



HELPING OUR MEMBERS SUCCEED

MNAFEE's mission is to promote, advocate for, and strengthen parent education, Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), and early childhood programming in public schools.

Minnesota Association for Family and Early Education (MNAFEE) Legislative Priorities 2021

MNAFEE sees a Minnesota in which all families access comprehensive, high quality parent education and early childhood programming in public schools. The current intersecting pandemics place families at the center and make our vision more important than ever. As we are planning to invest in 2021 we must have a wide vision of how family and early education supports and can contribute to a strong, supportive social network. If we intend to solve for persistent educational and developmental disparities, now is the time to consider a multigenerational approach from prenatal, early childhood (birth-8) and beyond.

Legislative Priorities

1. Gain support for essential multigenerational programming, like ECFE, which builds authentic relationships with families and works to heal distrust in systems of education, and creates the greatest promise for reducing the opportunity gap.
2. Leverage and bolster resources for Minnesota's ECFE as a hub for connecting with and providing support and resources for children, parents, and childcare providers (including FFN).
3. Mobilize Minnesota's uniquely positioned workforce of licensed parent educators trained to work with parents of children from prenatal to emerging adults, so that Minnesota can better support student, family, and teacher success in nearly every school district across the state.
4. Increase access and outreach with and for families to high quality educational support services such as home visiting, early childhood screening, and preschool.

Strategic Actions

To uphold the legislative priorities above, MNAFEE is committed to:

1. Partnering with organizations investing in young children and families to ensure parents are supported. Because we are stronger together.
2. Build relationships between legislators and ECFE programs in the communities they represent so that legislators are provided concrete examples of the innovative and essential ways ECFE is supporting the families that make up their constituency.
3. Provide professional development for administrators, parent and early childhood educators, and parent advisory councils to build capacity for more effective and innovative means of program delivery, outreach, and evaluation.
4. Give voice to the multitude of ways ECFE programs provide culturally responsive and trauma informed family support and education in ways that meet community needs, including home visiting and multi-generational group-based education.



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Special Statement on ECFE's Role in Supporting Families During These Unprecedented Times

Written by Susan Somers, Parent Educator, St. Paul Public Schools ECFE

The mission of ECFE is to strengthen families through the education and support of all parents to provide the best possible environment for the healthy growth and development of their children. Established in 1974, ECFE is the largest and oldest program of its kind in the country and has been cited as a national model for parent education and family support. ECFE provides a place for parents to learn about and practice important parenting and family life skills and build trusting relationships with other parents from their community. Research confirms that children whose parents are involved in their education and learning are more successful in school.

Parenting is challenging on our very best days. I've heard it said that parenting is the hardest job you'll ever love. ECFE works to strengthen families by supporting them. We offer current research on best practices in parenting as well as providing a place for connection with other parents traveling the same road. While we've been in practice for nearly 47 years, we are more essential now than ever before. As parents face racial injustice and inequity, political unrest, a global pandemic, and other life-altering circumstances, the isolation for them is immense. There is fear. ECFE provides space, whether virtually or in person, that invites families to just "be". Space that allows us to peel back the layers of the onion and determine what our individual families need to be successful. We excel at building community, connection, and relationships with relevance, intentionality, and kindness. The world can be unkind. ECFE is here to embrace young families with hope.

MNAFEE Is At The Table

Here are a few of the organizations we are in conversation with to move our shared priorities forward:

- Children's Defense Fund Minnesota (CDF-MN)
- Greater Twin Cities United Way Advocacy for Children Day Rally
- Minnesota Community Education Association (MCEA)
- Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)
- MN Prenatal to Three Coalition
- Zero to Three's Think Babies campaign