

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6297

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Human Services & Early Learning

**Title:** An act relating to recognizing the experience of existing early learning providers to meet educational requirements.

**Brief Description:** Recognizing the experience of existing early learning providers to meet educational requirements.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Padden, Wellman, Wagoner, Wilson, C., Hawkins, Billig and Zeiger).

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Human Services & Early Learning: 2/25/20, 2/26/20 [DPA].

#### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by Committee)

- Allows certain early learning providers to meet education requirements through experience-based demonstrated competence.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & EARLY LEARNING

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Callan, Vice Chair; Frame, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Eslick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Goodman, Griffey, Kilduff, Klippert, Lovick and Ortiz-Self.

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

#### Background:

Rules for child care licensing require early learning providers to meet certain education requirements, or their equivalent, by August 2024, or within five to seven years of the person's date of hire or promotion, depending on the position.

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*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.*

Most positions will require a certificate in Early Childhood Education (ECE), which may be earned at a community or technical college. An ECE certificate may be earned as initial, short, or full state certificate, and the level of the certificate required depends on the staff position.

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**Summary of Amended Bill:**

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) must allow early learning providers who are required to have an ECE initial or short certificate, or both, the option of meeting the certificate requirement through experience-based demonstrated competence (EBDC).

Contingent upon the passage of Substitute House Bill 2556, a provider is eligible to demonstrate his or her competence if the provider has:

1. been employed by a licensed child care center or family home for seven years by August 1, 2026; and
2. completed all training that was required during the seven years, including in-service requirements and health and safety training.

The EBDC is portable between facilities. The DCYF must review applications for EBDC on a quarterly basis. This section expires on December 31, 2027.

Conforming Amendment.

If Substitute House Bill 2556 is not enacted by the effective date of the bill, the date by which a provider must have been employed by a licensed child care center or family home for seven years is August 1, 2024, instead of August 1, 2026, and the section expires on December 31, 2025, instead of December 31, 2027.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:**

The amended bill:

- changes the date by which a provider must have been employed by a licensed child care center or home, or both, for a total of seven years from August 1, 2024, to August 1, 2026, contingent upon passage of Substitute House Bill 2556; and
- adds expiration dates.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Amended Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section 1, relating to conforming amendments, which takes effect only if Substitute House Bill 2556 is enacted; and section 2, relating to

conforming amendments, which takes effect only if Substitute House Bill 2556 is not enacted.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) There is a shortage of early learning providers and child care centers, and licensed family homes are closing. The requirement for a college degree should be able to be met through experience. This policy is important to put into statute to protect child care workers and is a critical part of solving the child care crisis in Washington. Clarity should be added to the phrase "competency demonstration" which may not align to the intent of the bill. The waiver should be changed to apply to staff with three years instead of seven years of experience. The language should reflect that the determination goes with the individual, not with the facility. The DCYF applies a provider's experience in his or her lowest level position held in the past seven years. A more reasonable measure would be to use the longest-held position. This bill still falls short of honoring the full experience of the current workforce.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Padden, prime sponsor; Stephanie Smith, Washington Childcare Centers Association; and Suzie Hanson, Washington Federation of Independent Schools.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.