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SENATE BILL 6293

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State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2012 Regular Session

By Senators Harper, McAuliffe, Shin, Rolfes, and Chase; by request of Department of Early Learning

Read first time 01/17/12. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to adopting early learning guidelines; and  
2 reenacting and amending RCW 43.215.020.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 43.215.020 and 2010 c 233 s 1, 2010 c 232 s 2, and  
5 2010 c 231 s 6 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

6 (1) The department of early learning is created as an executive  
7 branch agency. The department is vested with all powers and duties  
8 transferred to it under this chapter and such other powers and duties  
9 as may be authorized by law.

10 (2) The primary duties of the department are to implement state  
11 early learning policy and to coordinate, consolidate, and integrate  
12 child care and early learning programs in order to administer programs  
13 and funding as efficiently as possible. The department's duties  
14 include, but are not limited to, the following:

15 (a) To support both public and private sectors toward a  
16 comprehensive and collaborative system of early learning that serves  
17 parents, children, and providers and to encourage best practices in  
18 child care and early learning programs;

1 (b) To make early learning resources available to parents and  
2 caregivers;

3 (c) To carry out activities, including providing clear and easily  
4 accessible information about quality and improving the quality of early  
5 learning opportunities for young children, in cooperation with the  
6 nongovernmental private-public partnership;

7 (d) To administer child care and early learning programs;

8 (e) To serve as the state lead agency for Part C of the federal  
9 individuals with disabilities education act (IDEA);

10 (f) To standardize internal financial audits, oversight visits,  
11 performance benchmarks, and licensing criteria, so that programs can  
12 function in an integrated fashion;

13 (g) To support the implementation of the nongovernmental private-  
14 public partnership and cooperate with that partnership in pursuing its  
15 goals including providing data and support necessary for the successful  
16 work of the partnership;

17 (h) To work cooperatively and in coordination with the early  
18 learning council;

19 (i) To collaborate with the K-12 school system at the state and  
20 local levels to ensure appropriate connections and smooth transitions  
21 between early learning and K-12 programs;

22 (j) To develop and adopt rules for administration of the program of  
23 early learning established in RCW 43.215.141;

24 (k) To develop a comprehensive birth-to-three plan to provide  
25 education and support through a continuum of options including, but not  
26 limited to, services such as: Home visiting; quality incentives for  
27 infant and toddler child care subsidies; quality improvements for  
28 family home and center-based child care programs serving infants and  
29 toddlers; professional development; early literacy programs; and  
30 informal supports for family, friend, and neighbor caregivers; (~~and~~)

31 (l) To develop and make widely available early learning guidelines,  
32 in partnership with the office of the superintendent of public  
33 instruction and the nongovernmental private-public partnership, and to  
34 periodically review and revise the guidelines with a committee offering  
35 broad stakeholder representation; and

36 (m) Upon the development of an early learning information system,  
37 to make available to parents timely inspection and licensing action  
38 information through the internet and other means.

1           (3) The department's programs shall be designed in a way that  
2 respects and preserves the ability of parents and legal guardians to  
3 direct the education, development, and upbringing of their children,  
4 and that recognizes and honors cultural and linguistic diversity. The  
5 department shall include parents and legal guardians in the development  
6 of policies and program decisions affecting their children.

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