

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Trisha York, and I am the Director/Owner of Learning Universe Childcare in West Fargo, ND. We are located at 705 Main Ave E Suite A, West Fargo, ND 58078 and have been in operation for 18.5 years. We have been licensed since 2006, are licensed for 78 children, and currently have 10 staff. We are currently Step 2 in Bright and Early ND and have been participating since 2012. We received \$3000 for completing and executing our Step 2, we have also received \$3000 in Inclusion Grant money, and \$9920 from the Facility Improvement Grant.

We have used this money for so many things throughout the Center. We have used it to add money to our hourly pay to help retain and keep teachers at the Center. We used it to help purchase sensory and educational items for our kiddos that have Autism and hearing loss. We bought Nugget couches and Nugget Chunks to help with climbing and exploring, along with making a safe quiet space for those who need it most. We also used it to replace all the crib mattresses in our infant room, purchase new cots for our toddler classroom, replace all the bathroom fixtures in 3 bathrooms along with replacing the floor in those 3 bathrooms. We replaced our fridges and freezers with commercial grade ones and added 1 full stand-up fridge and 1 full stand-up freezer. We also replaced our 10-year-old shed that stores our outdoor toys along with a 6-seat stroller for our infant classroom.

This money has had such a positive impact on not only the kiddos and their families, but also the teachers at the Center. How amazing is it when a kiddo comes into the Center and has new toys to play with and explore all while learning and educating themselves with those toys. Teachers also need that extra hourly wage to help make a living wage to be able to continue to work in early childhood. They also enjoy getting new items to help educate our littlest learners in their classrooms. This money also helps keep the early childhood field in competition with any other entry level job in the community. I appreciate all the grants the state has given us thus far and hope the state can continue to these awesome opportunities not only for our Home, Group, and Centers in North Dakota but most importantly for our earliest learners in our state. I am in favor of fully funding the 7 million dollars that was originally allocated for this bill, not the cutting the 2 million dollars.

Trisha York