

2019 Public Policy Priorities



Based on our extensive work with child care providers Think Small believes that by prioritizing investments in childcare, Minnesota can achieve a triple bottom line –

Contributing
to positive developmental outcomes for young children

Fostering
women's economic empowerment, and

Supporting
business performance through increased employee productivity, lower turnover, and reduced absenteeism.

Minnesota has one of the largest K-12 achievement gaps in the nation when comparing white children to children of color.

But these achievement gaps begin as early as 18 months as opportunity gaps. Therefore, to address the issue of achievement and opportunity gaps, Minnesota must prioritize early childhood investments.

The single best investment the state can make is targeted early childhood investments in our most vulnerable children.

In the 2019 Legislative session, Think Small's advocacy will build upon the momentum of significant investments in early care and education and will support policies that: **1** Prioritize increased access to high quality early care and education for children with high needs, **2** Increase support for early learning professionals by working to

- **Expand access for children, birth to kindergarten entry, from families with low incomes to high-quality early care and education programs by advocating funding for flexible, parent-directed scholarships**
- **Increase the number of financially sustainable Parent Aware rated programs and allow programs to maintain or improve their Parent Aware ratings**
- **Improve Minnesota's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to assure more children from families with low incomes can access high quality care**
- **Support the sustainable career pathways of early learning professionals**
- **Improve tracking and data collection of children's program participation and outcomes**