

A bill for an act
relating to early childhood education; creating an Office of Early Learning;
proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 4.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **[4.046] OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING.**

(a) An Office of Early Learning is established to coordinate high quality
prekindergarten and child care programs. The governor must appoint an executive director
who is a recognized expert in the field of early childhood care and education who will
facilitate communication and coordinate prekindergarten and child care programs under
the administration of the Departments of Education and Human Services.

(b) The executive director of the Office of Early Learning must coordinate
Departments of Education and Human Services staff efforts to:

(1) consolidate and coordinate resources and public funding streams for early
education and child care, and ensure the accountability and coordinated development of
all early education and child care services to children from birth to age five;

(2) work with the Departments of Education and Human Services and Minnesota
Early Learning Foundation (MELF) to create common standards for quality early
childhood programming and rules for teacher training and certification;

(3) create a seamless transition from early childhood programs to kindergarten;

(4) encourage family choice by ensuring a mixed system of high quality public and
private programs, with local points of entry, staffed by well-qualified professionals;

(5) ensure parents a decisive role in the planning, operation, and evaluation of
programs that aid families in the care of children;

2.1 (6) provide consumer education and accessibility to early education and child care
2.2 resources;

2.3 (7) advance the quality of early education and child care programs in order to
2.4 support the healthy development of children and preparation for their success in school;

2.5 (8) develop a seamless service delivery system of early education and child care
2.6 programs administered by local, state, and federal agencies, with local points of entry;

2.7 (9) develop and manage an effective data collection system to support the necessary
2.8 functions of a coordinated system of early education and child care in order to enable
2.9 accurate evaluation of its impact;

2.10 (10) respect and be sensitive to family values and cultural heritage; and

2.11 (11) establish the administrative framework for and promote the development of
2.12 early education and child care services in order to provide that such services, staffed
2.13 by well-qualified professionals, are available in every community for all families that
2.14 express a need for them.

2.15 (c) The Office of Early Learning must report to the legislative committees with
2.16 jurisdiction over the early childhood education and child care programs by February 1 of
2.17 each year on the status of the work required under paragraph (b) and any statutory changes
2.18 necessary to improve quality and increase access.