



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE | May 18, 2021

Welcome to the latest 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 action that has been taken at the committee level or on the floor, a brief overview of bills that have been introduced, 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

As of 11:58 p.m. on Sunday, May 16, the Governor and legislative leaders reached an overall budget agreement, with specific targets for each committee/omnibus bill. With the constitutional deadline for adjournment set for Monday, May 17, this will mean that the legislature will need to come back for a special session to finalize the nearly \$52 billion state budget and accompanying policy elements.

Since most of the work of the conference committees hinged on this budget decision, there was not a lot of progress this past week. A few additional provisions were agreed to in committees, and one committee, Health and Human Services, did create a conference committee report containing some policy elements that were agreed upon. Any relevant early childhood elements from the past week's meetings and conference committee report are included in the updates below.

Leadership has asked conference committees to complete their spreadsheets and finance decisions by Friday, May 28 and complete their overall bills by Friday, June 4. A special session to pass all legislation will likely be held in mid-June.

We will return with a final update and bill tracker once the Legislature has completed their special session. Keep an eye out for this in June!

FLOOR ACTION

- **SF 1315** (HF 1403-Becker-Finn)-Pregnant and postpartum inmate placement in community-based program authorized. **Passed the House 128-5 on 5/10. Presented to Governor 05/12 and approved 5/13**
- **HF 2128** (Liebling/Benson) Health and Human Services Conference Committee report (policy-only items)- **Passed the House Floor 77-57 and the Senate floor 66-1 on 5/17**

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

OMNIBUS BILL OVERVIEWS and COMMITTEE DECISIONS AS OF 5/17/21

Agreed upon language elements to date are highlighted in yellow

HF2128, Omnibus Health and Human Services Bill: Passed House 70-62; Passed Senate 39-28

- House conferees: Liebling, Schultz, Gomez, Pinto, Schomacker
- Senate conferees: Benson, Abeler, Koran, Hoffman, Utke

Early Childhood items under negotiation (see April 13 and 19 legislative updates for full list of elements):

- **Child Care Assistance** funding and policy (Senate includes transfer of funds for Early Learning Scholarships)
- Proposals from the **Family Child Care Task Force**, including licensing and regulation modifications
- Early education **workforce supports** including T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarships and REETAIN Grants, child Care start up, revitalization and business support
- A competitive grant program to expand options for child care for **children with disabilities**
- Grants for **home visiting** programs for pregnant women and families with young children
- The **“Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act**, requiring hospitals with obstetric care and birth centers to provide continuing education on anti-racism and implicit bias
- Exempts health care professionals from **reporting on certain drug and alcohol use** in pregnant mothers, if those mothers are receiving prenatal or postpartum care from health care professional
- Moves **Home Visiting** program into state statute

HF1065, Omnibus Education Bill: Passed House 73-60; Passed Senate 37-29

- House conferees: Davnie, Richardson, Pryor, Hassan, Kresha
- Senate conferees: Chamberlain, Eichorn, Duckworth, Dornink, Wiger

Early Childhood items under negotiation (see April 13 Legislative Update for full list of elements):

- **Limit on screen time for children in preschool and kindergarten**-prohibits children in publicly funded preschools or kindergartens from using **an individual-use screen**, such as a tablet or smartphone, without engagement from a teacher or other student. Children who have an individualized education program (IEP) or individualized family service plan are not subject to the prohibition. **Adopted 5/6/21**
- **Evidence-based education grants**. Requires all preK-12 education grants awarded after July 1, 2022, to be awarded through a framework that encourages the goals of the grants to be aligned to Minnesota’s world’s best workforce and the federal government’s student accountability systems. **Adopted 5/6/21**
- **Full and equitable participation in early learning**. Prohibits dismissal of a student in kindergarten through **grade three unless non-exclusionary discipline measures have been exhausted**. **Adopted 5/10/21**
- Changes in eligibility for the **Early Learning Scholarships** and increased funding
- An evaluation of the **Parent Aware Rating** program and development of a racial equity plan
- Creation of the **Great Start for All Minnesota Children** Task Force to develop a plan for all families to have access to high-quality, affordable early care and education for children from birth up to age five
- Expansion of the **Grow Your Own** program, allowing programs including Head Start to apply for grants to support persons of color or American Indian persons to become licensed teachers or preschool teachers
- Changes in **teacher licensure** requirements for school-based Pre-K and VPK programs
- Requirement to implement the **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment** statewide

SF1342, Omnibus Jobs/Workforce Development Bill:

- House conferees: Noor, Ecklund, Olson, Hamilton, Berg
- Senate conferees: Pratt, Rarick, Draheim, Housley, Eken

Early Childhood Elements under consideration (See April 19 Legislative Update for full list of elements):

- **Minnesota Initiative Foundations (MIF) Child Care grants and Community Child Care grants** through DEED
- A new **family and medical leave** program
- Requirements to provide **nursing and lactating employees** with paid break time to express milk
- Changes to eligibility for **parenting and pregnancy leave** accommodations
- Establishment of **earned sick and safe time** requirements

SF975, Omnibus Higher Education Bill: Passed House 74-59; Passed Senate 38-29

- House conferees: Bernardy, Keeler, Klevorn, O'Neill, Christensen
- Senate conferees: Tomassoni, Rarick, Goggin, Jasinski, Clausen

Early Childhood Elements under consideration (See April 19 Legislative Update for full list of elements):

- **Child Care Grant Eligibility**- Simplifies eligibility criteria and allows an additional semester of eligibility for students who provide care to spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition. **Adopted 4/28**
- **Child Care Grant increased to \$6,500. Adopted 5/11.**
- Establishment of the **Aspiring Minnesota teachers of color scholarship program** and a new **grant program** for student teachers who belong to a racial or ethnic group **underrepresented in the state's teacher workforce**
- Expansion of the **workforce scholarship program** (which currently includes early childhood) and increasing funding

HF991 – Omnibus Tax Bill: Passed House 68-66; Passed Senate 39-26

- House conferees: Marquart, Youakim, Her, Lislegard, Davids
- Senate conferees: Nelson, Weber, Miller, Bakk, and Rest

Early Childhood Elements under consideration (See April 26 Legislative Update for full list of elements):

- Changes to the **Working Family Credit including changing the** definition of **“qualifying child”** for the credit to include qualifying children who do not qualify because they do not have a Social Security number
- Establishment of a **licensed in-home child care provider property tax credit**

BILL INTRODUCTIONS

For more information about bills introduced to date, or to see all of the bills introduced, please download our weekly [Bill Tracker](#). The bill tracker has also been updated to reflect any bills that **have been included, in whole or in part, in the omnibus bills** (with the exception Senate bonding bills).

- **S.F. No. 2515 (Westrom)**: A bill for an act relating to campaign finance; allowing noncampaign disbursements for child care costs and for costs incurred due to a candidate's disability; allowing unused funds to be carried forward for child care costs and for costs incurred due to a candidate's disability.