

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5715

As Reported by House Committee On:

Early Learning & Human Services
Education Appropriations & Oversight

Title: An act relating to adopting core competencies for early care and education professionals and child and youth development professionals.

Brief Description: Requiring adoption of core competencies for early care and education professionals and child and youth development professionals.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, Litzow, Harper and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Early Learning & Human Services: 2/16/12, 2/21/12 [DP];
Education Appropriations & Oversight: 2/23/12 [DP].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Early Learning to adopt core competencies for early care and education professionals and child and youth development professionals.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Roberts, Vice Chair; Walsh, Ranking Minority Member; Hope, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dickerson, Goodman, Johnson and Orwall.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Overstreet.

Staff: Megan Palchak (786-7120).

Background:

Professional Development Consortium.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In 2008 the Department of Early Learning (DEL) led a group of early learning experts and stakeholders, called the Professional Development Consortium (PDC), to create a comprehensive early learning professional development system in Washington for those who work with children birth through school age. In 2009 the Legislature passed House Bill 1943, which directed the PDC to develop recommendations for a statewide system of preparation and professional development for the early learning workforce. The December 2010 report provides recommendations to build policy support, build organizational capacity, and advance professional development of staff in early learning settings. One of the recommendations is to adopt the Washington State Core Competencies for Early Care and Education, which addresses caregivers and teachers working with children birth to age 8.

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program.

In 1985 Washington established the state-funded Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), a comprehensive whole child, family-focused, preschool program designed to help low-income and at-risk children and their families succeed in school and life. The DEL administers the ECEAP, and directly contracts with service providers.

Quality Rating and Improvement System.

In 2007 the Legislature directed the DEL to design and implement a voluntary quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). Washington's QRIS model, is designed to support licensed child care providers in improving the quality of child care they offer children and families. Through the QRIS, participating providers will be offered a variety of professional development opportunities. The DEL and Thrive by Five Washington field tested the system in communities around the state, and are in the process of bringing the system to scale using federal Race to the Top grant funds.

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers.

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) provides services to children from birth to age 3 who have disabilities and/or developmental delays. Eligible infants and toddlers and their families are entitled to individualized, quality early intervention services in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, part C. The DEL houses ESIT.

Summary of Bill:

The DEL must adopt core competencies for early care and education professionals and child and youth development professionals and develop an implementation plan by December 31, 2012. The purpose of the core competencies is to serve as a foundation for what early care and education professionals and child and youth development professionals need to know and do to provide quality care for children. The DEL must incorporate the core competencies into all appropriate professional development opportunities including, but not limited to, QRIS, the ECEAP, child care licensing, and ESIT. The core competencies must be reviewed and updated every five years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Early learning professional development supports early childhood development and learning. Professionals in the field support this bill. The inclusion of youth development professionals into the bill is important since learning and maturing happens on a continuum. The core competencies were developed by a consortium of professionals, and can be used in a number of ways, including in designing higher education courses, designing professional development training opportunities, or serving as the basis of DEL awards. These core competencies need to be implemented.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Kohl-Wells, prime sponsor; and Amy Blondin, Department of Early Learning.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS & OVERSIGHT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Probst, Vice Chair; Anderson, Ranking Minority Member; Dammeier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dahlquist, Hansen, Hope, Maxwell, Orwall, Pollet, Reykdal, Santos, Seaquist and Sells.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Fagan, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Nealey and Short.

Staff: Wendy Polzin (786-7137).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Education Appropriations & Oversight Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Early Learning & Human Services:

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Earlier this session, this committee heard a bill related to early learning guidelines, or guidelines for what children should be able to do, and when. This bill is for child care professionals, and provides benchmarks and competencies for their skills. The Department of Early Learning partnered with School's Out Washington to develop these competencies. The core competencies must be reviewed every five years, and will be updated based on new research and information. This body of work could be used by institutions of higher education when developing child care training programs.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Amy Blondin, Department of Early Learning.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.