

Building Blocks for Wisconsin's Future

Recommendations to the Governor

Dear Governor Evers,

On behalf of the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), we are pleased to provide the council's 2019 report. This report reaffirms the two smart investments presented in the ECAC 2018 report by providing updates and describes some of the exciting plans for 2020.

SMART INVESTMENT 1: Home Visiting Expansion

Research has shown that high-quality programs targeted to highest-risk families have a return of up to \$5.70 for every dollar invested in home visiting, through savings in child protection, K-12 education and grade retention, and criminal justice expenses.

Family Foundations Home Visiting program received \$3,000,000 in TANF and GPR funds as part of the Wisconsin FY19-21 biennial state budget. In the first year, two home visiting programs serving six additional counties will be added. In the second year, an RFP will be released to add new programs in January 2021.

- The percentage of caregivers with an identified barrier to practicing safe sleep who receive additional support from the home visitor increased from 83% to 100% between May 2018 and July 2019
- The percentage of children with an ASQ-3 score in the monitoring zone who were rescreened within 90 days increased from 22% to 42% between May 2018 and July 2019.



SMART INVESTMENT 2: Early Education Workforce Tax Credit

About 80% of businesses report difficulty in finding workers. A lack of available child care is a significant challenge to workforce development. Access to children increases by growing a consistent, qualified workforce of early educators. A refundable tax credit for the early education workforce can incentivize early educators to stay in the field.

While this recommendation was not included in the FY19-21 biennial state budget, the ECAC continues to strongly recommend it as a strategy.

- In fact, one of the strategies being included in the policy agenda for the Pritzker Children's Initiative (PCI) Prenatal-to-Age-Three planning grant will focus efforts on advocacy around tax incentives.
- The Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA) was awarded a Pritzker Children's Initiative (PCI) Prenatal-to-Age-Three planning grant in the amount of \$100,000 to establish a statewide prenatal-to-age-three policy agenda and action plan.



The council is looking forward to 2020 and is anticipating being awarded two grants. The council is eager to play a significant role in the Preschool Development Grant Birth to 5 and the Pritzker Foundation Implementation Grant. The council is also looking forward to continuing to enhance its process of needs assessment and recommendations with some refinements to selecting speakers and information sharing, as well as increased communication and collaboration with your office and staff.

It's an exciting time for early childhood in Wisconsin, and the council is honored to continue to be able to advise you.

Sincerely,

Emilie Amundson, Secretary-designee, Department of Children and Families

Carolyn Stanford Taylor, State Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction