

2SHB 3168 - S COMM AMD

By Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

OUT OF ORDER 03/07/2008

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

4 (1) The state is committed to providing early learning services to
5 all eligible economically disadvantaged families;

6 (2) Research has demonstrated that comprehensive services,
7 including family support services designed to meet the early education
8 needs of low-income and at-risk children, are successful in improving
9 school readiness, reducing the risk of juvenile delinquency and
10 incarceration, and reducing reliance on public assistance among these
11 children later in life;

12 (3) The state's early childhood education and assistance program
13 was originally established to serve as the state counterpart to the
14 federal head start program. When it was created, it aligned with the
15 federal program in both standards and funding levels;

16 (4) The state early childhood education and assistance program has
17 served an important role in providing comprehensive services to low-
18 income children. However, since it was first created, per-child
19 funding levels for the state program have not kept pace with funding
20 levels for the federal program. This has resulted in fewer service
21 hours for children and less intensive services for families;

22 (5) Aligning performance standards and funding levels for the state
23 early childhood education and assistance program with federal head
24 start will improve the quality of state-supported early learning
25 programs. Additionally, it will improve school readiness through
26 measures, such as a forty percent increase in class time, and it will
27 achieve administrative efficiencies and make state-supported services
28 more easily recognizable and accessible to parents and families
29 eligible for these programs; and

1 (6) Providing quality early learning services for children from
2 birth to age three is the most cost-effective investment society can
3 make. Additionally, the state can use the demonstrated results from
4 the federal early head start program as an example to expand its reach
5 of services already provided to three and four-year old children to
6 children in the critical birth to three years age category.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The department shall develop a proposal
8 for how to implement a statewide Washington head start program. To the
9 extent possible while maintaining quality standards, the program should
10 align the state early childhood education and assistance program with
11 federal head start program eligibility criteria, guidelines,
12 performance standards, and methods/processes for ensuring continuous
13 improvement in program quality. In this proposal, the department shall
14 make recommendations that:

15 (a) Identify federal head start program guidelines, performance
16 measures and standards, or other requirements for which state
17 flexibility would be recommended. This shall include an analysis of
18 how state flexibility may impact outcomes for children and how that
19 flexibility might deviate from outcomes associated with the federal
20 standards. Areas to be examined must include, but are not limited to,
21 transportation requirements, service hour configurations, delivery
22 methods, and impact on rural programs;

23 (b) Provide comparative data regarding child performance,
24 readiness, and educational outcomes for Washington's existing head
25 start and early childhood education and assistance programs;

26 (c) Determine the alignment between head start standards and the
27 recommendations of Washington learns;

28 (d) Identify any change in the state early childhood education and
29 assistance program laws that would be required to implement a
30 Washington head start program;

31 (e) Identify additional resources needed to meet federal guidelines
32 and standards. Areas to be examined must include, but are not limited
33 to: Per-child funding levels, professional development and training
34 needs, facilities needs, and technical assistance;

35 (f) Identify state early childhood education and assistance
36 programs that offer full-day, full-year services to children, and what

1 steps would need to be taken to transition these programs into a
2 Washington head start program;

3 (g) Provide steps for phasing-in a Washington head start program;

4 (h) To the extent that state funds are provided for this purpose,
5 identify and report on the implementation of state-supported pilot
6 programs modeled on the federal early head start program.
7 Recommendations must include a timeline, strategy, and funding needs to
8 implement a statewide, state-supported early head start program that
9 will be a part of the Washington head start program; and

10 (i) Provide a process for the department to work with the regional
11 office of federal head start to identify any exceptions or waivers
12 needed to provide flexibility and maintain high quality standards.

13 (2) In developing its recommendations for this proposal, the
14 department shall seek, where appropriate and available, training or
15 technical assistance from the appropriate regional office of federal
16 head start in order to maximize nonstate resources that might be
17 available for the consultative work and research involved with
18 developing this proposal. The department also shall consult with and
19 solicit input from:

20 (a) State early childhood education and assistance program
21 providers on Indian reservations and across the state, including
22 providers who operate solely state-supported programs;

23 (b) Tribal governments operating head start programs and early head
24 start programs in the state to ensure that the needs of Indian and
25 Alaskan native children and their families are incorporated into the
26 recommendations of the proposal, especially as they pertain to
27 standards or guidelines around language acquisition, school readiness,
28 availability and need for services among Indian and Alaskan native
29 children and their families, and curriculum development; and

30 (c) Providers operating migrant and seasonal head start programs in
31 the state in order to address the needs of the children of migrant and
32 seasonal farmworker families.

33 (3) The department shall make recommendations on how to
34 periodically review the standards and guidelines of the Washington head
35 start program, including how to incorporate the latest research and
36 information on early childhood development as well as any new
37 innovations that may further improve outcomes to low-income children
38 and their families.

1 (4) The department shall deliver its report to the governor and
2 legislature by December 1, 2008.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Sections 1 and 2 of this act are each added
4 to chapter 43.215 RCW.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** If specific funding for the purposes of this
6 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by
7 June 30, 2008, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and
8 void."

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9 On page 1, line 2 of the title, after "program;" insert "adding new
10 sections to chapter 43.215 RCW; and creating a new section."

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