



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

February 15, 2022

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Start Early Funders Coalition, we express our support for the Governor's Budget for Children and Families. Our vision as a Coalition is that every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success. Our coalition is committed to advancing racial equity in our early childhood systems and advocating for policies that benefit Black, Indigenous and other children of color, their families and the programs that serve them.

The Governor's budget demonstrates the great need facing our state to care for and educate our youngest Minnesotans. We know that investment in early care and education programs is critical for our children and our families. Increased investments across our early childhood system including increased investments in CCAP, early learning scholarships and support for providers stabilize our provider workforce. This is particularly important at a time when Minnesotans, and in particular rural Minnesotans are struggling to find care for their children. It is critical that we invest in a mixed delivery early childhood system that meets the needs of all families, promotes quality in early childhood, adds stability to a difficult market system in a particularly challenging time and allows early care and education professionals to make a living wage. We must ensure all children, including children from families that are low income birth to kindergarten 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 supported with prioritized state and federal funding is required to support the early childhood care and education professionals and the business model and for our state's economic recovery. We must maintain and continue to grow equitable investments in critical early childhood programs based on ongoing community feedback and guidance.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carrie Zelin Johnson".

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

The Start Early Funders Coalition for Children and Minnesota's Future is a collaboration of more than 15 members of Minnesota's philanthropic community. The Coalition provides critical leadership and funding for research, program development, public policy and grant making to improve early childhood efforts in Minnesota. We are working together to ensure every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success.