



SAINT PAUL FEDERATION
OF EDUCATORS LOCAL 28

July 18, 2023

Council President Brendmoen, Council Vice President Noecker, Council Members Balenger, Jalali, Prince, Tolbert, and Yang:

Whether we are white, Black, or Brown, every family, child, parent, provider, and teacher in Saint Paul deserves to have an affordable, accessible and culturally relevant childcare system that honors every person's dignity and allows everyone to thrive.

On July 19, 2023 you will be presented with a resolution calling for a special election in 2024 to seek a levy to fund an early childhood plan in Saint Paul. The Saint Paul Federation of Educators has participated in the Early Learning Legislative Committee, and engaged in substantive conversations with Council Members Noecker and Yang. While much work has been done there is also much work left to do in order to present both the City Council, and the residents of Saint Paul with a clear plan.

Many in our community are struggling because wages have not kept pace with inflation. There are many real, and necessary demands to repair and update existing city infrastructure. If we, as a city, choose to ask the residents of Saint Paul to once again, increase their own tax burden to support all children, we must also be able to provide them a clear plan, designed with authentic community input, that centers the voices of families, educators, and child-care providers. Lacking this critical part of any successful levy, the Saint Paul Federation of Educators cannot support a resolution to seek a levy at this time.

We recognize the crisis our St. Paul families are facing because the cost and accessibility of childcare is unattainable for so many. The Saint Paul Federation of Educators is committed to continued engagement with the City Council and community to develop long-term, sustainable access to childcare resources. We look forward to continued conversation to ensure that children, families, providers, and educators across race, class, and geography have an experience of our childcare system that is a model for our state and the country.

Leah VanDassor

President, Saint Paul Federation of Educators