The Importance of High-Quality Child Care in Minnesota

High-quality child care benefits the state in multiple ways:

- It allows parents to go to work
- It supports child care providers as business owners
- It helps prepare children for school and life

High-quality early education is the best investment we can make. Economists have shown that investing $1 in high-quality learning for low-income children leads to a return on investment of up to $16. It pays dividends in long-term productivity and savings to our education, health, social service and justice systems.

Parent Aware promotes research-based best practices among participating programs through training and coaching and rates them on a scale of one to four stars. Parents can access the ratings information to choose the best early childhood program for their child and family. It pays dividends in long-term productivity and savings to our education, health, social service and justice systems.

In Minnesota, there are 419,084 children age birth through five years; 74% of these children live in households where all available parents are currently working. Parents need a safe, nurturing, educational environment for their children while they’re at work.

Early Learning Scholarships are a crucial tool for closing the opportunity gaps facing Minnesota. Research shows gaps forming between children from low-income families and their more well off peers as young as 18 months old. Supporting low-income families to access affordable quality early learning programs is the best way to prevent these persistent gaps.

Teaching kids is actually a lot more like rocket science than babysitting. Quality teachers need to understand brain development, social and emotional growth, language development, cultural relevance and more. They also need adequate compensation for their work.

Minnesota has lost close to 30% of our licensed family providers since 2005. We must address this shortage to ensure strong families and a strong economy in the future.

---