



Michigan Association for the
Education of Young Children

2021 State Legislative Talking Points for FY22

Lawmakers need to hear from you! Share your voice and experience as an Early Childhood Professional by calling your state lawmakers and telling your story.

Step 1: Find your state lawmaker in the Michigan [Senate](#) and [House](#).

Step 2: Choose one of the scripts below. Which resonates most with you?

Step 3: Follow one of the scripts below to either call or email your lawmakers. Some lawmakers have expressed a preference for phone calls.

Step 4: Thank your lawmaker for listening on your social media page. Be sure to tag them and set your post to “public.”

T.E.A.C.H. Script:

Hello, my name is (____) and I’m a constituent of (*Lawmaker’s name*). I am (*your professional role*). I’m calling today to share with you my experience with the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program.

(Share your story about T.E.A.C.H. Are you a recipient? Would you like to be or employ someone who is? How did/would it affect you?)

T.E.A.C.H. has been experiencing an increased need for the past 12 months. Currently there are 84 applicants on the waitlist, and T.E.A.C.H. receives about 403 new applications every semester.

I support continued investment in this program, and more is needed on an ongoing basis. The cost to serve all applicants on the waitlist requires an additional \$2.2 million, meaning T.E.A.C.H. needs at least an annual allocation of \$7.2 million. Future early childhood investment, whether from the state or federal stimulus, should include an annual \$7.2 million allocation for T.E.A.C.H. to eliminate the current waitlist.

Thank you for your time today. If I can further support (*lawmaker*)’s understanding in this matter, please let me know.

T.E.A.C.H Follow-up:

- Supply the [2020 Annual Report - T.E.A.C.H](#)
- Thank your lawmaker with a social media post:
 - *Thank you to @State Representative Padma Kuppa for taking the time to hear my story today. The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship has played an important role in my life, and increased funding is needed to support the demand of other Early Childhood Professionals.*

Social-Emotional Competence of Young Children and Staff Script:

Hello, my name is (____) and I'm a constituent of (*Lawmaker's name*). I am (*your professional role*). I'm calling today to share with you my experience with Social-Emotional Competence in young children and the professionals that support them.

(Share your story: How have you seen the pandemic impact the physical, emotional, and mental health of early childhood educators and children ages birth through age eight? How could access to these resources improve the well-being of early childhood educators and children?)

I ask that all early childhood educators working with children from birth through age 8 be eligible for physical, emotional, and mental health programs for educators and students, rather than limiting the resource by the setting. An example of a step toward this investment includes funding infant/early childhood mental health consultation investment.

Thank you for your time today. If I can further support (*lawmaker*)'s understanding in this matter, please let me know.

Social-Emotional Follow-up:

- Resource Article: [New Study Points to Early Childhood Mental Health Consultations as an Important Tool for Addressing Challenging Behavior](#)
- Thank your lawmaker with a social media post:
 - *Thank you to @State Representative Padma Kuppa for taking the time to hear my story today. Support is needed for the toll that this pandemic has taken on early childhood educators and young children's physical, emotional, and mental health.*

Child Development and Care Script:

Hello, my name is (____) and I'm a constituent of (*Lawmaker's name*). I am (*your professional role*). I'm calling today to share with you my experience as an Early Childhood Professional.

(Share your story, which resonates with you:

- *Share how the cost of lower class sizes and PPE has impacted your community.*
- *Speak to whether a 10% increase in hourly rates will support you in covering these pandemic related costs, or not?*
- *Share whether it is enough to invest in systemic issues, like funding to compensate all early childhood educators in-line with the state average for elementary teachers or not. Will this be enough to offer health insurance to early childhood educators in your area?*
- *Share how family income entrance eligibility % impacts families and programs in your area. Can you think of a specific family that is just over the income requirement, didn't get services, and how this impacted both the family and your program?)*

Families must continue to be supported by increasing income eligibility thresholds so that more families can afford the cost of child care. Child care providers must continue to be supported by increasing hourly rates and providing greater stability by permanently basing payments on enrolled children as is temporarily in place. Previous models, which base reimbursement rates on a child's attendance, are not sustainable as most child care costs are fixed. I advocate for continued and additional investment in Child Development and Care.

Child Development and Care Follow-up:

- Supply these infographics:
 - [Child Care Keeps Michigan Working](#)
 - [Michigan Wage Profile](#)
- Thank your lawmaker with a social media post:
 - *Thank you to @State Representative Padma Kuppa for taking the time to hear my story today. Supporting increased investments in Child Development and Care will have a major impact on our community.*

GSRP Script:

Hello, my name is (____) and I'm a constituent of (*Lawmaker's name*). I am (*your professional role*). I'm calling today to share with you my experience with GSRP.

(Share your story: How could an increase in per child funding impact pay parity between GSRP teachers, associate teachers, and elementary teachers? Could there be greater stability in the GSRP teaching teams, providing higher quality early childhood experiences? Could the community based programs implementing GSRP, which are also small businesses, be positively impacted?)

We celebrate the increases in per student funding from \$7,250 to align with the per pupil foundation allowance (currently \$8,700) because it streamlines education funding and also provides an opportunity to increase GSRP educators' compensation to better align with that of their colleagues in K-12 education.

I ask that you and your colleagues continue to partner with early childhood professionals as this is a step toward aligning with the \$14,155 per preschool student recommended in The School Finance Research Collaborative. High Quality Early Childhood is a greater per child expense because educators are working with children whose brains are about 80% developed when they are three years old. Early childhood experiences establish neurological connections that impact children through adulthood. Join us to continue growing the investment.

Thank you for your time today. If I can further support (*lawmaker*)'s understanding in this matter, please let me know.

GSRP Follow-up:

- Share these resources:
 - [Michigan Wage Profile](#). We need an increase in the per student rate to invest in educators.
 - [Research Collaborative Report Fact Sheet](#). The School Finance Research Collaborative recommends \$14,155 per preschool student.
 - [Michigan's game-changing preschool program "untenable" without more funding](#) (article)
- Thank your lawmaker with a social media post:
 - *Thank you to @State Representative Padma Kuppa for taking the time to hear my story today. As a GSRP teacher, I see first-hand how impactful the proposed per-student funding increase would be for our program.*

Equity for Children and Early Childhood Professionals:

Hello, my name is (____) and I'm a constituent of (*Lawmaker's name*). I am (*your professional role*). I'm calling today to share with you my experience as an early childhood professional.

(Share your story: How long have you been working in the field? How does your pay compare to that of public K-12 schools in your area? Do all children ages birth-5 in your area have the same opportunities for high quality early learning experiences? What more needs to be done to eliminate inequities for early childhood professionals and the children they serve? Is your private center or home child care program able to access state funding?)

Learning in the early years is crucial for brain development and eventual success both in school and in life. All children have the right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society, which includes diverse educators. Families rely on consistent, high quality care to be able to work. Early childhood professionals deserve affordable education and compensation equitable to the work to make a strong, positive impact at a critical time in a child's development. I support initiatives that embrace diversity and full inclusion as strengths, uphold fundamental principles of fairness and justice, and work to eliminate structural inequities that limit equitable learning opportunities.

Equity for Children and Early Childhood Professionals Follow-up:

- Share these resources:
 - [Michigan Wage Profile](#). We need an increase in the per student rate to invest in educators.
 - [NAEYC Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education Position Statement](#)
 - Michigan's Children [Building a Better Child Care System in Michigan](#)
 - [Think Babies Resource- State of Childcare by County](#)
- Thank your lawmaker with a social media post:
 - *Thank you to @State Representative Padma Kuppa for taking the time to hear my story today. As an early childhood professional, I strongly support equity for all children and early childhood professionals.*