**Sample Letter to the Editor**

Text, whiteboard

Description automatically generated

***In Brief. This template is offered as a guide to writing a Letter to the Editor about issues impacting young children and families such as access to child care. Be sure to personalize it by including your own story and experience. Check your local newspaper’s letter submission guidelines for word limits – most are only 200-300 words! For example, google your local newspaper, click on opinion or commentary, and check out the rules for the word length restriction and instructions to submit. Some newspapers have a web form. The easiest way to compose a letter to the editor is to draft it in a regular word document, edit it and make sure you comply with the word or character limit, and then cut & paste into the web form. Similar rules apply for Op-Eds – but generally, the word length is longer (e.g., there may be a limit of 200-300 words on an LTE but 600 words for an op-ed).***

If you would like help writing or submitting an LTE or if you are interested in submitting an Op-Ed to your local paper, please contact [info@earlylearnersd.org](mailto:info@earlylearnersd.org). We’re ready to help!

**SAMPLE Letter to the Editor**

Items that are highlighted are where you should add in your own information and must be changed.

With COVID and the state of the economy, this November is an important election. It will put in place an array of policymakers at all levels who will help shape economic recovery. For families with children, this means many important decisions that will lead to policies with long-lasting impact.

It is vital that our next set of policymakers who will steer us through 2021 and beyond will support policies that promote healthy child development. The earliest years of a child’s life shape all the rest. This is the period of time when brain development forms the foundation for all future learning (e.g., social, emotional, and cognitive development). We need elected officials who will strengthen South Dakota’s early childhood system to ensure that policies, programs, and support best promote children’s healthy development, early learning, and future success in school and in life.

There will be no economic recovery without working parents. And, working parents depend on child care. Not just a work support, child care is also an early learning setting for young children. As a [INSERT YOUR ROLE, ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERTISE, OR PERSONAL CONNECTION TO ISSUE], I am calling on 2020 candidates to share their plans to address access to child care for working families. Economic recovery depends on it. A child’s school readiness, school success, and future job pathway does as well. What’s your plan? Working parents of young children want to know.