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Aligned Applauds Missouri’s Approval of Record Funding for Early Childhood Education

Governor Parson signs largest increase in state’s history in support of Missouri’s Children

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, JUNE 30, 2023 – Aligned, a non-partisan, nonprofit coalition of business leaders who educate and influence policymakers to drive educational transformation efforts, commends Missouri’s approval for record funding for pre-Kindergarten (pre-K) children. The \$82 million increase in funding is the largest in the state’s history and is a step to ensuring every child from birth to five has access to quality care and education. Through a partnership with key business leaders and policymakers, Aligned worked with the Missouri legislature to include funding for expansion of pre-K programs and more funding for child care subsidies.

“Thanks to the leadership of Governor Mike Parson and the advocacy of key lawmakers, the Show-Me State is making generational investments in our children from birth to five-years old,” said Torree Pederson, President and CEO of Aligned. “We are proud of our 10 plus years on the front lines advocating on behalf of Missouri’s children that led to this capstone moment of this historical funding for the development of our Missouri children.”

Missouri Governor Mike Parson signed the FY24 budget, which includes nearly \$82 million in funding for new pre-K grants. The funding allocated to pre-K is in different bills. House Bill 2 includes more than \$26 million for community-based child care providers and House Bill 20 allocates more than \$55 million for pre-K grants to districts and charter schools for 4-year-olds.

“Early childhood care is essential to our state’s success, and we’re honored to champion this historic investment in our families and future generations of Missourians,” said Mike Parson, Missouri’s Governor. “If we are to truly make a difference, it starts with our children, and this landmark funding will support our work to ensure every Missouri child is supported with the right tools to succeed. This was a team effort, and thanks to dedicated childhood education advocates like Aligned, we were able to get it across the finish line. Now, let’s celebrate this moment for Missouri kids, families and businesses.”

“This is a huge win for Missouri and an investment in our children’s care and education,” said Pederson. “These additional resources are available now for child care providers, districts and charter schools to ensure that all children with the greatest need have more access.”

Aligned celebrated the release of the Investment Blueprint for Missouri's Children at the end of June. The Children's Trust Fund of Missouri and Kids Win Missouri led a year-long effort to study the needs and opportunities in early care and education in the Show-Me State. Aligned served on the steering committee that guided this work which will shape future contributions towards early childhood development.

To learn more about Aligned, visit www.wearealigned.org.

About Aligned

Founded in 2011 with the support of key civic leaders, Aligned has assembled a coalition of businesses and community leaders who are committed to focusing strategically on ways that businesses and policymakers can work better together to foster children’s achievement and economic development. Aligned is the only state-wide non-profit, nonpartisan business group working in Kansas and Missouri on educational issues impacting the full development of our children, supporting child care providers, and investing in the workforce of tomorrow.

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