Childcare at Metro?

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No matter which way you look at it, Metropolitan State University has one of the most diverse student populations in the entire Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system. The student population contains parents of all ages, and the difficulty of balancing school, work and childcare always remains constant. So why is it that Metro does not offer any level of childcare service?

In general, colleges that provide childcare will pursue one of three methods.

1.) Hire employees to run an on-campus daycare.

2.) Utilize an educational program, such as a Pre-K program, to provide on-campus daycare.

3.) Contract an outside daycare and give students a discount or free access.

The latter two options tend to be the most viable options, and they are almost exclusively used through the MnSCU system. Kelly Charpentier-Berg, who is a student at Metro, a mother of three, and a member of the MnSCU Board of Trustees, believes that the first option isn’t viable for Metro. According to her and previous Student Senate meeting minutes, liability insurance rates are simply too high to have a school-run daycare with independent staff.

After exploring and rejecting the school-run daycare option, the Student Senate came up with a potential solution: They would create a fund devoted to providing students with daycare vouchers. According to Student Senate president Amber Hamm, this would give parents some financial relief and grant them flexibility to use their preferred daycare.

The Senate has tried to get in touch with Metro’s Foundation Board in order to gain seed money for a fund, but according to Hamm, the board has not yet contacted the Senate to make plans to establish such a fund. While there are other potential options to pursue, Hamm claims that creating a fund “would be the most effective solution.”

When asked if we would see Metro-sponsored childcare within the year, Hamm simply replied, “We will work as hard as we possibly can trying to make it happen.”