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Agency of Human Services

Date: March 2, 2023
To: Chair Marcotte and House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development
From: Miranda Gray, Deputy Commissioner, Department for Children and Families
Re: Snelling Center's Early Childhood Leadership Institute Budget Request

Good afternoon. The Department for Children and Families appreciates the opportunity to speak with the committee today about the Snelling Center's Early Childhood Leadership Institute Budget Request.

As the out-going Deputy Commissioner for the Child Development Division, I have had a number of conversations with leadership at Snelling about this program as well as have heard from graduates of the program about what this experience has provided to them. And although it sounds like it has provided many with needed tools to step into leadership roles, just as Mr. Snelling outlined in his letter, the goal of the Child Development Division is to support those directly working or will be working within a child care program.

The funding that the Child Development Division (CDD) has had to support the field has predominately been American Rescue Plan Act funds and with this funding we have been able to increase the current student scholarship program known as T.E.A.C.H., created a new student loan repayment program, as well provided stabilization payments to child care programs from November 2021 until February 2023. These efforts are directly contributing to supporting staff in staying in child care programs which is where we desperately need staff.

CDD is also implementing Quality Coaches which will support programs in setting goals related to increasing quality, connecting programs to resources, and technical assistance. CDD supports the Business Technical Assistance Program administered by Children's First Finance which will assist programs with enhancing their business acumen. By providing these supports, CDD is supporting child care programs with quality improvement and business assistance.

In closing the request of the Snelling Center is not a part of the Governor's budget for state fiscal year 2024.

Thank you again for time in your committee