



February 10, 2023

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing this letter in support of The Children's Museum of Rochester, Inc.'s bills, SF725 and HF1023. The Children's Museum of Rochester, Inc. is also known as SPARK.

As a parent, and as the Executive Director of Cradle 2 Career MN (C2C), I see first-hand the benefits that SPARK offers our community. When children engage in exhibits and quality educational programs offered at SPARK, they are working toward developmental milestones recognized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, as well as current state and national academic standards. Engagement at SPARK also promotes school readiness, which is one of our goals at C2C, by focusing on early literacy, beginning math and science concepts, the development of planning and problem-solving skills, cooperation, self-esteem and self-discipline, and physical coordination.

Funding children's museums this session will direct resources to impact children, families, and our Southeast Minnesota communities when it's needed more than ever. These bills seek to provide funding that builds upon successful initiatives funded with previous appropriations from the Minnesota Department of Education. This funding would increase access and engagement for diverse audiences through museum programs and exhibits that promote Minnesota arts, culture, and history.

We encourage you to lend your support and leadership in passing SF725 and HF1023 for SPARK, the Children's Museum of Rochester, Inc.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Julie Ruzek", is written in black ink.

Julie Ruzek
Executive Director
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