



A better way to serve early learners.

There is widespread understanding and support for the value of high-quality early learning as a way to close the achievement gap. Minnesota has significantly increased funding for early learning in recent years. The state's multiple categorical, competitive funding streams are now getting a closer look as some legislators and advocates call for the creation of a more coordinated system. [Learn more at MREAVOICE.org/EarlyLearningSystem](http://MREAVOICE.org/EarlyLearningSystem)

SCHOOLS NATURALLY LEAD COORDINATION >>

Excluding child care assistance, school districts currently coordinate 72% of the state's nearly \$239 million early learning program funding annually and 64% of the total early learning funds including federal and local sources.

PROGRAM FUNDING FOR FY 2017 (in millions)

	Minnesota	Total Federal, State & Local
Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten	\$25	\$25
Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)	\$29.3	\$45.1
Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)	\$65.8	\$121.9
School Readiness	\$33.6	\$33.6
Early Learning Scholarships, Pathways I and II*	\$59.9	\$59.9
Head Start (including American Indian Program)	\$25.1	\$94.1
Child Care Assistance (CCAP and MFIP)	\$160.1	\$249.1
Total Annual Investment for FY 2017	\$398.8	\$628.7

*\$17 million coordinated by school districts

RIISING NEEDS: The 2016 Legislature created Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten with \$25 million that funded 74 school districts, 40 percent of the applicants. Despite increased funding to programs in recent years, Minnesota continues to face a need to provide high-quality early learning programs, in addition to child care. The state needs to increase child care services by 37 percent, according to the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Greater Minnesota faces a severe shortage of options due to a significant loss of home-based options that are not being replaced by center-based child care. That has led Greater Minnesota school districts to make the unprecedented move of adding child care programming to help meet needs.

CHANGE IN CHILD CARE SPACES (2006-2015)	Family (Home) Child Care	Center Based Child Care	Net Change
Greater Minnesota	-20,416	+5,039	-15,377
Twin Cities	-16,125	+19,409	+3,284

WHAT'S NEXT: Greater Minnesota communities need a significant investment in state resources to build out a comprehensive system of quality early learning and child care services. A coordinated mixed delivery model would help close learning gaps and address much needed workforce supports for young families. Rural school districts can be central to building this capacity when funded appropriately and charged with coordinating efforts in their communities.

