

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.

- Research conducted by Art Rolnick at Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis found that high quality preschool programs, such as the Perry Preschool Project, produce an annual rate of return of 16%. The economic benefits result from increased wages, reduced dependence on welfare, and reduced chance of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.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



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¹ <http://minneapolisfed.org/pubs/fedgaz/03-03/earlychild.cfm>

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