

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6067

As of January 21, 2014

Title: An act relating to the integration of early learning programs.

Brief Description: Requiring the department of early learning to adopt a single set of licensing standards for child care and the early childhood education and assistance program.

Sponsors: Senators Billig, Litzow, Frockt and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/17/14.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Katherine Taylor (786-7434)

Background: The Department of Early Learning (DEL) was created in 2006. DEL oversees many programs and services, including but not limited to licensing and monitoring of family home child care facilities and child care centers, the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), Early Support for Infants and Toddlers Program, home visiting services, Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills, Medicaid Treatment Child Care, Early Learning Advisory Council, and Early Achievers, Washington's quality rating and improvement system.

Early Achievers is a free, voluntary program that provides training, technical assistance, consultation, coaching, and financial incentives to licensed child care facilities, tribal and military-certified programs, and state and federally funded preschool programs such as ECEAP and Head Start. Early Achievers participants are evaluated and assigned a rating from one to five. Early Achievers is funded through the federal Child Care and Development Fund grant and a federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

ECEAP is Washington's pre-kindergarten program for three to four-year-old children. Children are eligible for ECEAP in their two years before kindergarten if they are from families with an annual income at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty level—\$25,905 for a family of four, qualify for school district special education services, or have developmental or environmental risk factors that could affect school success. Since 1985, ECEAP has focused on providing nutrition, health, education, and family support services.

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.

Summary of Bill: No later than July 1, 2015, DEL must adopt a single set of licensing standards for child care and ECEAP. The new licensing standards must:

- use the Early Achievers program as a foundational framework and eliminate additional burdensome regulations for providers who demonstrate higher levels of quality care;
- take into account the separate needs of family care providers and child care centers; and
- ensure for the continued health and safety of child care settings.

This section expires July 1, 2016.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: We need to continue to remove barriers and improve access to education and child care options. We must invest in high quality early education. We need to prepare kids to learn. These bills provide a comprehensive package. The bills focus on outcomes, build in clear standards, focus on stability and continuity, and increase meaningful collaboration. We need to invest in our children. It is a moral imperative to change these kids' lives. We want Washington to be the best place to raise kids. This is a great opportunity. We need to have consistent standards.

OTHER: We need to iron out details. We want to get rid of duplicative standards. We want to streamline standards.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Parasa Chanramy, Stand for Children; Frank Ordway, League of Education Voters.

OTHER: Lani Todd, Service Employees International Union 925.