
**Early Learning & Children's
Services Committee**

HB 3269

Brief Description: Creating a roving early intervention specialist pilot program.

Sponsors: Representatives Roach, Haler, Williams, Campbell, Rodne and Ross.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Early Learning to implement a pilot program to provide for a roving early intervention specialist to assist licensed child care providers.

Hearing Date: 2/5/08

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) has responsibility for implementing state early learning policy and coordinating, consolidating, and integrating child care and early learning programs in order to administer programs and funds efficiently.

The Legislature in 2007 appropriated a total of \$500,000 to the DEL for child care consultation services, \$250,000 in the 2008 and 2009 fiscal years. In November 2007 the DEL issued a request for proposal (RFP) for child care consultation services to be provided in 10 pilot communities.

Summary of Bill:

Subject to the availability of funds, DEL must administer the Roving Early Intervention Specialist Pilot Program beginning July 1, 2008. The purpose of the program is to provide assistance to licensed child care providers and families in Pierce County with children ages birth to 5 years with special needs.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

One roving early intervention specialist must be housed at the local Child Care Resource & Referral in Pierce County. The specialist must, at a minimum, have a Bachelor of Arts degree, preferably in child and family counseling or early intervention services. The specialist must:

- (1) assist families in finding child care and other related services;
- (2) coordinate with families and child care providers to ensure a child's enrollment and smooth transition into a child care facility;
- (3) provide professional and technical assistance to licensed child care providers; and
- (4) encourage child care providers not to expel a child with special needs until the specialist has had the opportunity to ameliorate concerns.

Professional and technical assistance includes site visits to assist with the providers' challenges and to provide training to workers.

By August 1, 2009 the DEL must report findings to the Governor and the appropriate education and fiscal committees of the Legislature. The DEL must report on the following elements of the program:

- (1) how often providers received timely consulting and evaluation assistance;
- (2) how many children who might have been asked to leave a child care facility were retained due to the intervention of the specialist; and
- (3) how many providers reported improvement with the children's learning progress and readiness.

The DEL also must include recommendations for increasing the number of roving early intervention specialists to serve statewide.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 2008.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.