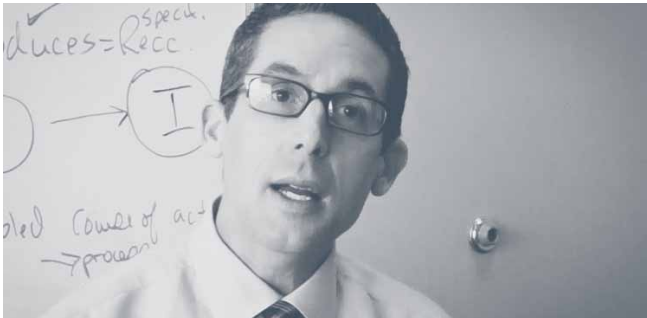


COMMUNITY LEADER TESTIMONIALS

SUPPORT MINNESOTA'S
EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE
GRANT APPLICATION

Sean Kershaw

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CITIZENS LEAGUE



“Part of what I love about Minnesota is our legacy of progressive, innovative education reform... We have this long, 40-year history of innovation in education. And the point was not to just come up with ideas, but to get them done. The next example of that will be early childhood learning.”

Art Rolnick

SENIOR FELLOW,
HUMPHREY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS



“One of the key reasons Minnesota is so well positioned is the support of the business community... Five years ago we put an organization together called the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation. The board consists of the top CEOs from the top corporations in the state... We have the infrastructure in place and we’re ready to take it to scale.”

Elona Street-Stewart

CHAIR, BOARD OF EDUCATION,
SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS



“There are a number of incredible partners who have worked together to ensure the state of Minnesota will have a promising future. Right now we need to make sure we don’t overlook the best asset that we have, and that’s our children. Let’s start with making sure our early learners have the best opportunities to succeed.”

MaryAnn Baenninger, Ph.D.

PRESIDENT,
COLLEGE OF SAINT BENEDICT



“I’m a developmental psychologist and I’m a college president so I know in my scholarly work and professional work at the one end the importance of early childhood learning and I know from the college end, the fundamental early impact on learning. It follows these students through their lives.”

Jay Barnes

PRESIDENT,
BETHEL UNIVERSITY



“The path to higher education begins in pre-school. I realize how important early childhood education is in shaping the future of education.”

Lori Swanson

SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR,
WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA SCHOOLS



“We must ask ourselves, what can we do for our future? ... It starts with providing access to high-quality early childhood education for every Minnesota child.”

Paul Cerkvenik

PRESIDENT,
MINNESOTA PRIVATE COLLEGE COUNCIL



“In the 21st Century, a college degree is what a high school diploma meant in the 20th Century. Economic success is going to depend, for individuals and for our community, on increasing the number of college graduates we have. But the only way to do that is to make sure young children, child that are three, four and five, get a start in the education continuum on the right track.”

Lynn Casey

CHAIR AND CEO,
PADILLA SPEER BEARDSLEY



“I know first hand, as does my organization, that there is an immensely strong correlation between an educated workforce and a thriving local economy, and our great quality of life.”

Vallay Varro

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
MINNCAN



“Our coalition of supporters is broad and powerful. We can do this. Our time is now, to seize this challenge and open a world of opportunities.”

Alex Cirillo

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT,
3M COMMUNITY AFFAIRS AND 3M FOUNDATION



“The community at large in Minnesota has made a commitment to education... By augmenting that with Race to the Top, it’s clear to me that we would be able to take programs that exist and implement those programs at a more rapid fashion.”

John Choi

RAMSEY COUNTY ATTORNEY



“We cannot have a community and a society where disproportionately large amounts of children of color are not succeeding in our school... Whatever investments that we can do today to change that trajectory is something that is very important.”