



House Early Childhood and Family Support Committee
Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Hack, Vice-Chair Piluso



HB 2013: Regarding Preschool Promise educational requirements



As Early Learning Hubs we have been working with our various community partners to implement Preschool Promise. In the relatively short time, we have already realized the investment in our children, families, and the workforce. We are committed and strong champions of this program. Preschool Promise has provided a vehicle and enhanced our ability to:

- Provide increased access to a preschool experience to a greater number of children and families to increase kindergarten readiness;
- Increase the levels of quality in a variety of settings; and
- Provide educational opportunities for the early learning workforce.



The initial legislation included language that the lead preschool teachers must have a bachelor degree. It is critical that we have the workforce that is highly skilled and trained. The intent of having a highly qualified workforce is well received and very important.



There is the reality that for many early learning providers, the road to a bachelor's degree may be a long road. And, in many cases, teachers do not have English as a first language, and most of our higher level institutions do not have adequate access to early learning degrees in languages other than English. The revised language provided in HB2013 offers an inclusive pathway for professionals in the field of early learning, with the goal of ensuring that the quality of instruction will be consistent with what we desire to see in the preschool classroom. This language also allows for and acknowledges cultural and language differences in our providers and the types of programs that are a part of the Preschool Promise provider landscape. As champions of the early learning system, we remain committed to building pathways to higher education for all our workforces; this language allows us to continue to be intentional in our work around quality and workforce development.



In addition, this bill allows communities to use the kindergarten teacher pay scale as a guideline, rather than have it be the rule. This will be helpful in the implementation of Preschool Promise; we all want to see

our early learning teachers be paid a professional rate. However, it often ended up creating challenges in the workplace when you had teachers working for the same organization doing the same work, and one teacher being paid at a much higher wage. Some organizations are bound by collective bargaining and position structures that made this a real challenge to implement. This flexibility will allow us the ability to work with organizations to remove barriers to increase salaries for early learning professionals.

It is an exciting time to be a part of the early learning profession. Thank you for your continued investment in Preschool Promise and the early learning system as a whole.

Sincerely,



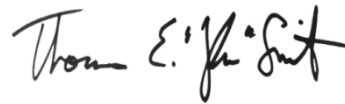
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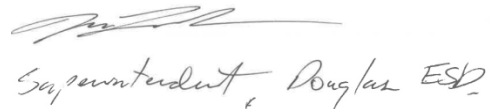
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