



Representative Dave Pinto
Chair, Health and Human Services Finance & Policy Committee
503 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

March 8, 2021

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Start Early Funders Coalition, we express our support for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and Early Learning Scholarship funding proposals before your committee. Our vision is that every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success.

HF 1747 and HF 1293 demonstrate the great need facing our state to educate and prepare our youngest learners. We know that investment into these critical programs are necessary to prepare our children for the workforce and stabilize our families. Both CCAP and Early Learning Scholarships provide greater access to quality care for our Black, Indigenous and children of color and their families that have been historically left behind. Increased investments, including increasing CCAP to the 75th percentile, and additional funding for early learning scholarships will stabilize our provider networks at time when rural Minnesotans are struggling to find care for their children. We must ensure all children birth to kindergarten from low-income families have access to these programs.

The Start Early Funders Coalition supports a robust early childhood system that gives children and families access to a continuum of high-quality early care and education programs. A broad range of program types, including Child Care Assistance Program and Early Learning Scholarships, supported with prioritized state and federal funding is required to support the ECE business model and for our state's economic recovery. We must maintain and continue to grow investments in critical early childhood programs based on ongoing community feedback and guidance.

Thank you,

Carrie Zelin Johnson
Start Early Funders Coalition Coordinator
Start Early Funders Coalition