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February 5, 2018

Commissioner Cassellius
Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Dear Commissioner Cassellius:

Minnesota's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant focused on using federal and state resources to build a stronger infrastructure to support our early learning system. One of the critical gaps that existed when the grant was written was the lack of information on the outcome of public investment in early care and education programming. To address that gap, Minnesota spent more than \$9 million in state and federal funds to create 1) the Kindergarten Entry Profile as our shared measure(s) of children's progress toward kindergarten readiness, and 2) the Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System (ECLDS) to allow the public and policymakers to access Kindergarten Entry Profile data on an ongoing basis. Specifically, Minnesota's Final Race to the Top Performance Report (2016, Page 60) committed that, "Data from the KEP will now be collected in the Early Learning Data System for greater public availability and to see how kindergarten readiness aligns with other early childhood initiatives and outcomes."

After several years of publishing a regular School Readiness Study, there has been no report on statewide kindergarten readiness published by MDE since 2013, sharing data from Fall 2012. The revised KEP tools were piloted and have been made available to districts statewide. We understood the first set of statewide KEP data would be made publicly available on the Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System in March of 2017. At this point, no KEP data has been made public, despite commitments from the Department and more than \$9 million in public investment in infrastructure that should support the public dissemination of that data. This is frustrating to advocates, policymakers and program planners at every level, especially given the significant public investment in a wide range of early care and education programs in recent years.

We respectfully ask the Department to share the rationale for no longer publishing an annual School Readiness Study, the timeline for releasing a next study, and the timeline for including KEP data in the Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System. Thank you in advance for this information.

Sincerely,



Ericca Maas
Executive Director