



## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE | JANUARY 24, 2023

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

Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan announced a series of proposals [to make Minnesota the best state in the country for kids](#). The first of four packages within their One Minnesota Budget, this \$12 billion proposal would lower the cost of child care for middle-class families, reduce child poverty by expanding tax credits for families who need help the most, and make the largest investment in public education in state history.

While more details will be released with the Governor's full budget proposal on January 24, here are a few of the proposed elements:

#### Funding to support family access to programs

- Expand the state's child and dependent care tax credit. Families that earn less than \$200,000 could get up to \$4,000 if they have one child, \$8,000 for two children, and \$10,500 if they have three kids.
- Increase the Child tax credit for lower-income Minnesotans, which could give families \$1,000 per child, up to \$3,000.
- Increase the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) rates to the federal recommendation of the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- Reprioritize the CCAP waitlist to serve new families more efficiently, allowing eligible families caring for children in foster care to access the program and increasing funding to serve more families currently on the waitlist.
- Shift the focus of Early Learning Scholarships to prioritize 0–3-year-olds in the highest need populations.
- Invest \$90 million per year in the Early Learning Scholarships model, which will allow an estimated 9,000 new scholarships per year.
- Establish full-day public prekindergarten for nearly 25,000 eligible children using a mixed delivery model including school-based learning, Head Start, community-based centers, and family child care programs.

#### Support for early educators

- Retain staff through increased compensation with payments for child care programs, support earnings for family child care, and support providers starting child care businesses.
- Support child care economic development in Greater Minnesota, which will assist child care providers, create much-needed new child care slots, and increase the capacity and quality of child care across the state.

- Streamline the licensing application and renewal process for family child care providers, making it easier and more flexible for child care providers and licensors. Annual inspections may be conducted anytime during the calendar year, benefiting families when licensors address health and safety concerns in different seasons.

Building on these bold investments, Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan also proposed a new Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) that reimagines state government structures to elevate child, youth, and family priorities and funding needs by providing focused leadership in our executive branch and with the legislature. This new agency will bring together holistic supports for families, including core programs from early childhood through youth.

The One Minnesota Budget proposes a process for transitioning to the new agency and obtaining authority and resources to support the creation, alignment, and launch of a two-year process of moving core child, youth, and family support divisions beginning in July 2024.

## COMMITTEE/FLOOR ACTIVITY

Here are the committee discussions that took place during the week of January 16-20:

- **The House Children and Families Committee** heard:
  - HF 13-Keeler, which modifies child care assistance rates. The bill was passed and re-referred to the Ways and Means Committee.
  - HF 150-Pinto, which modifies the child care stabilization base grants, and appropriates money. The bill was passed and re-referred to the Ways and Means Committee.
  - HF 456-Pérez-Vega, which makes permanent the expansion of the voluntary prekindergarten and school readiness plus program. The bill was passed and re-referred to the House Education Finance Committee.
- **The House Health Finance & Policy Committee** heard HF 52-Richardson, which establishes pregnant patient right to have a designated support person present while receiving health care. The bill was passed and referred to the General Register.
- **The House Labor and Industry Committee** heard HF 19-Olson, which provides earned sick and safe time. The bill was passed and re-referred to Judiciary, Finance, and Civil Law Committee.
- **The House Education Policy Committee** heard HF 320-Hassan, which strengthens the Teachers of Color Act and increases the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota. The bill was laid over for further discussion at a future meeting.
- **The House State and Local Government Committee** heard HF 19-Olson. The bill was passed and re-referred to the Judiciary, Finance, and Civil Law Committee.
- **The House Health Finance and Policy Committee** heard HF 289-Olson, which modifies grant program to support pregnant people in carrying their pregnancies to term and new parents caring for babies after birth. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus bill.
- **The Senate Labor and Industry Committee** heard SF 34-Pappas; Earned sick and safe time provision and appropriation. The bill was recommended to pass and Re-referred to State and Local Government Committee.
- **The Senate Jobs Committee** heard SF 2-Mann, establishing paid family and medical leave. The bill was recommended to pass as amended and re-referred to the Labor Committee

## BILL INTRODUCTIONS

The following bills were introduced during the week of January 16-20. For more information about bills introduced to date, or to see all of the bills introduced, please download our weekly [Bill Tracker](#).

- Grant program modified to support pregnant people in carrying their pregnancies to term and new parents caring for babies after birth (HF 289-Olson, L./SF 336-Kunesh)
- Child care center and family child care provider allowed to adopt policy regarding immunizations (HF 367-Freiberg/SF 610-Boldon)
- Increase Teachers of Color Act in higher education strengthened; pilot scholarship program for aspiring teachers of color made permanent (HF 381-Kozlowski/SF 267-Fateh)
- Reach Out and Read Minnesota program grant funding provided, and money appropriated (HF 570-Kotyza-Witthuhn)
- Statewide parent-to-parent programs appropriation for families of children and youth with special health care needs (SF 317-Abeler)
- Child care assistance program fraud investigation unit transfer from the Department of Human Services to the Department of Public Safety authorization (SF 341-Koran)
- Developmental screening aid increase and appropriation (SF 401-Kunesh)
- Pregnant patient right established to have a designated support person present while receiving health care (HF 52-Richardson/SF 406-Mann)
- Teachers of Color Act strengthened, percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota increased, and world's best workforce requirements amended (HF 320-Hassan/SF 619-Kunesh)
- Community solutions establishment and appropriation for healthy child development grant (SF 402-Kunesh)
- Tax credit creation for employer-paid family leave (SF 463-Coleman)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **January 24** - Governor's budget released
- **March 22** - Advocacy Day for Children

## DEADLINES

- **Friday, March 10** - Committees must act favorably on bills in the house of origin
- **Friday, March 24** - Committees must act favorably on bills, or companions of bills, which met the first deadline in the other body
- **Tuesday, April 4 by 5 p.m.** - Committees must act favorably on major appropriation and finance bills
- **April 4-April 10** - Legislative recess
- **May 22** - Last day of session