



March 20, 2023

Chairs & Ranking Minority Members of the House & Senate Education, Health, Human Services, Higher Education, and Children & Families committees;

Transforming Minnesota's Early Childhood Workforce was formed in 2016 to build upon the recommendations of the National Institute of Medicine's "Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age Eight" report. Our goal is to ensure Minnesota's early childhood educators are qualified, diverse, supported, and equitably compensated, regardless of setting. We are pleased to see numerous proposals in the Governor's budget recommendations that will go a long way toward supporting that goal. Policy makers in Minnesota are sitting in a very powerful point in our state's history, with a nearly \$18 billion surplus and a child care sector desperately in need of transformational change. Adding these proposals to your omnibus bills will help to change the trajectory of early care and learning in this state.

To that end, we strongly encourage inclusion of the following proposals in your respective omnibus bills:

Higher Education

- Transparent Pathway to Academic Credit for Child Development Associate Credential Holders - \$475K one-time - to develop a transparent pathway for current CDA Credential holders to be awarded academic credit that aligns with related academic certificate, diploma, and degree programs at Minnesota State
- Dual Training Grants - \$4.5M in 2024 ongoing - provide direct support to our child care programs in their efforts to attract, retain, and improve the education of staff

Education

- Grow Your Own - \$1.5M in 2024 ongoing for EC specifically - fostering partnerships between educator preparation programs, school districts or charter schools, and community organizations that recruit and prepare local community members (e.g., parents, paraeducators, non-certified school staff, high school students) to enter the teaching profession and teach in their communities

Human Services

- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood scholarships - \$695K in 2025 ongoing - comprehensive scholarships that enable early educators to work towards credentials and degrees by making it possible for them to afford both the time and expense of going to school
- Child Care Wayfinder - \$2.9M in 2025 ongoing - the child care one stop assistance network

- Empower to Educate - \$1.3M in 2025 ongoing – targeted to economically disadvantaged individuals, grants for funds to recruit and provide child care training, job skills, and job placement
- Retention payments - \$120M in 2024, \$168M in 2025 – direct grants to centers and family child care providers to be used for across-the-board compensation
- Shared Services Alliances - \$500K in 2024 ongoing– to help family child care providers achieve economies of scale and run more efficient programs, boost provider wages, increase enrollment, and leverage shared supports services to improve quality

We see this as a career with many facets, and one deserving of respect and support, given the tremendous impact it has on our children, families, and communities. Support of these proposals will help show early childhood educators that the state feels the same. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Transforming Minnesota's Early Childhood Workforce