



# AFSCME Legislative Agenda 2017

## Making Education Affordable

### Help Working Families Afford Child Care and Higher Education

The opportunity to succeed is built on education. That's why AFSCME supports investment in education from early childhood through college.

AFSCME Council 5 supports Governor Dayton's budget requests for early childhood through higher education, including the state's higher education systems. We also support the governor's bonding proposals for Minnesota State and University of Minnesota campuses.

**Child Care Assistance** – For Minnesota parents, the cost of child care can be more than the cost of tuition at a state college. For example, the high cost of center-based care is about \$14,000 a year, while home-based care is less than \$8,000. The problem is that some AFSCME child care providers are charging less because parents can't afford to pay more. To help solve that problem, the state should fully fund the Child Care Assistance Program and eliminate the waiting list so providers can serve 7,000 more families. The Dayton/Smith proposal invests \$73.5 million in this initiative to increase provider payment rates and remove red tape for parents and providers.

**Bonding for Campuses** – State spending has not kept pace with needed upkeep at higher education campuses. Repairs are urgently needed to keep our members safe at work and to help them deliver services to students. Supporting Governor Dayton's bonding proposal allows our state to make these critical investments: \$201.8 million for Minnesota State and \$154.3 million for the University of Minnesota.

**Paid Parental Leave** – AFSCME is part of a coalition calling on the Legislature to pass the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act. The legislation would create an insurance program to provide all Minnesota workers with a portion of their pay for up to 12 weeks for pregnancy and medical leave, plus 12 weeks for bonding with a new child or caring for a seriously ill family member.

#### Action – Ask your legislators to:

- Support Governor Dayton's budget request for Minnesota State and U of M.
- Support Governor Dayton's bonding proposal.
- Support the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act.
- Fund the Child Care Assistance Program and increase provider payment rates.