

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2ESB 5617

As Reported by House Committee On:
Early Learning & Children's Services

Title: An act relating to the early learning advisory council.

Brief Description: Changing early learning advisory council provisions.

Sponsors: Senators Kauffman and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Early Learning & Children's Services: 2/19/10, 2/23/10 [DP].

Brief Summary of Second Engrossed Bill

- Revises the membership and duties of the Early Learning Advisory Council.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Roberts, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Goodman and Seaquist.

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

Early Learning Advisory Council.

In 2007 the Legislature created the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) to advise the Department of Early Learning (DEL) on statewide early learning needs and progress. The ELAC is directed to work in conjunction with the DEL to develop a statewide Early Learning Plan (ELP). The draft ELP was released in December 2009, and the final version is to be delivered in March 2010.

The ELAC may include up to 25 members, as follows:

1. one representative from each of the following state agencies:
 - the DEL;

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- the Office of Financial Management;
 - the Department of Social and Health Services;
 - the Department of Health;
 - the Higher Education Coordinating Board;
 - the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; and
 - the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
2. seven or more leaders in early childhood education, appointed by the Governor;
 3. two members of the House of Representatives, one from each caucus;
 4. two members of the Senate, one from each caucus;
 5. two parents, one of whom must serve on the DEL's Parent Advisory Council;
 6. one representative designated by sovereign tribal governments;
 7. two representatives from Thrive by Five Washington (Thrive); and
 8. one representative from the Washington Federation of Independent Schools.

The ELAC members serve staggered two-year terms. Co-chairs are elected by vote, with one representing a state agency and the other representing a nongovernmental entity. The DEL provides staff support to the ELAC and members are reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in carrying out their duties.

Summary of Bill:

The role of the ELAC is revised so that it advises the DEL on issues leading to the building of a comprehensive system of quality early learning programs and services by:

- assessing needs and the availability of services;
- aligning resources;
- developing plans for data collection and professional development; and
- setting key performance measures.

The membership of the ELAC is reduced to not more than 23 members. Thrive representation is reduced from two members to one, and the total number appointed by the Governor is limited to seven.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The goal of this bill is to align Washington law on the ELAC with requirements relating to federal funding opportunities. The membership changes also will allow flexibility to add a Head Start representative.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Kauffman, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.