

MINNESOTA EARLY EDUCATION LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

Leadership makes early education improvements happen. While there are thousands of leaders throughout Minnesota improving early education for our most vulnerable children, Parent Aware for School Readiness (PASR) is recognizing a small group of leaders who have played particularly constructive roles.

FOUR-STAR LEGISLATORS

This is a bipartisan, bicameral group of Minnesota state legislators who have been strong and active supporters of state policies that are leading to early education improvements for Minnesota children, particularly the low-income children who are most likely to fall into the achievement gap. They have championed one or more of the following early education initiatives: 1) Expansion of flexible, targeted Early Learning Scholarships; 2) development of a strong Parent Aware quality rating and improvement system; and/or 3) enactment of Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) quality improvement incentives. In alphabetical order, our Four-Star Legislators are:

- » Senator Terri Bonoff
- » Senator Richard Cohen
- » House Speaker Kurt Daudt
- » Senator Melisa Franzen
- » Representative Ron Kresha
- » Senator Carla Nelson
- » Senator Eric Pratt
- » House Minority Leader Paul Thissen
- » Representative Ryan Winkler

FOUR-STAR LEADERS

This is a group of community leaders who are implementing locally based early education improvements that are benefiting the low-income children who are most likely to fall into the achievement gap. They and their colleagues are making sure that flexible, targeted Early Learning Scholarships, a strong Parent Aware quality rating and improvement system, a reformed Child Care Assistance Program, and/or other early education initiatives are working as well as possible for Minnesota's most vulnerable children. In alphabetical order, our Four-Star Leaders are:

- » Jan Callison, Hennepin County Commissioner
- » Barb Fabre, White Earth Child Care Program Director
- » Muneer Karcher-Ramos, St. Paul Promise Neighborhood Director
- » Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Commissioner
- » Sondra Samuels, Northside Achievement Zone President and CEO

CHAMPIONS OF THE YEAR

These are two bipartisan state leaders who have been persistent and tireless champions of Minnesota children, particularly the low-income children who are most likely to fall into the achievement gap. Representative Loon has been particularly instrumental in dramatically expanding the Early Learning Scholarships to help low-income children access high quality early education programs. On behalf of the Dayton Administration, Commissioner Jesson has worked for years to build and champion the Parent Aware quality rating and improvement system, and to reform the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to reward providers using kindergarten-readiness best practices. Without these two leaders, and those who empower and support them, Minnesota early education reforms would not be where they are today. In alphabetical order, our Champions of the Year are:

- » Commissioner Lucinda Jesson
- » Representative Jenifer Loon