



March 27, 2023

Chair Pinto, Vice-Chair Keeler, Ranking Member Daniels, and members of the House Children & Families committee;

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.

To that end, we applaud inclusion of the following proposals in HF 238:

- Funding for curriculum redesigns at higher education institutions to embed the Knowledge and Competency Framework. Art. 9, Sec. 3.
- Grow Your Own program, which fosters 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. The request is fully funded at \$3M in FY24 and \$3M in FY25. Art. 9, Sec. 8.
- Child Care Wayfinder, the one-stop assistance network for child care, which is fully funded at \$2.9M in 2025 and ongoing. Art. 1, Sec. 23.
- Retention payments, which are direct grants to centers and family child care providers to be used for across-the-board compensation. This request is not fully funded at the requested amount of \$117,250M in FY24 and \$162,950M in FY25 but at the rate of \$73,830 in FY24 and \$119,530 in FY25. Art. 1, Sec. 25.
- 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 Art. 1, Sec. 26.

Should the committee consider any changes to the DE language, we would encourage contemplation of adding the following:

- A higher amount for retention payments as noted above.
- Registered apprenticeships – as heard in HF2573 - \$2M in FY24 and \$2M in FY25 to create an apprenticeship program with DLI and DHS, building upon the national T.E.A.C.H. program.
- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood scholarships from the Governor’s request - \$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.
- Empower to Educate from the Governor’s request - \$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.
- REETAIN funding – as heard in HF2571, DE3, the “Great Start” bill - The “Retaining Early Educators Through Attaining Incentives Now” (REETAIN) grant program was established to provide competitive grants to incentivize well-trained child care professionals to remain in the workforce.

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