



Minnesota Child Care Provider
Information Network
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June 16, 2020

Re: Early childhood program eligibility modification

This letter is to support the shift of Early Learner Scholarships for only 3&4 Star programs to be changed to take effect 2024 on behalf of MCCPIN (Minnesota Child Care Provider Information Network, state wide 501(c)3 association for Family Child Care.

Currently in law, parents who have Early Learner Scholarships can utilize these scholarships at all Parent Aware Star rated programs.

The law is set to change beginning July 2020 to limit scholarships to only be utilized at 3 & 4 Star rated programs.

Without this proposed change in law, parents will be needing to find a different care setting for their children or not use their Early Learner scholarship. Passing the 2024 implementation is urgently needed.

- This allows parents and providers to provide the most critical impact of a child's success and that is **continuity of care!** Parents/guardians/children can stay connected to the one known they have had which is care setting for their child. Without this change, they will need to find a different care setting. Without this change, providers will need to adjust their enrollment. **In this Emergency Peacetime Crisis both are difficult to do.**
- This change also allows Licensed Family Child Care more time for the opportunity to step into the Parent Aware system and become rated.

Parent Aware has been a challenging program for Licensed Family Child Care providers to participate in and obtain the 3&4 Star ratings. We are small businesses and financial decisions are critical.

For example:

- The incentives structure has encouraged programs to stay at the 1&2-star ratings levels. Only recently have the 4 star rated programs been awarded grants.
- Due to lower funding at the Pathways I program level, there have been fewer clients searching for care and therefore, less incentive for Family Child Care providers to participate.
- The language and phrasing on the application is exclusively center and school-based discouraging providers from engaging as they do not 'see' themselves as part of the process.

MCCPIN has been involved with work groups to make changes to these challenges to support Licensed Family Child Care toward greater participating in the higher ratings but this is a slow process.

Please support the extension of Early Learner Scholarships being used at all Parent Aware Rated programs until the 40% participating criteria is met. **This 40% threshold will support the 'mixed deliver' which is vital to Minnesota's model.**

Questions regarding MCCPIN's Public Policy can be directed to Cyndi Cunningham, MCCPIN Public Policy Chairperson at 651-470-4857, mccpinpublicpolicy@gmail.com.

The mission of the Minnesota Child Care Provider Information Network (MCCPIN) is to support, promote and strengthen the profession of licensed family child care, thereby enriching the lives of providers, children, families and communities.