

# What's the best way to invest in **EARLY EDUCATION?**

	Expand current scholarship approach.	Build new schools-only approach.
Ready to Roll Out	✓	
Not Disruptive To Existing Businesses	✓	
Most Diverse Options for Parents	✓	
Fits Needs of Rural Areas	✓	
Flexible For Parents	✓	
Means-Tested	✓	
Field-Tested	✓	
Cost Effective Way To Narrow Achievement Gap	✓	



# Targeted scholarships are the best way to invest in **EARLY EDUCATION**



To narrow our education achievement gap, we must help low-income children access high quality early education programs through our proven scholarships model. High quality early education programs are currently available in schools, centers, homes and churches in every part of Minnesota, and all are using kindergarten-readiness best practices, as measured by the Parent Aware Ratings. This existing scholarships approach has significant advantages over rigid, costly, and untargeted proposals to mandate a new schools-only system for all 4-year olds regardless of income.

- **Ready to Roll Out.** Minnesota already has a statewide network of over 2,000 quality providers and more are joining all the time. The scholarship model layers nicely on the existing private-pay market, while the schools-only approach starts from scratch.
- **Not Disruptive To Existing Businesses.** Parent Aware is a voluntary system that equips existing providers to adopt best practices, and empowers parents to choose the best options. Replacing the private market with public providers would cost jobs, and likely raise costs for remaining services.
- **Most Diverse Options for Parents.** Having an early educator from the same race and/or culture supports early learning. Because scholarships provide the most complete range of options, scholarships are the most flexible tool to empower parents to find the right fit for their child.
- **Fits Needs of Rural Areas.** Scholarships provide access to all providers in sparsely settled areas, rather than relying only on often distant and underfunded school districts to provide a new service.
- **Flexible for Parents.** Scholarships allow parents to choose from an array of community providers offering flexible schedules and full range of services in one stop, rather than carving out isolated programs just for 4-year olds.
- **Means-Tested.** Scholarships target limited tax dollars on kids of greatest need and potential, while avoiding subsidizing services for higher-income families.
- **Field-Tested.** The scholarships + Parent Aware model was proven in a five-year, pilot and demonstration project, supported by a \$25 million public investment. The model was further refined in a statewide rollout from 2011-2015. It does not make sense to now move away from that proven approach to an untested system that depends on financially strapped school districts to find funding for rich and poor kids alike.
- **Cost Effective Way to Close Achievement Gap.** Building on the existing market and targeted assistance on low-income families will do more to close the achievement gap at far less cost than building a new system from scratch for rich and poor alike.

For more information, go to [www.PASRMN.org](http://www.PASRMN.org).