

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FINANCE POLICY MEETING MINUTES

Representative West and Representative Kotyza-Witthuhn, Co-Chairs of the Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee, called the meeting to order at 3:04 PM on February 24, 2026, in Room 123 of the Capitol Building.

The Committee Legislative Assistant noted the roll.

Members present:

KOTYZA-WITTHUHN, Carlie, Co-Chair
WEST, Nolan, Co-Chair
HANSON, Jessica, Co-Vice Chair
NELSON, Nathan, Co-Vice Chair
ALTENDORF, Pam
COULTER, Nathan
HICKS, Kim
LEE, XP
MCDONALD, Joe
NADEAU, Danny
OLSON, Bjorn
PÉREZ-VEGA, María Isa
SENCER-MURA, Samantha
ZELEZNIKAR, Natalie

A quorum was present.

Chair Kotyza-Witthuhn moved the minutes of February 18, 2025. THE MOTION PREVAILED.

Presentation by Think Small titled “A Better Future for Minnesota Child Care Licensing and Quality”.

Presenting:

Dr. Nicole Smerillo, Think Small Director of Data, Research and Policy
Maria Harms, Snug as a Bug Childcare and Preschool (Zoom)
Cyndi Cunningham, Public Policy Board Member, Lead and Care Minnesota
Amy Waryzbok, Dodge Nature Center
Candace Yates, Child Care Aware Minnesota
Shawna Maryanovich, Minnesota Montessori Network
Celeste Finn, Big Wonder Childcare

Presentation titled “DCYF Implementation Updates”.

Presenting:

Randall Keys, Inspector General, DCYF

Testifying:

Alexandra Keys, Family Child Care Unit Manager, DCYF
Shana Morse, Legislative Director, DCYF

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 PM.

Representative Kotyza-Witthuhn, Co-Chair

Representative West, Co-Chair

Caleb Rohrer, Committee Legislative Assistant

Elizabeth Laukka, Committee Legislative Assistant