

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1866

As Passed Senate, April 12, 2019

Title: An act relating to professional development requirements for child day care centers.

Brief Description: Concerning professional development requirements for child day care centers.

Sponsors: Representatives Dent, Chapman, Corry, Griffey, Dolan, Reeves and Appleton.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/05/19, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/22/19, 4/01/19 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed Senate: 4/12/19, 47-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to allow child day care centers until at least August 1, 2024, to comply with any changes made to professional development requirements.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Holy, Hunt, McCoy, Mullet, Padden, Pedersen, Salomon and Wagoner.

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Single Set of Licensing Standards. The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) regulates child care licensing and must adopt and update core competencies for early care and education professionals. In 2015, the Legislature directed the Department of Early Learning, which is now DCYF, to produce a single set of licensing standards for child care, including family home and center providers. The licensing standards must:

- provide minimum health and safety standards for child care and preschool programs;
- rely on the standards established in the Early Achievers program to address quality issues;

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- take into account the separate needs of family care providers and child care centers; and
- promote the continued safety of child care settings.

DCYF has adopted new rules, which will be effective August 1, 2019.

Staff Qualifications. Effective August 1, 2019, new rules will change staff qualifications for various positions. For example, center directors and assistant directors must complete a state certificate or equivalent within five years from August 1, 2019. Individuals hired or promoted into these positions after the effective date must have the state certificate or equivalent at the time of hire.

Lead teachers in family homes and centers must have an initial certificate or equivalent within five years or five years from being employed or promoted into these positions. Lead teachers in centers must progress towards a short certificate or equivalent. They must receive the short certificate within two years of receiving the initial certificate or seven years from being employed or promoted into these positions.

Under the new rules, an initial certificate is 12 quarter credits and covers foundational content for early learning professionals. The short certificate is the initial certificate plus eight quarter credits. The state certificate is the short certificate plus 27 quarter credits and is the benchmark for core competencies and prepares for the next step, which is an associate's degree in early childhood education.

Summary of Bill: DCYF must allow all child day care centers until at least August 1, 2024, to comply with any changes made to the professional development requirements.

Professional development means any professional credentials including academic degrees, coursework, or certificates, attendance at conferences, informal learning, or other education required for licensure by DCYF.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Professional development requirements are being piled on child care providers when they already have many other responsibilities. The child care workforce industry is struggling, and providers are leaving the business because of additional requirements. Child care is not affordable or accessible. This bill is based on feedback heard in the Joint Select Committee on Early Achievers, and it extends the deadline for child care providers to meet professional development requirements. Education and professional development are important, but providers, especially child care centers, need time to complete it. Child care centers are already having a difficult time filling positions, and this will become more difficult once these requirements are in place.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Tom Dent, Prime Sponsor; Suzie Hanson, Washington Federation of Independent Schools; Jim Murphy, Three Rivers Christian School, Director of Early Learning Center; Amber McPhee Millard, Washington Childcare Centers Association; Julie Schroath, Washington Childcare Centers Association; Tina Kendall, Washington Childcare Centers Association; Lois Martin, Washington Childcare Centers Association; Tom Emery, Washington Childcare Centers Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.