incentives for providers
- Require alignment with MN's Early Learning Guidelines and accountability for improving child outcomes and school readiness



NorthStar System Financial Incentives


- 70% of NQIRS funds will go to providers:
 - *for improvement grants* to move to higher levels of quality, and
 - *for quality achievement grants* based on the providers' quality level and enrollment to maintain quality.
- The remainder (30%) will fund the parent information, provider ratings, and overall administration of the NQIRS.



NorthStar Provider Outreach and Support


Providers will also receive

- an orientation on the QRS and the MDE School Readiness Assessment
- materials to help them align their curriculum with MN's Early Learning Guidelines
- training on the early childhood environment rating scale




The NorthStar QIRS Provides Accountability for Child Outcomes

- Providers will be required to use individual child observation and appropriate child assessment tools aligned with Minnesota's School Readiness Assessment
- A sample of child assessments will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the NQIRS for improving children's school readiness



Coordinate Current Policies through the NQIRS


- Licensing visits
- CCR&R Provider Improvement Grants
- TEACH and REETAIN scholarships & bonuses
- Costs for accreditation validation reimbursed
- Regional projects to improve quality
- CCAP incentives for choosing quality



QRS Impact on the Quality of Child Care: Oklahoma

"The findings from the 'Reaching for the Stars' ratings show that more high quality programs are enrolling children subsidized by DHS, global quality ratings have risen, and teacher-child interactions are generally positive."


Source: "Reaching for the Stars" Center Validation Study Final Report (November 2013), by Deborah J. Norris, Lorraine Dunn, and Lisa Eckert, prepared for Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care by Early Childhood Collaborative of Oklahoma (ECCO) at Oklahoma University/Oklahoma State University Partnership, page 45. <http://okdhs.org/childcare>



QRS Impact on the Quality of Child Care: North Carolina


"Assessment scores provide valuable insight into the areas of achievement and those areas in need of resources and continuing improvement. ...The findings also provide compelling evidence of an increase in rating scale scores in child care centers" with increasing levels of teacher education."

Source: The North Carolina Rated License: A Three-Year Summary



NorthStar Quality Improvement and Rating System — Summary


- ✓ Provides parents with quality ratings
- ✓ Voluntary for providers
- ✓ Increases working parents' choices for quality early education in licensed child care settings
- ✓ A cost effective model to improve children's school readiness by linking public and private investments to standards and accountability for child outcomes in private market child care



"A QRS can help policy makers create policies that will improve quality in child care..."

A state or community with a QRS is aligned around the best interests of its children and is on track to build successful schools, productive citizens, and a well-trained, well-educated future workforce to support long-term economic development."

-Brian A. Gallagher
President and CEO, United Way of America



For more information, contact:

- Nancy Johnson
GMDCA Public Policy and System Financing
612-349-0553
Nancy.Johnson@qmdca.org
- Zoe Nicholie
Ready for K Public Policy Director
651-644-8138
Zoe@ready4k.org

Anti-Bias Curriculum

Tools for EMPOWERING Young Children



How Do We See and Use the ABC's of Learning?

My House and the Strange People

More and more people came from Spain, England, and France to live in the beautiful country of the Native Americans. The people coming to live here were called colonists. As more and more colonists came, they needed more and more land for their houses and farms.

The sad part of this story is that the Native Americans were already living on the land the colonists wanted, and so the colonists took the land away from the Native Americans. Here's a story to help you understand the way the Native Americans felt about having their home taken away.

Suppose you lived in a house that you and your family loved very much. Every day, your parents tell you that the trees, streams, mountains, and animals around your home are your brothers. Every night, before you sleep, you think about how wonderful it is to have such a beautiful home. Your parents teach you never to harm any living thing, except to use for food, or shelter, or clothing.

One day, some people came to your home from far away in big ships. They look very different from you, and at first you are very afraid. Then, you remember your parents' teaching that all living things are brothers.

Your mom and dad invite these people into your beautiful home. These strangers have a long stick that kills your brothers, the animals. They call it a gun, and its loud noise frightens you because you've never seen one before.

Mom and Dad teach these people how to grow things and how to live in your house. One day, the Strange People tell your family that they like your house so much that they have decided to take your house away from you and keep it for themselves. The Strange People make your family leave your home. How does that make you feel?

Every year after your family has left, the Strange People have a big party in your old house to celebrate taking it away from you. They eat the animal brothers that your family taught them were good to eat. They have the vegetables and breads your family taught them to grow and make. They even enjoy the berries you used to love to pick and eat. How does this party make you feel?

The Strange People called their celebration Thanksgiving.

After the story, the teacher should emphasize that this happened a long time ago and that in our class we're learning how to be fair to Native Americans. As a follow-up to this story, have the persona dolls celebrate their own Thanksgiving together. Bring out all the dolls and sit them at a table. With the children, prepare different kinds of ethnic foods—based on each doll's favorite—and then have the dolls share their Thanksgiving feast with the class. At the end of the dinner, Mary, the Navajo doll, says: "I'm thankful that all of us friends, who all have different colors of skin, speak different languages, and have different kinds of families can be together!"

Halloween

The Halloween image of the "witch," old, ugly, wicked, and dressed in black, reflects stereotypes of gender, race, and age: Powerful women are evil; old women are ugly and scary; the color black is evil (a connection which permeates our language). Moreover, the mean, ugly, evil witch myth reflects a history of witch hunting and witch burning in Europe and North America—from the Middle Ages through the Salem witch hunts of the 17th Century directed against midwives and other independent women.

Adults are so used to seeing this witch image as part of a "fun" holiday that it may seem "picky" to some of you to make this critique. However, some teachers are challenging it because it is so offensive, especially to many women. At an after-school care program (children 4 to 6 years old), the teacher did these activities during the two weeks before October 31st.

Witches and Healers

DAY 1: Kay asks "What are your ideas about witches?" "Bad, ugly, old" is the children's unanimous response. Kay: "Many people do think that. What I know is that the real women we call witches weren't bad. They really helped people. These women lived a long time ago. Maybe you know about some good witches too?" (The only one the class can think of is Glinda in "The Wizard of Oz.") Kay: "Yes, Glinda was pretty and helped people, but she didn't do what most of

the women called witches did. They healed people who were sick or hurt." (The children start talking about doctors.) Kay: "Yes, the healers were like doctors." Then Kay reads the children a story she has written and illustrated.

DAY 2: Kay brings in a number of different herbs: mint, clove, cinnamon, and ginger root. She introduces the herbs to the children, letting them smell them. They talk about what they think they could use them for and then Kay tells them briefly about how the herbs have really been used to help people.

DAYS 3, 4, 5, and 6: Kay sets up a number of activities children can choose to do over the next week: a "witch-healer" table, where the children can make their own potions; a tea-making table, where children can make and drink mint and cinnamon tea; planting herbs; and making collages with herbs.

FOLLOW UP: After a week of these activities, Kay has another brief discussion with the children about witches. "What do you know now about witch-healers?" she asks. The consensus is that witches fell into two categories. Some were bad, some good. So although the activities don't completely change the children's minds, they do stretch thinking by creating a category of "some good witches." (Later in the year, Kay raises the question of witches again to see what ideas the children have kept over time. They still hold to the "some good/some bad witches" categories.)

Witches, Evil, and the Color Black

To contrast the prevailing imagery of black and evil (witches, cats, darkness), Kay teaches the children an already existing Halloween chant:

"Surring, surring, stirring the pot;
Bubbly, bubbly, bubbly hot;
Look to the moon, laugh like a loon,
Throw something into the pot."

(This chant is usually accompanied by hand movements. Kay, integrating another aspect of anti-bias curriculum, substitutes signing.) Then Kay puts a large black cloth in the middle of the children's circle and asks children to symbolically throw beautiful black things into the "pot." At first, children throw in typical Halloween objects (e.g., black cat, spider). With Kay's encouragement to think of other black things, they begin throwing in

objects such as licorice, pepper, chocolate ice cream, blackberries, magic markers. Kay then lists all the beautiful, useful, black things on a chart and briefly talks about how people sometimes think that black is bad because of how the color black is used. Later in the day, children who want to find and paste on pictures of the black objects listed on the chart.

Two further spin-offs come from the Halloween activities. (1) In response to the children's interest in healers, Kay brings in books and tells stories about healers in other cultures, including Native American, Mexican-American, and African. She talks about how people stereotype "witch doctors" as scary, just like the healers who were called witches. (2) Kay introduces the children to the Mexican and Mexican-American holiday, "Día de los Muertos" (Day of the Dead). In contrast to the way death and ghosts are treated on Halloween, *Días de los Muertos* is a time for remembering and celebrating the dead in one's family. Skeletons are an important part of the ritual, but they have a different meaning than the skeletons of Halloween. Kay sets up an altar, children dictate or write the name of a person or pet animal who is dead, and Kay tells the story of how Marisela's family celebrates *Días de los Muertos*.

Christmas

Although Christmas is celebrated as a national holiday, it really reflects a specific religious belief system. For children who are not Christian—be they Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, atheist—Christmas can be a problem. How do teachers handle the dual reality of Christmas, as a Christian holiday and a national holiday, in a way that is supportive and fair to all? Here are some solutions other teachers have used.

Alternative 1: Integrate December holidays from several cultural groups. In one child care center, many of the children and staff celebrate Christmas, three families celebrate Chanukah, and a staff member, Suzanne, wants to share her Native American tradition of celebrating the Winter Solstice.

First, the staff identifies common themes and observances: All three holidays use firelight (can-

Expanding Children's Understanding of Gender Anatomy and Gender Identity

Remember that the purpose of these activities is to enable preschoolers to develop a clear, healthy sex identity through understanding that their being a girl or boy depends on their anatomy, not on what they like to do.

- Read *What Is a Girl? What Is A Boy?* (Waxman, 1976), and *Dodies* (Brenner, 1973). Both books have excellent photographs of children's bodies. Use correct anatomical terms with children.
- Make copies of an outline of a body as drawn by a preschooler, and in small groups ask children to fill in all the body parts, and to show if the person is a girl or a boy.

- Make a class book with the children based on the format of *What Is A Girl? What Is A Boy?*: "Some people say a girl is someone who likes to play with paints, but Robin also likes to play with paints, and he is a boy."
- Have anatomically correct dolls available for the children in the dramatic play area and to be used for specific activities with the teachers. For example, tell a persona doll story where a few of the dolls ask questions about what makes them a boy or a girl.

ADAPTATION

Some teachers and parents may strongly disagree with teachers' talking about genitals, using correct anatomical terms, showing books with photos of the naked body, or even using anatomically correct dolls in the classroom. Chapter 11, "Working With Parents," discusses strategies for talking and problem solving with parents if this issue comes up. Even if you ultimately decide not to use the direct approach of the activities suggested in this guide, it is important to find other ways to help your children understand that their body, not their behavior, makes them a girl or boy.

Expanding Awareness of Gender Roles

Many of the activities in this section are similar to those described in Chapter 7, "Learning About Cultural Differences and Similarities," and can be combined with them. In particular, see the activities for learning about different kinds of work.

- Read books about boys and girls that contradict gender stereotypes: *William's Doll* (Zolotow, 1972); *Stephanie and the Coyote* (Crowder, 1969); *Everybody Knows That* (Pearson, 1978).
- Have the children find and cut out magazine pictures of boys and girls, men and women, showing the diversity of looks, dress, activities, and emotions. Make books with the pictures: "About Girls and Women," "About Boys and Men."
- Create a display of photos and pictures of women and men doing the same kinds of tasks "in the home" and "in the world of work." Make sure there are racial and ethnic diversity and images of differently abled people. Use this to talk about the different tasks the children's family members do, and talk about what kinds of tasks the children do and would like to do when they grow up.
- As the teacher, role model learning new skills and sharing tasks in the classroom in nonsexist ways.
- Read books about different ways families are organized: two parents; single parents; children living with family members other than parents; two-parent families and a live-in grandparent; adopted two-parent, single-parent, same-race, different-race families; "blended" families; gay or lesbian families (two daddies or two mommies—you may decide not to use the words *gay* and *lesbian*, but the child deserves calm recognition of the reality of the composition of his family); only child; many children; cousins living as a family; families without children; single adults who do not live with their families (nieces,

EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS:

Minnesota's Early Learning Standards

Curtis, D., & Carter, M. (2000). *The art of awareness: How observation can transform your teaching.* St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

↙ **Derman-Sparks, L. (1989).** *Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

DeVries, R., Zan, B., Hildebrandt, C., Edmiaston, R., & Sales, C. (2002). *Developing constructivist early childhood curriculum: Practical principles and activities.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Dickinson, D., & Tabors, P. (Eds.) (2001). *Beginning literacy with language: Young children learning at home and school.* Baltimore: Brookes Publishers.

Dodge, D., Colker, L.J., & Heroman, C. (2002). *The creative curriculum for preschool.* Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies.

Edwards, C., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (Eds.) (1995). *The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Edwards, L. (1997). *The creative arts: A process approach for teachers and children.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

Engel, B.S. (1995). *Considering children's art: Why and how to value their works.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Epstein, A. (2003). How planning and reflection develop young children's thinking skills. *Young Children*, 58(5), 28-36.

French, L. (2004). Science as the center of a coherent, integrated early childhood curriculum. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 19(1), 138-149.

Gallahue, D. (1993). *Developmental physical education for today's children.* Madison, WI: Brown & Benchmark.

Gartrell, D. (2004). *The power of guidance: Teaching social-emotional skills in early childhood classrooms.* Clifton Park, NY: Delmar Learning & Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Ginsburg, H.P., Greenes, C., & Balfanz, R. (2003). *Big math for little kids.* Parsippany, NJ: Dale Seymour Publication, Pearson Learning Group.

Healthy-Start, LLC. (2004). *Healthy start: A comprehensive approach to health education for preschoolers and their families.* Available at: <http://www.healthy-start.com>.

Helm, J., & Katz, L. (2001). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Helm, J., & Beneke, S. (Eds.) (2003). *The power of projects.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Hendrick, J. (1995). *The whole child.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Merrill.

Hendrick, J. (1997). *Total curriculum for the whole child.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Hohmann, M., Banet, B., & Weikart, D. (1992). *Young children in action.* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

Hohmann, M., & Weikart, D. (2002). *Educating young children: Active learning practices for preschool and child care programs (2nd ed.).* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

**Senate Counsel, Research,
and Fiscal Analysis**

G-17 STATE CAPITOL
75 REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
ST. PAUL, MN 55155-1606
(651) 296-4791
FAX: (651) 296-7747
JO ANNE ZOFF SELLNER
DIRECTOR

Senate


State of Minnesota

S.F. No. 906 - Delete Everything Amendment (SCS0906A-3)

Author: Senator Terri Bonoff

Prepared by: Joan White, Senate Counsel (651/296-3814)

Date: March 22, 2006



Section 1 establishes the kindergarten entrance assessment initiative.

Subdivision 1 requires the commissioner of education to establish a method for assessing the school readiness of children entering kindergarten. Over a three-year period, school sites may implement the kindergarten entrance assessment initiative starting with the schools with the highest rank under the first-grade preparedness program. The first-grade preparedness program ranks all school sites from highest to lowest based on the site's free and reduced lunch count as a percentage of fall enrollment, with the highest incidence of free and reduced lunch receiving the highest rank.

In fiscal year 2008, 30 percent of children entering kindergarten will be asked to participate, in 2009, 50 percent of children entering kindergarten will be asked to participate, and in 2010, 100 percent of children entering kindergarten will be asked to participate in the kindergarten entrance assessment initiative.

Subdivision 2 establishes the intervention program, to provide additional instruction to children who are assessed and identified as being not yet ready for kindergarten. At the end of the kindergarten school year, the district must reassess each child who receives an intervention to evaluate the progress of the child over the kindergarten school year, and the success of the intervention strategy. The district must report the results to the commissioner.

Subdivision 3 requires the commissioner to report annually to the senate and house committees having jurisdiction over early childhood education issues on the results of the kindergarten entrance assessment initiative, and the results of the intervention program.

JW:mvm

Senators Kelley, Wergin, Sparks, Nienow and Pappas introduced--
S.F. No. 906: Referred to the Committee on Finance.

1 A bill for an act

2 relating to early childhood education; expanding early
3 childhood developmental screening; establishing a
4 school readiness kindergarten assessment initiative;
5 appropriating money; amending Minnesota Statutes 2004,
6 section 121A.17, subdivisions 1, 3.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

8 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 121A.17,
9 subdivision 1, is amended to read:

10 Subdivision 1. [EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING.]
11 Every school board must provide for a mandatory program of early
12 childhood developmental screening for children at least once
13 ~~before-school-entrance, targeting children who are between 3-1/2~~
14 ~~and four years old~~ by the child's third birthday. This
15 screening program must be established either by one board, by
16 two or more boards acting in cooperation, by service
17 cooperatives, by early childhood family education programs, or
18 by other existing programs. This screening examination is a
19 mandatory requirement for a student to continue attending
20 kindergarten or first grade in a public school. A child need
21 not submit to developmental screening provided by a board if the
22 child's health records indicate to the board that the child has
23 received comparable developmental screening from a public or
24 private health care organization or individual health care
25 provider. Districts are encouraged to reduce the costs of
26 preschool developmental screening programs by utilizing

1 volunteers and public or private health care organizations or
2 individual health care providers in implementing the program.

3 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 121A.17,
4 subdivision 3, is amended to read:

5 Subd. 3. [SCREENING PROGRAM.] (a) A screening program must
6 include at least the following components: developmental
7 assessments, hearing and vision screening or referral,
8 immunization review and referral, the child's height and weight,
9 identification of risk factors that may influence learning, an
10 interview with the parent about the child, and referral for
11 assessment, diagnosis, and treatment or referrals to appropriate
12 resources when potential needs are identified. The district and
13 the person performing or supervising the screening must provide
14 a parent or guardian with clear written notice that the parent
15 or guardian may decline to answer questions or provide
16 information about family circumstances that might affect
17 development and identification of risk factors that may
18 influence learning. The notice must clearly state that
19 declining to answer questions or provide information does not
20 prevent the child from being enrolled in kindergarten or first
21 grade if all other screening components are met. If a parent or
22 guardian is not able to read and comprehend the written notice,
23 the district and the person performing or supervising the
24 screening must convey the information in another manner. The
25 notice must also inform the parent or guardian that a child need
26 not submit to the district screening program if the child's
27 health records indicate to the school that the child has
28 received comparable developmental screening performed within the
29 preceding 365 days by a public or private health care
30 organization or individual health care provider. The notice
31 must be given to a parent or guardian at the time the district
32 initially provides information to the parent or guardian about
33 screening and must be given again at the screening location.

34 (b) All screening components shall be consistent with the
35 standards of the state commissioner of health for early
36 developmental screening programs. A developmental screening

1 program must not provide laboratory tests or a physical
2 examination to any child. The district must request from the
3 public or private health care organization or the individual
4 health care provider the results of any laboratory test or
5 physical examination within the 12 months preceding a child's
6 scheduled screening.

7 (c) If a child is without health coverage, the school
8 district must refer the child to an appropriate health care
9 provider.

10 (d) A board may offer additional components such as
11 nutritional, physical and dental assessments, review of family
12 circumstances that might affect development, blood pressure,
13 laboratory tests, and health history.

14 (e) If a statement signed by the child's parent or guardian
15 is submitted to the administrator or other person having general
16 control and supervision of the school that the child has not
17 been screened because of conscientiously held beliefs of the
18 parent or guardian, the screening is not required.

19 (f) The district must develop and implement community
20 outreach plans to diverse populations to ensure that all
21 children are screened by age three. Districts are encouraged to
22 include parents, community partners, public or private health
23 care organizations, and individual health care providers in the
24 development of the outreach plans.

25 Sec. 3. [SCHOOL READINESS KINDERGARTEN ASSESSMENT
26 INITIATIVE.]

27 Subdivision 1. [ESTABLISHMENT.] The commissioner of
28 education shall establish a system for assessing the school
29 readiness of children entering kindergarten, building on the two
30 school readiness studies conducted by the Department of
31 Education in 2002 and 2003. The department shall also set
32 biennial milestones for progress in the number of children
33 reaching proficiency on all measures of the assessment.

34 Subd. 2. [DESCRIPTION.] (a) The school readiness
35 kindergarten assessment initiative will be implemented in all
36 school districts in Minnesota on a voluntary basis over a

1 five-year period. The schedule for implementation is as follows:

2 (1) fiscal year 2006, 6,000 entering kindergarteners;

3 (2) fiscal year 2007, 18,000 entering kindergarteners;

4 (3) fiscal year 2008, 30,000 entering kindergarteners;

5 (4) fiscal year 2009, 45,000 entering kindergarteners; and

6 (5) fiscal year 2010, 60,000 entering kindergarteners.

7 (b) Results of the assessment must be included in the

8 annual school performance report cards under Minnesota Statutes,

9 section 120B.36.

10 Subd. 3. [EVALUATION AND REPORTING.] The commissioner

11 shall evaluate the effectiveness of the data gathering system

12 for implementing developmental assessments at kindergarten

13 entrance on a school-by-school basis. The commissioner shall

14 also report to the committees of the senate and house of

15 representatives having jurisdiction over early childhood

16 education issues on the progress toward reaching the milestones

17 in odd years beginning with fiscal year 2007.

18 [EFFECTIVE DATE.] This section is effective June 30, 2005.

19 Sec. 4. [APPROPRIATION.]

20 Subdivision 1. [DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.] The sums

21 indicated in this section are appropriated from the general fund

22 to the Department of Education for the fiscal years designated.

23 Subd. 2. [HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING AID.] For

24 health and developmental screening aid under Minnesota Statutes,

25 sections 121A.17 and 121A.19:

26 \$..... .. 2006

27 \$..... .. 2007

28 The 2006 appropriation includes \$..... for 2005 and

29 \$..... for 2006.

30 The 2007 appropriation includes \$..... for 2006 and

31 \$..... for 2007.

32 Subd. 3. [SCHOOL READINESS KINDERGARTEN ASSESSMENT

33 INITIATIVE.] For the school readiness kindergarten initiative:

34 \$..... .. 2006

35 \$..... .. 2007

1.1 Senator moves to amend S.F. No. 906 as follows:

1.2 Delete everything after the enacting clause and insert:

1.3 "Section 1. [124D.136] KINDERGARTEN ENTRANCE ASSESSMENT
1.4 INITIATIVE; INTERVENTION PROGRAM.

1.5 Subdivision 1. Kindergarten entrance assessment initiative. (a) The
1.6 commissioner of education shall establish a method for assessing the school readiness of
1.7 children entering kindergarten, building on the two school readiness studies conducted by
1.8 the Department of Education in 2002 and 2003.

1.9 (b) Over a three-year period, school sites may implement the kindergarten entrance
1.10 assessment initiative based on the school rank under section 124D.081, starting with
1.11 the school sites with the highest rank. Under section 124D.081, the commissioner of
1.12 education ranks all school sites based on the incidence of free and reduced lunch. The
3 school sites with the highest incidence of free and reduced lunch receive the highest rank.

1.14 The schedule for implementation is as follows:

1.15 (1) fiscal year 2008, 30 percent of children entering kindergarten;

1.16 (2) fiscal year 2009, 50 percent of children entering kindergarten; and

1.17 (3) fiscal year 2010, 100 percent of children entering kindergarten.

1.18 Subd. 2. Intervention program. A school site that participates in the kindergarten
1.19 entrance assessment initiative under subdivision 1 must work with the school district and
1.20 other community partners to establish a kindergarten readiness intervention program
1.21 to provide additional instruction to children who are assessed and identified as being
1.22 not yet ready for kindergarten. Each child will have a locally determined intervention
3 strategy focusing the curriculum content on the individualized needs of that child. The
1.24 commissioner, at a district's request, must assist the district and the school to develop
1.25 the intervention program. At the end of the kindergarten school year, the district must
1.26 reassess each child who receives an intervention to evaluate the progress of the child
1.27 over the kindergarten year and the success of the intervention strategy developed for that
1.28 child. The district must report the results of the intervention and year-end assessment to
1.29 the commissioner.

1.30 Subd. 3. Report to legislature. The commissioner shall report annually to the
1.31 senate and house of representatives committees having jurisdiction over early childhood
1.32 education on the results of the kindergarten entrance assessment initiative, and the results
3 of the intervention program."

1.34 Amend the title accordingly





**Hermantown/Proctor
Early Childhood Coalition**

ECFE Office
5028 Miller Trunk Hwy
Hermantown, MN 55811
Phone: 218/729-9563
Fax: 218/729-0370
ifichtner@hermantown.k12.mn.us

Lori Fichtner
Community Coordinator

In partnership with
**Northland
Foundation**

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Hermantown/Proctor communities include two school districts, which work together as neighbors, but retain their separate identities. Each serves residents within its city limits as well as in outlying townships. Proctor and Hermantown collaborate to provide a top quality Community Education program, including early childhood services. Both communities support families with young children. Through a partnership with the Northland Foundation's Minnesota Early Childhood Initiative, the Hermantown/Proctor Early Childhood Coalition is working to ensure all young children thrive and have a healthy life of learning, achieving, and succeeding.

For more information contact:

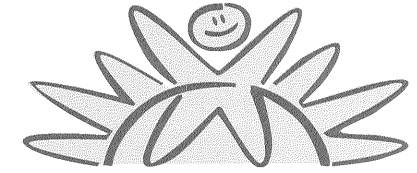
Lori Fichtner, Coordinator
Hermantown/Proctor Early Childhood
Coalition
5028 Miller Trunk Highway
Hermantown, Minnesota 55811
(218) 729-9563

The Minnesota Early Childhood Initiative
is a program of the Northland Foundation



MINNESOTA EARLY CHILDHOOD
INITIATIVE
a campaign for our youngest children

Lori Fichtner, Coordinator
Hermantown/Proctor Early Childhood Coalition
5028 Miller Trunk Highway
Hermantown, MN 55811



Hermantown/Proctor

Brightening the Future For our youngest Citizens



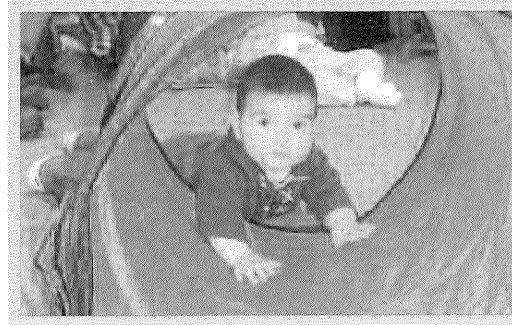
Hermantown/Proctor Early Childhood Vision

Welcoming Atmosphere

Our community of Hermantown/Proctor values each member. We provide a safe, welcoming atmosphere by promoting community gatherings, activities, and programs. Neighbors and organizations work together to support each other and their unique strengths and needs. Diversity of all kinds is embraced and valued. Family activities are promoted to include the youngest of children to the oldest of adults.

Nurturing & Caring Community

We, in the Proctor/Hermantown community, care about each other. We nurture and protect our children. Understanding the demands placed on parents, we strive to provide an environment where families are encouraged, supported, and mentored. Life-long learning opportunities and support services are provided for personal and community growth.



Quality of Life

Our community is committed to providing quality, accessible, available, and affordable community-based services to all members. Early Childhood caregivers and educators are respected, highly trained, and skilled. We promote healthy prenatal outcomes in order to enhance child development. Quality medical and mental health services are available to all. Our community is safe and violence free.

Quality Education

The Proctor/Hermantown community regards a high-quality education as a right for all. We embrace a variety of life-long learning opportunities. We believe strong connections between home, school, and community are essential. Our community recognizes a quality educational system that provides programming prenatal/birth to Grade 12. Training and Education are valued for all who work with children.

Hermantown/Proctor Early Childhood Goals

Welcoming Atmosphere

Partnerships will be supported between the community, business, education, and government to maintain a safe community environment. Safe and clean indoor and outdoor gathering places will be provided. We will support and promote the concept of neighborhood get-togethers, i.e. "National Night Out".

Nurturing & Caring Community

Our community will support a movement that respects and values *families first*. The entire community will benefit from opportunities to build quality relationships.

Quality of Life

A task force will be established to determine the assets and needs of the community. This information will be used to develop programs.

Quality Education

By exploring ways to develop home, school, and community connections, we will promote and achieve high quality education.

Getting School Ready In Minnesota

**“I want to be ready
for kindergarten.”**



**“How can kindergarten
be ready for me?”**

A guide for parents, family members,
caregivers, and teachers of children who will be
attending kindergarten in Minnesota.

Acknowledgements

In 2003, the Northland Foundation and the five other Minnesota Initiative Foundations launched the Minnesota Early Childhood Initiative. Together, they are developing grassroots coalitions, made up of diverse community sectors, to strengthen local resources for young children and their families across the state.

MINNESOTA EARLY CHILDHOOD



INITIATIVE

a campaign for our youngest children

Minnesota Initiative Foundations

The **Getting School Ready in Minnesota Guide** is part of a broader school readiness project developed by the Northland Foundation and the Northeastern Minnesota Early Childhood Initiative Regional Alliance. This Alliance is comprised of Aitkin County, Carlton County, Fond du Lac Reservation, Hermantown/Proctor, Itasca Area, Koochiching County, and Mesabi East School District Coalitions. Special thanks to the Alliance members who developed this guide. They include early care and education professionals from Early Childhood Family Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Family Services Collaboratives, Head Start, School Readiness, and Ready 4 K.

Sponsors

The following organizations provided financial resources to publish and distribute this guide throughout Minnesota.

Minnesota Initiative Foundations

Northland Foundation
 Northwest Minnesota Foundation
 Initiative Foundation
 West Central Initiative
 Southwest Minnesota Foundation
 Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

Blandin Foundation

Ready 4 K

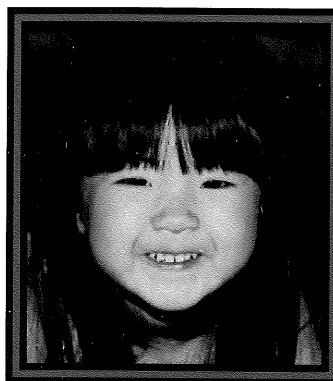
Credits

The **Getting School Ready In Minnesota Guide** is based on a publication developed by the Getting School Ready Project (Seattle/King County, Washington).

Permission granted to reprint for educational purposes.

Winter 2006

**If children could tell us,
here's what they might say:**



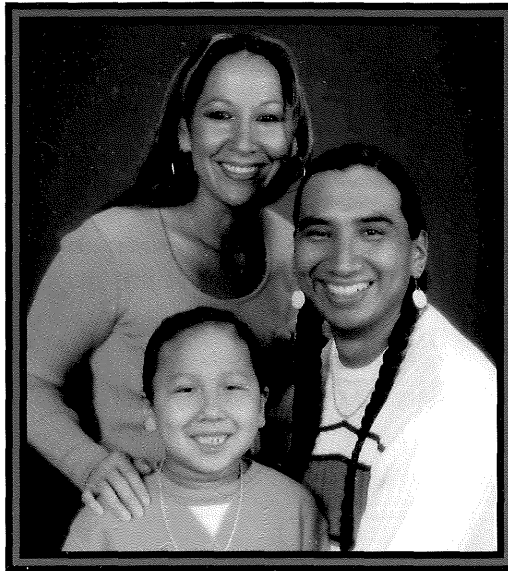
**“I need adults to work together to help
me get school ready.”**

**How are you already helping?
Read on to see.**

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Social and Emotional Skills	5
Social and Emotional Skill-Builders	6
Word Skills	7
Word Skill-Builders	8
Number Skills	9
Number Skill-Builders	10
Learning Skills	11
Learning Skill-Builders	11
Safety and Health Skill-Builders	12
Family, Culture, and Language	14
Communication Among Grown-ups	15

Getting School Ready In Minnesota

- What do children need to be ready for kindergarten?
- What can families and caregivers do to prepare their children for kindergarten, while the school is getting ready for them?



Children learn through a variety of activities and experiences. While there is no perfect formula to know when a child is ready for kindergarten, this guide can be used by parents, caregivers, and teachers to make good decisions in preparing a young child for kindergarten. Checklists and helpful hints are provided in

this guide to help you prepare a child to be a confident and successful learner.

Children benefit when their families participate and are involved in their learning and development. And yet, ALL – parents, caregivers, schools, and communities – contribute to the well being of children.

Social and Emotional Skills

Checklist of general expectations for children

Children entering kindergarten should be able to take care of themselves and their personal things and work independently.

- Hang coat on a hook
- Put on and take off shoes
- Handle toileting needs
- Pick up toys and put them in appropriate places
- Follow a daily routine
- Separate from caregiver and adjust to new settings
- Choose activities independently

Children entering kindergarten should learn to make friends, solve problems with others, show empathy, and negotiate.

- Join one or more children in play
- Interact easily with familiar adults
- Begin to recognize and respond to others' emotions
- Use words and phrases, such as *"Can I play with you?"* or *"Please stop. I don't like that."*

Children entering kindergarten should have a growing sense of self to take risks as a learner.

- Show increasing self direction and independence
- Begin to have a sense of family and tradition

Social and Emotional Skill-Builders

Helpful hints for parents, caregivers, and teachers



“I need to feel excited and comfortable about starting kindergarten.”

Things **you can** do:

- Let me know you're excited about me starting kindergarten.
- Give me a chance to visit my school before I start.
- Listen to my thoughts and ideas about school.
- Help me pretend I'm in school.

“I need to know what kindergarten will be like.”

Things **you can** do:

- Teach me to follow directions by giving me simple steps.
- Help me to learn how to share with other children, stand in line, wait my turn, and sit in a group.

“I need to feel good about myself.”

Things **you can** do:

- Pay attention to me and listen to my ideas.
- Help me feel good about things I can do.
- Praise me for my strengths.
- Be patient and let me develop at my own pace.
- Teach me that all my feelings are okay, but not all my actions are okay.
- Teach me ways to calm myself when I get frustrated.

"I need to get along with others."

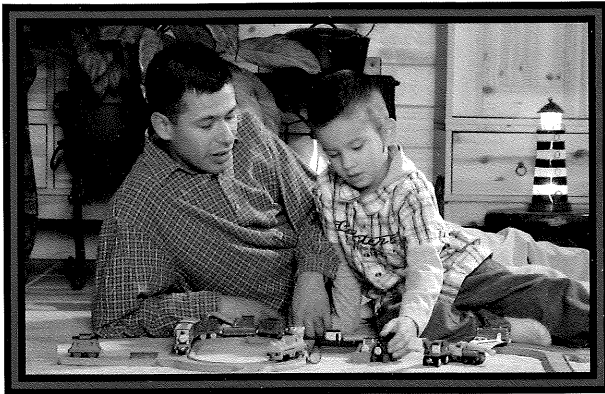
Things **you can** do:

- Show me ways to make new friends.
- Help me understand how I can be friends with children who are different than me.
- Teach me to use words when someone hurts my feelings, such as *"Please stop. That hurts my feelings."*

"I need to know how to talk and listen to others."

Things **you can** do:

- Talk with me about things I find interesting.
- Teach me how to know when it's my turn to speak and when I need to listen.
- Teach me to use words to describe my feelings and needs, and when to use them.



Word Skills

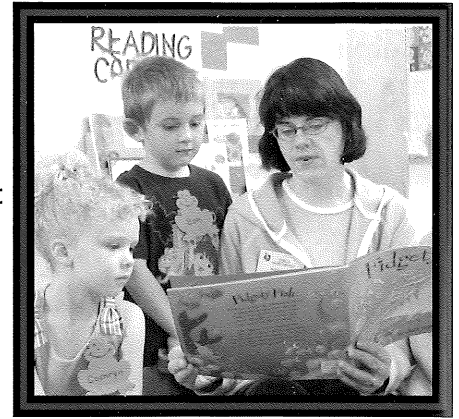
Checklist of general expectations for children

Children entering kindergarten should be able to listen to stories and have conversations.

- Listen and understand stories, conversations, and directions
- Start conversations
- Ask and respond to questions
- Recognize rhyming words
- Use a growing vocabulary

Children entering kindergarten should be able to recognize their name, interact with stories, re-tell stories, and make guesses using pictures.

- Recognize and name some letters of the alphabet, especially those in their own name
- Guess what will happen next in a story using pictures as a guide
- Begin to show an interest and understanding in written language by asking "What does that say?"



Children entering kindergarten should be able to hold a pencil, write their names, and express themselves using pictures.

- Use scribbles, shapes, and pictures to represent thoughts or ideas
- Begin to copy or write their own name

Word Skill-Builders

Helpful hints for parents, caregivers, and teachers

"I need to be familiar with words and books."

Things **you can** do:

- Teach me new words.
- Show me words and symbols in my language and the sounds they make.
- Read to me, take me to the library, and bring me books and magazines.
- Ask me questions about stories to help me understand their meaning.
- Sing songs and teach me rhymes.
- Write down my words or stories as I tell you.

Number Skills

Checklist of general expectations for children

Children entering kindergarten should be able to count, sort, classify, and create patterns.

- Count objects, such as cups, when setting the table
- Sort objects by color, size, or shape

Children entering kindergarten should be able to identify colors and shapes around them.

- Describe simple shapes
- Identify colors
- Play matching games

Children entering kindergarten should use language to describe math concepts.

- Use language to describe time, such as *"today or tomorrow"*
- Describe people or objects using *"big, little, short, tall, long,"* etc.



Number Skill-Builders

Helpful hints for parents, caregivers, and teachers

“I need to know shapes, sizes, and colors.”

Things **you can** do:

- Give me things to sort by shape, size, or color.
- Help me find and name shapes and colors all around me.

“I need to learn to count and understand that numbers have meaning.”

Things **you can** do:

- Help me play counting games.
- Let me count things at home.
- Show me how numbers are used around me.



Learning Skills

Checklist of general expectations for children

Children entering kindergarten should have experiences through play to become confident learners.

- Be flexible and imaginative in play
- Play for a period of time
- Stay with a task when faced with a challenge
- Use new ideas in solving problems or exploring objects
- Try to figure things out
- Seek and/or accept help when needed
- Apply knowledge and experiences to new situations

Learning Skill-Builders

Helpful hints for parents, caregivers, and teachers

“I need to be excited about learning.”

Things **you can** do:

- Encourage me to explore with my senses - to see, touch, hear, smell, and taste.
- Give me fun, exciting choices.
- Give me lots of time to figure things out.

“I need to learn to try things and keep trying even when it seems hard.”

Things **you can** do:

- Give me activities that hold my interest.
- Help me explore and try new activities.
- Help me learn step by step.
- Teach me that making mistakes is part of learning.
- Show me different ways to understand my world.

Safety and Health Skill-Builders

Helpful hints for parents, caregivers, and teachers

“I need to be safe and feel safe.”

Things **you can** do:

- Help me practice saying my name, address, and phone number.
- Teach me about crossing the street and watching for cars.
- Teach me about not talking to strangers and who is a safe person to ask for help.



“I need to have bathroom and self-help skills.”

Things **you can** do:

- Teach me the words to tell other grown-ups when I need to go to the bathroom, or when I am feeling sick or hurt.
- Help me learn to go to the bathroom and wash my hands by myself.
- Teach me to dress and tie my shoes.
- Encourage me to try things before I ask my teacher for help.

“I need to have my basic needs met before I come to school each day.”

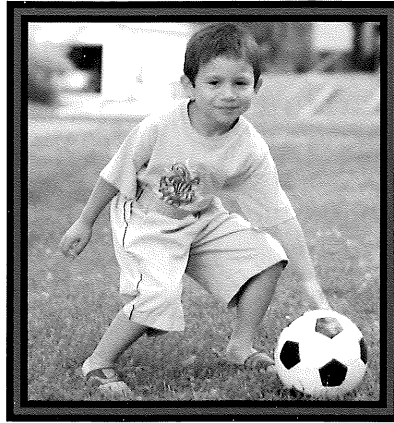
Things **you can** do:

- Make sure I eat healthy food, get plenty of rest, and dress for the weather.
- Take me to all my medical check-ups and make sure I see the doctor and the dentist before I start school.
- Teach me how to brush my teeth.

“I need to be able to use my hands and fingers to do small tasks.”

Things **you can** do:

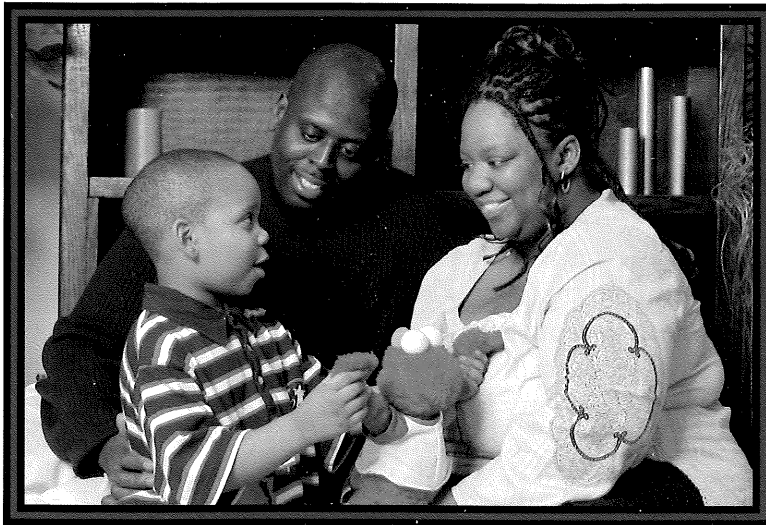
- Help me to pick up, hold and use pencils, crayons, markers, paintbrushes, and scissors.
- Help me make things with blocks, paper, cardboard, and tape.



“I need to be able to use my arms, legs, and body to make big movements.”

Things **you can** do:

- Encourage me to run, jump, climb, dance, and move to music as I am able.
- Give me time each day to play outdoors.
- Encourage me to play and **limit my TV and computer time.**



Support For My Family, Culture, and Language

Helpful hints for parents, caregivers, and teachers

“I need to feel good about my family and culture, and to learn about other cultures.”

Things **you and my school can** do:

- Show me books, tell me stories, and sing me songs about my culture and other cultures.
- Take me to places that teach me about my culture and other cultures.
- Use the language(s) I know to help me understand and learn.

“I need my school to welcome my family.”

Things **my school can** do:

- Put up welcoming signs in the language I speak at home.
- Learn about my community and culture before I arrive.
- Let my family know who to go to with ideas or questions.
- Invite us to participate in the school, classroom, and PTA.

“My family and I want all the grown-ups at my school to know and respect my culture, my learning style, and my family.”

Things **my school can** do:

- Understand that school may be my first introduction to cultures and languages other than my own.
- Let me know if my classroom teacher and others at school can speak my home language.
- Invite my family and me to share information with my teacher and classmates about my family or culture.
- Support my family culture by putting me in a class with other children who share my home language and culture.
- Let me know that speaking my language strengthens all my language skills.

Communication Among the Grown-ups in My Life

Helpful hints for parents, caregivers, and teachers

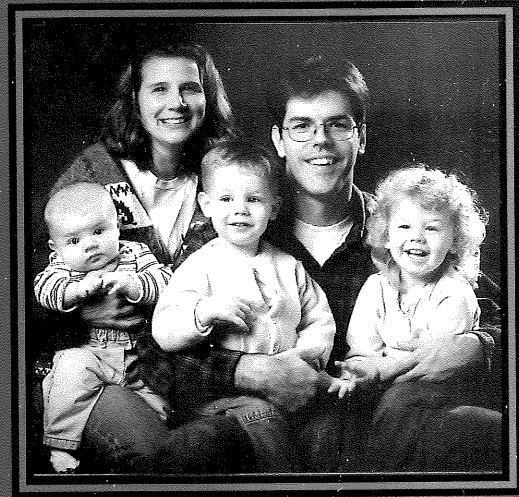
“My school experience will be best if my early childhood educators, kindergarten teachers, school staff, parents, and family members work together to help me learn.”

Things **you and my school can** do:

- Share with each other.
- Share things happening in my life that might affect how I feel and act.
- Participate in Early Childhood Screening.
- Find out about any special abilities and needs I have.
- Learn about school and community services.
- Volunteer at school.



“I need my family to know what is happening at my school, what I am learning, and what I am expected to know.”



**Ensuring that all young children thrive and
have a healthy life of learning, achieving,
and succeeding.**

Produced by:

**NORTHLAND
FOUNDATION**

SCHOOL READINESS STUDY IN PROCTOR AND HERMANTOWN
Fall 2005

Our ECFE and School Readiness programs have had outstanding support and direction in the areas of evaluation and planning. This has been important because of the changing needs of children and families. What has been so beneficial in studies like the School Readiness Study, Year 3, is that evaluations are conducted and results analyzed by people who work in the field. These results are closely scrutinized and discussed so that recommendations made are meaningful regardless of your program size. They provide necessary guidance for program goal setting.

As we looked at the recommendations for using the School Readiness Year 3 Study in our communities, we chose five to concentrate on:

1. **Develop or enhance “TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN” initiatives for both children and their parents.** Like many programs, we have known for a long time that we needed to strengthen the tie between early childhood and kindergarten. Both were working in isolation and the result was ineffective for the benefit of children and parents. Our participation in this study prompted us to get this off the back burner and address it. This would include: Communication on expectations of kindergarteners, planning curriculum content in early childhood and kindergarten classrooms.
2. **Work for the common goal of SCHOOL READINESS FOR ALL CHILDREN.**
First and foremost – we needed to define what school readiness was. What we found in this process was that teachers (ec and kindergarten alike) held a personal bias on what defined school readiness. This was confusing to all who worked with young children – teachers, child-care providers, and most of all parents.
3. **Find additional partners to address school readiness issues in the community.**
Becoming an Early Childhood Coalition of the Northland Foundation helped to put this in place by recognizing all the community partners beyond the school district and Head Start including daycare centers, family child care providers and private schools.
4. **Continue to support parents in their role as children’s first teachers.** We will provide information about educational choices, parenting information, and appropriate ways to expand learning at home.
5. **Continue to focus on improving children’s early language and literacy and math at the same time increasing their personal and social skills and development in all areas.** These were the areas identified as needing a greater focus as children start kindergarten. They became a primary focus in our curriculum planning, learning environment, parent/child learning activities and newsletters.

**Minnesota School Readiness Year Three Study
Strategic Sample Results – School District Level
Proctor, District #704**

<i>Domain</i>	Table 1: Readiness Levels by Domain (Average Number and Percent) <i>N=131</i>					
	District #704	Year 2 Statewide SRS	District #704	Year 2 Statewide SRS	District #704	Year 2 Statewide SRS
	<i>Not Yet</i>		<i>In Process</i>		<i>Proficient</i>	
<i>Physical Development</i>	<i>N=2</i> 1%	<i>N=76</i> 2%	<i>N=14</i> 11%	<i>N=1,207</i> 41%	<i>N=114</i> 88%	<i>N=1,702</i> 57%
<i>The Arts</i>	<i>N=2</i> 1%	<i>N=170</i> 6%	<i>N=17</i> 13%	<i>N=1,413</i> 48%	<i>N=113</i> 86%	<i>N=1,391</i> 47%
<i>Personal and Social Development</i>	<i>N=1</i> 1%	<i>N=266</i> 9%	<i>N=21</i> 16%	<i>N=1,317</i> 44%	<i>N=108</i> 83%	<i>N=1,407</i> 47%
<i>Language and Literacy</i>	<i>N=4</i> 3%	<i>N=345</i> 12%	<i>N=26</i> 20%	<i>N=1,363</i> 46%	<i>N=101</i> 77%	<i>N=1,283</i> 43%
<i>Mathematical Thinking</i>	<i>N=3</i> 2%	<i>N=318</i> 11%	<i>N=31</i> 23%	<i>N=1,489</i> 50%	<i>N=98</i> 75%	<i>N=1,186</i> 40%

Table 1 shows that three-fourths or more of the Proctor School District kindergartners were proficient, on average, in all five domains, with most proficiency shown in physical development (88%) followed by the arts (86%), personal and social development (83%), language and literacy (77%), and mathematical thinking (75%). In all five domains, the Proctor children showed higher average “proficiency” ratings than the statewide averages from the Year Two study, ranging from 31-39 percent higher across the five domains. The Proctor kindergartners ranged from 11-23 percent in their average “in process” ratings across the five domains, and the average “not yet” rating across the five domains was one to three percent.

When examining the individual indicators in Table 2, two indicators in language and literacy had “not yet” ratings of ten percent (*N=13* each) – “begins to develop knowledge about letters” and “demonstrates phonological awareness.”

Most of the parents (95%) responded to the parent survey. Table 3 shows that most of the parents reported their education level as trade school or some college beyond high school (42%), and almost 57 percent of the parents reported incomes under \$55,000 with 25 percent at \$0-\$35,000.

Proctor has two elementary schools. Results for both schools were similar and close to the overall district ratings. At one school the average proficiency ratings ranged from 69-86 percent across the domains with differences of zero-six percent less in proficiency ratings as compared to those for the district. “In process” average ratings were somewhat higher than the district for this school (0-5% range), and “not yet” average ratings were almost identical. The other elementary school had average proficiency ratings ranging from 80-94 percent with differences of three-ten percent higher than district average proficiency ratings. There were almost no average “not yet” ratings for this school.

Minnesota School Readiness Year Three Study
Strategic Sample Results – School District and School Level
Hermantown, District #700
Hermantown Elementary
Principal Dennis Nelson
536 West Arrowhead
Hermantown, MN 55811

Domain	Table 1: Readiness Levels by Domain (Average Number and Percent) N=118					
	District #700	Year 2 Statewide SRS	District #700	Year 2 Statewide SRS	District #700	Year 2 Statewide SRS
	Not Yet		In Process		Proficient	
Physical Development	N=16 14%	N=76 2%	N=46 39%	N=1,207 41%	N=56 47%	N=1,702 57%
Mathematical Thinking	N=12 10%	N=318 11%	N=55 47%	N=1,489 50%	N=51 43%	N=1,186 40%
Personal and Social Development	N=13 11%	N=266 9%	N=57 49%	N=1,317 44%	N=47 40%	N=1,407 47%
The Arts	N=15 13%	N=170 6%	N=57 48%	N=1,413 48%	N=46 39%	N=1,391 47%
Language and Literacy	N=20 17%	N=345 12%	N=54 46%	N=1,363 46%	N=45 38%	N=1,283 43%

Table 1 shows that less than half of the Hermantown School District kindergartners were proficient, on average, in all five domains, with most proficiency shown in physical development (47%) followed by mathematical thinking (43%), personal and social development (40%), the arts (39%), and language and literacy (38%). The Hermantown children showed higher average proficiency ratings than the statewide average from the Year Two study in the domain of mathematical thinking (3% higher). In the other four domains their average ratings were five-ten percent lower than the statewide ratings. The Hermantown kindergartners ranged from 39-49 percent in their average “in process” ratings across the five domains, very similar to the statewide average “in process” ratings in the Year Two study.

Ten percent or more of the school district children were rated, on average, as not yet showing the skills, knowledge, behaviors, or accomplishments in all five domains with the highest “not yet” average rating in language and literacy (17%) followed by physical development (14%), the arts (13%), personal and social development (11%), and mathematical thinking (10%). Other than in mathematical thinking, the other four domains had average “not yet” ratings that were two-twelve percent higher than the Year Two statewide average “not yet” ratings.

When examining the individual indicators in Table 2, three indicators in language and literacy stand out as having higher “not yet” ratings than the other indicators – “uses letter-like shapes, symbols, and letters to convey meaning” at 38 percent, “demonstrates phonological awareness” at 27 percent, and “begins to develop knowledge about letters” at 21 percent. In addition, note a number of other indicators with “not yet” ratings of 15 percent or more across the other domains.

Eighty-eight percent of the parents responded to the parent survey. Table 3 shows that over 44 percent of the parents reported education levels of Bachelor’s, graduate, or professional school degrees; and almost 70 percent reported household incomes above \$55,000.

Hermantown/Proctor
Early Childhood Program
Childcare Connections Assessment Tool

Bridging Child Care & Schools

This assessment tool is designed for the childcare provider to observe and record the growth and development of children who are four or five years old. Its purpose is to identify strengths in children's understanding in the areas of math, literacy, and social/emotional development as well as how children approach learning. Through play and observation, childcare providers can identify kindergarten readiness in children.

In this assessment tool, you will find examples and questions designed to guide you as you observe the children in your care. Space is also provided for you to document your observations and reflections.

Children show growth and understanding in many different ways and in their own time. The year before kindergarten is an exciting time for parents and their children. This assessment tool will guide the childcare provider with examples and ideas of important learning areas needed for kindergarten success.

Child's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Provider _____

Elementary School attending _____

Date Recorded: from ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

AREAS OF LEARNING

***Emotional and Social Development**

- * Language and Literacy
- * Mathematical Thinking
- * Approaches to Learning

EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. My responsible self

Kindergarteners need to be able to take care of themselves, their personal things, and work independently.

- _____ Hangs coat up
- _____ Takes shoe on/off
- _____ Toilets self
- _____ Washes hands
- _____ Picks up toys/puts them away in appropriate place
- _____ Follows the daily routine set by the provider
- _____ Is able to transition when dropped off or picked up from daycare home
- _____ Is able to choose activities independently

How does this child take care of him/herself at daycare? Give examples:

B. How I get along with others

Kindergarteners need to learn to make friends, solve problems with words, show empathy and negotiate.

- _____ Uses words or phrases such as, "Please stop, that hurts."
- _____ Is beginning to negotiate
- _____ Is able to join a group of children in play
- _____ Interacts with familiar adults
- _____ Recognizes and responds to other emotions

How does the child get along with others at daycare?

C. Who am I?

Kindergarteners need a strong sense of self to take risks as a learner.

- _____ Shows self-direction
- _____ Independence

How does this child show a sense of self?

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

A. Listening and Speaking

Kindergarteners need to be able to listen and speak appropriately and respectfully to stories and conversations.

- _____ Listens with understanding to stories, directions, and conversation
- _____ Asks appropriate questions
- _____ Responds appropriately
- _____ Initiates conversations
- _____ Language is growing and changing

How does this child listen and participate in conversations?

B. Emergent Reading

Kindergarteners need to be able to read their name, interact with stories, retell stories and make guesses using pictures.

- _____ Recognizes and names some letters of the alphabet, especially those in own name
- _____ Guesses what will happen next in a story using pictures as a guide
- _____ Retells information from a story
- _____ Beginning to show an interest and understanding of the written language. Asks: "What does that say?"

How does this child show an interest in reading?

C. Emergent Reading

Kindergarteners need to be able to hold a pencil, write their name, and express themselves using pictures.

- _____ Communicates with "writing"
- _____ Uses scribbles, shapes, pictures or dictation to represent thoughts or ideas
- _____ Begins to copy or write name

How does this child communicate with writing?

MATHEMATICAL THINKING

A. Use of Numbers & Patterns

Kindergarteners need to be able to count, sort, classify, and create patterns.

- _____ Child is able to count objects such as cups when setting the table
- _____ Organizes objects according to similarities (red cars/blue cars)
- _____ Child is able to copy a simple clapping pattern

Describe how this child uses numbers in your daycare setting:

B. Colors & Shapes

Kindergarteners need to identify colors & shapes in their environment.

- _____ Child is able to describe simple shapes
- _____ Child is able to identify simple colors
- _____ Child is able to play matching games

Describe how you have seen this child use color or shapes.

C. Measurement of people, objects & time

Kindergarteners need to have experience using language to describe math concepts.

- _____ Child uses language to describe
- _____ Child is able to describe people or objects using big, little, short, tall, long, short, etc.

Describe how this child uses language when comparing objects, people, or time.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

A. Risk-Taking & Perseverance

Kindergarteners need to have experiences with play and risk-taking, as well as working to solve a problem to become confident learners.

- _____ Stays with a task when forced with a challenge
- _____ Wants to figure things out
- _____ Plays for a period of time
- _____ Adapts play with imaginative use of play things
- _____ Has new ideas

Describe how this child uses risk-taking & perseverance in their play.

SUMMARY—WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

As you reflect on what you have learned about this child, think about a goal that you would like to set for this child.

What would you like this child's kindergarten teacher to know about him/her?

Completed by _____

I have reviewed this assessment and give my permission to share this information with the school district's Kindergarten teachers.

Parent (guardian) signature

Date

This assessment tool was developed by the Proctor/Hermantown Early Childhood Program using the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards, 2005.

For more information, call 218-729-9563 or e-mail odoco@cs.com or lorifichtner@hermantown.k12.mn.us

Getting School Ready!

Hermantown Early Childhood Programs February 2006

COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN— It's time for Kindergarten Roundup!

Roundup is a **COUNTDOWN to KINDERGARTEN** that brings together children, parents, and educators. Remember that as your child's first and most important teacher, here you can convene the significant adults in your child's life. It is an opportunity for children and their parents to prepare for the kindergarten experience.

Even though marching off to kindergarten is not the rite of passage

it once was, it is still a big change for most children. Going to a "real" school is a transition for 5 year olds because they have been hearing about going to school for such a long time. But no matter how ready they may seem, kindergarten "newcomers" are apt to feel overwhelmed at first. Everyone is a stranger and everything seems "huge" - the playground, the gym, the older children in the hallways,

and the lunchroom. With all of these changes lurking in your child's pathway to school, Kindergarten Roundup is an opportunity to smooth this transition into kindergarten.



How to make the most of your participation in Roundup

First, talk to your child about what to expect before she goes. Meeting teachers, seeing classrooms, visiting with friends and future classmates is all part of the visit. Just like us, children like to have "pictures" in their mind of how things will go.

Among the people you'll meet will be kindergarten teachers, the principal, transportation director, nurse, and Title 1 teacher.

The **transportation director** will talk about schedules, safety, and accommodations for kindergar-

ten children.

The **school nurse** will talk about guidelines for deciding if your child is healthy and well enough to go to school, what immunizations are required and at what age, policies for use of medications in school, and the guidelines for sending ill students home.

Hermantown
Kindergarten
Roundup is
March 17



UPCOMING
EVENTS:

Art Fair

April 1

**Health &
Safety Fair**

May 6

What About Parent Involvement?

What does *Parent Involvement* mean?

It means that you care about your child's education and find ways to let her/him and the school know that you care. When families send a positive message to their children about the importance of education, children have more success in school. Research has clearly proven that the students with involved parents are more likely

to earn higher grades and test scores, to be promoted, to adjust well to school, to attend regularly, and to graduate. So talk with your child's teacher early in the year and often throughout the year. Tell the teacher what you know about your child and ask for more ways to help your child at home.



At Roundup, be sure to ask questions! Ask questions of teachers, principals, bus drivers, the school nurse, the Title I teacher, and other parents!

You Are Invited ...

The Hermantown Elementary school PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) would like to extend a warm welcome to all new students, parents and guardians to the Hermantown Elementary School. We look forward to helping make your transition into school a very positive experience. The PTO is made up of parents, guardians, teachers

and staff. PTO sponsors many events throughout the school year as well as holding monthly informative meetings to help you keep in touch with what is happening at your school.

Information about the PTO will be available at your child's Kindergarten Roundup or you

may contact current PTO chairperson: Lisa Van Baalen @ 729-9067 or e-mail at vanbaalen5@msn.com

For more information contact PTO chairperson Lisa VanBaalen at 729-9067, or e-mail her at vanbaalen5@msn.com

What is Title I?

Title I is a federally funded program that reinforces reading and math skills. It is a flexible program in which children are either worked with in class or travel to another room to work—at the classroom teacher's discretion. The classroom teacher refers students to the Title I program based on results

from their performance during the first few months of school. The decision is based on sound and letter recognition.

In kindergarten the Title I teacher typically helps students with writing their names and recognizing letters and sounds. The Title I teacher makes it fun

for the children who participate.

"They like to come down to my room, and others ask if they can come too."

— Mary Tafs, Title I Teacher



Note: If you are planning to send your child to kindergarten in the fall but will be unable to attend roundup, please contact the school to let them know of your plans @ 729-6891.

The Hermantown/Proctor Early Childhood Coalition was formed in the fall of 2003 to ensure all young children thrive and have a healthy life of learning, achieving, and succeeding. Coalition members represent many aspects of our community including parents, kindergarten teachers, elementary principals, school superintendents, Community Education, home daycare providers, center-based daycare, private pre-school providers, the business community, the faith community, law enforcement, city government, and Early Care and Education staff (Head Start, ECFE, ECSE, and School Readiness).

As a result of the Proctor and Hermantown Schools' participation in the Year 3 School Readiness Study, a Kindergarten Transition Team was formed. This Committee is made up of the Elementary Principal and a Kindergarten teacher from each district as well as a representative from School Readiness, Head Start, ECFE, a private pre-school, a parent from each District, and the Early Childhood Coalition Coordinator. This team meets twice a year to develop strategies on how best to reach ALL children to improve their readiness to enter kindergarten.

We have been able to implement two of these strategies through the grant-writing process. The first is our "Bridges to Kindergarten" program geared toward children the year before kindergarten and their parents. A series of evening and Saturday activities are offered to these children focusing on the various areas of learning including Cognitive Development, Language and Literacy Development, Social Emotional Development, Approaches to Learning, Creativity and the Arts, and Physical and Motor Development. Each event includes both a parent education component as well as activities to help the child enhance their skills. Four of these events are held at the Elementary School kindergarten classrooms and are staffed by a team of early childhood teachers and Kindergarten teachers. It is an opportunity for the adults to build relationships and for the children to become comfortable in the kindergarten classrooms. Parents are given ideas of things they can do at home to enhance their child's learning.

An Early Childhood Teacher develops a monthly newsletter highlighting a different area of learning. The newsletter topic is tied to the "Bridges" Event for that month. This newsletter is mailed to every family in both districts with a child identified to be age appropriate for Kindergarten in the fall. It is also sent to home daycare providers.

The second strategy we have implemented is our "Providers as Partners in Education" program. A licensed Early Childhood Teacher works with 24 in-home daycare providers. She visits each provider three times during the school year. A typical visit consists of doing a circle time with the provider and all the children, answering questions about their learning environment or selection of curriculum

materials and helping providers understand the areas of learning and how they can provide feedback to parents and the schools through observation and assessment. Based on the Indicators of Progress, a simplified Assessment Tool has been developed for use by Providers. The daycare provider shares their observations with the parent and with parental permission, passes their observations on to the Elementary Principal to assist in classroom placement just like children participating in ECFE, School Readiness or Head Start. The Early Childhood teacher also serves as a mentor to the providers as they observe and record the growth and development of children in their care.

The Early Childhood Teacher arranges three evening training/networking sessions where all 24 providers come together. We have provided training on Early Brain Development and simple make-and-take projects the provider can replicate in their daycare. All providers surveyed appreciate the resources provided to them and feel respected in their choice of profession.

We have a combined total of about 250 children age appropriate for Kindergarten in the Fall of 2006. The cost for this entire Transition Program (6 Special Events, monthly mailings, Transition Team meetings, working with 24 daycare providers, and helping parents understand their role as early educators) is about \$14,000. We were able to use the ECFE Home visiting money as well as some in-kind services from the school district. Grant money of about \$9,500 was secured to support the program.

Early Childhood Screening Learning Toolkit

Our Regional Coalition Coordinators meet quarterly. We all identified the area of Early Childhood Screening as an opportunity to provide parents with information they can use to enhance their child's learning. During the parent interview portion of the Screening, the Parent Educator gives each parent a Backpack which includes the following items: blunt-tip scissors, skinny crayons, a ruler, plain paper, a toothbrush and toothpaste, a bottle of water and a healthy snack, Math & Language Tip Cards, the book Froggy Goes to School, the Getting School Ready in Minnesota book developed by our Coalitions, and a welcome letter from the School Superintendent. Donations, along with grants paid for the initial development of these backpacks.

The ECFE/School Readiness Teachers each developed a simple take-home activity to accompany the backpack based on the different areas of learning. A display is set up for parents showing the activity, along with a book and inexpensive store-bought game related to the area of learning.

The purpose of these activities is two-fold: often this is the first contact a parent has with the school district so we want to ensure a positive experience; we also want parents to understand that it is the simple, creative things kids do that provide the best opportunities for learning--it is not necessary to buy computer games or videos.

These are just a few examples of how a small investment can have a huge impact when we all work together to “Brighten the Future For Our Youngest Citizens”!

**Senate Counsel, Research,
and Fiscal Analysis**

G-17 STATE CAPITOL
75 REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
ST. PAUL, MN 55155-1606
(651) 296-4791
FAX: (651) 296-7747
JO ANNE ZOFF SELLNER
DIRECTOR

Senate

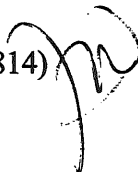
State of Minnesota

**S.F. No. 3295 - Early Childhood and Family Education
Funding Increase**

Author: Senator Terri Bonoff

Prepared by: Joan White, Senate Counsel (651/296-3814)

Date: March 20, 2006



S.F. 3295 increases funding for early childhood family education. This is the amount the funding was prior to the 2003 legislative changes.

JW:mvm

**Senators Bonoff, Rest, Anderson, Hann and Clark introduced--
S.F. No. 3295: Referred to the Committee on Finance.**

A bill for an act
relating to early childhood education; increasing funding for early childhood
family education; amending Minnesota Statutes 2005 Supplement, section
124D.135, subdivision 1.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

**Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2005 Supplement, section 124D.135, subdivision 1,
is amended to read:**

Subdivision 1. Revenue. The revenue for early childhood family education
programs for a school district equals ~~\$96 for fiscal year 2005 and \$104~~ \$120 for fiscal
year 2006 and later, times the greater of:

(1) 150; or

(2) the number of people under five years of age residing in the district on October 1
of the previous school year.

1.1 Senator moves to amend S.F. No. 3295 as follows:

1.2 Page 1, line 10, strike "2006" and insert "2007"



Independent School District 11

Jane R. Roundtree
LC/DC Program Supervisor

LC/DC

2740 Wingfield Ave. N.

Anoka, MN 55303

(763) 506-1475

(763) 506-1530 Fax

jane.roundtree@anoka.k12.mn.us

Mr. Chair and members of the Early Childhood Committee, my name is Jane Roundtree. I am the Supervisor of the **Early Childhood Special Education Program (ECSE)** for the **Anoka-Hennepin School District**, and I am honored to testify in **support of Senate File 3295** to increase funding for **Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)**. Early Childhood Special Education provides special education and related services to young children with disabilities as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Anoka-Hennepin Early Childhood Special Education program provides these services to over 900 children and their families, throughout the year.

We have built a **strong partnership** with Early Childhood Family Education and we have a continued need to increase this partnership as we reach out to more and more families. There are many ways Early Childhood Family Education is a **valuable resource** to special education. We share many families in several different settings. Early Childhood Family Education provides **home visiting services** to families dealing with issues including raising a child with special needs and accessing community resources. We **collaborate in the classroom** of both Early Childhood Family Education and School Readiness. Early Childhood Family Education/School Readiness provides young children with special needs **inclusionary experiences with typical children, along with their expertise in child development and family systems**.

Families with young children with special needs often feel overwhelmed with special education, medical concerns, childcare, and other individual issues that impact their family. We have an increase of families from different cultures, families with low income, with mental health concerns, drug addictions and other serious factors that impact their ability to support their child's special needs. Early Childhood Family Education is often a **very important link** for these families.

Early Childhood Family Education is a **strong referral source** to the Early Childhood Special Education program, allowing for the early identification of young children with special needs. The earlier the intervention begins, the stronger and more positive the outcomes are for these youngsters and their families.

In support of Senate file 3295 is Early Childhood Family Education/School Readiness programs ability to provide inclusionary experiences for young children with special needs. This becomes extremely critical, as Early Childhood Special Education, through the State Performance Plan to the Office of Special Education (OSEP), has been mandated to work toward **increased inclusion** (75% by 2010 for the 3-5 year olds) and **increased natural environment provision of services** (93% by 2010 for the Birth-2 year olds).

I have also provided copies of the 2004-05 Anoka-Hennepin Early Childhood Special Education Data Profile, which reports our enrollment and other demographic information as of September 1, 2004 and tied to the State Performance Plan. **ECSE will not be able to meet the State Performance Plan** if we do not have the additional spots in Early Childhood Family Education/School Readiness classrooms, that are designed to assist in providing high quality **early education and care for ALL** families in the community. These additional spots can only be realized with increased funding and expansion of existing programs.

The partnership and collaboration between Early Childhood Family Education and Early Childhood Special Education is certainly one of the critical components in making sure "No Child Starts Behind".

Please come visit one of our programs to see all the great services we provide our youngest learners and their families. I have included one of my business cards for your convenience.

Now, Mr. Chair and members of the Early Childhood Committee, it gives me great pleasure to introduce, Becky Mashuga. Becky is the parent of a child with special needs. She will share her family's experiences with Early Childhood Family Education, Early Childhood Special Education, School Readiness and now, school-aged programming.

Ty is my middle child, who has a Traumatic Brain Injury due to a car accident when he was 3 months old. He started receiving Early Intervention Services through Early Childhood Special Education at 5 months, once his condition stabilized. These services were provided in our home setting. Once he transitioned into the 3-5 year old special education program, our family participated in a couple Early Childhood Family Education classes specifically designed for families of children with special needs. These classes provided family support, resources and connections with other families in a similar situation. Siblings of children

with special needs also benefited from this class, as they were able to connect to other children in similar family environments.

For his final year of Early Childhood Special Education, Ty was placed in a School Readiness classroom that was Team Taught by a School Readiness Teacher and an Early Childhood Special Education Teacher. He was included in a classroom with 8 students with special needs and 8 typical children. It was great to see how this program model helped Ty transition the next year, into a kindergarten classroom in our neighborhood school with his peers and big brother.

Today, Ty continues to make gains and have positive outcomes while be included in his neighborhood school. Without the collaboration and partnerships built in Early Childhood Family Education, Early Childhood Special Education and School Readiness, I do not feel he would have made this successful transition to school-aged programming in our neighborhood school. Please support Senate File 3295 to increase funding of these community programs. Thank you.

Part C State Performance Plan Indicator #7:

Percent of eligible infants and toddlers with IFSPs for whom an evaluation and assessment and an initial IFSP team meeting were conducted within Part C's 45-day timeline.

State	Region	Strata	District	
75.9%	83.3%	80.7%	93.3%	100.0%

*Compliance target; must be 100%.

"No Data" indicates that either no evaluations were completed during the year OR that data was improperly reported

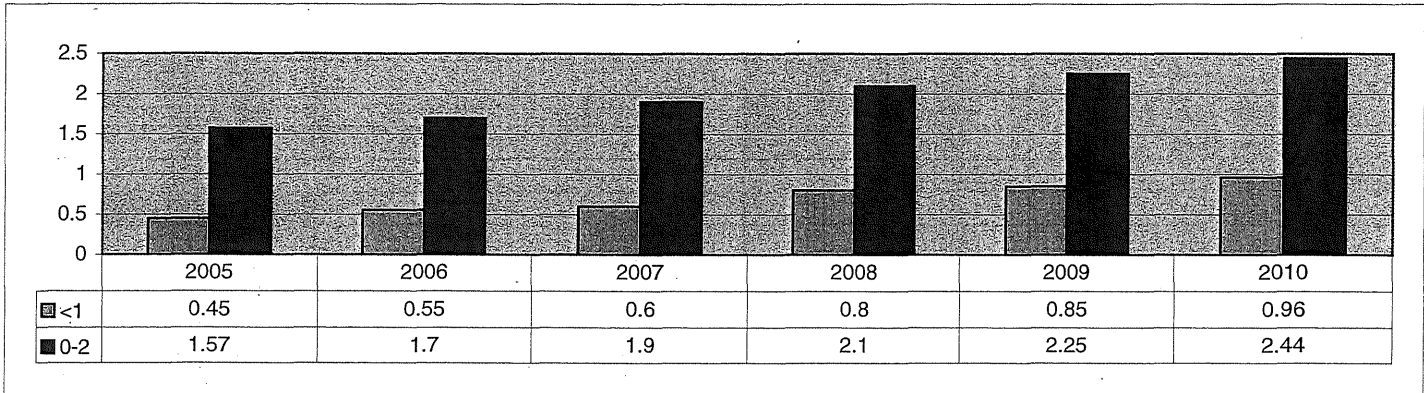
Part C State Performance Plan Indicators #5 & 6:

Percent of infants and toddlers birth to age one with IFSPs

Percent of infants and toddlers birth to three with IFSPs

State	Region	Strata	District	National
0.41%	0.37%	0.39%	0.27%	0.92%
1.5%	1.38%	1.50%	1.68%	2.3%

Performance Targets for Part C SPP Indicators 5 & 6: 2005 - 2010



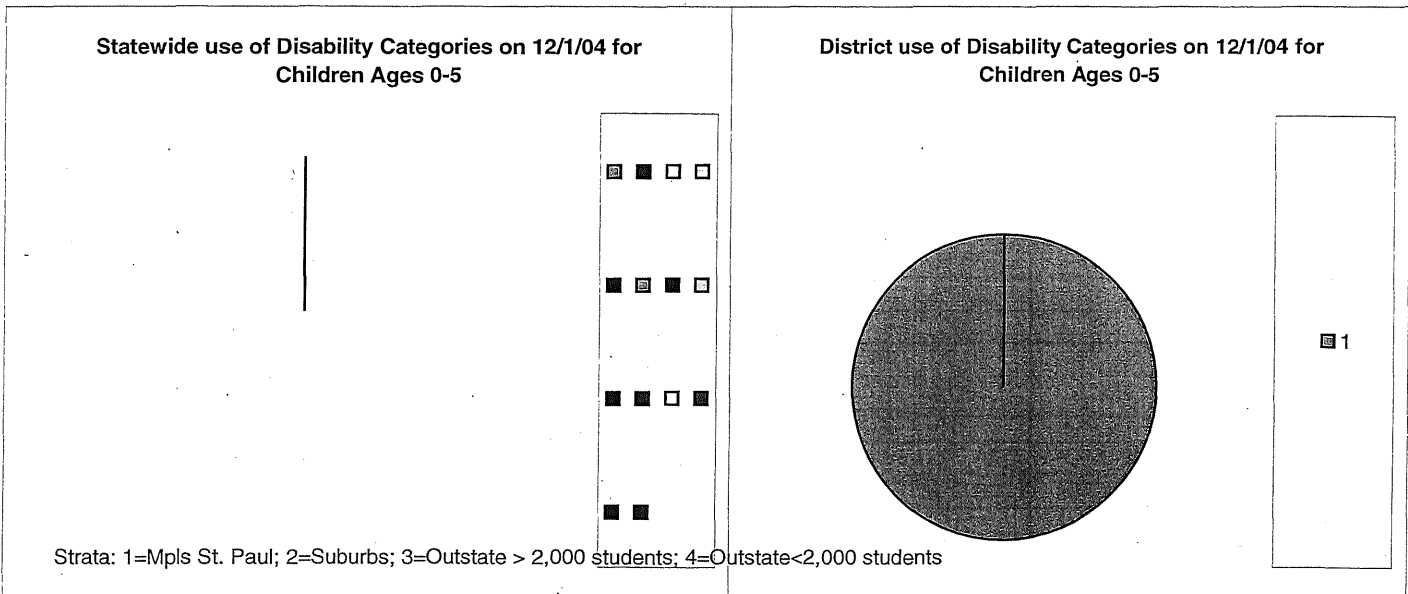
Number of preschool-aged children served by the district on 12/1 of each year

Age	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
0	15	9	15	11	8
1	38	46	47	44	46
2	105	104	102	118	108
3	163	145	156	163	198
4	215	208	221	235	206
5	99	104	78	75	64
Total	635	616	619	646	630

Age Range	Percent Identified	Quartile Ranking
< Age 1	0.27%	3
Age 0-2	1.68%	2
Age 0-4	3.4%	2

"N/A" indicates that the number of children in the general population is too small for meaningful analysis

Categorical Eligibility: Children under age 7 may receive ECSE services if they are eligible under Developmental Delay or any categorical criteria. To assure that each child is appropriately identified, evaluation teams must consider all possible disability categories when developing an evaluation plan and determining eligibility. The use of multiple categories is an indicator of that process.



Report Area 2: Services in Natural Environments or Least Restrictive Environments

Part C State Performance Plan Indicator #1:

Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who receive the services on their IFSPs in a timely* manner.

Note: For purposes of the SPP, "timely" was defined by the ICC as 30 or fewer days from the date of the IFSP team meeting

State	Region	Strata	District	Target
91.1%	87%	87.70%	95.5%	100.0%

*Compliance target; must be 100%.

Part C State Performance Plan Indicator #2

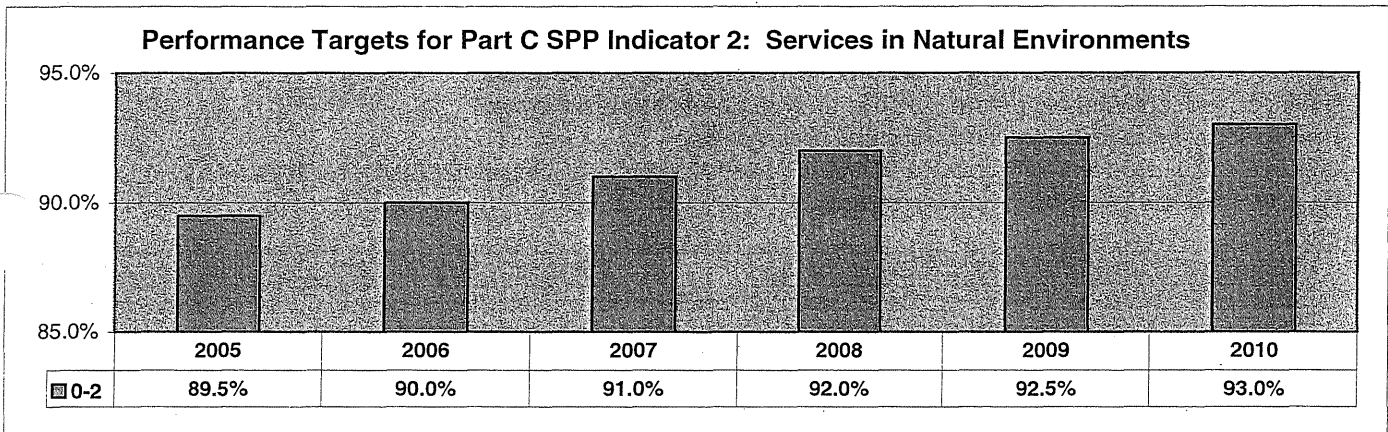
Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who receive their early intervention services primarily at home or in community settings.

Note: Includes MARSS settings 12 & 13.

Age	State	Region	Strata	District	Target
<1	97.7%	96.6%	95.5%	66.7%	N/A
Age 1-2	97.6%	97.3%	96.8%	91.5%	N/A
Age 2-3	83.8%	82.8%	84.1%	96.4%	N/A
0-2%	89.3%	88.0%	88.5%	93.4%	***

**Targets not established for specific age ranges

***Target not required for 2004-05 reporting year.



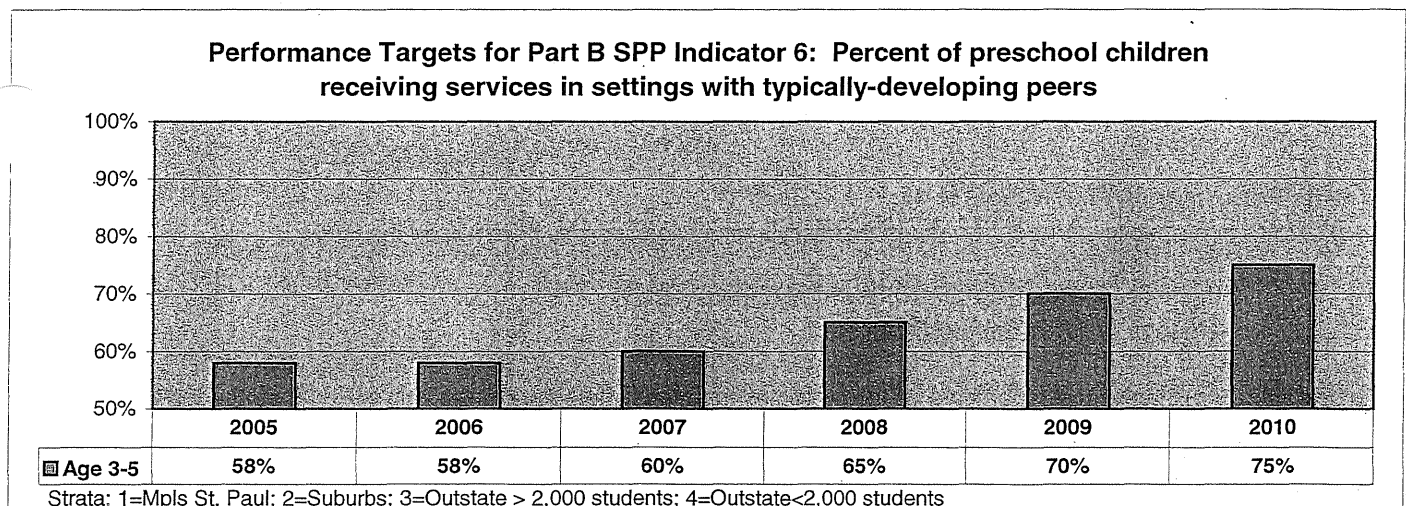
Part B State Performance Plan Indicator #6:

Percent of preschool children with IEPs who receive special education and related services in settings with typically-developing peers. **Note:** Includes MARSS early childhood settings 01, 03, and 04.

State	Region	Strata	District	Target
49.8%	39.50%	40.20%	23.5%	***

***Target not required for 2004-05 reporting year.

Quartile Rankings:	Most Use of Setting 1:
	Least Use of Setting 2:



Report Area 3: Transition from Services under Part C to Services Under Part B at Age Three

Part C State Performance Plan Indicator #8:

Percent of all children exiting Part C who received timely transition planning to support the child's transition to preschool and other appropriate community services by their third birthday, including:

- A. IFSP with transition steps and services
- B. Notification to LEA if child potentially eligible for Part B
- C. Transition conference, if child potentially eligible for Part B

State	District	
100%	District data	100%
N/A	is not yet	100%
100%	available	100%

Part B State Performance Plan Indicator #12

Percent of children referred to Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B and have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

MDE asserted in the Part B SPP that, due to the seamless nature of our ECSE system, eligible children and their families do not experience an interruption in special education services at age three.

Report Area 4: Child and Family Outcomes

Part C State Performance Plan Indicator 4 & Part B State Performance Plan Indicator 7

Percent of infants and toddlers and preschool children who demonstrate improved

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Part C Indicator	Status at Entrance-MN		Status at Entrance-Dst.		Part B Indicator	Status at Entrance-MN		Status at Entrance-Dst.	
	% At Age Level	% Below Age Level	% At Age Level	% Below Age Level		% At Age Level	% Below Age Level	% At Age Level	% Below Age Level
A					A				
B					B				
C					C				

These are new indicators. States must report data on the developmental status of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers at entry into Part C and Part B, respectively, in the 2005-2006 Annual Performance Report. This APR will be submitted in February 2007. States must report on the developmental status of toddlers exiting Part C and on the developmental status of children exiting early childhood services beginning in the 2006-2007 school year to be reported on the APR to be submitted in February 2008.

Potential values for reporting the developmental status of children at exit from Part C or exit from preschool.

1. Maintained an age-appropriate level of development
2. Attained an age-appropriate level of development
3. Made sufficient progress to narrow the gap between child's developmental status and typical development but did not yet attain an age appropriate level of development.
4. Made progress but did not narrow the gap between the child's developmental and that of same age peers.
5. Did not make progress

Part C State Performance Plan Indicator #4:

Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:

- A. Know their rights;
- B. Effectively communicate their children's needs; and
- C. Help their children develop and learn.

This is a new indicator. States must report data on the outcomes reported by families participating in Part C on the APR to be submitted in February 2007. MDE will collect this data from families exiting Part C beginning 4/1/2006.

**Senate Counsel, Research,
and Fiscal Analysis**

G-17 STATE CAPITOL
75 REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
ST. PAUL, MN 55155-1606
(651) 296-4791
FAX: (651) 296-7747
JO ANNE ZOFF SELLNER
DIRECTOR

Senate

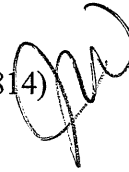
State of Minnesota

**S.F. No. 3280 - Early Childhood Family Education
Teachers Public Employee Definition**

Author: Senator Julie A. Rosen

Prepared by: Joan White, Senate Counsel (651/296-3814)

Date: March 20, 2006



S.F. 3280 amends the public employment labor relations chapter of law, by striking early childhood education teachers employed by the school district from the definition of public employee.

JW:mvm

Senators Rosen, Hann and Kierlin introduced-

S.F. No. 3280: Referred to the Committee on Finance.

A bill for an act

relating to education; removing early childhood family education teachers from definition of public employee; amending Minnesota Statutes 2005 Supplement, section 179A.03, subdivision 14.

1.3
1.4
1.5
1.6
1.7
1.8
1.9
1.10
1.11
1.12
1.13
1.14
1.15
1.16
1.17
1.18
1.19
1.20
1.21
1.23

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2005 Supplement, section 179A.03, subdivision 14, is amended to read:

Subd. 14. **Public employee or employee.** "Public employee" or "employee" means any person appointed or employed by a public employer except:

- (a) elected public officials;
- (b) election officers;
- (c) commissioned or enlisted personnel of the Minnesota National Guard;
- (d) emergency employees who are employed for emergency work caused by natural disaster;
- (e) part-time employees whose service does not exceed the lesser of 14 hours per week or 35 percent of the normal work week in the employee's appropriate unit;
- (f) employees whose positions are basically temporary or seasonal in character and:
 - (1) are not for more than 67 working days in any calendar year; or (2) are not for more than 100 working days in any calendar year and the employees are under the age of 22, are full-time students enrolled in a nonprofit or public educational institution prior to being hired by the employer, and have indicated, either in an application for employment or by being enrolled at an educational institution for the next academic year or term, an intention to continue as students during or after their temporary employment;

2.1 (g) employees providing services for not more than two consecutive quarters to the
 2.2 Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities under the terms of a
 2.3 professional or technical services contract as defined in section 16C.08, subdivision 1;

2.4 (h) employees of charitable hospitals as defined by section 179.35, subdivision 3;

2.5 (i) full-time undergraduate students employed by the school which they attend under
 2.6 a work-study program or in connection with the receipt of financial aid, irrespective
 2.7 of number of hours of service per week;

2.8 (j) an individual who is employed for less than 300 hours in a fiscal year as an
 2.9 instructor in an adult vocational education program;

2.10 (k) an individual hired by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and
 2.11 Universities to teach one course for three or fewer credits for one semester in a year;

2.12 (l) with respect to court employees:

2.13 (1) personal secretaries to judges;

2.14 (2) law clerks;

2.15 (3) managerial employees;

2.16 (4) confidential employees; and

2.17 (5) supervisory employees;

2.18 (m) with respect to employees of Hennepin Healthcare System, Inc., managerial,
 2.19 supervisory, and confidential employees.

2.20 The following individuals are public employees regardless of the exclusions of
 2.21 clauses (e) and (f):

2.22 (i) An employee hired by a school district or the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota
 2.23 State Colleges and Universities except at the university established in section 136F.13 or
 2.24 for community services or community education instruction offered on a noncredit basis:

2.25 (A) to replace an absent teacher or faculty member who is a public employee, where the
 2.26 replacement employee is employed more than 30 working days as a replacement for that
 2.27 teacher or faculty member; or (B) to take a teaching position created due to increased
 2.28 enrollment, curriculum expansion, courses which are a part of the curriculum whether
 2.29 offered annually or not, or other appropriate reasons; and

2.30 (ii) An employee hired for a position under clause (f)(1) if that same position has
 2.31 already been filled under clause (f)(1) in the same calendar year and the cumulative
 2.32 number of days worked in that same position by all employees exceeds 67 calendar days
 2.33 in that year. For the purpose of this paragraph, "same position" includes a substantially
 2.34 equivalent position if it is not the same position solely due to a change in the classification
 2.35 or title of the position; and

2.36 ~~(iii) an early childhood family education teacher employed by a school district.~~

1.1 Senator moves to amend S.F. No. 3280 as follows:

Delete everything after the enacting clause and insert:

1.3 "Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2005 Supplement, section 179A.03, subdivision
1.4 14, is amended to read:

1.5 Subd. 14. **Public employee or employee.** "Public employee" or "employee" means
1.6 any person appointed or employed by a public employer except:

1.7 (a) elected public officials;

1.8 (b) election officers;

1.9 (c) commissioned or enlisted personnel of the Minnesota National Guard;

1.10 (d) emergency employees who are employed for emergency work caused by natural
1.11 disaster;

1.12 (e) part-time employees whose service does not exceed the lesser of 14 hours per
week or 35 percent of the normal work week in the employee's appropriate unit;

1.14 (f) employees whose positions are basically temporary or seasonal in character and:
1.15 (1) are not for more than 67 working days in any calendar year; or (2) are not for more
1.16 than 100 working days in any calendar year and the employees are under the age of 22, are
1.17 full-time students enrolled in a nonprofit or public educational institution prior to being
1.18 hired by the employer, and have indicated, either in an application for employment or by
1.19 being enrolled at an educational institution for the next academic year or term, an intention
1.20 to continue as students during or after their temporary employment;

1.21 (g) employees providing services for not more than two consecutive quarters to the
1.22 Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities under the terms of a
professional or technical services contract as defined in section 16C.08, subdivision 1;

1.24 (h) employees of charitable hospitals as defined by section 179.35, subdivision 3;

1.25 (i) full-time undergraduate students employed by the school which they attend under
1.26 a work-study program or in connection with the receipt of financial aid, irrespective
1.27 of number of hours of service per week;

1.28 (j) an individual who is employed for less than 300 hours in a fiscal year as an
1.29 instructor in an adult vocational education program;

1.30 (k) an individual hired by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and
1.31 Universities to teach one course for three or fewer credits for one semester in a year;

1.32 (l) with respect to court employees:

1.33 (1) personal secretaries to judges;

(2) law clerks;

1.35 (3) managerial employees;

1.36 (4) confidential employees; and

2.1 (5) supervisory employees;
2.2 (m) with respect to employees of Hennepin Healthcare System, Inc., managerial,
2.3 supervisory, and confidential employees.

2.4 The following individuals are public employees regardless of the exclusions of
2.5 clauses (e) and (f):

2.6 (i) An employee hired by a school district or the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota
2.7 State Colleges and Universities except at the university established in section 136F.13 or
2.8 for community services or community education instruction offered on a noncredit basis:

2.9 (A) to replace an absent teacher or faculty member who is a public employee, where the
2.10 replacement employee is employed more than 30 working days as a replacement for that
2.11 teacher or faculty member; or (B) to take a teaching position created due to increased
2.12 enrollment, curriculum expansion, courses which are a part of the curriculum whether
2.13 offered annually or not, or other appropriate reasons;

2.14 (ii) An employee hired for a position under clause (f)(1) if that same position has
2.15 already been filled under clause (f)(1) in the same calendar year and the cumulative
2.16 number of days worked in that same position by all employees exceeds 67 calendar days
2.17 in that year. For the purpose of this paragraph, "same position" includes a substantially
2.18 equivalent position if it is not the same position solely due to a change in the classification
2.19 or title of the position; and

2.20 (iii) ~~an~~ full-time early childhood family education ~~teacher~~ teachers employed by a
2.21 school district."

The Minnesota Department of Education would like to share additional information with you about Head Start in response to the testimony you received expressing concerns with the Governor's Early Childhood Education Bill SF 3300.

Unmet Need:

For state funding purposes, unmet needs are determined by a comparison of each program's number of federally funded slots with the number of children in poverty under the age of five in the program service area. The number of children in poverty is based on data from the most recent decennial census.

The Minnesota Head Start Association asserts that they are currently only able to serve 42% of the eligible population in Minnesota. While this is a reflection of the total eligible population it does not account for an individual family's desire to participate in the program.

The Minnesota Head Start Association asserts that the redistribution of funds from 50% based on the federal share and 50% based on unmet need will result in a loss of services to 200 children that are currently being served. We respectfully refute that assertion as follows:

- As reported in the most recent Program Information Report (PIR), statewide Head Start serves 14,783 children in non-tribal programs. Over 50% (8,648) of the children served in non-tribal Head Start programs will enter Kindergarten in September 2006. *Programs whose funds would be redistributed to higher need areas currently provide services to a greater number of children entering kindergarten than the number of slots that would be reduced.* Therefore, no children currently enrolled in Head Start will experience a loss of service.

Under Enrollment:

The PIR shows that 13 out of 35 Head Start programs were under enrolled according to the federal definition which states a vacancy in a Head Start program may not exist more than 30 calendar days. In the Governor's proposal, Minnesota will adhere to the federal definition of enrollment and require that vacant slots be filled by the 31st day.

The Head Start Association asserts that 98% of statewide slots were filled. As a statewide figure this does not account for individual program vacancies. The Governor's proposal addresses this on an individual program level by redistributing the funds from a program that is under enrolled to a program that demonstrates higher need.

The 2001 Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) Report on Early Childhood Education Programs reported that, although the current funding formula was originally designed as an incentive for programs to maximize their federal funds, over time federal funding has become inflexible and reflective of historically-negotiated rates rather than present costs and needs. Consequently, although programs have applied for additional federal funding in recent years, most have seen only limited changes in their funding. In addition, the

Governor's proposal would further McKinsey & Company's call for program transparency and accountability.

The attached spreadsheet outlines the effects of the proposed changes. Note that the proposed change in the formula would more equitably allow programs to serve the needs of their community by referring to the column entitled "Percent of Unmet Need Served Under Proposed Formula." In this column you will note that with the exception of Northwest, whose federal funding exceeds their need, the proposed redistribution of funds would result in a variance between 8% and 12%. Under the column entitled "Percent of Unmet Need Served Under Current Formula" you will note, variance ranges from between 8% and 36%.

Innovative Funds:

Programs will be permitted to continue to implement innovative programming that addresses the individual needs of their communities, but would be required to stay within the federal cost per child and the number of children to be served as stated in their allocation. Innovative funding (eliminated in 2003) was intended to provide a one time fund for initiatives that are innovative and not supplant private funds or support on-going programming. In order to help programs provide innovative services that fit the needs of their communities, the state could waive some of the federal performance standards that could be problematic. For example, in serving homeless children the program may not be able to meet the number of service hours as required by the performance standards because these children may not be available for the required number of hours.

Currently, Head Start services that are considered to be innovative programs have become on-going services like the services Parents In Community Action (PICA) has provided to homeless families for over a decade. The Governor's proposal does not change current intent for state Head Start funds to expand services and serve additional children beyond those being served with federal funds

Early Head Start:

The bill currently allows for Early Head Start funding for both federal and non-federal Early Head Start grantees through the language in 119A.53 that states the commissioner shall allocate money for programs "to expand services and to serve additional low-income children." It would therefore be permissible for those Head Start programs that have not been federally designated as Early Head Start programs to expand their services and serve additional children from birth to three. Federal Early Head Start programs would receive the federal birth to three cost per child. Programs who have not been selected by the feds to serve younger children, may do so using their state funds at their federal cost per child rate.

Tribal Programs:

The tribal programs will be allocated funds based on their share of federal funds (as they are now), and will then be paid based on the number of children actually served. Because the service areas of these programs overlap with the service area of non-tribal Head Start programs it is not possible to apply an unmet need formula to these programs.

Head Start Allocations Based on Unmet Need

Projections Based on SFY 2006 Allocation

Program	Census Estimate of Under Age 5 in Poverty	FFY 04 Federal Total Enrollment	Total State Unmet Need	Total State % of Unmet Need	Proposed State Share Based on Unmet Need	SFY 06 Current State Allocation	Difference in Current State and Proposed	FFY 05 Federal Cost per Child	Proposed Children served w/state \$ based on Unmet Need	Current SFY 06 Children Funded to Serve	Difference in Number of Children Served	Percent of Unmet Need Served	Percent of Unmet Need Served
												Proposed	Current
Anoka	1729	491	1238	5.11%	\$837,333	\$862,294	-\$24,961	\$7,450	112	116	-4	9%	9%
Arrowhead	1035	356	679	2.80%	\$459,248	\$519,672	-\$60,424	\$6,425	71	81	-10	11%	12%
Bi-County	1044	295	749	3.09%	\$506,593	\$549,470	-\$42,877	\$8,018	63	69	-6	8%	9%
CCR&R	858	282	576	2.38%	\$389,583	\$428,732	-\$39,149	\$7,151	54	60	-6	9%	10%
Duluth	958	298	660	2.72%	\$446,397	\$429,805	\$16,592	\$5,972	75	72	3	11%	11%
Heartland	727	291	436	1.80%	\$294,893	\$359,551	-\$64,658	\$6,286	47	57	-10	11%	13%
Inter-County	316	170	146	0.60%	\$98,748	\$168,316	-\$69,568	\$6,039	16	28	-12	11%	19%
Kootasca	564	217	347	1.43%	\$234,697	\$322,147	-\$87,450	\$8,142	29	40	-11	8%	12%
Lakes & Pines	1281	355	926	3.82%	\$626,309	\$583,641	\$42,668	\$6,561	95	89	6	10%	10%
Lakes & Prairies	586	228	358	1.48%	\$242,137	\$317,101	-\$74,964	\$7,416	33	43	-10	9%	12%
Mahube	574	359	215	0.89%	\$145,417	\$428,524	-\$283,107	\$7,865	18	54	-36	9%	25%
MVAC	1623	467	1156	4.77%	\$781,872	\$708,156	\$73,716	\$5,848	134	121	13	12%	10%
Northwest	184	239	0	0.00%	\$0	\$191,787	-\$191,787	\$6,208	0	31	-31	>100%	>100%
Otter Tail-Wadena	679	200	479	1.98%	\$323,976	\$303,938	\$20,038	\$6,112	53	50	3	11%	10%
PICA	7961	1818	6143	25.34%	\$4,154,876	\$3,679,909	\$474,967	\$7,306	569	504	65	9%	8%
Prairie 5	320	231	89	0.37%	\$60,196	\$185,761	-\$125,565	\$5,820	10	32	-22	12%	36%
RAP	5486	1147	4339	17.90%	\$2,934,724	\$2,383,652	\$551,072	\$6,726	436	354	82	10%	8%
Reach-Up	1220	412	808	3.33%	\$546,498	\$625,988	-\$79,490	\$7,103	77	88	-11	10%	11%
Scott-Carver-Dakc	1751	320	1431	5.90%	\$967,870	\$727,113	\$240,757	\$6,526	148	111	37	10%	8%
Semcac	1313	297	1016	4.19%	\$687,181	\$501,852	\$185,329	\$6,333	109	79	30	11%	8%
Southwestern	469	157	312	1.29%	\$211,024	\$224,342	-\$13,318	\$6,523	32	34	-2	10%	11%
Three Rivers	537	187	350	1.44%	\$236,726	\$261,363	-\$24,637	\$6,592	36	40	-4	10%	11%
Tri-County	1108	425	683	2.82%	\$461,954	\$572,283	-\$110,329	\$6,420	72	89	-17	11%	13%
Tri-Valley	398	214	184	0.76%	\$124,450	\$222,718	-\$98,268	\$6,474	19	34	-15	10%	18%
West Central	442	250	192	0.79%	\$129,861	\$246,308	-\$116,447	\$6,263	21	39	-18	11%	20%
Western	610	208	402	1.66%	\$271,897	\$293,493	-\$21,596	\$6,528	42	45	-3	10%	11%
Wright County	579	252	327	1.35%	\$221,170	\$289,150	-\$67,980	\$6,112	36	47	-11	11%	14%
Subtotal	34352	10166	24241	100.00%	\$16,395,630	\$16,387,066	\$8,564		2,409	2,407	2		

Federal Funding

% of total

Migrant	\$4,597,380	655	5.55%	\$1,060,522	\$1,063,880	-\$3,358	\$7,019	151	152	-1
Bois Forte	\$420,491	48	0.51%	\$96,999	\$97,306	-\$307	\$8,760	11	11	0
Fond du Lac	\$1,533,450	162	1.85%	\$353,736	\$354,856	-\$1,120	\$8,110	44	44	0
Grand Portage	\$185,073	15	0.22%	\$42,693	\$42,828	-\$135	\$12,338	3	3	0
Leech Lake	\$1,641,319	192	1.98%	\$378,619	\$379,818	-\$1,199	\$8,549	44	44	0
Mille Lacs	\$874,113	93	1.06%	\$201,640	\$202,278	-\$638	\$8,779	23	23	0
Red Lake	\$993,047	129	1.20%	\$229,076	\$229,801	-\$725	\$7,698	30	30	0
White Earth	\$1,478,618	170	1.79%	\$341,087	\$342,167	-\$1,080	\$7,996	43	43	0

Subtotal	\$11,723,491	1464	14.16%	\$2,704,370	\$2,712,934	-\$8,564		349	350	-1
-----------------	---------------------	-------------	---------------	--------------------	--------------------	-----------------	--	------------	------------	-----------

Total		11630	24241		\$19,100,000	\$19,100,000	\$0		2758	2757	1		
--------------	--	--------------	--------------	--	---------------------	---------------------	------------	--	-------------	-------------	----------	--	--

% of total federal funding to Migrant & Tribal Programs: 14.16%
 Amount of total funding to be allocated to Migrant/Tribal: #####
 Amount of funding for remaining Head Start Grantees: #####