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**SENATE BILL 5742**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Palumbo, Frockt, Rolfes, Kuderer, and Saldaña

AN ACT Relating to working connections child care eligibility for applicants or consumers enrolled in programs that will lead to a baccalaureate degree; and amending RCW 43.215.135.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 43.215.135 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 7 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department shall establish and implement policies in the working connections child care program to promote stability and quality of care for children from low-income households. These policies shall focus on supporting school readiness for young learners. Policies for the expenditure of funds constituting the working connections child care program must be consistent with the outcome measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 and the standards established in this section intended to promote stability, quality, and continuity of early care and education programming.

(2) As recommended by Public Law 113-186, authorizations for the working connections child care subsidy shall be effective for twelve months beginning July 1, 2016, unless an earlier date is provided in the omnibus appropriations act.

(3) Existing child care providers serving nonschool-age children and receiving state subsidy payments must complete the following requirements to be eligible for a state subsidy under this section:

(a) Enroll in the early achievers program by August 1, 2016;

(b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program by August 1, 2017; and

(c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program by December 31, 2019. If a child care provider rates below a level 3 by December 31, 2019, the provider must complete remedial activities with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher no later than June 30, 2020.

(4) Effective July 1, 2016, a new child care provider serving nonschool-age children and receiving state subsidy payments must complete the following activities to be eligible to receive a state subsidy under this section:

(a) Enroll in the early achievers program within thirty days of receiving the initial state subsidy payment;

(b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program within twelve months of enrollment; and

(c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program within thirty months of enrollment. If a child care provider rates below a level 3 within thirty months from enrollment into the early achievers program, the provider must complete remedial activities with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher within six months of beginning remedial activities.

(5) If a child care provider does not rate at a level 3 or higher following the remedial period, the provider is no longer eligible to receive state subsidy under this section.

(6) If a child care provider serving nonschool-age children and receiving state subsidy payments has successfully completed all level 2 activities and is waiting to be rated by the deadline provided in this section, the provider may continue to receive a state subsidy pending the successful completion of the level 3 rating activity.

(7) The department shall implement tiered reimbursement for early achievers program participants in the working connections child care program rating at level 3, 4, or 5.

(8) The department shall account for a child care copayment collected by the provider from the family for each contracted slot and establish the copayment fee by rule.

(9) The department shall establish and implement policies in the working connections child care program to allow eligibility for an applicant or consumer not participating in the WorkFirst program who is enrolled in a program that will lead to a baccalaureate degree offered by an institution of higher education that receives a state need grant.

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