

My name is Emily Penz from Teachers On Call, A Kelly Education Company – we are a Twin Cities based substitute staffing agency providing early childhood education (ECE) substitute staff to over more than 100 licensed child care facilities in the metro region. We are members of the MCCA and want to reiterate the importance of continuing to provide child care centers with appropriate Stabilization Grant funding for their FTEs. After working in educational staffing for the last five years, there has never been a worse staffing shortage of educators – specifically early childhood educators. With so many educators leaving the industry, we need to do all we can to retain our current educators and build interest in prospect hires. We can do this by properly compensating child care staff for the physical, emotional, and intellectual work they produce day in and day out. Additionally, costs to mandated pre-hire trainings, professional development hours, and clearances are a barrier to enter the ECE field when the current salary for most ECE educators already is not a sustainable living wage.

Teachers On Call provides full-time substitute employees to our contracted partners – licensed child care facilities. The additional grant funds will aid our partners by ensuring they are able to afford to utilize our services whenever necessary to prevent disruption of their classrooms. Many of our partners have informed us without our substitute staff they would have to disenroll students, close down classrooms, or close the facility altogether as they rely heavily on the additional staffing support we provide.

Teachers On Call highly urges the Senate Human Services Reform, Finance, & Policy Committee to continue to provide the essential Stabilization Grant funding to licensed child care facilities and not make changes to the grant that would hurt our educators.

Emily Penz
Manager, Early Childhood Education Center of Excellence
Kelly Education