

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 3, 2011

The Honorable Arne Duncan  
U.S. Secretary of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius  
U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Sebelius:

As members of the Ohio congressional delegation, we are writing to offer our support for Ohio's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application.

Ohio's application meets the challenge to build a coordinated system of early learning and development that will ensure all of our state's children will enter kindergarten with the necessary skills to succeed in school and throughout life. The approach will create a new governance system for early learning in Ohio by establishing a single point of accountability, expanding and aligning content standards, implementing a comprehensive kindergarten readiness assessment, and measuring quality and outcomes. While the focus of the initiative is to improve early learning for the most vulnerable children, all populations from birth to age five will benefit from this comprehensive and outcomes-based approach to early childhood education.

Ohio's vision for early learning has gained the attention of the state's business leaders. They recognize the importance of ensuring our future workforce is prepared with the knowledge and skills to participate in the global economy. A recent study by the Ohio Business Roundtable found that on basic measures of early literacy, nearly 60 percent of Ohio children are not prepared to enter kindergarten and nearly 30 percent of economically disadvantaged students fail to graduate from high school.

In order for our education system to prepare children for the future, they must enter it ready to succeed. We strongly support Ohio's application for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant and encourage you to give it your fullest consideration.

Sincerely,



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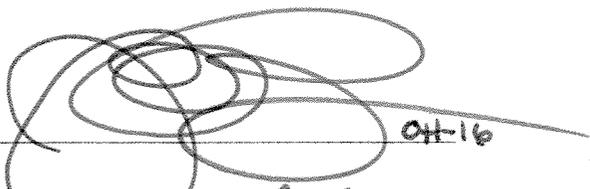
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Gen. Lamade

Sherrill Brown