

AMSD Position on Early Childhood Education

The Association of Metropolitan School Districts believes the State should provide funding to ensure all 3 and 4 year olds have access to quality early childhood programs, or grant levy authority to local school boards to implement such programs.

AMSD BELIEVES

- Early childhood education programs increase school readiness.
- Early childhood programs are a tool to help eliminate the achievement gap.
- Investments in early childhood produce benefits to the state, such as increased incentive for businesses to locate in Minnesota, as well as benefits to individual students.

BACKGROUND

In 2003 the legislature enacted cuts to early childhood family education (ECFE) programs, Head Start, and childcare. The 2005 E-12 Omnibus Bill restored the Head Start cuts and approximately two-thirds of the ECFE cuts, but did not to restore funding for childcare, an important form of early childhood education.

RESEARCH

Research shows that participation in quality early childhood programs is linked to higher graduation rates, increased earnings, and a reduced chance of being on welfare. Research also shows that early childhood education can serve as an economic development incentive for companies to locate in certain communities.

- According to economists Art Rolnick and Rob Grunewald of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank, every \$1 we spend on quality early education saves taxpayers up to \$12.¹
- Children who participate in high quality early education develop better language skills, score higher in school readiness tests and have better social skills and fewer behavioral problems once they enter school.¹
- Children with high quality early learning experiences are 40% less likely to need special education or be held back a grade.¹

- Children from low-income families who participate in high quality early education programs show the greatest magnitude of benefits – they repeat fewer grades and have higher test scores.¹
- In the fall of 2004, the Committee for Economic Development released a report which concluded that the existence of strong early childhood programs serve as an economic development incentive for high-profile companies to locate in certain communities.²
- The RAND Corporation, known for its defense and business research, has identified early childhood programs as cost-effective measures for averting future social problems and costs, with returns to society as well as the individual.³



Association of Metropolitan School Districts
1667 Snelling Ave. N
St. Paul, MN 55108
651-999-7325 fax 651-999-7328
www.amsd.org

¹ Ready 4 K “Guide for Policy Makers”

² “Developmental Education: The Value of High Quality Preschool Investments as Economic Tools” www.ced.org.

³ “Early Learning Left Out: Public Spending on Children in Minnesota.” Ready 4 K