



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE / February 5, 2019

Welcome to the Child Care Aware Legislative Update. This narrative update, along with our Bill Tracker, will be posted each Tuesday (reflecting activity through the previous Friday) on the [Child Care Aware of Minnesota Website](#).

Each week, we will provide a brief overview of bills that have been introduced, action that has been taken at the committee level or on the floor, and any other pertinent news related to early care and education and school-age care issues.

If you have additions to recommend to the Bill Tracker, please contact [Ann McCully](#).

OVERVIEW

While the cold weather resulted in some canceled hearings, the Legislature continued to move forward with both committee work and bill introductions. As noted below, last week also saw the first bill hearings related to our issues in the House committees, and more are scheduled to be heard this week.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

- **The House Early Childhood Finance and Policy Division** continued to educate their members with overviews of the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and the Head Start & Early Head Start, Voluntary Prekindergarten & School Readiness Plus, and Early Learning Scholarships programs.
- **The House Education Finance Division** heard a presentation from the Minnesota Department of Education with a focus on special education.
- **The House Education Policy Committee** heard **HF 125** to require that state MDE grants include evidence-based standards. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus bill.
- **The House Health and Human Services Finance Division** discussed and reviewed the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and CCAP-Eligibility Case Studies from the Department of Human Services and Dakota County.
- **The House Labor Committee** held the first of what will be many hearings on **HF 5** – the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act. After many testifiers and much discussion, the bill passed and was referred to the House Commerce Committee.

BILL INTRODUCTIONS

For more information about each bill, please download our weekly Bill Tracker. This list includes topics, numbers, authors, and general committee referrals for bills introduced through **January 11, 2019** (New bills are highlighted in yellow).

Early Education/Child Care Programs

- Additional funding and opportunities for children aged birth to three created; programs and funding for prenatal care services, home visiting, early childhood education, and child care assistance (**HF 1-Pinto**) and (**HF 30-Moran/SF 671-Wiklund**)
- Family and group family child care initial licensure modification; plain-language handbook, uniform family child care provider application, and child care provider communication process development requirement (**SF 2-Housley**)
- Minnesota Initiative Foundations grant for rural sustainable child care appropriation (**SF 137-Nelson**)
- Initial family and group family child care licensure requirement modification (**SF 155-Housley**)
- Child care in rural Minnesota funding provided and money appropriated (**HF 422-Brand/SF 537-Nelson**)
- Greater Minnesota child care facility capital grant program bond issue and appropriation (**HF 423-Brand/SF 538-Relph**)
- Community solutions funds for healthy child development grant program established and money appropriated (**HF 459-Hassan**)

Child Care Assistance

- Public assistance and child care programs counted income for eligibility determinations clarification (**HF 380-Scott/SF 44-Benson**)
- Child care assistance program maximum reimbursement rates modified and money appropriated (**HF 496-Hassan**)
- Child care providers prohibited from receiving child care assistance program reimbursements for dependents of employees (**HF 497-Franson**)
- Child care assistance program disqualifications due to wrongfully obtaining assistance modified (**HF 498-Franson**)
- Low-income workers increased child care assistance and child care assistance reimbursement rates; basic sliding fee child care assistance program forecasting (**SF 625-Marty**)

Pre-K – 12

- Funding for school-linked mental health service grants increased, funding for full-service community schools provided, funding for support our students grants extended, the Homework Starts with Home program funded, the Collaborative Urban Educator program funding increased (**HF 2-Edelson**) and (**HF 26-Kunesh-Podein/SF 369-Cwodzinski**)
- Mental health grants establishment and appropriations (**SF 1-Rosen**)
- Kindergarten readiness assessment requirement (**SF 33-Wiger**)
- Full-service community schools grants appropriation (**SF 37-Wiger**)
- Minnesota reads task force creation and appropriation (**SF 81-Wiger**)
- School-linked mental health services grants modification and appropriation (**SF 89-Nelson**)
- Education programs; legislative grants awarded to organizations for education programs evidence-based grant standard established, and report required (**HF 125-Bennett**)
- School districts authorized to transfer community education reserve funds (**HF 337-Davnie**)
- Cultural competency training for teacher licensure definition (**SF 289-Clausen**)
- Community education revenue program funding increase (**SF 292-Latz**)

Family Support

- Paid family, pregnancy, bonding, and applicant's serious medical condition benefits (**HF 5-Halvorson**)
- Parental leave costs individual income and corporate franchise employer tax credits (**SF 90-Nelson**)
- Statewide parent-to-parent programs for families of children and youth with special health care needs funding provided and money appropriated (**HF 190-Zerwas/SF 215-Hoffman**)
- Minnesota Family Investment program (MFIP) and General Assistance (GA) cash grants increase and appropriation (**HF 309-Kunesh-Podein/SF 167-Laine**)
- Paid family, pregnancy, bonding, and serious medical condition benefits provided, employment leaves regulated and required, data classified, rulemaking authorized, and money appropriated (**HF 256-Koegel**)
- Pregnant and parenting pupils transportation to certain qualifying educational programs requirement and appropriation (**SF 340-Draheim**)
- Minimum wage phased-in increase; federal social security tax loophole closure; child care assistance expansion; Minnesota Family Investment program (MFIP) cash grant increase; working family tax credit program increase; basic sliding fee child care assistance program forecasting (**SF 622-Marty**)

Higher Education

- Student loan debt counseling grant program and appropriation (**HF 550-Pryor/SF 306-Draheim**)
- Higher education institutions eligibility for the state grant program modification (**SF 378-Bingham**)
- Teacher candidates of color financial aid provided and money appropriated (**HF 434-Noor**)

Oversight

- Human services provider enrollment medical assistance (MA) modification; counted income clarification; surety bond requirements; programs documentation, and commissioner of human services authority modifications; visit verification system; universal identification number; fraud prevention investigations appropriation (**SF 4-Abeler**)
- Human services background studies disqualification of individuals with expunged criminal records prohibited (**HF 290-Noor/SF 405-Champion**)
- Office of Inspector General created (**HF 445-Franson**)
- Temporary immediate license suspensions modified, eligibility verification required, theft offenses penalties established, and report required (**HF 446-Franson**)
- Legal nonlicensed child care provider definition modified (**HF-481 Swedzinski**)
- Background checks required on all first-time teaching applicants and mandatory reporting expanded (**HF 532-Erickson**)
- Child care fix-it ticket violation expansion (**SF 669-Abeler**)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Feb. 19:** Deadline for Gov. Walz to present his proposed budget
- **March 15:** First committee deadline-bills must be heard in at least one body by this date
- **April 13-22:** Easter-Passover break for the Minnesota Legislature
- **May 20:** Deadline to end the 2019 legislative session