

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5879

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Early Learning & Human Services

**Title:** An act relating to early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

**Brief Description:** Concerning early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

**Sponsors:** Senators Billig, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles; by request of Department of Early Learning.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Early Learning & Human Services: 2/19/16, 2/23/16 [DPA].

#### **Brief Summary of Bill (As Amended by Committee)**

- Specifies that the Department of Early Learning (DEL) is the lead agency for the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers program.
- Specifies that the DEL has the authority to develop and adopt rules that establish minimum requirements for the services offered through Part C programs, including allowable allocations and expenditures for transition into Part B.
- Requires the DEL to develop and submit a plan to the Legislature by December 15, 2016, on comprehensive and coordinated early intervention services for all eligible children with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & HUMAN SERVICES

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Senn, Vice Chair; Walsh, Ranking Minority Member; Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kilduff, McCaslin, Ortiz-Self, Sawyer, Scott and Walkinshaw.

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*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.*

**Staff:** Ashley Paintner (786-7120).

**Background:**

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers.

In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C, children from birth to age 3 who have been diagnosed with a disability or developmental delays and their families are entitled to intervention services. The program in Washington that provides these services is called the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program. The stated goal of the ESIT program is to enable young children to be active and successful participants during the early childhood years and in the future.

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) contracts with 27 local lead agencies to deliver a range of services such as: specialized instruction, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. The provision of early intervention services utilizes cross-systems and agency collaborations between educational school districts, health departments, health and human services agencies, nonprofits, and county health departments. In 2010 the Department of Social and Health Services transferred lead agency responsibility to the DEL.

State Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and Their Families.

The State Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families (Council) was established in 2014 in accordance with the IDEA, Part C. The Council's primary responsibility is to assist the DEL and other participating agencies in implementing a collaborative and comprehensive statewide system of early intervention services for children from birth to age 3 who have disabilities or are at risk for developing disabilities and their families. The Council is also tasked with coordinating the transition of these children into programs for 3- to 6-year-olds.

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**Summary of Amended Bill:**

The lead agency for the ESIT program is identified as the DEL. As the lead agency, the DEL has the authority to develop and adopt rules that establish minimum requirements for the services offered through Part C programs, including allowable allocations and expenditures for transition into IDEA, Part B. The DEL must develop and submit a plan to the Legislature by December 15, 2016, which must include:

- a full accounting of all the expenditures related to the ESIT program from both the DEL and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) from the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years;
- the identification and proposal for coordination of all available public financial resources within the state from federal, state, and local sources;
- a design for an integrated early learning intervention system for all eligible infants and toddlers who have been diagnosed with a disability or developmental delays and their families;
- the development of procedures that ensure services are provided to all eligible infants and toddlers and their families in a consistent and timely manner; and

- a proposal for the integration of ESIT services with other critical services available for children from birth to age 3 and their families.

It is clarified in statute that the Council addresses children from birth to age 3 rather than birth to age 6.

**Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The amended bill requires the DEL to develop and submit a plan to the Legislature by December 15, 2016, on comprehensive and coordinated early intervention services for all eligible children with disabilities in accordance with IDEA, Part C. The amended bill also requires that as part of this plan, the OSPI and the DEL must provide a full accounting of the expenditures related to the ESIT program from the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. Additionally, the amended bill specifies that as the lead agency for Part C programs, the DEL has the authority to develop and adopt rules that establish minimum requirements for the services offered through Part C programs, including allowable allocations and expenditures for transition into Part B.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) There are limited resources available for early intervention services for children from birth to age 3. Therefore, it is imperative that early intervention services are administered in a coordinated and efficient manner in order to provide high quality care to children with disabilities or developmental delays. Furthermore, these high-quality services should be available to all eligible children, no matter where they reside in the State of Washington.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Lance Morehouse, Sherwood Community Services; and Frank Ordway, Department of Early Learning.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.