

January 27, 2022

Amy Gottschamer M.Ed., Executive Director  
Googols of Learning Child Development Center

Date of Hearing HB2525: Monday, Jan. 31st, 2022-1:30 pm  
House Committee on Children and Seniors

Chairperson Concannon and members of the committee:

I first want to thank you for having this hearing. I am a strong proponent of House Bill 2525. My name is Amy Gottschamer, and I am an owner and executive director of Googols of Learning Child Development Center, a community-based child care center in Lawrence. On average, I have upwards of 100 children ages 1 to 5 enrolled and employ 30 educators.

In our field many early childhood educators are parents. And like all early childhood educators, they are very poorly paid. So much so, that nationally, roughly half of early childhood educators are on state subsidies themselves. It is a high bar to ask an early childhood educator to pursue higher education to improve the quality of care they provide other people's children, then fail to pay them a living wage, and also not support them by offering child care assistance so they can attend school. I particularly support the aspect of HB 2525 that removes the 24-month lifetime limit on childcare assistance for adults pursuing postsecondary education.

As working teachers and parents, they cannot carry a full-load of college classes, so it is unreasonable to expect them to complete even an Associates Degree within 24 months. As hourly wage-earners, they cannot afford to take off work to attend class, pay for childcare and lose wages. If we want them in the field supporting our state's workforce overall, then we need to support their attending school part-time by providing child care assistance. If we want high-quality care and education for all Kansas children, we need to give these working educators more than 24 months to complete their higher education. As a child care director, I have a vision for a high-quality, well-compensated early childhood workforce. When asked, I tell people my 6-word-why. 'Quality education comes from quality educators.' At Googols of Learning we want as many of our teachers to be highly educated as possible and I want the same thing for the children of Kansas.

Again, I am providing written-only proponent testimony for HB 2525. I hope I've provided some valuable information and want to invite you to reach out to me as a resource in the future.

Best Regards,



500 Rockledge Road, Lawrence, KS 66049  
amy@googolsoflearning.com\*785-423-5025

<https://www.facebook.com/googolsoflearning/> \* <https://twitter.com/GoogolsLearning>