



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE April 12, 2022

Welcome to the Child Care Aware Legislative update. The updates from the full session, along with our Bill Trackers, can be found 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

The main focus of last week was the creation and passage of all of the House and Senate Omnibus bills. Several bills contained elements related to early childhood and are outlined in this update. Links to all of the omnibus bills and the included bills, in whole or in part, can be found on this week's [updated bill tracker](#).

The Legislature is now on a break until Tuesday, April 19. When the Legislature returns, these omnibus bills go to the House Ways and Means Committee or the Senate Finance Committee, and then to the House and Senate floors for votes. Both of these stops allow for opportunities to make additional amendments to the bills, so the items listed below may change through that process. We will keep you posted on any substantive changes in future updates.

OMNIBUS BILL SUMMARIES

HOUSE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION BILL (HF 4735-PINTO)

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

- Makes permanent the temporary changes to how families are prioritized on the Basic Sliding Fee child care assistance program waiting list
- Increases the maximum rate paid to child care providers for child care assistance to the 75th percentile of the most recent child care provider rate survey beginning October 3, 2022.
- Requires child care resource and referral programs to: (1) administer the child care one-stop regional assistance network to provide assistance to child care providers and individuals interested in becoming providers; and (2) provide supports that enable economically challenged individuals to obtain the skills training, career counseling, and job placement assistance necessary to begin a career in child care.
- Establishes a new "Brain Builder" competitive grant program for licensed family child care providers and legally non-licensed child care providers who care for infants.
- Adds additional funds for Family Friend and Neighbor child care grants through DHS.

- Directs the commissioner to establish a grant program to enable family child care providers to implement shared services alliances
- Directs the commissioner to provide grants to one or more organizations to offer grants or other supports to child care providers to improve their access to computers, the internet, and other technologies.
- Removes the sunset date for the stabilization base grants for child care providers and removes the requirement that the grants be reduced between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023.
- Directs DHS, in consultation with stakeholders, to develop a cost estimation model for providing early care and learning.
- Directs DHS to develop, in consultation with stakeholders, a child care provider wage scale that: (1) provides for wages that are equivalent to elementary school educators with similar credentials and experience; (2) incentivizes child care providers and staff to increase child care-related qualifications; and (3) accounts for the business structures of different types of providers.

CHILD CARE LICENSING

- Makes several changes related to supporting safe sleep/reduction of risk of sudden unexpected infant death in licensed programs
- Allows the commissioner to increase the maximum group size to no more than 40 children and increase the acceptable staff-to-child ratio to 1:20 for certified, license-exempt child care centers during national security, peacetime, or pandemic-related public health emergencies.
- Allows the commissioner to conduct and administer pilot projects to test methods and procedures related to the projects for modernizing child care regulations.
- Directs the commissioner of Information Technology Services to develop and implement a plan to modernize the information technology systems supporting programs that impact early childhood.

EARLY EDUCATION

- Provides that the state appropriation for Head Start programs may be used for costs associated with program operations, infrastructure, or reconfiguration to serve children from birth to age five in center-based services.
- Increases the amount of state aid paid to school districts for each child who is screened prior to or within 30 days of enrolling in public school kindergarten.
- Establishes the Grow Your Own Early Childhood Educator program to enhance and diversify the early childhood workforce.
- Allows school districts to receive school breakfast aid for ECSE students who participate in VPK programs.
- Allows adults who provide child care, or caregivers, to participate in early childhood family education (ECFE) programs .
- Makes families that have a child who is referred as in need of child protective services or placed in foster care eligible for Early Learning scholarships regardless of a family's income level.
- Changes a child's eligibility for scholarships to include all children from birth through age four on September 1 of the current school year .
- Directs the commissioner to give highest priority for scholarships to children who are younger than four years old and adds children who have incarcerated parents to the priority list.
- Allows school districts to receive English learner aid for ECSE students. Services provided to ECSE students do not count against the seven-year limit of total funded service.
- Allows the commissioner of human services to make grants to school districts and charter schools to provide services related to children's mental health.
- Authorizes DEED to conduct an early childhood workforce study.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES APPROPRIATIONS

- Increase CCAP to 75th percentile - \$51,000 in 2022-23; \$220 million in 2024-25
- One-stop assistance network - \$1.2 million in 2024-25
- Child Care Workforce Development Grants - \$1.3 million in 2024-25
- Shared Services Alliance - \$1 million in 2024-25
- Technology grants for Child Care Providers - \$300,000 in 2022-23; \$600,000 in 2024-25
- Child Care Stabilization base grants - \$30 million in 2022-23; \$160.8 million in 2024-25
- Child Care hardship grants - \$29 million in 2022-23
- FFN Caregiver grants - \$3.1 million in 2022-23; \$6.7 million in 2024-25
- Brain Builder Grants - \$2.5 million in 2022-23
- Data Sharing initiative - \$10 million in 2022-23

EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

- Early Learning Scholarships increased funding - \$150 million in 2022-23; \$90 million in 2024-25
- Early Childhood Family Education Office at MDE - \$325,000 in 2022-23; \$650,000 in 2024-25
- Grow your own Early Educators - \$3.8 million in 2022-23; \$7.6 million in 2024-25
- Early Head Start increased funding - \$10 million in 2022-23; \$20 million in 2024-25
- Infant & Early Ch. Mental Health Consult (Transfer to DHS) - \$3.8 million in 2022-23; \$7.5 million in 2024-25
- Early Childhood Family Education Office at MDE - \$325,000 in 2022-23; \$650,000 in 2024-25
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consulting - \$2.5 million in 2022-23; \$5 million in 2024-25
- Reach out and Read increase - \$250,000 in 2022-23; \$500,000 in 2024-25
- Early Childhood Workforce study (transfer to DEED) - \$255,000 in 2022-23

HOUSE HEALTH BILL (HF 4706-LIEBLING) & HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES BILL (HF 4579-SCHULTZ)

- Establishes the community solutions for healthy child development grant program in statute (\$10 million in 2022-23; \$20 million in 2024-25)
- Establishes a grant program for remediation of lead sources in drinking water in schools and child care settings (\$2.05 million in 2022-23; 3.08 million in 2024-25)
- Creates the Healthy beginnings, Healthy families act (\$11.7 million in 2022-23; 23.5 million in 2024-25)
 - Establishes a Minnesota collaborative to prevent infant mortality
 - Authorizes grants to improve infant health
 - Establishes the Help Me Connect online navigator to connect pregnant and parenting families with local services
 - Authorizes a universal screening program to identify young children at risk for developmental and behavioral concerns
 - Permits grants to implement model jail practices to benefit children of incarcerated parents
- Community Resource Hubs & Coordination funding (\$14.8 million in 2022-23; 37.9 million in 2024-25)
- Increases Voluntary Family Home Visiting services (\$62.3 million in 2022-23; \$124.7 million in 2024-25)

HOUSE E-12 EDUCATION BILL (HF 4300-DAVNIE)

- Modifies the existing after-school community learning program grant language, removes eligibility for child care centers, and requires grant programs to offer a broad array of academic enrichment activities (\$25 million in 2022-23)
- Increases the appropriation for full-service community schools (\$50 million in 2022-23)

- Allows adults who provide child care, or caregivers, to participate in early childhood family education (ECFE) programs
- Establishes a new Voluntary pre-kindergarten program for all eligible four-year-old children (Blends VPK, school readiness, school readiness plus, and early learning pathway two scholarships - \$67 million in 2022-23; \$193 million in 2024-25)
 - Allows a school district, charter school, licensed child care center, licensed family child care provider, or Head Start agency that meets specified requirements to establish a VPK program for eligible four-year-old children
 - School district and charter school VPK programs are funded based on the number of eligible pupils enrolled; Head Start and licensed child care VPK programs receive \$11,000 per child served per year
 - An eligible child can participate in a VPK program free of charge
 - Allows VPK programs to charge a sliding fee for instructional hours that exceed the 850 hours required during the school year, any hours provided before or after school, or any hours for child care provided in the summer
 - Programs must provide comprehensive program content aligned with the state early learning standards, including the implementation of curriculum, assessment, and intentional instructional strategies
 - Provides voluntary pre-kindergarten staff salaries and set salary schedules equivalent to the salaries of public school district elementary school staff with similar credentials and experience for school district and charter pre-kindergarten program sites and, to the extent practicable, for Head Start, child care center, and family child care sites
 - Employ a lead teacher for each voluntary pre-kindergarten classroom who has at least a bachelor's degree in early education or a related field no later than July 1, 2028. Teachers employed by an eligible provider for at least three of the last five years immediately preceding July 1, 2022, who meet the necessary content knowledge and teaching skills for early childhood educators, as demonstrated through measures determined by the state, may be employed as a lead teacher.
 - School districts and charter schools that receive funding for voluntary pre-kindergarten programs must develop and submit a mixed-delivery program plan to the Department of Education annually by July 1, 2023, and every year thereafter

HOUSE WORKFORCE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BILL (HF 4355-NOOR)

- Increased funding for DEED grants to increase the number of quality child care providers to support economic development. (\$4 million in additional funding for 2022-23)

HOUSE TAX BILL (HF 3669-MARQUART)

- An Income Tax rebate of \$325 per child for families with children aged 16 and under (\$308 million in 2022-23)
- An increased Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (\$196.9 million in 2022-23; \$407 million in 2024-25)

HOUSE AGRICULTURE BILL (HF 4366-SUNDIN)

- Farm-to-school grant funding increased, child care providers who purchase from local farmers reimbursement authorized (\$1.6 million in 2022-23)

SENATE HUMAN SERVICE REFORM BILL (SF 4410-ABELER)

- Quality Parenting Initiative funding provided (\$200,000 in 2024-25)

BILL INTRODUCTIONS

This list includes topics, numbers, authors, and general committee referrals for bills filed during the week of April 4-8. For more information about each bill, or to see all of the bills introduced, please download [our weekly Bill Tracker](#).

- YWCA Minneapolis early childhood and youth programming grant established, and money appropriated (HF 4761-Agbaje)

TIMELINES

- **April 9-18** - Legislative Break
- **Monday, May 23** - Last day of session