

**From:** [Jacquelyn Kendall](#)  
**To:** [Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** ECDP  
**Date:** Sunday, September 19, 2021 5:59:48 PM

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Please deliver this email to all members of the Leelanau County Board of Commissioners and post it online. Thank you.

Dear County Commissioners:

This letter is in reference to the Board's consideration of defunding the Early Childhood Development Program already approved by the voters in Leelanau County. Because of the hours spent in committee and in educating the Community and the Board about this program , I will not discuss what the ECDP is. I will stick with what it isn't.

It isn't childcare. The ECDP provides no childcare but can act in an advisory capacity to child care providers if asked about child development. The Quebec study referenced by Commissioner Bunek studied outcomes of a Canadian childcare program. It is irrelevant to services provided by ECDP.

It is not Early Childhood Education. It provides programming to support children age 0-3. Ninety percent of brain development occurs during this period and it happens in families for the most part so that children are prepared for education. Do all families know instinctively how to do this ? Not so much. Might they need help? Definitely!

It is not a literacy program, although it can help parents foster literacy in the home.

It is not a once and done healthcare program like vaccinations. It provides support for as long as necessary. It can help families who suspect physical and mental health problems intervene appropriately as early as possible.

It does not provide all services necessary for good early childhood development directly but can provide excellent referral to help families meet fundamental human needs like food, clothing, shelter and safety.

Young families in Leelanau County are underserved and overlooked. They struggle to survive in the most expensive county in Michigan in which to live. They are our neighbors and their children will be our leaders. We have a prototypical, state recognized program in our county. Voters decreed that it was wanted and needed. Arbitrary defunding of this program goes well beyond the authority of the County Commission and is a direct attack on the voting process.

Thank you,  
Jacquelyn Kendall  
Kasson Township

Sent from my iPad