



# Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force

Meeting #9

July 26, 2022

# Welcome & Agenda

# Welcome from our Co-Chairs



**Shakira Bradshaw**

Parent of Children under 5



**Jenny Moses**

Children's Cabinet



**Sandy Simar**

Early Educator

## The Task Force is supported by:

- **Children's Cabinet Staff:** Erin Bailey, Hannah Quinn
- **Facilitation Team:** Afton Partners and Children's Funding Project

Develop a plan and implementation timeline that **ensures all families have access to affordable, high-quality early care and education that enriches, nurtures, and supports children and their families.**



# Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles reflect the Task Force's values and beliefs, guide how it operates, and lay a foundation for decision-making

Promote Equity	Prioritize Family Perspectives, Needs, and Choices	Support the Power of Local Communities	Build Upon our Solid Foundation	Uplift and Diversify the ECE Workforce	Recognize Implementation Realities	Expect High Quality & Effectiveness	Design for Stability, Sustainability, and Positive Impact
We will prioritize a system that promotes equitable outcomes, with a specific focus on children from the POCI community and building cultural competency in ECE classrooms.	We will prioritize families' perspectives, needs, and choices as we make data driven and evidence informed recommendations , recognizing that all provider types and settings provide value to the system.	We will ensure local communities are able to define their own priorities and are supported to build the system that meets their children and families' needs.	We will build upon the successes of Minnesota's past and current system, lessons from other states, and the expertise and research in the field.	We will invest in our dedicated and capable early childhood professionals so that they have the opportunity to thrive and grow, and we will build and support a racially diverse workforce.	We will recognize inherent system constraints while remaining responsive to local, state, and federal landscape changes.	We will endeavor to create a high quality and effective ECE system that meets the needs of all of Minnesota's children and families, regardless of circumstance, knowing that the state's future workforce, economy, and resident welfare is dependent upon it	We will work to support funding stability for providers, educators, and staff across mixed delivery settings to ensure better service for families.

# Today's Goals



Vote on Recommendations for Workforce Compensation:  
Financial Relief Strategies and Time off



Provide a roadmap for remaining votes



Discuss 'What will it take to meet our vision for effectiveness  
within each setting'?



React to draft proposals from Working Groups on long-term  
family affordability plans, provider pay calculation methods,  
and credentialing and career pathways recommendations

# Meeting #9 Discussion – 2 hours

- 6:00 – 6:05 p.m.** Welcome, agenda, Meeting 8 minutes approval
- 6:05 – 6:20 p.m.** Formal votes (Workforce Financial Relief Strategies and Time off) and anticipated vote timeline
- 6:20 – 6:55 p.m.** What will it take to meet our vision for effectiveness (including quality) within each setting?
- 6:55 – 7:25 p.m.** Affordability working group discussion
- 7:25 – 7:55 p.m.** Workforce working group discussion
- 7:55 – 8:00 p.m.** Timeline, next steps, meeting close out

# Reminder: Procedures



Open meeting law requires public bodies to **record and maintain votes** of its members. Virtual meetings require a vote by roll call.



**Formal votes** will include only voting members and formal votes will be held for items such as a statement on vision, or value or a recommendation to be included in the Task Force Plan.



**Informal voting** (ex. thumbs up) may be used to engage all Task Force members on items such as a matter of process, or an item necessary to get to a vision statement or recommendation.

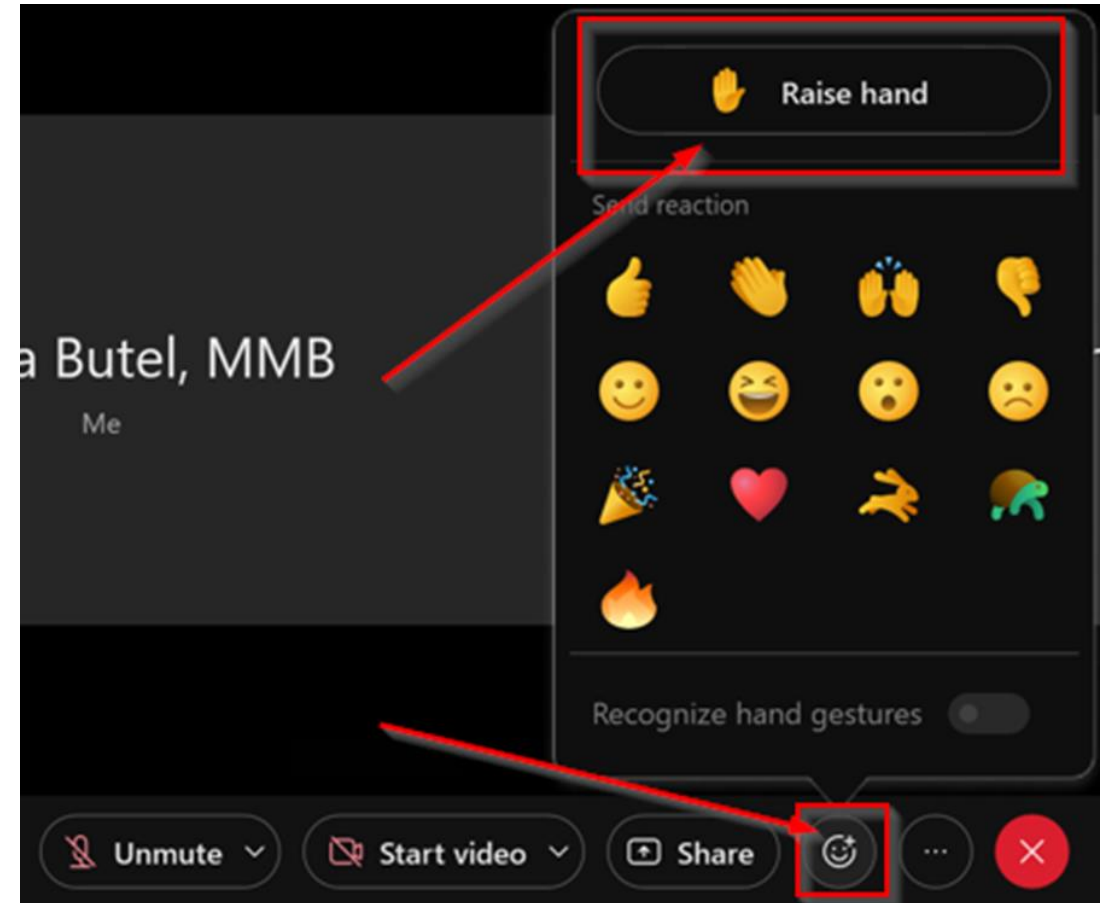


**Quorum** is defined as a majority of voting members.

# Approval of Meeting #8 Minutes

Please indicate your approval of the minutes from meeting #8 by using the '**Raise Hand**' icon/button in WebEx.

To do this, click on the 'smiley face' icon at the bottom of WebEx. After the dialog box opens, please click on the '**Raise Hand**' icon/button if you want to approve the minutes from meeting #8.



# Consensus in Recommendations

- This Task Force is a **broad coalition** and we do not expect to reach 100% agreement on all of our recommendations
- We do want to **reach consensus and buy-in** from members on our recommendations
- In order to reach consensus, we need to hear from all task force members – your ideas, your questions, and your concerns are all valuable!

I really like it – I'm fully convinced	I like it/good enough!	I will support it until I learn more	Mixed feelings	I prefer something different	I just don't like it
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*Gradients of Agreement Scale adapted by Pierre Omidyar*

# Formal votes (Workforce Financial Relief Strategies and Time off) and anticipated vote timeline



# VOTE: Financial Relief Strategies Recommendations

Short term financial relief strategies must be adopted alongside longer-term compensation reform as the recommendations of the Task Force are phased in.

## ***To support recruitment of new talent to the ECE field:***

1. A one-time incentive/bonus to individuals who enter the field, with awards provided after the first 6 months of employment.
  - Building on the lessons learned from the Workforce Development Grants project, a bonus (starting at \$500, evaluated yearly to account for inflation) for new staff who complete training **or CDA credential** and start a job in a child care and early education program
  - A bonus (starting at \$1,000, evaluated yearly to account for inflation) for new staff who have earned an AA, BS, and/or BA degree in early care and education, complete initial training and orientation, and start a job in an early care and education program.

## ***To support retention of talent in the ECE field:***

1. Pending further study, tax benefits should be put in place to ensure ECE educators across the mixed delivery system are not unfairly penalized by earning increased wages that would disqualify them from government benefits OR a separate eligibility category should be created for the ECE workforce.
2. Expand REETAIN awards so that ECE workforce members from *all* early care and education settings are eligible to receive one. Revise the application process for REETAIN bonuses to make it easier for eligible staff to take advantage of the opportunity **(for example, by increasing the amount of time the application window is open, accepting rolling applications, increasing communications to all members of the workforce, etc.)**
3. Based on successes of and lessons learned from the Childcare Stabilization Base Grant program, plan for on-going funding to programs for the stabilization of their ECE workforce. Ensure there is a mechanism in place to enforce the continued requirement that 70% of grant awards be used for increased compensation and/or benefits. *\*connection to access factor 1 – stabilization grants support supply of services*





# VOTE: Time Off Recommendations

## Time Off

- After further study of specific models, like that in Washington state, regional substitute pools should be created so that ECE staff are able to pursue professional development and utilize paid time off.
- Any cost modeling study completed to estimate the expense of substitute providers should assume a minimum of 5 paid days off per year per full-time ECE worker.
- All ECE Center-based and FCC providers across the mixed delivery system should be provided with and encouraged to use best practice guidance (below) when developing time off policies that are adequate to meet the need of both vacation time and sick time, whether those are separate or one lump sum.
- School-based and Head Start providers should be provided with guidance for determining time off in alignment with best practices for elementary educator time off, accounting for 9- and 12-month schedules. These policies should be adequate to meet the need of both vacation time and sick time, whether those are separate or one lump sum.

## **Best Practice Guidance | From “Model Work Standards” report produced by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment**

### **Centers, ~~Head Start & Schools~~**

- Full time employees accrue paid vacation time based on longevity in their program: minimally five days per year during the first year of employment; 10 days per year during years two through four; and 15 days per year with five or more years of employment. Part-time employees earn paid time off on a prorated basis.
- A minimum of eight holidays are paid each year for FTEs.
- Full time employees receive at least 5 paid sick/personal days per year, which can be taken to care for sick family members, as well.

### **FCC**

- The provider sets aside between five and 10 vacation days per year, which are paid in full by families enrolled in the program. Additional unpaid vacation leave may be negotiated with parents in the contract.
- The provider receives a minimum of eight holidays per year, which are paid in full by families whose contracted hours fall on these days.
- The provider sets aside a minimum of two paid sick/personal days per year, which can be taken to care for sick family members, as well.



# Building Toward Meeting Our Charge

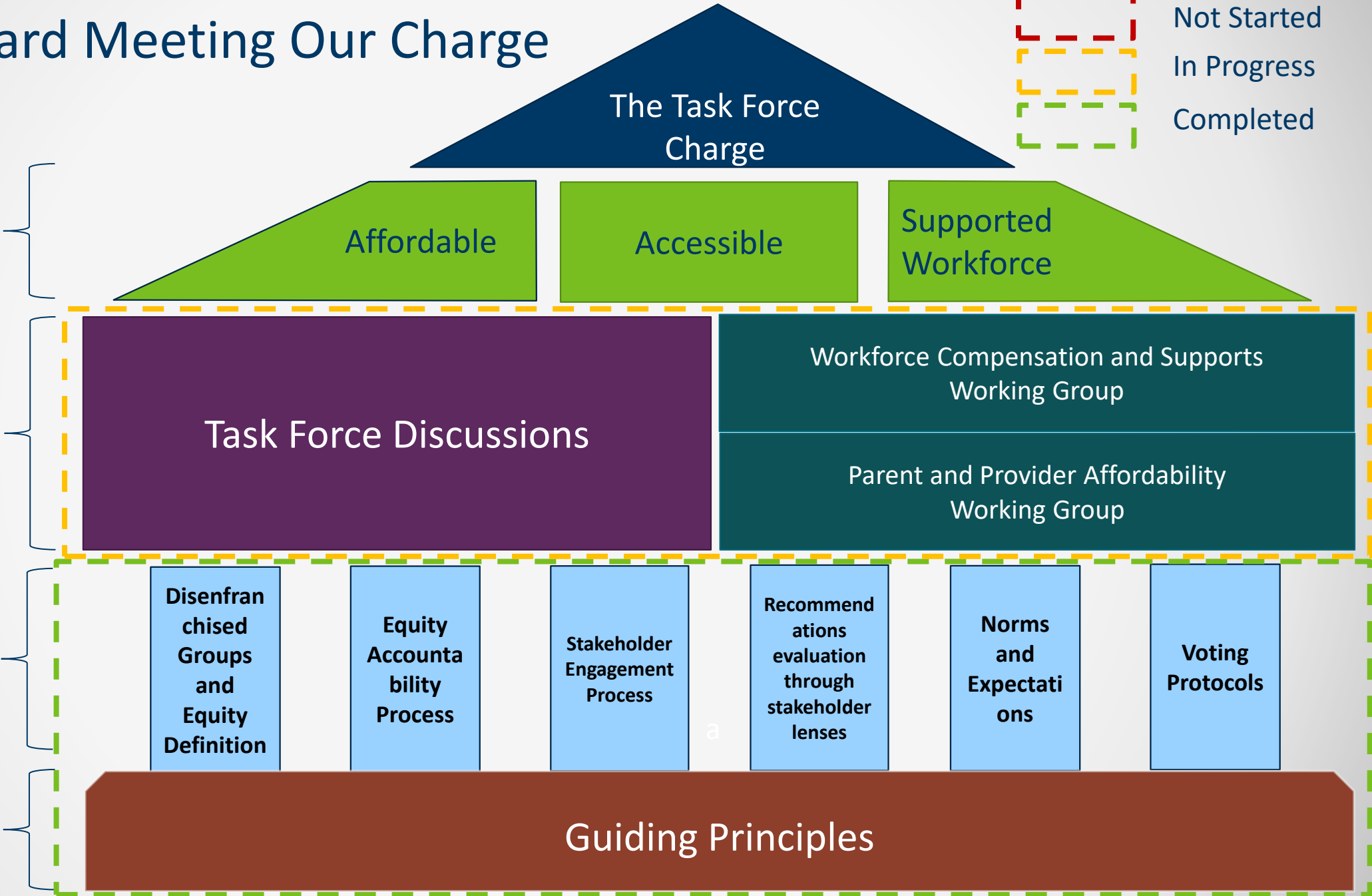
Not Started  
In Progress  
Completed

Goals (all equity-led)

Plan Development

Supporting Concepts / Processes

Foundation





# DRAFT: Fiscal Impact Recommendation

Though the Task Force establishing legislation does not address the fiscal impact of our charge, we recognize that our recommendations would have significant financial implications. To fully understand these implications, we recommend the following:

The legislature should support and make funding available for **1) a fiscal study of each budget-related recommendation** included in the plan and implementation timeline, and **2) a comprehensive economic impact assessment of the full package of recommendations**, which should consider child and family outcomes, economic impacts including potential savings, and cost to taxpayers.

In addition, the legislature should support and make funding available for **3) a strategic financing study** to identify and assess the impact of revenue options available to cover the costs of the plan.

# Vote Sequencing

Month	Affordability	Workforce	Effectiveness	Implementation
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Affordability Standard</li> <li>Long-term Family Benefits Plan</li> <li>Provider Pay Calculation Method</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits</li> <li>Ensuring a "Qualified" Workforce</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost Impact, Economic Impact, and Strategic Financing Studies</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provider Pay Mechanism Improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring a "Diverse" Workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness Improvement Recommendations Package</li> </ul>	
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration implications &amp; roles in the future system</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation Priorities</li> </ul>
November	<i>Hold for final review of draft plan; votes only for essential changes</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation Timeline</li> </ul>
December	<i>NO VOTES – reflection on draft plan and timeline</i>			
January	<i>Votes on edits for final plan and timeline</i>			

# Remaining time from July - December



What will it take to meet our vision for effectiveness  
(including quality) within each setting?

# Vision for Effective ECE services

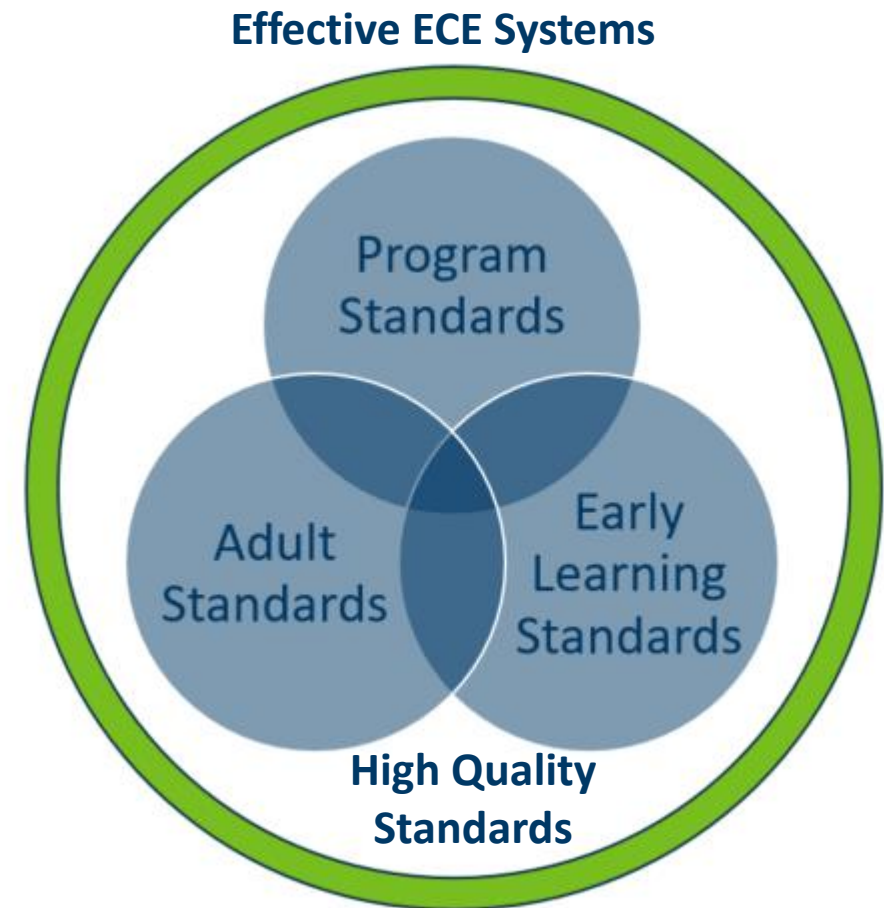
## Confirmed via formal vote in April Meeting (Meeting 6)

In addition to being affordable and accessible, an effective ECE experience centers child and family well-being through a system of choice. It does this by:

- Ensuring offerings address and advance the **social, emotional, psychological, cultural, physical, and intellectual needs** of each child, in a trauma-informed manner
- Providing **safe, healthy, stable, secure, consistent, nurturing, and enriching environments** for each child.
- Building **trusting relationships** founded on mutual respect between each family and their caregivers.
- Promoting **linguistically responsive and culturally relevant** environments with **diverse staff that reflect the families they serve and the whole state**.
- **Connecting families to resources and supports** *they* have identified will increase their family well-being

# Why did we choose the word “Effective” Instead of “High Quality”

- We are trying to define the experience we want for children and families. We *are not* redefining “quality” for the state, which is generally associated with quality standards
- “Effectiveness” is supported by recognized “high quality” standards and practices, they are not mutually exclusive.
- Quality standards provide a foundation for effective services.
- Quality standards do not sufficiently address **ALL** aspects we have identified in our vision for effectiveness.

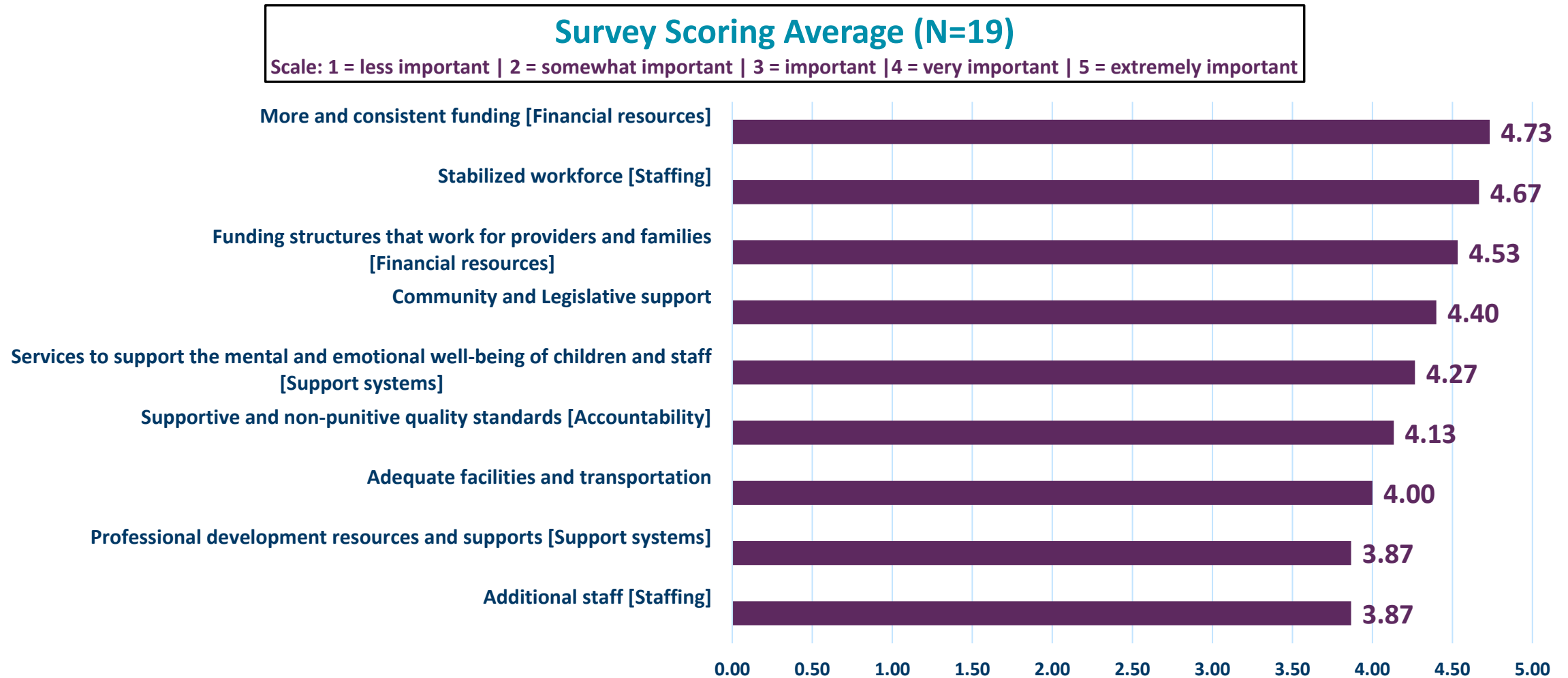


# What will it take for providers/programs to offer an effective experience (per our vision)?

## **Themes from a brief discussion in our March meeting:**

- Financial resources
  - More and consistent funding
  - Funding structures that work for providers and families
- Staffing
  - Additional staff
  - Stabilized workforce
- Accountability to ensure effectiveness
  - Supportive and non-punitive quality standards
- Support systems
  - Professional development resources and supports
  - Services to support the mental and emotional well-being of children and staff
- Community and Legislative support
- Adequate facilities and transportation

# What does this Task Force prioritize from our original list?



# Survey Themes: What will it take for providers/programs to offer an effective experience?

Given our vision for effectiveness, how would you expand upon our initial thinking on what it will take for providers/programs to offer an effective experience?

- Connections between funding, wages, and training:
  - *"More and consistent funding for wages and program stability."*
  - *"Consistent and equitable standards for staff across settings."*
  - *"Adequate funding, staffing and resources are critical to successful implementation of standards in the context of effectiveness. Over the past 2 years, providers/programs have been consumed by staffing shortages and COVID mitigation. To move forward in effectiveness, staffing must be stabilized to offer consistent, effective experiences for children and their families."*
  - *"Providers need a consistent income so they are able to establish quality programs for young children. Quality takes time and money, as well as training that encourages developmentally appropriate practices."*
- Recognition:
  - *"ECE workers are not recognized enough so feeling important and recognized will help retain workers. Recognition, compensation, work/life balance, professional education for everyone is very important."*
- Wrap-around services:
  - *"A need to support wrap-around services and ecosystem building and mobilizing in the ECE field."*

# Survey Themes: What will it take for providers/programs to offer an effective experience?

How should quality standards support our vision for effectiveness?

- Focus on growth and continuous improvement:
  - *"Quality standards should focus on self-identified areas for continuous quality improvement in order to make it meaningful and timely. Work with directors/program leaders to establish a culture of growth and continuous improvement in all settings."*
  - *"Standards have to be applied equally and be monitored. They need to be built from best practice and evolve over time and not become static."*
- Cultural competence:
  - *"They should be culturally competent & inclusive of quality for all ethnicities & cultures."*
- Coaching and mentoring, simplifying and clarifying requirements:
  - *"Quality standards are important but early educators need coaching/mentoring to reach those goals. Also, simplifying documentation and wording around requirements would be helpful."*
  - *"Quality standards are the foundation for our vision for effectiveness. All settings should receive training and coaching on implementation of the standards in the context of effectiveness. The standards should be monitored for on-going compliance. Adequate funding, staffing and resources are critical to successful implementation."*

# Survey Themes: What will it take for providers/programs to offer an effective experience?

How can we ensure all provider types are supported in offering effective experiences?

- Positive incentives equally accessible by all programs:
  - *"The positive incentives built into the draft recommendations for financial relief strategies, benefits and time-off for all provider types will be instrumental in stabilizing and growing the work force. We cannot have effective experiences without continuity of care for children."*
  - *"Create the most flexible funding opportunities to support all provider types."*
- Business supports:
  - *"Provide opportunities for providers to become stronger businesses... For example: the Boston Childcare Entrepreneur Fund is a program that existing or new providers can apply for which will give them access to a \$3500 grant if they attend 6 workshops that relate to small business skills. Provide greater access to manageable programs (it fits in a provider's available free time and is accessible to their location)."*
  - Current business training efforts through a partnership with First Children's Finance have had: 40 online training events (758 participants), 12 business leadership cohorts (79 participants), and a total of 4,870 hours of support given.
- Simplified regulation, clear standards:
  - *Consistent messaging, coaching/mentoring, licensors that have the same understanding of regulations and rules throughout the entire state. Less documents and simplified paperwork for early educators would be helpful. Make FCC and center licensing less intimidating.*
- Culture of growth, ecosystem of ECE field:
  - *When a culture of growth and continuous improvement is established, teachers/providers will recognize their own areas of strength and where they can continue to deepen and refine their skills. A variety of Professional Development supports is needed so that individuals can choose the ones that meet their needs.*
  - *"By supporting a level playing field where programs can all have access to resources and "see themselves" as part of the broader early childhood picture. This means addressing and honoring the unique nature of each program type, but also asking them to participate in the broader goals that are shared across all settings and systems."*

# Small group discussion: What will it take to achieve our vision for effectiveness (including quality) within all settings?

Centers

FCCs

Schools

Head  
Start

## Discussion in small groups (15 min):

- What are the gaps to our vision for effectiveness today? Does this differ by provider/program type?
- What supports or resources need to be provided and/or what barriers need to be removed? Does this differ by provider/program type?
- What are the next action steps? Who must do what?

# Working Group Share-outs and Discussion

# Task Force & Working Group Structure

Endorses charge, guiding principles, deliverables, and timeline

Establishes, advises, and sets priorities for Working Groups

Reviews, adjusts, and formally approves recommendations for incorporation into a Task Force Report

**Task Force**

**Working Groups**

Take direction from Task Force

Research, analyze, and bring proposals to Task Force

- Regarding key topics/questions posed by the Task Force
- Stemming from the Charge, and
- In alignment with guiding principles

# Family and Provider Affordability Working Group

**GOAL:** What does it mean to have an affordable system that works for families and that providers want to be a part of? How do we get there?

Voting Members	Non-Voting Members
Representative Liz Boldon	Janell Bentz, Minnesota Department of Revenue
Shakira Bradshaw, Parent Children Under 5	Summer Bursch, Minnesota Association of Child Care Professionals (MACCP)
Kath Church, Family Child Care Program	Deb Fitzpatrick, Statewide Advocacy Organization
Brook LaFloe, Tribal Representative	Missy Okeson, Minnesota Initiative Foundations (MIFs)
Jayne Whiteford, Parent Children Under 5	Clare Sanford, Minnesota Child Care Association
	Tonia Villegas, Minnesota Association of County Social Services Administrators
	Cindi Yang, Department of Human Services



# Three draft voting items being proposed today

- **Long-term family benefits plan** – *The plan/process through which families will access financial assistance for ECE*
- **Affordability standard** (within the long-term family benefits plan) - *The maximum percentage of income that families must pay for ECE*
- **Process to determine provider pay** - *How provider payment rates for childcare will be determined and updated*

# Revising our long-term family benefits recommendations based on feedback

- How can we think **outside the box of our current systems** to meet our charge?
  - Pushing beyond the existing programs/language of existing programs – is this something new entirely?
  - What are the pros and cons of existing benefits programs' frameworks that we can build from?
  - What are the restrictions that come with federal dollars that we must keep in mind?
- Cost will be a large factor in implementation. **Do we need to prioritize**, and if so, where and how?
- We want a **quality system** that families can access. How do family benefits impact or address this?

# Changes based on Task Force feedback

- 1) Developed a comprehensive plan based on attributes we would like to see in a future system that centers children, rather than evolution of existing programs, including:
  - Promoting family choice
  - Promoting quality
  - Encouraging family participation
  - Maximizing federal contributions available
- 2) Adhering to our guiding principle of *Acknowledging Implementation Realities* while still centering children and families, decreased max income eligibility to those making 150% of SMI (\$142K for a family of three) rather than 250% of SMI (\$237K for a family of three) in the previous version
  - Noted that max eligibility should increase in line with any further federal CCDBG increases to maximize federal funding
- 3) Added a recommendation for periodic re-evaluation of the affordability standard
- 4) Added a recommendation for a cost study to be able to determine differences in cost of care based on geographies and quality standards

# Reframing from existing systems to “attributes of the future system”

Per our charge “It is the goal of the State for all families to have access to affordable, high-quality early care and education...The goal will be achieved by...creating a system in which family costs for early care and education are affordable...”

Attributes: “a quality or feature regarded as a characteristic or inherent part of someone or something”

**We want a system that:**

Is built to center the child and brain development

Makes early care and education affordable for families, especially lower- and middle- class families  
 (“Affordability Standard”)

Promotes access to quality

Promotes family choice among provider and program types that best meet family needs

Encourages family participation

Maximizes federal investments to minimize costs to the State



# DRAFT: What could this new program look like?

## (Slide 1 of 2)

- **A new family benefits system (for example, "Great Start MN Program") is built to center the child and brain development.** Existing state and federal resources and necessary new contributions are combined to form the new program, which is fully funded to cover the full cost of quality care for the true demand in the system. This means there should be enough money in the system to provide coverage based on eligibility guidelines and established family contribution schedules. With this level of funding, assuming provider capacity exists, there would be no systemic waitlists (though program-specific waitlists may still exist) and all eligible families would have access to benefits.
- **Federal investments are maximized to minimize costs to the state.** This means if/as federal limitations on eligibility increase, the state increases its eligibility accordingly and maintains its investment efforts as federal appropriations increase. Upon commencement, eligibility immediately increases to the federal level in place.
- **Early care and education is affordable for lower- and middle- class families in the new system ("affordability standard").** This is done in four ways:
  - Expanding income eligibility levels at the beginning of the implementation timeline for program participation to percentage of state median income (SMI) allowed under federal law (*in alignment with short-term recommendations, as of today this is 85% SMI*)
  - Further expanding income eligibility up to 150% SMI (\$142K for a family of three) by the end of the implementation timeline, in accordance with the state's clear goal to make early care and education affordable to families
  - Eliminating contributions for lower-income families – families below 75% SMI (\$71K for a family of three) should not be required to pay a family contribution
  - Reducing family contributions for middle class families – families earning 75% of SMI to the income eligibility limit should contribute an increasing amount of income, but no more than 7% for lower- and middle- class families



# DRAFT: Long-term Affordability Recommendation (Slide 2 of 2)

## **The system is structured to promote access to quality.**

Families must understand what quality means, looks like, and how it benefits children's brain development. Families must have support in finding a quality program that meets their needs. The benefit program must cover the cost of quality programs and give families no financial (or other) disincentive to choose quality care.

8/2/2022

## **The new system is structured to promote family choice among provider and program types that best meet family needs.**

Families have the information necessary to make informed decisions about program/provider types, and can easily find the choices available to them that meet their needs and preferences. The benefit amount covers the cost of each provider/program type, and there must be no financial (or other) disincentive to attend the program type of family choice.

## **Family participation in the program is actively encouraged, given the opportunity for positive impact on child development.**

It does this by making participation affordable, but also by removing barriers to participation, including: Reduce administrative complexity, increase access points, streamlined communications, create clear connections to other social programs, and minimize stigma. Benefits of increased family participation are the positive impact on economic self-sufficiency for families and healthy child development.

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# Reflection on Long-term Family Affordability Plan



Did we appropriately account for your feedback?



What concerns or questions do you have?

*Please submit feedback by Tuesday, 8/9, to support working group discussions*

# Deep dive into our “Affordability Standard”: *How much can families contribute to costs of care?*

- In 1998, the United States Department of Health and Human Services created a benchmark of **10%** of family income as an affordable copayment.
- The national benchmark was revised following the 2014 bipartisan reauthorization of the CCDBG. The current benchmark is **7% of income** for low to moderate income families.
  - "HHS chose the 7% benchmark to reflect U.S. Census Bureau data that showed the average percent of monthly income spent by all families on child care stayed consistent at about 7% from 1997 to 2011. Because low-income families disproportionately spend more of their income on child care compared to higher income families, HHS recommended the 7% benchmark in order to achieve parity in child care cost burden." - from the Bipartisan Policy Center
- The Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization Act of 2022, introduced by Senator Tim Scott (R-SC), would establish 7% of income as a cap for family copayments (replacing the current "benchmark", which is not a required cap).
  - The bill would establish a sliding scale for copayments:
    - Families earning less than 75% of SMI would pay no copayment
    - Families earning between 75-100% of SMI would have a copayment between 0-2% of income
    - Families earning between 100-125% of SMI would have a copayment between 2-4% of income
    - Families earning between 125- 150% of SMI would have a copayment between 4-7% of income



# DRAFT recommended affordability standard, and its ramifications (slide 1 of 2)

From establishing legislation: "The plan must include an affordability standard that clearly identifies the maximum percentage of income that a family must pay for early care and education. "

- DRAFT Affordability Standard:
  - Families earning less than 75% of SMI (\$71K for a family of three) should pay no contribution.
  - Families earning between 75-100% of SMI (\$71K-\$95K) should pay a contribution between 0-2% of income.
  - Families earning between 100-125% of SMI (\$95K-\$119K) should pay a contribution between 2-4% of income.
  - Families earning between 125- 150% of SMI (\$119K-\$142K) should pay a contribution between 4-7% of income.
- Following further investment from the federal government, including an expansion of eligibility for CCDBG dollars:
  - Families earning between 150%-250% of SMI (\$142K-\$247K) should pay between 7%-10% of income.
  - Families earning more than 250% of SMI (\$247K+) should pay for the full price of ECE, which, on average, costs 7% of income for a 3-person family at 250% of SMI.
- Eligibility for state benefits programs should be in line with this affordability standard by the end of the implementation timeline for our plan (July 2031).
  - This Task Force's short-term recommendations (approved in our June Task Force meeting) include increasing to the federal limitation of 85% SMI at the start of the implementation timeframe (2025).
  - Using phased increases, the state should reach 150% SMI eligibility by the end of the implementation timeline (by July 2031).
  - If action from the federal government increases the maximum percent of SMI eligibility for CCDBG-funded programs, Minnesota should adopt the greatest standards funded by law and invest adequate funding to meet demand up to this income level, up to 250% of SMI.

# Yearly Family Contributions based on our affordability standard

SMI Level	Income (family of 3)	Max % of Income	Family Contribution (\$)	Median Market Price of 1 infant in care - Center	Median Market Price of 1 infant in care - FCC
75%	\$71,153	0%	\$0	Jackson County: \$9,100 Crow Wing County: \$10,816 Isanti County: \$12,220 Ramsey County: \$19,864	Jackson County: \$6,500 Crow Wing County: \$7,280 Isanti County: \$8,840 Ramsey County: \$10,400
100%	\$94,871	2%	\$1,897		
125%	\$118,588	4%	\$4,744		
150%	\$142,306	7%	\$9,961		
250%	\$237,176	10%	<i>Total price of care (10% of income is \$23,718)</i>		
SMI Level	Income (family of 4)	Max % of Income	Family Contribution (\$)	Median Market Price for 2 children (infant + preschooler) - Center	Median Market Price for 2 children (infant + preschooler) - FCC
75%	\$84,707	0%	\$0	Jackson County: \$16,796 Crow Wing County: \$20,176 Isanti County: \$22,516 Ramsey County: \$35,464	Jackson County: \$13,000 Crow Wing County: \$14,040 Isanti County: \$16,640 Ramsey County: \$19,760
100%	\$112,942	2%	\$2,259		
125%	\$141,178	4%	\$5,647		
150%	\$169,414	7%	\$11,859		
250%	\$282,356	10%	\$28,236		



# DRAFT recommended affordability standard, and its ramifications (slide 2 of 2)

The affordability standard must be re-evaluated periodically (every two years) to assess the impact of changes in:

- **Family Incomes**, including understanding family income in comparison to inflation and cost of living
- **Costs of care**, including levels of quality and increasing compensation, which may make the full cost of care more challenging for even higher income families to cover
- **Federal landscape** – including both federal funding changes and changing requirements – which could dramatically alter costs to the State and families

A cost study must be done alongside the periodic re-evaluation of the affordability standard to understand 1) true cost of care including varying levels of quality, 2) geographic differences in costs of care, and 3) total costs to the state. This study must also include an assessment of full system take rates and demand, in order to understand total costs to the state.

# How could this program function?

- Should this new program be administered through one state agency?
- How will families access supports? What should be the point(s) of entry for families?
- Other than income, what other factors should be considered for eligibility?
- Should provider participation in the new family benefits system be tied to QRIS participation? If mandated, how to scale up while keeping access for families and stability for providers?



# DRAFT Recommendation for Provider Pay Determination

Per legislation, we must consider: *How provider payment rates for childcare will be determined and updated*

**Minnesota should establish early care and education funding amounts based on cost modeling**, rather than market rates (as is current practice). Cost modeling will estimate the actual cost of providing care, reflective of all costs associated with running a program. This should be done across provider types, quality levels, and regions of the state.

This should begin with modeling current costs of care and be **updated every two years** to take into account changes in cost elements including phase-in of Task Force recommendations (including compensation), new mandates, other recommendations or requirements including requirements to meet quality standards, and for changes in cost of living and inflation.

This Task Force's recommendations (including compensation) should be **included in the ongoing work to create an updated Cost Modeling Report**, carried out by First Children's Finance, with planned delivery in Fall 2024.



What concerns or questions do you have?



What would you like this WG to keep in mind as they finalize this plan in their next meeting?

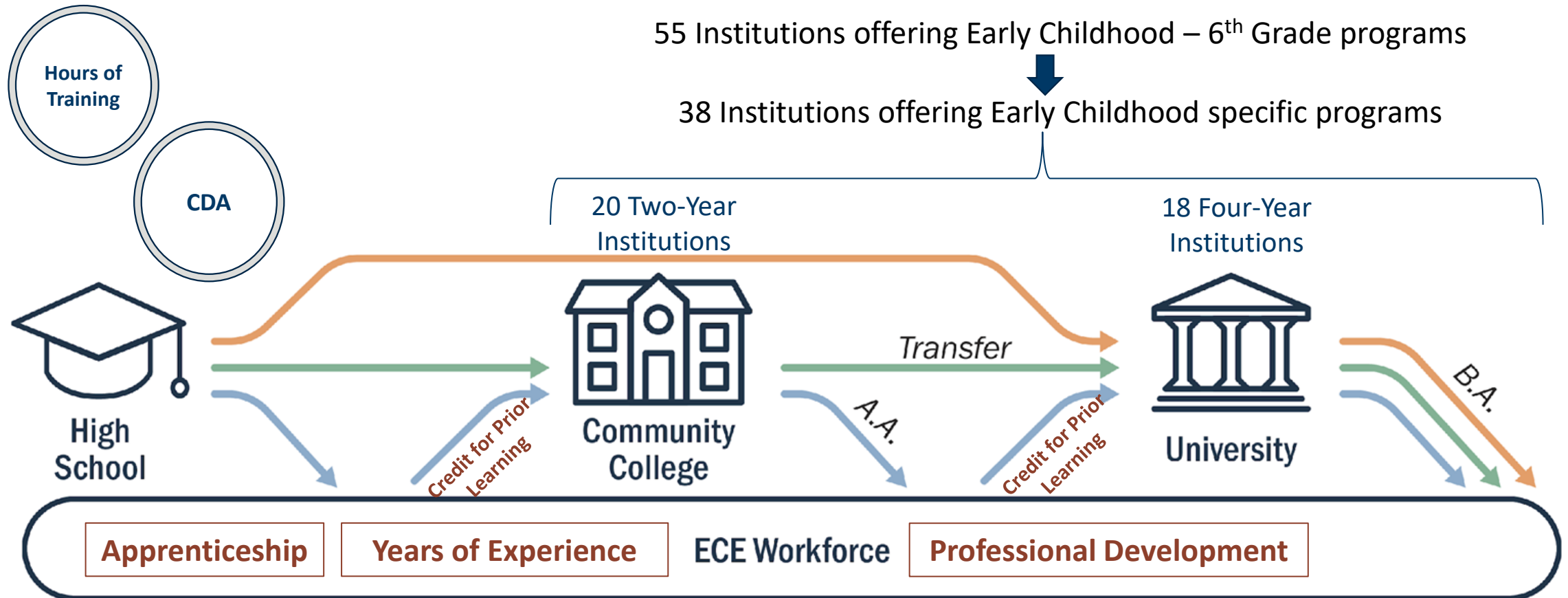
*Please submit feedback by Tuesday, 8/9, to support working group discussions*

# Workforce Compensation and Supports Working Group

**GOAL:** What do we mean by a “qualified, diverse, supported and equitably compensated” workforce, and how do we get there?

Voting Members	Non-Voting Members
Meghan Caine, Early Childhood Educator - Public school-based	Nicole Blissenbach, MN Dept of Labor and Industry
Pat Ives, Director of Licensed Child Care	Lydia Boerboom, Kids Count on Us Representative
Adriana Lopez, Early Childhood Educator - Licensed Center	Oriane Casale, Department of Employment and Economic Development
Jenny Moses, Children’s Cabinet	Cyndi Cunningham, MN Child Care Provider Information Network
Krystal Shatek, Director of Licensed Child Care	Nancy Hafner, Faculty Representative
Senator Melissa Wiklund	Debbie Hewitt, Minnesota Department of Education
	Ann McCully, Child Care Aware of Minnesota
	Michelle Trelsted, MN Community Education Association

# There is no one path to a career in ECE



# Working Group Brainstorm

What are the **current challenges** with MN's ECE pathways?

- Transitions between levels are not seamless, and legislated transfer pathways are not consistent across institutes of higher education
- Classes and trainings aren't held at a time that works for people who are caring for children
- Current low wages prevent workers from entering higher education in the first place, and there is no guarantee of a higher level of pay after earning a degree or license
- Not all institutes of higher education feel welcoming to all people
- Pathways and options are unclear to the workforce (degrees, licensure, etc.)
  - Educational programs, scholarships, and grants may not be well promoted
  - Current faculty are approaching retirement without people in line to replace them

# Working Group Brainstorm

What **current solutions** exist to make MN's ECE pathways more aligned, affordable, and accessible?

- Existing programs could be solutions
  - If used, the transfer pathways would support solutions
  - Advocates and professional organizations are aligned and active
  - Scholarship models and financial supports exist but need further promotion
- The ongoing Grow Your Own (GYO) pilot program will provide lessons learned
- Existing 2-year courses offer most courses online, accommodating geographic and scheduling issues
- Individual providers create solutions in their own programs to make a CDA free or low-cost for teachers
- Current exploration of an apprenticeship model for MN through the T.E.A.C.H. National Center

# Working Group Brainstorm

What **other solutions** might we consider?

- Broader use of credit for prior learning across all levels, including multiple ways to demonstrate prior learning (competency, skills test, portfolio, etc.)
- Paid internship/student teaching opportunities
- Student loan repayment for ECE programs/free two-year programming
- State funded wage floor + career ladder so teachers are in a better financial position to pursue higher education
- Cohort models that support the completion of education programs
- Robust and compensated mentorship programs
- Support for both individuals and the higher education system, as well as the training infrastructure
- Coursework available nights, weekends, and in languages other than English
- Update licensure requirements, including by making experience in the field count toward student teaching



# DRAFT Recommendations: Qualified Workforce - Individuals

## Support For Individuals

1. Provide financial and academic support to new and current early educators as they move up the career ladder by:
  - a. Promoting awareness and ensuring adequate funding of existing scholarship programs (i.e. the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program)
  - b. Expanding awareness of and connecting eligible recipients to the Minnesota Future Together Grant program which provides tuition-free pathways for high need careers (early childhood named as one).
  - c. Expanding “last dollar” scholarships for students entering ECE education programs to cover the full cost of study.
  - d. Developing a Minnesota Early Childhood Educator apprenticeship model (for example, the model currently being explored through T.E.A.C.H. National Center)
2. Develop and expand opportunities to earn “credit for prior learning” to account for knowledge and competencies gained through on the job exposure and years of experience. This would include multiple ways to demonstrate one’s experience, including but not limited to: skills tests; portfolio; demonstration)
3. Develop an ECE career lattice that allows individuals to identify where they are on a coherent career pathway and identify next steps for increasing their education.
4. Support retention in the field by developing a paid mentorship/coaching model for current ECE staff to learn from and consult with seasoned professionals.



# DRAFT Recommendations: Qualified Workforce - System

## Support For the Higher Education System and Training Infrastructure

1. Expand the Grow Your Own program to include the early childhood education field (pilot currently underway).
2. Expand the use of the Minnesota Transfer Pathways framework amongst existing 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education that offer early childhood education programming.
3. Expand the adoption of MN's Knowledge and Competency Framework in all ECE higher education programming as a way to align qualification standards across the state.
4. After a period of review and input from members of the workforce, update requirements to obtain teacher licensure, including to account for prior experience in the field.
5. Ensure that ECE programming and coursework is accessible to *all* students, including offerings classes on nights and weekends; virtually and in-person; and in languages other than English.



# DRAFT Recommendations: Qualified Workforce - System (cont.)

6. Support institutions of higher education in developing strong ECE preparation programs by establishing a new fund to support ECE and child development programs at institutions of higher education and infrastructure for in-service training. Grant funds could be used to:

- a. Subsidize programs with low enrollment; market ECE programming more aggressively.
- b. Pay students for their internships and/or required student teaching; RELATED: pay “cooperating teachers” for their time supervising student teachers.
- c. Improve degree programs at 2- and 4-year colleges as well as credentialing programs that are focused on preparing ECE educators for the classroom.
- d. Support practice-based learning by developing guided pathways and capacity building, such as hiring and training well-qualified, diverse faculty.
- e. Support flexible scheduling and the provision of courses in alternative locations to make coursework accessible to more students.
- f. Develop cohort models that support the completion of ECE programs.
- g. Develop graduate programs in ECE to support the development of educators and instructional leaders with expertise in ECE.

# Reflection on Qualified Workforce Direction



What do you like about the direction this Working Group is going?



What concerns or questions do you have?



What would you like this WG to keep in mind or consider as they continue their conversations?

*Please submit feedback by Tuesday, 8/9, to support working group discussions*

## Timeline & Next Steps

# Where are we going next?

- ☐ Understanding the current state *Complete*
- ☐ Who does the system need to work for? How? *Complete*
- ☐ What is working in the system today? *Complete*
- ☐ Defining the future experience we want to see
  - ☐ What is equitable access? *Complete*
- ☐ What are the dimensions of a quality, effective experience? *In process*
- ☐ What is affordable? *Working Group*
- ☐ What is sustainable for providers? *Working Group*
- ☐ How should the workforce be compensated and supported? *Working Group*
- ☐ How do we ensure local voice and ownership?
- ☐ What capacity building is needed?
- ☐ How do we get to our goal, led by equity?

# A call for written input

As Task Force staff maintains and updates our records of potential recommendations to include in our deliverables, we invite you to provide written input, outside of our regular Task Force meetings. Input should follow our normal meeting norms and procedures:

- Provide actionable ideas and potential solutions
- Apply your specific expertise
- Speak to the topics at hand for the work of the Task Force

Email ideas to [GreatStart.TaskForce.MMB@state.mn.us](mailto:GreatStart.TaskForce.MMB@state.mn.us)

# Task Force Meeting Dates

*Draft and subject to change*

Meetings will be held from **6 - 8pm** on the last Tuesday of each month, except when conflicting with anticipated holidays

- **August 30, 2022**
- September 27, 2022
- October 25, 2022
- November 29, 2022 ← *last scheduled meeting before draft report*
- December 20, 2022
- January 31, 2023



# Running list of voting Items and results

Date of Vote	Voting Item	Approved (Yes/No)?	Informal	Formal
December 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2021	November Meeting Minutes	Yes	X	
January 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	December Meeting Minutes	Yes	X	
February 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2022	January Meeting Minutes	Yes	X	
	Factors of Equitable Access	Yes	X	
	Support of the Mixed Delivery System	Yes		X
	Adopting Equity Definition	Yes		X
March 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	February Meeting Minutes	Yes	X	
	Task Force Guiding Principles	Yes	X	
	Definition of Historically Disenfranchised Groups	Yes		X
April 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	March Meeting Minutes	Yes	X	
	Primary stakeholders in the ECE system	Yes		X
	Vision for effective ECE services	Yes		X
	Vision for equitable access to ECE services	Yes		X

# (Continued) Running list of voting Items and results

Date of Vote	Voting Item	Approved (Yes/No)?	Informal	Formal
<b>May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022</b>	April Meeting Minutes	Yes	X	
	Statement on Care is Education	Yes		X
<b>June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022</b>	May Meeting Minutes	Yes	X	
	Short Term Recommendations for Family Affordability: Child Care Assistance	Yes		X
	Short-Term Recommendations for Family Affordability: Early Learning Scholarships	Yes		X
	Financial Compensation Recommendations	Yes		X
	Access Factor: Availability (schedule & hours) and accessibility (geography, location) of early care and education that meets the diversity of families' needs	Yes		X
	Access Factor: The role local communities should have in both determining access priorities for their communities and how to meet access needs	Yes		X
	Access Factor: Resources and ability of providers and programs to offer culturally responsive programming and environments	Yes		X
	Access Factor: Transportation and other barriers, such as language barriers, affecting access to families' programs of choice	Yes		X



# Anticipated Votes Next Meeting

**Formal** (Statement on vision or value, recommendation to be included in the Task Force Plan)

- Long-term family benefits plan
- Affordability standard (within the long-term family benefits plan)
- Process to determine provider pay
- Workforce – Benefits
- Qualified Workforce – Individuals
- Qualified Workforce – Higher Education and Training System

**Informal** (Matter of process, necessary to get to a vision statement or recommendation)

- Meeting 9 Minutes

# Next Steps

Send any feedback to:

[greatstart.taskforce.mmb@state.mn.us](mailto:greatstart.taskforce.mmb@state.mn.us)

## Stakeholder Listening Session

- **Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup> (6 – 7pm)**

## Working Group meetings

- **Workforce:** Wednesday, August 10th, 6-8pm
- **Affordability:** Thursday, August 11th, 1-3pm

Next Task Force meeting is

**Tuesday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm**

