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**Early Learning & Human Services  
Committee**

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**SB 5578**

**Brief Description:** Exempting certain family day care providers who have been operating for at least five years from any requirement to have a high school diploma or equivalent education.

**Sponsors:** Senators Fraser, Carrell, Padden, Darneille, Harper, Pearson, Hargrove and Kline.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Exempts certain family day care providers from having to obtain a high school diploma or equivalent education.

**Hearing Date:** 3/19/13

**Staff:** Lindsay Lanham (786-7120).

**Background:**

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) has the statutory responsibility to establish and monitor licensing standards for child care and early learning programs. Licensing standards are intended to guide child care and early learning practice in a manner that keeps children safe and healthy and promotes optimum growth and development. The DEL's policies are informed by federal mandates, academic literature, program evaluations, and the unique needs of Washington families.

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) serves as the official 'rule book' for child care and early learning programs. Providers are expected to follow the guidelines detailed in the WAC in order to become licensed and maintain licensure.

According to current rules, all new applicants for a family home child care license must have a high school diploma or the evidence of equivalent education. By March 31, 2017 all family home child care licensees must have a high school diploma or submit evidence of equivalent

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education. The DEL defines equivalent education as the following: passing the general education development (GED) test; completion of 12 years of elementary and secondary education; possessing a current child development associate credential; or completion of 45 credits of post-secondary education.

**Summary of Bill:**

A family day care provider who has been licensed in operation for a minimum of five years and has not received a complaint that resulted in an enforcement action is exempt from the high school diploma or equivalent education requirement.

**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.