



Montessori American Indian Childcare Center

E³ = Establishing, Experiencing, Enhancing the Love of Learning

March 10, 2022

Representative Tina Liebling
Chair, Health Finance and Policy Committee

Rep. Liebling and Members of Health Finance and Policy Committee:

I am the Executive Director at the Montessori American Indian Childcare Center (MAICC). Our preschool is a recipient of the Community Solutions Grant Program. We are writing in strong support of HF 4099.

The Montessori American Indian Childcare Center is in its eighth year of serving the youngest learners in its community. Its **mission** is to address the early childhood needs and the academic achievement gap of American Indian children through revitalizing language and culture. It is the **vision** of the Montessori American Indian Childcare Center to be the premier model of early childhood education

We are in our second year of a grant from the Community Solutions Grant Program. With few dollars coming into our community to address health disparities experienced by American Indian children and their early learning needs, the Community Solutions Fund Grant is a strong supporter of our preschool.

The funding from the Community Solutions Grant Program supports our current work to offer access to a preschool opportunity to indigenous children in our community. The Community Solutions Grant Program supports the Parent Nest, which is the core of our work with families and involves parents in the education and development of their children. The grant supports family stability; the expansion of culturally based services and interventions to serve prenatal moms, infants and toddlers, a population most at risk for poor health and child development outcomes; and the creation of culturally specific developmental materials that promote healthy development of prenatal- to age 3 children.

The Community Solutions Grant Program promotes and practices community inclusion and engagement in the communities it funds. It works with BIPOC communities that have a long history of experiencing systemic, racial, and structural policies, which impact the education, health, and well-being of its children. The Community Solutions Grant Program is an important partner to these communities as they strive to address racial inequity and close the unfair advantage that exists in early education for the children and families in their respective communities.

Community engagement matters. We support HF 4099 because we believe it is a strategy that addresses inequality as well as amplifies the innovative solutions that leverage community assets, are culturally relevant, and center the experiences and dignity of those



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most impacted by inequity. Community Solutions Grant Program represents more than money, it is also recognition that communities of color, American Indian communities, and geographically dispersed communities have invaluable knowledge, and must be active and valued participants within the creation of solutions for their communities.

We strongly encourage you to support HF 4099. The collective health and prosperity of our state is tied to ensuring every child has what they need to thrive.

Respectfully,

LaVon Lee

LaVon Lee
Executive Director

Janice LaFloe

Janice LaFloe
Founder/ Director Program Development