AN ACT Relating to expanding accessible, affordable child care
and early childhood development programs; amending RCW 43.88.055,
43.216.075, 43.216.136, 43.216.505, 43.216.512, 43.216.556,
43.216.749, 43.216.090, 43.216.578, 43.216.710, and 43.216.514;
reenacting and amending RCW 43.216.010, 28B.50.248, 43.84.092,
43.84.092, and 43.84.092; adding new sections to chapter 43.216 RCW;
adding a new section to chapter 43.330 RCW; creating new sections;
repealing RCW 43.216.1365; providing effective dates; providing
expiration dates; and declaring an emergency.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. SHORT TITLE. This act may be known and
cited as the fair start for kids act.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. INTENT. (1) The legislature finds that
high quality child care and early learning is critical to a child's
success in school and life. The legislature recognizes that COVID-19
has devastated the existing child care industry, making it unduly
burdensome for families to find care. The legislature recognizes that
without immediate action to support child care providers, and without
expanded access to affordable child care, especially infant and
school-age care, parents will not be able to return to work while
children lose valuable learning opportunities. In order to bolster a full economic recovery, the legislature finds that every child deserves a fair start.

(2) The legislature finds that access to affordable child care increases economic growth and labor force participation. The legislature further finds that an affordable, accessible system of high quality child care is necessary to the health of Washington's economy because employers benefit when parents have safe, stable, and appropriate care for their children. The legislature recognizes that too many working parents are forced to reduce their hours, decline promotional opportunities, or leave the workforce completely due to a lack of affordable and appropriate child care. The legislature finds that a report commissioned by the department of commerce in 2019 found that working parents in Washington forego $14,000,000,000 each year directly due to child care scarcity. The legislature recognizes that this disproportionally impacts women in the workforce and that in September 2020 alone, 78,000 men left the workforce, compared to 600,000 women.

(3) The legislature finds that the scarcity of child care, exacerbated by COVID-19, most significantly impacts families furthest from opportunity. The legislature recognizes that there are additional barriers to accessing this foundational support for immigrant communities and families whose first language is not English, families who have children with disabilities, rural communities, or other child care deserts. The legislature recognizes that high quality, inclusive child care and early learning programs have been shown to reduce the opportunity gap for low-income children and black, indigenous, and children of color while consistently improving outcomes for all children both inside and outside of the classroom.

(4) The legislature finds that without access to comprehensive, high quality prenatal to five services, children often enter kindergarten without the social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language skills they need to be successful and fall behind their peers, facing compounding developmental challenges throughout their K-12 education. The legislature finds that cascading impacts of inaccessible child care and early learning programs create systemic barriers for children and their families that result in higher special education needs, greater likelihood of needing to repeat grades, increased child welfare and juvenile justice involvement,
reduced high school graduation rates, limited postsecondary education attainment, and greater barriers to employment in adulthood.

(5) The legislature finds the vast majority of child care providers are small businesses and nonprofit organizations. In addition to adhering to federal, state, and local regulations to ensure healthy and safe environments for children, the legislature recognizes that child care providers must ensure their employees are adequately compensated and supported. However, the legislature acknowledges that the reduced staffing ratios for health and safety, additional cost of personal protective equipment and extra cleaning supplies, increased use of substitutes needed during COVID-19-related absences, and increased technology demands during school closures from the pandemic are further straining the viability of the child care business model in Washington state.

(6) The legislature finds that the health and stability of the early learning workforce is pivotal to any expansion of child care in Washington state. The legislature recognizes that the child care workforce, predominantly comprised of women of color, is structurally afflicted by low wages, limited or no health care, and a severe lack of retirement benefits. The legislature further recognizes that the threat of COVID-19 compounds these underlying issues, forcing providers to navigate increased stress, anxiety, and behavioral issues all while risking their lives to care for children. The legislature recognizes that families, friends, and neighbors who provide care are a critical component of the child care system. The legislature finds that child care workers are essential and deserve to be compensated and benefited accordingly.

(7) Therefore, the legislature resolves to respond to the COVID-19 crisis by first stabilizing the child care industry and then expanding access to a comprehensive continuum of high quality early childhood development programs, including infant and school-age child care, preschool, parent and family supports, and prenatal to three services. The legislature recognizes this continuum as critical to meeting different families' needs and offering every child in Washington access to a fair start.

(8) The legislature recognizes the strengths that multilingual, diverse early learning providers and caregivers contribute to early learning across the state. Therefore, the legislature intends to expand language access services to create an inclusive early learning system that specifically supports underserved providers.
The legislature intends to expand eligibility for existing child care and preschool programs to increase access. The legislature recognizes that expansion must be accompanied by an investment to make child care more affordable. Therefore, the legislature intends to eliminate copayments for low-income families and limit copayments for any family on subsidy to no more than seven percent of their income.

The legislature further intends to stabilize, support, and grow the diverse early learning workforce by funding living wages and affordable health benefits while providing training, infant and early childhood mental health consultation, shared business services, and a variety of other supports that recognize the critical role that early learning providers serve for all Washington children.

The legislature intends to accelerate Washington's economic recovery from the devastating impacts of COVID-19 by dramatically expanding access to affordable, high quality child care and preschool, in order to get parents back to work and provide every child with a fair start.

PART I

INVESTING IN CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING

NEW SECTION. Sec. 101. FAIR START FOR KIDS ACCOUNT. (1) The fair start for kids account is created in the state treasury. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation.

(2) Expenditures from the account may be used only for child care and early learning purposes.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 102. FAIR START FOR KIDS SPENDING GOALS AND STRATEGIES. The spending goals and strategies for the fair start for kids account created under section 101 of this act include, but are not limited to:

(1) Increasing child care subsidy rates, with the goal of moving toward the full cost of providing high quality child care;

(2) Expanding health care coverage through state sponsorship of child care workers on the Washington health benefit exchange and providing consumer assistance through navigators, as well as any other expansions of access to affordable health care for staff in child care centers, family home providers, outdoor nature-based care, and early childhood education and assistance program staff;
(3) Increasing child care and early learning providers' compensation;

(4) Implementing the provisions of collective bargaining agreements for family child care providers negotiated pursuant to RCW 41.56.028;

(5) Supporting and expanding access to the early childhood education and assistance program to reach state-funded entitlement required in RCW 43.216.556;

(6) Making child care affordable for families;

(7) Providing resources and supports for family, friend, and neighbor caregivers that better reflect the full cost of care;

(8) Providing professional development opportunities for child care and early learning providers;

(9) Delivering infant and early childhood mental health consultation services;

(10) Establishing prekindergarten through third grade systems coordinators at educational service districts;

(11) Supporting youth development programs serving children and youth ages birth through 12 including, but not limited to, expanded learning opportunities, mentoring, school-age child care, and wraparound supports or integrated student supports;

(12) Awarding grants and loans through the early learning facilities grant and loan program established under chapter 43.31 RCW;

(13) Paying enhanced rates for special rate designations in the working connections child care programs, early childhood education and assistance programs, and birth to three early childhood education and assistance programs including designations established in sections 302, 304, 305, and 404 of this act;

(14) Supporting costs for transparent data collection and information technology systems operated by the department and department contractors, in particular, to ensure equitable systemic service provision and outcomes;

(15) Providing access to learning technology;

(16) Providing child care resource and referral services;

(17) Conducting quality rating and improvement system activities through the early achievers program;

(18) Expanding prenatal to three services and supports, including the birth to three early childhood education and assistance program
and the in-home parent skill-based programs established in RCW 43.216.130;

(19) Building and delivering a family resource and referral linkage system;

(20) Administering comprehensive shared services hubs to allow the ongoing pooling and shared use of services by licensed or certified child care centers and family home providers;

(21) Training department staff to ensure consistent and equitable application of child care licensing and quality standards across the state including antibias and antiracist training;

(22) Providing incentives for child care providers to become licensed; and

(23) Recognizing the benefits of the diverse workforce and facilitating communication in the three most commonly spoken languages by developing a language access plan that centers on equity and access for immigrants, multilingual providers, caregivers, and families.

Sec. 103. RCW 43.88.055 and 2020 c 218 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The legislature must adopt a four-year balanced budget as follows:

(a) Beginning in the 2013-2015 fiscal biennium, the legislature shall enact a balanced omnibus operating appropriations bill that leaves, in total, a positive ending fund balance in the general fund and related funds.

(b) Beginning in the 2013-2015 fiscal biennium, the projected maintenance level of the omnibus appropriations bill enacted by the legislature shall not exceed the available fiscal resources for the next ensuing fiscal biennium.

(2) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Available fiscal resources" means the beginning general fund and related fund balances and any fiscal resources estimated for the general fund and related funds, adjusted for enacted legislation, and with forecasted revenues adjusted to the greater of (i) the official general fund and related funds revenue forecast for the ensuing biennium, or (ii) the official general fund and related funds forecast for the second fiscal year of the current fiscal biennium, increased by 4.5 percent for each fiscal year of the ensuing biennium;
(b) "Projected maintenance level" means estimated appropriations necessary to maintain the continuing costs of program and service levels either funded in that appropriations bill or mandated by other state or federal law, and the amount of any general fund moneys projected to be transferred to the budget stabilization account pursuant to Article VII, section 12 of the state Constitution;

(c) "Related funds," as used in this section, means the Washington opportunity pathways account, the workforce education investment account, the fair start for kids account, and the education legacy trust account.

(3) Subsection (1)(a) and (b) of this section does not apply to an appropriations bill that makes net reductions in general fund and related funds appropriations and is enacted between July 1st and February 15th of any fiscal year.

(4) Subsection (1)(b) of this section does not apply in a fiscal biennium in which money is appropriated from the budget stabilization account pursuant to Article VII, section 12(d)(ii) of the state Constitution.

Sec. 104. RCW 43.216.075 and 2020 c 262 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

INVESTMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT. (1) The early learning advisory council is established to advise the department on statewide early learning issues that contribute to the ongoing efforts of building a comprehensive system of quality early learning programs and services for Washington's young children and families.

(2) The council shall work in conjunction with the department to

(a) Assist in policy development and implementation that promotes alignment of private and public sector actions, objectives, and resources, with the overall goal of promoting school readiness for all children;

(b) Provide recommendations annually to the governor and the legislature, beginning August 31, 2022, regarding the phased implementation of strategies and priorities identified in section 102 of this act, recognizing that system capacity must be developed and revenue expanded in order to achieve the stated goal in subsection (1) of this section;
(c) Maintain a focus on racial equity and inclusion in order to
dismantle systemic racism at its core and contribute to statewide
efforts to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty;

(d) Maintain a focus on inclusionary practices for children with
disabilities;

(e) Partner with nonprofit organizations to collect and analyze
data and measure progress; and

(f) Assist the department in monitoring and ensuring that the
investments funded by the fair start for kids account created in
section 101 of this act are designed to support the following
objectives:

   (i) Advance racial equity and strengthen families by recognizing
and responding to the growing diversity of our state's population;

   (ii) Promote access to affordable, high quality child care and
early learning opportunities for all families, paying particular
attention to the needs of rural and other underserved communities;

   (iii) Promote kindergarten readiness by enhancing child
development, including development of social-emotional skills, and
eliminating exclusionary admissions practices and disproportionate
removals in child care and early learning programs; and

   (iv) Contribute to efforts to strengthen and grow our state's
economy by supporting working parents as well as stabilizing and
supporting the child care and early learning workforce.

(3) In collaboration with the council, the department shall
consult with its advisory groups and other interested stakeholders
and shall submit a biennial report to the governor and legislature
describing how the investments funded by the fair start for kids act
have impacted the policy objectives stated in subsection (2)(f) of
this section. The first report under this section is due September
15, 2023. The council shall include diverse, statewide representation
from public, nonprofit, and for-profit entities. Its membership shall
include critical partners in service delivery and reflect regional,
racial, and cultural diversity to adequately represent the interests of all children and families in the state.

(4) Councilmembers shall serve two-year terms. However, to
stagger the terms of the council, the initial appointments for twelve
of the members shall be for one year. Once the initial one-year to
two-year terms expire, all subsequent terms shall be for two years,
with the terms expiring on June 30th of the applicable year. The
terms shall be staggered in such a way that, where possible, the
terms of members representing a specific group do not expire simultaneously.

(5) The council shall consist of members essential to coordinating services statewide prenatal through age five, as follows:

(a) In addition to being staffed and supported by the department, the governor shall appoint one representative from each of the following: the department of commerce and the department of health((the student achievement council, and the state board for community and technical colleges));

(b) One representative from the student achievement council, to be appointed by the student achievement council;

(c) The military spouse liaison created within the department of veterans affairs under RCW 43.60A.245;

(d) One representative from the state board for community and technical colleges, to be appointed by the state board for community and technical colleges;

(e) One representative from the office of the superintendent of public instruction, to be appointed by the superintendent of public instruction;

((c) The governor shall appoint leaders in early childhood education to represent critical service delivery and support sectors, with at least one individual representing each of the following:

(i) The head start state collaboration office director or the director’s designee;

(ii) A representative of a head start, early head start, or migrant/seasonal head start program;

(iii) A representative of a local education agency;

(iv) A representative of the state agency responsible for programs under section 619 or part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

(v) A representative of the early childhood education and assistance program;

(vi) A representative of licensed family day care providers;

(vii) A representative of child care centers; and

(viii) A representative from the home visiting advisory committee established in RCW 43.216.130;

(d))) (f) Two members of the house of representatives, one from each caucus, to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and two members of the senate, one from each caucus,
to be appointed by the majority leader in the senate and the minority
leader in the senate;

((e)) (g) Two parents, one of whom serves on the department's
parent advisory group, to be appointed by the (governor) parent
advisory group;

((f)) (h) One representative of the private-public partnership
created in RCW 43.216.065, to be appointed by the partnership board;

((g)) (i) One representative from the developmental
disabilities community representing children and families involved in
part C of the federal individuals with disabilities education act and
one representative from the developmental disabilities community
representing children and families involved in part B of the federal
individuals with disabilities education act;

((h)) (j) Two representatives from early learning regional
coalitions;

((i) Representatives)) (k) Up to five representatives of
underserved communities who have a special expertise or interest in
high quality early learning, one to be appointed by each of the
following commissions:

(i) The Washington state commission on Asian Pacific American
affairs established under chapter 43.117 RCW;

(ii) The Washington state commission on African American affairs
established under chapter 43.113 RCW; ((and))

(iii) The Washington state commission on Hispanic affairs
established under chapter 43.115 RCW;

(iv) The Washington state women's commission established under
chapter 43.119 RCW; and

(v) The Washington state office of equity established under
chapter 43.06D RCW;

((j)) (l) Two representatives designated by sovereign tribal
governments, one of whom must be a representative of a tribal early
childhood education assistance program or head start program;

((k)) (m) One representative from the Washington federation of
independent schools;

((l)) (n) One representative from the Washington library
association; ((and

(m)) (o) One representative from a statewide advocacy coalition
of organizations that focuses on early learning;
(p) One representative from an association representing statewide business interests, to be appointed by the association and one representative from a regional business coalition;
(q) One representative of an advocacy organization for immigrants and refugees;
(r) One representative of an organization advocating for expanded learning opportunities and school-age child care programs;
(s) One representative from the largest union representing child care providers;
(t) A representative of a head start, early head start, or migrant and seasonal head start program, to be appointed by the head start collaboration office;
(u) A representative of educational service districts, to be appointed by a statewide association of educational service district board members;
(v) A provider responsible for programs under section 619 of the federal individuals with disabilities education act, to be appointed by the superintendent of public instruction;
(w) A representative of the state agency responsible for part C of the federal individuals with disabilities education act, to be appointed by the department;
(x) A representative of the early childhood education and assistance program, to be appointed by an association representing early childhood education and assistance programs;
(y) A representative of licensed family home providers, to be appointed by the largest union representing child care providers;
(z) A representative of child care centers, to be appointed by an association representing child care centers;
(aa) A representative from the home visiting advisory committee established in RCW 43.216.130, to be appointed by the committee;
(bb) An infant or early childhood mental health expert, to be appointed by the Barnard center for infant and early childhood mental health at the University of Washington;
(cc) A family, friend, and neighbor caregiver, to be appointed by the largest union representing child care providers;
(dd) A representative from prenatal to three services;
(ee) A pediatrician, to be appointed by the state chapter of the American academy of pediatrics; and
(ff) A representative of the statewide child care resource and referral organization, to be appointed by the statewide child care resource and referral organization.

(6) The council shall be cochaired by two members, to be elected by the council for two-year terms and not more than one cochair may represent a state agency.

(7) At the direction of the cochairs, the council may convene advisory groups, such as a parent caucus, to evaluate specific issues and report related findings and recommendations to the full council.

(8) The council shall appoint two members and stakeholders with expertise in early learning to sit on the technical working group created in section 2, chapter 234, Laws of 2010.

((8)) (9) Each member of the board shall be compensated in accordance with RCW 43.03.240 and reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of the board in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

((9)) (10)(a) The council shall convene an early achievers review subcommittee to provide feedback and guidance on strategies to improve the quality of instruction and environment for early learning and provide input and recommendations on the implementation and refinement of the early achievers program. The subcommittee shall at a minimum provide feedback and guidance to the department and the council on the following:

(i) Adequacy of data collection procedures;

(ii) Coaching and technical assistance standards;

(iii) Progress in reducing barriers to participation for low-income providers and providers from diverse cultural backgrounds, including a review of the early achievers program's rating tools, quality standard areas, and components, and how they are applied;

(iv) Strategies in response to data on the effectiveness of early achievers program standards in relation to providers and children from diverse cultural backgrounds;

(v) Status of the life circumstance exemption protocols; ((and))

(vi) Analysis of early achievers program data trends; and

(vii) Other relevant early learning data including progress in serving students with disabilities ages birth to five and least restrictive environment data.

(b) The subcommittee must include consideration of cultural linguistic responsiveness when analyzing the areas for review required by (a) of this subsection.
(c) The subcommittee shall include representatives from child care centers, family child care, the early childhood education and assistance program, contractors for early achievers program technical assistance and coaching, tribal governments, the organization responsible for conducting early achievers program ratings, and parents of children participating in early learning programs, including working connections child care and early childhood education and assistance programs. The subcommittee shall include representatives from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

(11) The council shall convene a temporary licensing subcommittee to provide feedback and recommendations on improvement to the statewide licensing process. The subcommittee shall examine strategies to increase the number of licensed child care providers in the state. The subcommittee shall develop model policies for licensed child care providers to implement licensing standards including, but not limited to, completing the child care and early learning licensing guidebook, to be made available to support providers with compliance. The subcommittee shall also develop recommendations regarding incentives and financial supports to help prospective providers navigate the licensing process. The subcommittee shall provide feedback and recommendations pursuant to this subsection by December 1, 2022.

(12) The council shall report its findings and recommendations annually to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by August 1st.

(13) The department shall provide staff support to the council.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 105. INFLATIONARY ADJUSTMENTS. Beginning July 1, 2023, and subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, rates paid under sections 302, 305, and 404 of this act and RCW 43.216.578 must be adjusted every two years according to an inflationary increase. The inflationary increase must be calculated by applying the rate of the increase in the inflationary adjustment index to the rates established in sections 302, 305, and 404 of this act and RCW 43.216.578. Any funded inflationary increase must be included in the rate used to determine inflationary increases in subsequent years. For the purposes of this section, "inflationary adjustment index" means the implicit price deflator averaged for each fiscal year, using the official current
PART II

EXPANDING ACCESS TO CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

NEW SECTION. Sec. 201. WORKING CONNECTIONS CHILD CARE PROGRAM

ELIGIBILITY AND COPAYMENT. (1) It is the intent of the legislature to increase working families' access to affordable, high quality child care and to support the expansion of the workforce to support businesses and the statewide economy.

(2) Beginning July 1, 2021, a family is eligible for working connections child care when the household's annual income is at or below 60 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size and:

(a) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age; or (ii) less than 19 years of age and has a verified special need according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

(b) The household meets all other program eligibility requirements.

(3) Beginning July 1, 2027, and subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, a family is eligible for working connections child care when the household's annual income is above 60 percent of the state median income and is at or below 75 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size and:

(a) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age; or (ii) less than 19 years of age and has a verified special need according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

(b) The household meets all other program eligibility requirements.

(4) The department must calculate a monthly copayment according to the following phased-in schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning date:</th>
<th>If the household's income is:</th>
<th>Then the household's copayment is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning July 1, 2021</td>
<td>At or below 20 percent of the state median income</td>
<td>$15 or waived to the extent allowable under federal law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning July 1, 2021</td>
<td>Above 20 percent and at or below 36 percent of the state median income</td>
<td>$65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Beginning July 1, 2021
Above 36 percent and at or below 50 percent of the state median income $115

Beginning July 1, 2021
Above 50 percent and at or below 60 percent of the state median income $165

Beginning July 1, 2027
Above 60 percent and at or below 75 percent of the state median income $215

(5) The department must adopt rules to implement this section.

Sec. 202. RCW 43.216.136 and 2020 c 279 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

WORKING CONNECTIONS CHILD CARE FOR STUDENT PARENTS. (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 established by the department and the standards established in this section intended to promote stability, quality, and continuity of early care and education programming.

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

(a) A household's 12-month authorization begins on the date that child care is expected to begin.

(b) If a newly eligible household does not begin care within 12 months of being determined eligible by the department, the household must reapply in order to qualify for subsidy.

(3)(a) The department shall establish and implement policies in the working connections child care program to allow eligibility for families with children who:

(i) In the last six months have:

(A) Received child protective services as defined and used by chapters 26.44 and 74.13 RCW;

(B) Received child welfare services as defined and used by chapter 74.13 RCW; or

(C) Received services through a family assessment response as defined and used by chapter 26.44 RCW;
(ii) Have been referred for child care as part of the family's case management as defined by RCW 74.13.020; and

(iii) Are residing with a biological parent or guardian.

(b) ((Children)) Families who are eligible for working connections child care pursuant to this subsection do not have to keep receiving services identified in this subsection to maintain twelve-month authorization.

(4)(a) Beginning ((August 1, 2020)) July 1, 2021, and subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department may not require an applicant or consumer to meet work requirements as a condition of receiving working connections child care benefits when the applicant or consumer is((:)

- (i) A single parent;
- (ii) A full-time student of a community, technical, or tribal college((:)) and ((iii) Pursuing)) is enrolled in: (i) A vocational education program that leads to a degree or certificate in a specific occupation((, not to result in a bachelor's or advanced degree));
- (ii) An associate degree program; or
- (iii) A registered apprenticeship program.

(b) An applicant or consumer is a full-time student for the purposes of this subsection if he or she meets the college's definition of a full-time student((: The student must maintain passing grades and be)) and is in good standing ((pursuant to college attendance requirements)).

(c) Nothing in this subsection is intended to change how applicants or consumers are prioritized when applicants or consumers are placed on a waitlist for working connections child care benefits.

(d) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department may extend the provisions of this subsection (4) to full-time students who are enrolled in a bachelor's degree program or applied baccalaureate degree program.

(5)(a) The department must extend the homeless grace period, as adopted in department rule as of January 1, 2020, from a four-month grace period to a twelve-month grace period.

(b) For the purposes of this section, "homeless" means being without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a) as it existed on January 1, 2020.

(6) For purposes of this section, "authorization" means a transaction created by the department that allows a child care
NEW SECTION. Sec. 203. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM INTENT. (1) The legislature finds that eligibility guidelines
for the national school lunch program require free meals for children
with household incomes at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty
level and that this income level is approximately equivalent to 36
percent of the state median income for a household of three. The
legislature further finds that eligibility guidelines require
reduced-price meals for children with household incomes at or below
185 percent of the federal poverty level and that this income level
is approximately equivalent to 50 percent of the state median income
for a household of three.

(2) Therefore, the legislature intends to raise the maximum
family income for children entitled to enroll in the early childhood
education and assistance program to 36 percent of the state median
income beginning July 1, 2026. Beginning in the 2030-31 school year,
the legislature intends to raise the maximum family income for
children entitled to enroll in this program to 50 percent of the
state median income. It is the intent of the legislature to
standardize income eligibility levels for assistance programs in
order to help families and social workers better understand the
benefits for which families qualify and to simplify and align state
systems wherever feasible.

(3) The legislature further intends to support educational
service districts to help school districts partner with early
childhood education and assistance program contractors and providers
to expand access.

Sec. 204. RCW 43.216.505 and 2019 c 408 s 2 are each amended to
read as follows:

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ENTITLEMENT
ELIGIBILITY. Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the
definitions in this section apply throughout RCW 43.216.500 through
43.216.559, 43.216.900, and 43.216.901.

(1) "Advisory committee" means the advisory committee under RCW
43.216.520.

(2) "Approved programs" means those state-supported education and
special assistance programs which are recognized by the department as
meeting the minimum program rules adopted by the department to qualify under RCW 43.216.500 through 43.216.550, 43.216.900, and 43.216.901 and are designated as eligible for funding by the department under RCW 43.216.530 and 43.216.540.

(3) "Comprehensive" means an assistance program that focuses on the needs of the child and includes education, health, and family support services.

(4) "Eligible child" means a three to five-year old child who is not age-eligible for kindergarten, is not a participant in a federal or state program providing comprehensive services, and who:
   (a) Has a family (income at or below one hundred ten percent of the federal poverty level, as published annually by the federal department of health and human services) with financial need;
   (b) Is experiencing homelessness;
   (c) Has participated in early head start or a successor federal program providing comprehensive services for children from birth through two years of age, the early support for infants and toddlers program or received class C developmental services, the birth to three early childhood education and assistance program, or the early childhood intervention and prevention services program;
   (d) Is eligible for special education due to disability under RCW 28A.155.020; (or
   (e)) (e) Is Indian as defined in rule by the department after consultation and agreement with Washington state's federally recognized tribes pursuant to section 207 of this act and is at or below 100 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size; or
   (f) Meets criteria under rules adopted by the department if the number of such children equals not more than ten percent of the total enrollment in the early childhood program. Preference for enrollment in this group shall be given to children from families with the lowest income, children in foster care, or to eligible children from families with multiple needs.

(5) "Family support services" means providing opportunities for parents to:
   (a) Actively participate in their child's early childhood program;
   (b) Increase their knowledge of child development and parenting skills;
   (c) Further their education and training;
(d) Increase their ability to use needed services in the community;
(e) Increase their self-reliance; and
(f) Connect with culturally competent, disability positive therapists and supports where appropriate.

(6) "Experiencing homelessness" means a child without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act (42 U.S.C., Chapter 119, Subchapter VI, Part B) as it existed on January 1, 2021.

(7) "Family with financial need" means families with incomes at or below 36 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size until the 2030-31 school year. Beginning in the 2030-31 school year, "family with financial need" means families with incomes at or below 50 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size.

Sec. 205. RCW 43.216.512 and 2019 c 409 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EXPANDED ENROLLMENT. (1) The department shall adopt rules that allow the enrollment of children in the early childhood education and assistance program, as space is available, if the number of such children equals not more than (twenty-five) 25 percent of total statewide enrollment, when the child is not eligible under RCW 43.216.505 and whose family income level is:

(a) Above one hundred ten percent but less than or equal to one hundred thirty percent of the federal poverty level; or

(b) Above one hundred thirty percent but less than or equal to two hundred percent of the federal poverty level; or

above 36 percent of the state median income but at or below 50 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size and the child meets at least one of the risk factor criterion described in subsection (2) of this section.

(2) Children enrolled in the early childhood education and assistance program pursuant to ((subsection (1)(b) of)) this section must be prioritized for available funded slots according to a prioritization system adopted in rule by the department that considers risk factors that have a disproportionate effect on kindergarten readiness and school performance, including:

(a) Family income as a percent of the state median income;
(b) ((Homelessness;)
(c)) Child welfare system involvement;
((d)) (c) Developmental delay ((or disability that does not
meet the eligibility criteria for special education described in RCW
28A.155.020)) eligible for services under part C of the federal
individuals with disabilities education act but not eligible for
services under part B of the federal individuals with disabilities
education act;
((e)) (d) Domestic violence;
((f)) (e) English as a second language;
((g)) (f) Expulsion from an early learning setting;
((h)) (g) A parent who is incarcerated;
((i)) (h) A parent with a ((substance use disorder or mental))
behavioral health treatment need; and
((j)) (i) Other risk factors determined by the department to be
linked by research to school performance.
(3) ((The department shall adopt rules that allow a child to
enroll in the early childhood education and assistance program, as
space is available, when the child is not eligible under RCW
43.216.505 and the child turns three years old at any time during the
school year when the child:
(a) Has a family income at or below two hundred percent of the
federal poverty level or meets at least one risk factor criterion
adopted by the department in rule; and
(b) Has received services from or participated in:
(i) The early support for infants and toddlers program;
(ii) The early head start or a successor federal program
providing comprehensive services for children from birth through two
years of age; or
(iii) The birth to three early childhood education and assistance
program, if such a program is established.
(4)) Children enrolled in the early childhood education and
assistance program under this section are not considered eligible
children as defined in RCW 43.216.505 and are not considered to be
part of the state-funded entitlement required in RCW 43.216.556.
(4) This section expires August 1, 2030.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 206.  EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM EARLY ENTRY.  (1) The department shall adopt rules that allow
a child to enroll in the early childhood education and assistance

p. 20  E2SSB 5237
program, as space is available and subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, when the child is not eligible under RCW 43.216.505 and the child turns three years old at any time during the school year when the child:

(a) Has a family income at or below 100 percent of the state median income or meets at least one risk factor criterion adopted by the department in rule; and

(b) Has received services from or participated in:
   (i) The early head start or a successor federal program providing comprehensive services for children from birth through two years of age;
   (ii) The early support for infants and toddlers program or received class C developmental services;
   (iii) The birth to three early childhood education and assistance program; or
   (iv) The early childhood intervention and prevention services program.

(2) Children enrolled in the early childhood education and assistance program under this section are not eligible children as defined in RCW 43.216.505 and are not part of the state-funded entitlement required in RCW 43.216.556.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 207.  INDIAN CHILD DEFINITION.  (1) The department must consult, and obtain the advice and consent of, the governing bodies of the state's federally recognized tribes in developing an agreed-upon definition of the term "Indian" for the purposes of RCW 43.216.505 and, by July 1, 2024, must adopt the definition in rule.

(2) This section expires December 1, 2030.

Sec. 208.  RCW 43.216.556 and 2019 c 408 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Funding for the program of early learning established under this chapter must be appropriated to the department. The department shall distribute funding to approved early childhood education and assistance program contractors on the basis of eligible children enrolled.

(2) The program shall be implemented in phases, so that full implementation is achieved in the ((2022–23)) 2026-27 school year.
(3) Funding shall continue to be phased in each year until full statewide implementation of the early learning program is achieved in the (2022-23) 2026-27 school year, at which time any eligible child is entitled to be enrolled in the program.

(4) School districts and approved community-based early learning providers may contract with the department to provide services under the program. The department shall collaborate with school districts, community-based providers, and educational service districts to promote an adequate supply of approved providers.

PART III
SUPPORTING CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING PROVIDERS

Sec. 301. RCW 43.216.749 and 2019 c 368 s 7 are each amended to read as follows:

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY RATES. (1) (By January 1, 2025, the department of children, youth, and families must) It is the intent of the legislature to systemically increase child care subsidy rates over time until rates are equal to the full cost of providing high quality child care.

(2) Beginning July 1, 2021, child care subsidy base rates must achieve the 85th percentile of market for licensed or certified child care providers.

(3)(a) The department shall build upon the work of the child care collaborative task force to develop and implement a child care cost estimate model and use the completed child care cost model (developed under RCW 43.330.527 to determine child care subsidy rates.

(2) This section expires January 30, 2025)) to recommend subsidy rates at levels that are sufficient to compensate licensed or certified child care providers for the full costs of providing high quality child care. The department shall consider:

(i) Adjusting rates to reflect cost of living such as area median income, cost of living by zip code, and grouping by categories such as rural, suburban, or urban; and

(ii) Incorporating the rate model for nonstandard child care hours developed under section 306 of this act.

(b) The department shall build upon the work of the child care collaborative task force to evaluate options to support access to
affordable health care insurance coverage for licensed or certified child care providers.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 302. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM RATES. (1) For the 2021-22 school year, rates for the early childhood education and assistance program must be set at a level at least 10 percent higher than the rates established in section 225, chapter 415, Laws of 2019.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature that rate increases shall be informed by the department's 2020 early childhood education and assistance program rate study.

(3) This section expires June 30, 2027.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 303. COMPLEX NEEDS FUNDS. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall administer in collaboration with the office of the superintendent of public instruction, two complex needs funds to promote inclusive, least restrictive environments and to support contractors and providers serving children who have developmental delays, disabilities, behavioral needs, or other unique needs. One fund must support early childhood education and assistance program contractors and providers and birth to three early childhood education and assistance program contractors and providers, and one fund must support licensed or certified child care providers and license-exempt child care programs.

(2) Support may include staffing, programming, therapeutic services, and equipment or technology support. Additional support may include activities to assist families with children expelled or at risk of expulsion from child care, and to help families transition in and out of child care.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 304. TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE SUPPORTS. (1) Beginning July 1, 2022, the department shall provide supports to aid eligible providers in providing trauma-informed care. Trauma-informed care supports may be used by eligible providers for the following purposes:

(a) Wage increases for individual staff who have an infant and early childhood mental health or other child development specialty credential;

(b) Trauma-informed professional development and training;
The purchase of screening tools and assessment materials; 
(d) Supportive services for children with complex needs that are 
offered as fee-for-service within local communities; or 
(e) Other related expenses.

(2) The department must adopt rules to implement this section.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "eligible provider" means: 
(a) An employee or owner of a licensed or certified child care center 
or outdoor nature-based care accepting state subsidy; (b) an employee 
or owner of a licensed family home provider accepting state subsidy; 
(c) a contractor or provider of the early childhood education and 
assistance program or birth to three early childhood education and 
assistance program; (d) a license-exempt child care program; or (e) 
an early achievers coach.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 305. DUAL LANGUAGE RATE ENHANCEMENT. (1) 
Beginning July 1, 2022, the department shall establish a dual 
language designation and provide a subsidy rate enhancement for 
licensed or certified child care providers who are accepting state 
subsidy; early childhood education and assistance program 
contractors; or birth to three early childhood education and 
assistance program contractors. It is the intent of the legislature 
to allow uses of the rate enhancement to include increased wages for 
individual staff who provide bilingual instruction, professional 
development training, the purchase of dual language and culturally 
appropriate curricula and accompanying training programs, 
instructional materials, or other related expenses.

(2) The department must consult with a culturally and 
linguistically diverse stakeholder advisory group to develop criteria 
for the dual language designation.

(3) The department must adopt rules to implement this section.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 306. NONSTANDARD HOURS RATE MODEL. (1) In 
order to expand the supply of critically needed after-hours care to 
meet the needs of parents and caregivers and a round-the-clock 
economy and subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for 
this specific purpose, the department of children, youth, and 
families, in consultation with diverse stakeholders, must develop a 
rate model for nonstandard child care hours and submit the model to 
the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by 
January 1, 2022.
NEW SECTION. Sec. 307. EARLY CHILDHOOD EQUITY GRANTS. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall distribute early childhood equity grants to eligible applicants. Eligible applicants include play and learn groups, licensed or certified child care centers and family home providers, license-exempt child care programs, and early childhood education and assistance program contractors. The equity grants are intended to serve as a step toward expanding access to early learning statewide and transforming Washington's early learning system to make it more inclusive and equitable. The department shall administer the early childhood equity grants to support inclusive and culturally and linguistically specific early learning and early childhood and parent support programs across the state.

(2) The department must conduct an equitable process to prioritize grant applications for early childhood equity grant assistance. An eligible applicant may receive an early childhood equity grant once every two years. When conducting the equitable grant process, the department must:

(a) Solicit project applications from a racially and geographically diverse pool of eligible applicants statewide;

(b) Provide application materials in the five most commonly spoken languages in the state and broadly communicate using a variety of strategies to reach diverse communities;

(c) Require applicants to demonstrate their proposed uses of early childhood equity grant funds to incorporate either inclusive practices or culturally and linguistically supportive and relevant practices, or both, into early learning program design, delivery, education, training, and evaluation; and

(d) Provide technical assistance to any applicant who needs it.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 308. A new section is added to chapter 43.330 RCW to read as follows:

EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED CHILD CARE. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department, in collaboration with the department of children, youth, and families, shall provide or contract to provide remote or in-person technical assistance to employers interested in supporting their employees' access to high quality child care.
(2) Technical assistance may include guidance related to:
(a) Operating a licensed child care center at or near the workplace for the benefit of employees;
(b) Financing and construction of a licensed child care center at or near the workplace for the benefit of employees;
(c) Providing financial assistance to employees for licensed or certified child care providers and license-exempt child care program expenses;
(d) Encouraging access and support for low-wage employees;
(e) Sponsoring dependent care flexible spending accounts for employees; and
(f) Developing a "bring your infant to work" program and other family-friendly work policies for employees.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 309. INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall administer or contract for infant and early childhood mental health consultation services to child care providers and early learning providers participating in the early achievers program.
(2) Infant and early childhood mental health consultation services must be delivered in coordination with the consultants provided under RCW 43.216.090.
(3) The department shall provide, or contract with an entity to provide, reflective supervision and professional development for infant and early childhood mental health consultants to meet national competency standards.
(4) As capacity allows, the department may provide access to infant and early childhood mental health consultation services to caregivers and licensed or certified, military, and tribal early learning providers, license-exempt family, friend, and neighbor care providers, and families with children expelled or at risk of expulsion from child care.

Sec. 310. RCW 43.216.090 and 2019 c 360 s 7 are each amended to read as follows:
INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION. (((The))) Beginning July 1, 2021, and subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of children, youth, and families must have or contract for one infant and early
childhood mental health consultation coordinator and must enter into
a contractual agreement with an organization providing coaching
services to early achievers program participants to hire ((one)) at
least 12 qualified infant and early childhood mental health
consultants, with at least one for each of the six department-
designated regions. The infant and early childhood mental health
consultants must be placed in regions based on the highest need. The
infant and early childhood mental health consultants must support
early achievers program coaches and child care providers by providing
resources, information, and guidance regarding challenging behavior
and expulsions and may travel to assist providers in serving families
and children with severe behavioral needs. ((In coordination with the
contractor, the department of children, youth, and families must
report on the services provided and the outcomes of the consultant
activities to the governor and the appropriate policy and fiscal
committees of the legislature by June 30, 2021.))

NEW SECTION. Sec. 311. PLAY AND LEARN GROUPS. Subject to the
availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the
department, in consultation with community-based programs, shall
provide or contract to provide, or both, resources and supports for
inclusive and culturally and linguistically relevant play and learn
groups. Play and learn groups offer parents and other caregivers
culturally responsive opportunities to support their children's early
learning, build relationships that reduce isolation and encourage
socialization, and promote kindergarten readiness.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 312. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. (1) Subject to
the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the
department shall provide professional development supports to aid
eligible providers in reaching the professional education and
training standards adopted by the department. Professional
development supports may include:

(a) Department-required trainings for child care providers
conducted by department-approved trainers;

(b) Trainings for license-exempt family, friend, and neighbor
child care providers conducted by department-approved trainers;

(c) Early achievers scholarships;

(d) Community-based training pathways and systems developed under
RCW 43.216.755; and
Other professional development activities such as updating training content, data collection and reporting, trainer recruitment, retention, program monitoring, and trainings delivered by department-approved trainers on topics such as small business management, antibias and antiracist training, providing care for children with developmental disabilities, social-emotional learning, implementing inclusionary practices in early learning environments, infant and toddler care, dual language program development, and providing trauma-informed care.

For the purposes of this section, "eligible provider" means:
(a) An employee or owner of a licensed or certified child care center or outdoor nature-based care accepting state subsidy; (b) an employee or owner of a licensed family home provider accepting state subsidy; (c) a contractor or provider of the early childhood education and assistance program or birth to three early childhood education and assistance program; or (d) an early achievers coach.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 313. NEGOTIATED RULE MAKING WITH CHILD CARE CENTERS. The secretary shall engage in negotiated rule making pursuant to RCW 34.05.310(2)(a) with the largest organization representing child care center owners and directors; the largest organization representing supervisors, teachers, and aides; and other affected interests before adopting requirements that affect child care center licensees.

PART IV
STRENGTHENING PRENATAL TO THREE SUPPORTS

NEW SECTION. Sec. 401. PRENATAL TO THREE INTENT. (1) The legislature finds that parental relationships and healthy interactions in the first few years of life help shape the development of babies' and toddlers' brains and bodies. Eighty percent of the brain is developed by the age of three and parents are a child's first teachers.

(2) The legislature finds that the federal family first prevention services act (P.L. 115-123) offers the state the opportunity to leverage federal funding for certain programs, including in-home parent skill-based programs, substance use disorder support, and mental health interventions. Culturally relevant, evidence-based programs that may qualify for these federal funds are...
limited. Therefore, state support may be necessary to serve
traditionally underrepresented communities and increase positive
engagement from parents and caregivers of children from before birth
to age three.

(3) The legislature finds that small teacher-child ratios for
infant and toddler care, as well as the existence of child care
deserts with low levels of access to care for the birth to three age
group, contribute to higher expenses for providers and families with
babies and young children.

(4) Therefore, the legislature intends to expand parent and
family education and support, incentivize the provision of infant and
toddler care, and make early therapeutic and preventative services
more readily available to families and young children.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 402. EDUCATION AND SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND
FAMILY, FRIEND, AND NEIGHBOR CAREGIVERS. (1) Subject to the
availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the
department shall administer a prenatal to three family engagement
strategy to support expectant parents, babies and toddlers from birth
to three years of age, and their caregivers.

(2) Components of the prenatal to three family engagement
strategy must include supports and services to improve maternal and
infant health outcomes, reduce and mitigate trauma, promote
attachment and other social-emotional assets, strengthen parenting
skills, and provide early supports to help maximize healthy and
robust childhood development and reduce isolation. Services and
supports may include:

(a) In-home parent skill-based programs and training established
in RCW 43.216.130;

(b) Facilitated play and learn groups;

(c) Parent peer-support groups, including groups designed for
families with children with complex needs; families whose primary
home language is not English; incarcerated parents; families coping
with substance use disorder or mental health support needs; black,
indigenous, and families of color; or other specific needs; and

(d) Other prenatal to age three programs and services.

(3) Continuity of services for babies and toddlers are important
for early childhood brain development. Therefore, the services and
supports described in this section may be made available to
biological parents, foster parents, kinship care providers, and other family, friend, and neighbor caregivers.

Sec. 403. RCW 43.216.578 and 2019 c 408 s 8 are each amended to read as follows:

BIRTH TO THREE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.
(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall administer a birth to three early childhood education and assistance program for eligible children under thirty-six months old. Funds to implement the program may include a combination of federal, state, or private sources.

(2) The department may adopt rules to implement the program and may waive or adapt early childhood education and assistance program requirements when necessary to allow for the operation of the birth to three early childhood education and assistance program. The department shall consider early head start rules and regulations when developing the provider and family eligibility requirements and program requirements. Any deviations from early head start standards, rules, or regulations must be identified and explained by the department in its annual report under subsection (6) of this section.

(3)(a) The birth to three early childhood education and assistance program must be delivered through child care centers and family home providers who meet minimum licensing standards and are enrolled in the early achievers program.

(b) The department must determine minimum early achievers ratings scores for participating contractors.

(4) When selecting pilot project locations for service delivery, the department may allow each pilot project location to have up to three classrooms per location. When selecting and approving pilot project locations, the department shall attempt to select a combination of rural, urban, and suburban locations. The department shall prioritize locations with programs currently

p. 30 E2SSB 5237
operating early head start, head start, or the early childhood education and assistance program.

(5)) To be eligible for the birth to three early childhood education and assistance program, a child's family income must be at or below ((one hundred thirty)) 50 percent of the ((federal poverty level)) state median income and the child must be under thirty-six months old.

((6)) Beginning November 1, 2020, and each November 1st thereafter during pilot project activity, the department shall submit an annual report to the governor and legislature that includes a status update that describes the planning work completed, the status of funds secured, and any implementation activities of the pilot project. Implementation activity reports must include a description of the participating programs and number of children and families served.)

**NEW SECTION.** Sec. 404. INFANT CARE INCENTIVES. (1) The legislature finds that our state suffers from an extreme shortage of infant child care, impacting the ability of parents to participate in the workforce. Further, parents returning to work after using paid family leave to care for a new child struggle to find readily available, high quality care during a time of critical growth and brain development for young children. Therefore, the legislature intends to incentivize the provision of high quality infant care.

(2) Beginning July 1, 2022, the department shall provide an infant rate enhancement for licensed or certified child care providers and birth to three early childhood education and assistance program contractors who are:

(a) Accepting state subsidy;

(b) In good standing with the early achievers quality rating and improvement system; and

(c) Caring for a child between the ages of birth and 11 months.

(3) The department must adopt rules to implement this section.

**NEW SECTION.** Sec. 405. EARLY THERAPEUTIC AND PREVENTATIVE SERVICES. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall administer early therapeutic and preventative services and programs, such as the early childhood intervention and prevention services program, and other related services for children who are:
(a) Between the ages of birth and five years; and
(b) Referred by a child welfare worker, a department of social
and health services social worker, a primary care physician, a
behavioral health provider, or a public health nurse due to: (i) Risk
of child abuse or neglect; (ii) exposure to complex trauma; or (iii)
significant developmental delays.

(2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
specific purpose, the department shall make all reasonable efforts to
deliver early therapeutic and preventative services and programs
statewide. These services and programs must focus first on children
and families furthest from opportunity as defined by income and be
delivered by programs that emphasize greater racial equity.

PART V
CONFORMING AMENDMENTS

Sec. 501. RCW 43.216.010 and 2020 c 270 s 11 are each reenacted
and amended to read as follows:

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter
unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Agency" means any person, firm, partnership, association,
corporation, or facility that provides child care and early learning
services outside a child's own home and includes the following
irrespective of whether there is compensation to the agency:

(a) "Child day care center" and "child care center" mean((a)) an
agency that regularly provides early childhood education and early
learning services for a group of children for periods of less than
twenty-four hours;

(b) "Early learning" includes but is not limited to programs and
services for child care; state, federal, private, and nonprofit
preschool; child care subsidies; child care resource and referral;
parental education and support; and training and professional
development for early learning professionals;

(c) "Family day care provider" and "family home provider"
mean((e)) a child care provider who regularly provides early
childhood education and early learning services for not more than
twelve children at any given time in the provider's home in the
family living quarters;

(d) "Nongovernmental private-public partnership" means an entity
registered as a nonprofit corporation in Washington state with a

p. 32 E2SSB 5237
primary focus on early learning, school readiness, and parental support, and an ability to raise a minimum of five million dollars in contributions;

(e) "Service provider" means the entity that operates a community facility.

(2) "Agency" does not include the following:

(a) Persons related to the child in the following ways:

(i) Any blood relative, including those of half-blood, and including first cousins, nephews or nieces, and persons of preceding generations as denoted by prefixes of grand, great, or great-great;

(ii) Stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, and stepsister;

(iii) A person who legally adopts a child or the child's parent as well as the natural and other legally adopted children of such persons, and other relatives of the adoptive parents in accordance with state law; or

(iv) Spouses of any persons named in (a)(i), (ii), or (iii) of this subsection, even after the marriage is terminated;

(b) Persons who are legal guardians of the child;

(c) Persons who care for a neighbor's or friend's child or children, with or without compensation, where the person providing care for periods of less than twenty-four hours does not conduct such activity on an ongoing, regularly scheduled basis for the purpose of engaging in business, which includes, but is not limited to, advertising such care;

(d) Parents on a mutually cooperative basis exchange care of one another's children;

(e) Nursery schools that are engaged primarily in early childhood education with preschool children and in which no child is enrolled on a regular basis for more than four hours per day;

(f) Schools, including boarding schools, that are engaged primarily in education, operate on a definite school year schedule, follow a stated academic curriculum, and accept only school age children;

(g) Seasonal camps of three months' or less duration engaged primarily in recreational or educational activities;

(h) Facilities providing child care for periods of less than twenty-four hours when a parent or legal guardian of the child remains on the premises of the facility for the purpose of participating in:

(i) Activities other than employment; or
(ii) Employment of up to two hours per day when the facility is operated by a nonprofit entity that also operates a licensed child care program at the same facility in another location or at another facility;

(i) Any entity that provides recreational or educational programming for school age children only and the entity meets all of the following requirements:

(i) The entity utilizes a drop-in model for programming, where children are able to attend during any or all program hours without a formal reservation;

(ii) The entity does not assume responsibility in lieu of the parent, unless for coordinated transportation;

(iii) The entity is a local affiliate of a national nonprofit; and

(iv) The entity is in compliance with all safety and quality standards set by the associated national agency;

(j) A program operated by any unit of local, state, or federal government;

(k) A program located within the boundaries of a federally recognized Indian reservation, licensed by the Indian tribe;

(l) A program located on a federal military reservation, except where the military authorities request that such agency be subject to the licensing requirements of this chapter;

(m) A program that offers early learning and support services, such as parent education, and does not provide child care services on a regular basis.

(3) "Applicant" means a person who requests or seeks employment in an agency.

(4) "Certificate of parental improvement" means a certificate issued under RCW 74.13.720 to an individual who has a founded finding of physical abuse or negligent treatment or maltreatment, or a court finding that the individual's child was dependent as a result of a finding that the individual abused or neglected their child pursuant to RCW 13.34.030(6)(b).

(5) "Conviction information" means criminal history record information relating to an incident which has led to a conviction or other disposition adverse to the applicant.

(6) "Department" means the department of children, youth, and families.
(7) "Early achievers" means a program that improves the quality of early learning programs and supports and rewards providers for their participation.

(8) "Early childhood education and assistance program contractor" means an organization that provides early childhood education and assistance program services under a signed contract with the department.

(9) "Early childhood education and assistance program provider" means an organization that provides site level, direct, and high quality early childhood education and assistance program services under the direction of an early childhood education and assistance program contractor.

(10) "Early start" means an integrated high quality continuum of early learning programs for children birth-to-five years of age. Components of early start include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Home visiting and parent education and support programs;
(b) The early achievers program described in RCW 43.216.085;
(c) Integrated full-day and part-day high quality early learning programs; and
(d) High quality preschool for children whose family income is at or below one hundred ten percent of the federal poverty level.

(11) "Education data center" means the education data center established in RCW 43.41.400, commonly referred to as the education research and data center.

(12) "Employer" means a person or business that engages the services of one or more people, especially for wages or salary to work in an agency.

(13) "Enforcement action" means denial, suspension, revocation, modification, or nonrenewal of a license pursuant to RCW 43.216.325(1) or assessment of civil monetary penalties pursuant to RCW 43.216.325(3).

(14) "Extended day program" means an early childhood education and assistance program that offers early learning education for at least ten hours per day, a minimum of two thousand hours per year, at least four days per week, and operates year-round.

(15) "Family resource and referral linkage system" means a system that connects families to resources, services, and programs for which families are eligible and uses a database that is developed and
maintained in partnership with communities, health care providers, and early learning providers.

(15) "Full day program" means an early childhood education and assistance program that offers early learning education for a minimum of one thousand hours per year.

(16) "Low-income child care provider" means a person who administers a child care program that consists of at least eighty percent of children receiving working connections child care subsidy.

(17) "Low-income neighborhood" means a district or community where more than twenty percent of households are below the federal poverty level.

(18) "Negative action" means a court order, court judgment, or an adverse action taken by an agency, in any state, federal, tribal, or foreign jurisdiction, which results in a finding against the applicant reasonably related to the individual's character, suitability, and competence to care for or have unsupervised access to children in child care. This may include, but is not limited to:

(a) A decision issued by an administrative law judge;

(b) A final determination, decision, or finding made by an agency following an investigation;

(c) An adverse agency action, including termination, revocation, or denial of a license or certification, or if pending adverse agency action, the voluntary surrender of a license, certification, or contract in lieu of the adverse action;

(d) A revocation, denial, or restriction placed on any professional license; or

(e) A final decision of a disciplinary board.

(19) "Nonconviction information" means arrest, founded allegations of child abuse, or neglect pursuant to chapter 26.44 RCW, or other negative action adverse to the applicant.

(20) "Nonschool age child" means a child who is age six years or younger and who is not enrolled in a public or private school.

(21) "Part day program" means an early childhood education and assistance program that offers early learning education for at least two and one-half hours per class session, at least three hundred twenty hours per year, for a minimum of thirty weeks per year.

(22) "Private school" means a private school approved by the state under chapter 28A.195 RCW.
"Probationary license" means a license issued as a disciplinary measure to an agency that has previously been issued a full license but is out of compliance with licensing standards.

"Requirement" means any rule, regulation, or standard of care to be maintained by an agency.

"School age child" means a child who is five years of age through twelve years of age and is attending a public or private school or is receiving home-based instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW.

"Secretary" means the secretary of the department.

"Washington state preschool program" means an education program for children three-to-five years of age who have not yet entered kindergarten, such as the early childhood education and assistance program.

Sec. 502. RCW 28B.50.248 and 2020 c 355 s 4 and 2020 c 279 s 3 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

Nothing in RCW 43.216.135((r)) or 43.216.136((r) or 43.216.1365) requires a community or technical college to expand any of its existing child care facilities. Any additional child care services provided by a community or technical college as a result of RCW 43.216.135((r)) or 43.216.136((r) or 43.216.1365) must be provided within existing resources and existing facilities.

Sec. 503. RCW 43.84.092 and 2020 c 354 s 11, 2020 c 221 s 5, 2020 c 103 s 7, and 2020 c 18 s 3 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1) All earnings of investments of surplus balances in the state treasury shall be deposited to the treasury income account, which account is hereby established in the state treasury.

(2) The treasury income account shall be utilized to pay or receive funds associated with federal programs as required by the federal cash management improvement act of 1990. The treasury income account is subject in all respects to chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for refunds or allocations of interest earnings required by the cash management improvement act. Refunds of interest to the federal treasury required under RCW 43.88.180 and shall not require appropriation. The office of financial management shall determine the amounts due to or from the federal government pursuant to the cash
management improvement act. The office of financial management may
direct transfers of funds between accounts as deemed necessary to
implement the provisions of the cash management improvement act, and
this subsection. Refunds or allocations shall occur prior to the
distributions of earnings set forth in subsection (4) of this
section.

(3) Except for the provisions of RCW 43.84.160, the treasury
income account may be utilized for the payment of purchased banking
services on behalf of treasury funds including, but not limited to,
depository, safekeeping, and disbursement functions for the state
treasury and affected state agencies. The treasury income account is
subject in all respects to chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is
required for payments to financial institutions. Payments shall occur
prior to distribution of earnings set forth in subsection (4) of this
section.

(4) Monthly, the state treasurer shall distribute the earnings
credited to the treasury income account. The state treasurer shall
credit the general fund with all the earnings credited to the
treasury income account except:

(a) The following accounts and funds shall receive their
proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's and fund's
average daily balance for the period: The abandoned recreational
vehicle disposal account, the aeronautics account, the Alaskan Way
viaduct replacement project account, the ambulance transport fund,
the brownfield redevelopment trust fund account, the budget
stabilization account, the capital vessel replacement account, the
capitol building construction account, the Central Washington
University capital projects account, the charitable, educational,
penal and reformatory institutions account, the Chehalis basin
account, the Chehalis basin taxable account, the cleanup settlement
account, the Columbia river basin water supply development account,
the Columbia river basin taxable bond water supply development
account, the Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery
account, the common school construction fund, the community forest
trust account, the connecting Washington account, the county arterial
preservation account, the county criminal justice assistance account,
the deferred compensation administrative account, the deferred
compensation principal account, the department of licensing services
account, the department of retirement systems expense account, the
developmental disabilities community ((trust) services) account, the
diesel idle reduction account, the drinking water assistance account, the administrative subaccount of the drinking water assistance account, the early learning facilities development account, the early learning facilities revolving account, the Eastern Washington University capital projects account, the education construction fund, the education legacy trust account, the election account, the electric vehicle account, the energy freedom account, the energy recovery act account, the essential rail assistance account, The Evergreen State College capital projects account, the fair start for kids account, the ferry bond retirement fund, the freight mobility investment account, the freight mobility multimodal account, the grade crossing protective fund, the public health services account, the state higher education construction account, the higher education construction account, the higher education retirement plan supplemental benefit fund, the highway bond retirement fund, the highway infrastructure account, the highway safety fund, the hospital safety net assessment fund, the Interstate 405 and state route number 167 express toll lanes account, the judges' retirement account, the judicial retirement administrative account, the judicial retirement principal account, the local leasehold excise tax account, the local real estate excise tax account, the local sales and use tax account, the marine resources stewardship trust account, the medical aid account, the money-purchase retirement savings administrative account, the money-purchase retirement savings principal account, the motor vehicle fund, the motorcycle safety education account, the multimodal transportation account, the multiuse roadway safety account, the municipal criminal justice assistance account, the oyster reserve land account, the pension funding stabilization account, the perpetual surveillance and maintenance account, the pilotage account, the pollution liability insurance agency underground storage tank revolving account, the public employees' retirement system plan 1 account, the public employees' retirement system combined plan 2 and plan 3 account, the public facilities construction loan revolving account, the public health supplemental account, the public works assistance account, the Puget Sound capital construction account, the Puget Sound ferry operations account, the Puget Sound Gateway facility account, the Puget Sound taxpayer accountability account, the real estate appraiser commission account, the recreational vehicle account, the regional mobility grant program account, the resource management cost account, the rural arterial
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investing balances of the agricultural permanent fund, the normal school permanent fund, the permanent common school fund, the scientific permanent fund, and the state university permanent fund shall be allocated to their respective beneficiary accounts.

(b) Any state agency that has independent authority over accounts or funds not statutorily required to be held in the state treasury that deposits funds into a fund or account in the state treasury pursuant to an agreement with the office of the state treasurer shall receive its proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's or fund's average daily balance for the period.

(5) In conformance with Article II, section 37 of the state Constitution, no treasury accounts or funds shall be allocated earnings without the specific affirmative directive of this section.

Sec. 504. RCW 43.84.092 and 2020 c 354 s 11, 2020 c 221 s 5, 2020 c 148 s 3, 2020 c 103 s 7, and 2020 c 18 s 3 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1) All earnings of investments of surplus balances in the state treasury shall be deposited to the treasury income account, which account is hereby established in the state treasury.

(2) The treasury income account shall be utilized to pay or receive funds associated with federal programs as required by the federal cash management improvement act of 1990. The treasury income account is subject in all respects to chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for refunds or allocations of interest earnings required by the cash management improvement act. Refunds of interest to the federal treasury required under the cash management improvement act fall under RCW 43.88.180 and shall not require appropriation. The office of financial management shall determine the amounts due to or from the federal government pursuant to the cash management improvement act. The office of financial management may direct transfers of funds between accounts as deemed necessary to implement the provisions of the cash management improvement act, and this subsection. Refunds or allocations shall occur prior to the distributions of earnings set forth in subsection (4) of this section.

(3) Except for the provisions of RCW 43.84.160, the treasury income account may be utilized for the payment of purchased banking services on behalf of treasury funds including, but not limited to, depository, safekeeping, and disbursement functions for the state
treasury and affected state agencies. The treasury income account is subject in all respects to chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for payments to financial institutions. Payments shall occur prior to distribution of earnings set forth in subsection (4) of this section.

(4) Monthly, the state treasurer shall distribute the earnings credited to the treasury income account. The state treasurer shall credit the general fund with all the earnings credited to the treasury income account except:

(a) The following accounts and funds shall receive their proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's and fund's average daily balance for the period: The abandoned recreational vehicle disposal account, the aeronautics account, the Alaskan Way viaduct replacement project account, the ambulance transport fund, the brownfield redevelopment trust fund account, the budget stabilization account, the capital vessel replacement account, the capitol building construction account, the Central Washington University capital projects account, the charitable, educational, penal and reformatory institutions account, the Chehalis basin account, the Chehalis basin taxable account, the cleanup settlement account, the Columbia river basin water supply development account, the Columbia river basin taxable bond water supply development account, the Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account, the common school construction fund, the community forest trust account, the connecting Washington account, the county arterial preservation account, the county criminal justice assistance account, the deferred compensation administrative account, the deferred compensation principal account, the department of licensing services account, the department of retirement systems expense account, the developmental disabilities community trust services account, the diesel idle reduction account, the drinking water assistance account, the administrative subaccount of the drinking water assistance account, the early learning facilities development account, the early learning facilities revolving account, the Eastern Washington University capital projects account, the education construction fund, the education legacy trust account, the election account, the electric vehicle account, the energy freedom account, the energy recovery act account, the essential rail assistance account, The Evergreen State College capital projects account, the fair start for kids account, the ferry bond retirement fund, the fish, wildlife, and
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(b) Any state agency that has independent authority over accounts or funds not statutorily required to be held in the state treasury that deposits funds into a fund or account in the state treasury pursuant to an agreement with the office of the state treasurer shall
receive its proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's or fund's average daily balance for the period.

(5) In conformance with Article II, section 37 of the state Constitution, no treasury accounts or funds shall be allocated earnings without the specific affirmative directive of this section.

Sec. 505. RCW 43.84.092 and 2020 c 221 s 5, 2020 c 148 s 3, 2020 c 103 s 7, and 2020 c 18 s 3 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1) All earnings of investments of surplus balances in the state treasury shall be deposited to the treasury income account, which account is hereby established in the state treasury.

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trust fund account, the budget stabilization account, the capital
vessel replacement account, the capitol building construction
account, the Central Washington University capital projects account,
the charitable, educational, penal and reformatory institutions
account, the Chehalis basin account, the Chehalis basin taxable
account, the cleanup settlement account, the Columbia river basin
water supply development account, the Columbia river basin taxable
bond water supply development account, the Columbia river basin water
supply revenue recovery account, the common school construction fund,
the community forest trust account, the connecting Washington
account, the county arterial preservation account, the county
criminal justice assistance account, the deferred compensation
administrative account, the deferred compensation principal account,
the department of licensing services account, the department of
retirement systems expense account, the developmental disabilities
community ((trust)) services account, the diesel idle reduction
account, the drinking water assistance account, the administrative
subaccount of the drinking water assistance account, the early
learning facilities development account, the early learning
facilities revolving account, the Eastern Washington University
capital projects account, the education construction fund, the
education legacy trust account, the election account, the electric
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account), the transportation equipment fund, the transportation future funding program account, the transportation improvement account, the transportation improvement board bond retirement account, the transportation infrastructure account, the transportation partnership account, the traumatic brain injury account, the University of Washington bond retirement fund, the University of Washington building account, the voluntary cleanup account, the volunteer firefighters' and reserve officers' relief and pension principal fund, the volunteer firefighters' and reserve officers' administrative fund, the vulnerable roadway user education account, the Washington judicial retirement system account, the Washington law enforcement officers' and firefighters' system plan 1 retirement account, the Washington law enforcement officers' and firefighters' system plan 2 retirement account, the Washington public safety employees' plan 2 retirement account, the Washington school employees' retirement system combined plan 2 and 3 account, the Washington state patrol retirement account, the Washington State University building account, the Washington State University bond retirement fund, the water pollution control revolving administration account, the water pollution control revolving fund, the Western Washington University capital projects account, the Yakima integrated plan implementation account, the Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account, and the Yakima integrated plan implementation taxable bond account. Earnings derived from investing balances of the agricultural permanent fund, the normal school permanent fund, the permanent common school fund, the scientific permanent fund, and the state university permanent fund shall be allocated to their respective beneficiary accounts.

(b) Any state agency that has independent authority over accounts or funds not statutorily required to be held in the state treasury that deposits funds into a fund or account in the state treasury pursuant to an agreement with the office of the state treasurer shall receive its proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's or fund's average daily balance for the period.

(5) In conformance with Article II, section 37 of the state Constitution, no treasury accounts or funds shall be allocated earnings without the specific affirmative directive of this section.

Sec. 506. RCW 43.216.710 and 2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 s 213 are each amended to read as follows:
The department shall:

1. Work in conjunction with the statewide child care resource and referral network as well as local governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and community child care advocates to create local child care resource and referral organizations. These organizations may carry out needs assessments, resource development, provider training, technical assistance, and parent information and training;

2. Actively seek public and private money for distribution as grants to the statewide child care resource and referral network and to existing or potential local child care resource and referral organizations;

3. Adopt rules regarding the application for and distribution of grants to local child care resource and referral organizations. The rules shall, at a minimum, require an applicant to submit a plan for achieving the following objectives:

   a. Provide parents with information about child care resources, including location of services and subsidies;

   b. Carry out child care provider recruitment and training programs, including training under RCW 74.25.040;

   c. Offer support services, such as parent and provider seminars, toy-lending libraries, and substitute banks;

   d. Provide information for businesses regarding child care supply and demand;

   e. Advocate for increased public and private sector resources devoted to child care;

   f. Provide technical assistance to employers regarding employee child care services; and

   g. Serve recipients of temporary assistance for needy families and working parents with household incomes at or below ((household incomes of two hundred)) 100 percent of the state median income;

4. Provide staff support and technical assistance to the statewide child care resource and referral network and local child care resource and referral organizations;

5. Maintain a statewide child care licensing data bank and work with department licensors to provide information to local child care resource and referral organizations about licensed or certified child care providers in the state;
(6) Through the statewide child care resource and referral network and local resource and referral organizations, compile data about local child care needs and availability for future planning and development;

(7) Coordinate with the statewide child care resource and referral network and local child care resource and referral organizations for the provision of training and technical assistance to child care providers;

(8) Collect and assemble information regarding the availability of insurance and of federal and other child care funding to assist state and local agencies, businesses, and other child care providers in offering child care services;

(9) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, increase the base rate for all child care providers by ten percent;

(10) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, provide tiered subsidy rate enhancements to child care providers if the provider meets the following requirements:
   (a) The provider enrolls in quality rating and improvement system levels 2, 3, 4, or 5;
   (b) The provider is actively participating in the early achievers program;
   (c) The provider continues to advance towards level 5 of the early achievers program; and
   (d) The provider must complete level 2 within thirty months or the reimbursement rate returns the level 1 rate; and

(11) Require exempt providers to participate in continuing education, if adequate funding is available.

Sec. 507. RCW 43.216.514 and 2020 c 343 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) (a) The department shall prioritize children for enrollment in the early childhood education and assistance program who are eligible pursuant to RCW 43.216.505.

   (b) A child who is eligible at the time of enrollment in the early childhood education and assistance program maintains program eligibility until the child begins kindergarten.

(2) As space is available, children may be included in the early childhood education and assistance program pursuant to RCW 43.216.512. (Priority within this group must be given first to...
children with incomes up to one hundred thirty percent of the federal
poverty level.

PART VI
MISCELLANEOUS

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 601.  Nothing in this act changes the
department's responsibility to collectively bargain over mandatory
subjects consistent with RCW 41.56.028(3) or limits the legislature's
authority to make programmatic modifications to licensed child care
and early learning programs consistent with legislative reservation
of rights under RCW 41.56.028(4)(d). For RCW 43.216.749, the parties
should bargain over the implementation of the subsidy rates and apply
those rates consistent with that section and the agreement reached
between the parties.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 602.  RCW 43.216.1365 (Working connections
child care program—Eligibility) and 2020 c 355 s 3 are each repealed.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 603.  If any part of this act is found to be
in conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition
to the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part
of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and
with respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does
not affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its
application to the agencies concerned. Rules adopted under this act
must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the
receipt of federal funds by the state.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 604.  Sections 204 through 206 and 403 of this
act take effect July 1, 2026.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 605.  Sections 101, 102, 105, 201, 206, 207,
302 through 307, 309, 311 through 313, 402, 404, 405, and 601 of this
act are each added to chapter 43.216 RCW.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 606.  Section 503 of this act expires July 1,
2021.
NEW SECTION.  Sec. 607.  Sections 201, 202, 301, 310, and 504 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and take effect July 1, 2021.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 608.  Section 504 of this act expires July 1, 2024.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 609.  Section 505 of this act takes effect July 1, 2024.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 610.  Section 503 of this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

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