



To Whom it may concern,

The proposed 2019-2020 DPI budget has two initiatives, which if approved, will have long lasting economic negative consequences on Wisconsin's workforce development.

Governor Evers is proposing full-day funding for 4K, which is currently funded at .5 fte or .6 fte for district's that include a parent involvement portion within their program. If school districts have the option of receiving full funding for each 4K student, they will be hard pressed to not take it and bring the 4 year-olds into their school buildings, instead of the current model of collaboration with community providers. Wisconsin has been at the forefront of the Community Approach, nationwide, and it will be a great loss if that goes away.

Furthermore, the financial ramification of all-day 4K on early care programs would be devastating. In removing the income from the programs, due to displacement of 4 year-olds, the programs would be unable to make up the loss of income and possibly forced to close. Last October, WEDA released a paper titled, "The Convening on Workforce, Table Top Discussion Feedback Report", which states that 19% of respondents stated that a lack of early care was a major workforce development challenge. Should even more early care programs close down, the Wisconsin Child Care Administrator Association (WCCAA) believes this percentage will greatly increase.

Complicating matters even more is the second proposal from DPI, which creates start- up grants for the five largest school districts in Wisconsin to begin 3K programs. Again, DPI is suggesting pulling three year-olds from quality early care programs, into school buildings, resulting in even more lost income for providers.

Subsequently, if 3 and 4 year-olds were removed from early care, there would be a 40% reduction in revenue, driving the costs of infant/toddler care to double or triple the current rates, removing affordability for parents. WCCAA asks, "If early care is no longer an option, who will take care of infants and toddlers? Where would school age children go outside of school hours and/or school vacation breaks?" If programs were forced to close down, schools would find it necessary to provide additional care options outside of the school day, resulting in depleted budgets, shortages in staff, and increased property taxes.

DPI should not be proposing to reinvest tax dollars in a start-up program, versus supporting what is already being done well through the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) Young Star Quality Rating Improvement System, which oversees private early care programs, mostly owned by women and are serving over 42,000 low income children.

WCCAA respectfully requests that Governor Evers chooses to invest in early care and education through meeting the needs of the children of Wisconsin within our existing early care system. To be more specific, we request that increased funding flows directly to the child care programs to be utilized for increasing staff wages, providing health benefits, and offering retirement plans.

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