

2026 Public Policy Agenda

The Start Early Funders Coalition will lead the 2026 legislative session with a racial equity lens on all public policies. We prioritize policies that will benefit low-income children, rural children and families as well as Black, Indigenous and children of color and their families; and the programs that serve them.



Child Care and Early Learning Family Affordability and Accessibility

- Defend and advocate for the programs, services and resources that provide children and families a continuum of high-quality early care and education programs including but not limited to Early Learning Scholarships, the child care assistance program, family, friend and neighbor care, voluntary PreK, Great Start Scholarships and home visiting programs .
- Support funding and administrative strategies to strengthen the child care and early learning business model sustainability.



Community Wellness & Mental Health Supports

- Support the mental wellbeing of children, families and early care and education professionals with early childhood mental health consultation, trauma-informed care, increased resources for community mental health services and increased investment in the Community Solutions Fund.
- Defend current investments in a full spectrum of care prenatal through age five.



Early Care & Education Professionals and the Workforce

- Support policies and advocate for funding that improve recruiting and retaining early care and education professionals through improved compensation, benefits, professional development resources and other short and long-term solutions to support compensation and retentions practices including FFN support, CDA accessibility, Grow Your Own programs and mental health support.



State & Federal Early Childhood Policy

- Monitor federal policies impacting lives of young children and families across Minnesota.
- Monitor and support implementation of state programs and the Department of Children, Youth and Families.
- Monitor diversified funding streams and investments in Minnesota's early childhood system.