



Early Learning Update

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Ten Minnesota Commitments to Equity

1. Prioritize equity.
2. Start from within.
3. Measure what matters.
4. Go local.
5. Follow the money.
6. Start early.
7. Monitor implementation of standards.
8. Value people.
9. Improve conditions for learning.
10. Give students options.



Agenda

- 2021 Session Lookback
- Federal Fund Investments
- Program Updates

- Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) and School Readiness Plus (SRP)
 - Investment of \$39.887M prevented elimination of 4,000 seats for FY22 and FY23
 - VPK – 118 districts and charters served 7,409 children at 198 sites in SY19-20
 - SRP – 10 districts and charters served 517 children at 17 sites in SY19-20

2021 Session – Screen Time Limitation

- Preschool and kindergarten students may not use individual screens without engagement from teacher or other students (exception for IEPs)
- Screen time legislation goes into effect July 1, 2022. Work to date on it includes:
 - Posted [screen time legislation announcement](#) on web
 - Included announcement in Superintendent Mailing and Kindergarten Communications.
 - Met with internal and external partners to determine ways to support teachers and staff
 - Drafted screen time guidance
 - Gathering stakeholder feedback on guidance
 - Likely a PD session offered on screen time at spring PD summit

ARP Investments – IDEA

- **~ \$3.5 million dollars to MN Part C**
- Funds are available for obligation by Part C lead agencies between July 1, 2021, and September 30, 2023, and must be liquidated by January 28, 2024.
- MDE Application for Use of Funds was due to OSEP August 2, 2021. The following “buckets” for funding distribution have been identified through intensive stakeholder engagement.
 - Family Voices
 - Family Outcome Survey
 - Funding to districts through sub-granting
 - Statewide profession development/ongoing support
 - Help Me Grow/Referral Process/Child Find and Outreach activities

ARP Investments – ESSER

- **Reach Out and Read was granted \$150,000 of ARP funds.**
- Reach Out and Read program partners with medical professionals to provide children with developmentally appropriate books and gives parents guidance and encouragement on reading with their children.
- Funding is being used to expand clinic base as well as maintain levels of high program quality at new and existing program sites.

ARP Investments – ESSER

- **Parent Child+ was granted \$1,300,000 of ARP funds.**
 - Also receive \$1,800,000 per biennium of state funds.
- ParentChild+ is a free, intensive home visiting program for families with children ages 2-4. It provides an evidence-based and research-validated early childhood literacy and school readiness program for children ages 16 months to four
- ParentChild+ works to provide programming during the pandemic, maintain program quality and adding the ParentChild+ Family Child Care (FCC) Model which provides comparable services to family child care providers and allows a broader community reach.

ARP Investments – State Fiscal Recovery Funds

- \$3.5M was awarded to continue funding for 8 education partnership coalitions in summer and fall of 2021.
- RFP currently available to fund 5 additional education partnership coalitions in the amount of \$100,000 each.
- These sites are tasked with coordinating at the local level how to achieve the following goals:
 - all children are ready for school;
 - all third-graders can read at grade level;
 - all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed; and
 - all students graduate from high school; and all students are ready for career and college.

Other Federal Fund Investments

- \$6.473M in GEER II funds served all 865 children with priority status on the scholarship waitlist as of April 2021.
- \$6.473M in GEER II funds for certified school age children in public schools serving 19,500 Pre-K to grade 6 students.
- \$20M in ARP – SFRF funds for Summer Preschool Program
 - Year-to-date served 5,219 4- and 5-year old children who would be entering kindergarten fall of 2021, whose preschool or kindergarten experience was disrupted due to COVID-19.

Program Updates

Early Childhood Special Education

- Team MDE-ECSE has been listening...
 - Regional Listening Sessions Around the State: Leader, Practitioners and Community Partners
 - Interagency Early Intervention Committee, Interagency Coordinating Council, Regional Low Incidence Facilitators
 - Families/Caregivers
 - Community and Inter-Agency Partners
- Lead Stakeholders are engaging in strategic planning
 - What does the field need?
 - Who do we need to help us plan?
 - How do we get there?
 - How do we know we're successful?
- Enrollment and Referrals are Rebounding
 - COVID-19 had a significant impact on students enrolled in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education Programs around the state as well as the number of referrals being made through Help Me Grow.
 - Preliminary December 1, 2021 child count:
 - Ages 0-2 = 5,596 and Ages 3-5 = 11,627
 - Final December 1, 2020 child count:
 - Ages 0-2 = 4,890 and Ages 3-5 = 11,921
 - Final December 1, 2019 child count:
 - Ages 0-2 = 6,128 and Ages 3-5 = 13,545

Head Start/Early Head Start

- Working to offer in person programming while experiencing staff shortages
- New Federal Head Start Performance Standard regarding vaccination requires vaccination against COVID-19 for all staff, contractors, volunteers working directly with children. Compliance date by Jan 31, 2022.
- School district partnerships and ECSE services have been impacted.

Early Childhood Family Education and School Readiness

- Many ECFE and School Readiness programs continued to provide financial and human resources support during the pandemic.
- Staffing continues to be an issue, both on the shortage and fatigue/burnout sides.
- Every ECFE program completed a community needs assessment. Responding to family needs continued to be a theme, as well as innovative and responsive programming. More partnering. Helping with family needs.

Health and Developmental Screening

- FY 2020: 44,723 unduplicated screenings completed by districts
- FY 2021: 48,795 unduplicated screenings completed by districts
- While overall screening has increased, the number of children screened at age 3 years (target age) decreased 45% from FY 2019 (27,519) to FY 2021 (15,262).

Kindergarten Entry Profile (KEP)

- Districts/charters are, like last year, not volunteering/choosing to participate in the KEP.
- We continue to use these funds to support voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) and school readiness plus (SRP) programs who are required to use a KEP assessment and other early learning programs that use KEP assessments (Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), school readiness (SR), and some child care programs).

Early Learning Scholarships

Cap increase effective 7/1/2021

For priority populations: (children of teen parents, in foster care or child protection, or experiencing homelessness)

- 4 stars: increased from \$10,000 to \$12,000
- 3 Stars: increased from \$7,500 to \$9,000

For all scholarships, increase the award by \$1,000

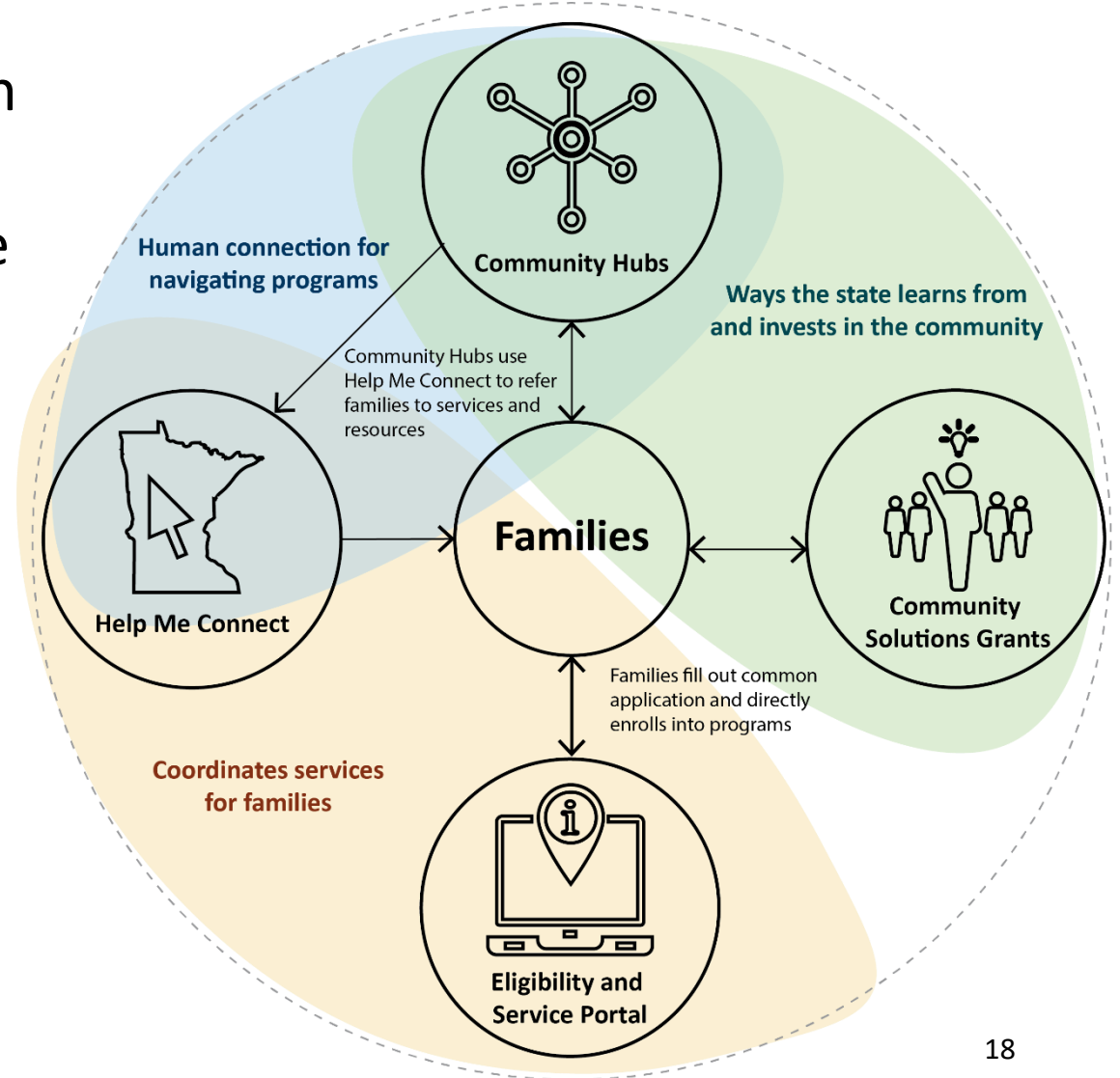
- 4 Stars: increased from \$7,500 to \$8,500
- 3 Stars: increased from \$5,000 to \$6,000
- 1 and 2 Stars: increased from \$4,000 to \$5,000
- For programs in a current cohort for rating: increased from \$3,000 to \$4,000

Preschool Development Grant Overview

Minnesota's Preschool Development Birth through Five (PDG B-5) grant and related activities support the overall goal to more efficiently align and coordinate our systems in order to ease navigation for families.

Vision

By focusing on children facing racial, geographic, and economic inequities, children in Minnesota will thrive within their families and communities.



Fostering Cross-Agency Collaboration



Preschool Development Grant 2020-2022 Strategic Plan Summary



"Again, it comes to trust – there is not trust for communities of color and indigenous communities."
Public Meeting, New Hope

"Strengthen relationships between Somali community and school with lessons from the Somali community who speaks the language and can be a strong language and cultural translator."
Somali Parents, St. Paul

"I hear so many people who connect with a job, but the hours do not work for their child care, their vehicle is not reliable, they do not have the right clothes."
Providers, Otter Tail County



VISION
By focusing on children facing racial, geographic, and economic inequities, all children in Minnesota will be born healthy and able to thrive within their families and communities.

"A lot of these intersect, and you can't have one without the other."
Child Care Providers, Minneapolis

"There are so many hoops. You have to tell them about your entire life before you can access just a little bit of help. I only go for help when I really, really need it."
Parents, Minneapolis

"Look at employment strategies holistically, taking mental health, addiction, and living situations into account and providing assistance where needed."
Providers, Duluth

"Create the system to work for individuals, families, and communities; not making the individuals, families, and communities bend to the system."
Participant from Leech Lake Tribal Nation

"Trauma informed care is missing. [We] need more people trained in trauma informed care."
Community Needs Assessment Respondent

- Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan
- Shared Governance
- Coordinated Funding
- Shared Information Technology Projects
- Cross-agency Communications

Thank you!

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