

SSB 6419 - H COMM AMD

By Committee on Early Learning & Human Services

ADOPTED 03/01/2018

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that research
4 continues to demonstrate the efficacy of the state's early childhood
5 education and assistance program, known as ECEAP. Studies in
6 Washington and from other states show that ECEAP prepares children
7 for kindergarten success and has significant positive impacts on
8 third, fourth, and fifth grade test scores. The legislature also
9 finds that in some areas of the state, expanding ECEAP has proven
10 challenging because there are too few eligible children to form an
11 ECEAP classroom. The result is that children who are income eligible
12 and the furthest from opportunity remain unserved. The legislature
13 finds further that in other ECEAP classrooms, funded seats remain
14 empty because providers do not have sufficient flexibility to serve
15 families in need who are slightly over income but often have similar
16 risk factors. The legislature intends, therefore, to provide more
17 flexibility in determining eligibility for ECEAP in order to maximize
18 the state's investment and assure that program funding is deployed to
19 serve the greatest number of children and families.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
21 RCW to read as follows:

22 (1) The department shall adopt rules that allow the inclusion of
23 children in the early childhood education and assistance program
24 whose family income is above one hundred ten percent of the federal
25 poverty level if the number of such children equals not more than
26 twenty-five percent of total statewide enrollment.

27 (2) Children included in the early childhood education and
28 assistance program under this section must be homeless or impacted by
29 specific developmental or environmental risk factors that are linked
30 by research to school performance. "Homeless" means without a fixed,

1 regular, and adequate nighttime residence as set forth in the federal
2 McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act, P.L. 100-77, July 22, 1987,
3 101 Stat. 482, and runaway and homeless youth act, P.L. 93-415, Title
4 III, September 7, 1974, 88 Stat. 1129.

5 (3) Children included in the early childhood education and
6 assistance program under this section are not to be considered
7 eligible children as defined in RCW 43.216.505 and are not considered
8 to be part of the state-funded entitlement required in RCW
9 43.216.556.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
11 RCW to read as follows:

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

15 (2) As space is available, children may be included in the early
16 childhood education and assistance program pursuant to section 2 of
17 this act. Priority within this group must be given to children who
18 are experiencing homelessness, child welfare system involvement, or a
19 developmental delay or disability that does not meet the eligibility
20 criteria for special education adopted under RCW 28A.155.020.

21 **Sec. 4.** RCW 43.216.555 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 7 s 11 are each
22 amended to read as follows:

23 (1) Beginning September 1, 2011, an early learning program to
24 provide voluntary preschool opportunities for children three and four
25 years of age shall be implemented according to the funding and
26 implementation plan in RCW ((43.215.456)) 43.216.556. The program
27 must offer a comprehensive program of early childhood education and
28 family support, including parental involvement and health
29 information, screening, and referral services, based on family need.
30 Participation in the program is voluntary. On a space available
31 basis, the program may allow enrollment of children who are not
32 otherwise eligible by assessing a fee.

33 (2) The program shall be implemented by utilizing the program
34 standards and eligibility criteria in the early childhood education
35 and assistance program in RCW ((43.215.400)) 43.216.500 through
36 ((43.215.450)) 43.216.550.

37 (3)(a) Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, the program
38 implementation in this section shall prioritize early childhood

1 education and assistance programs located in low-income neighborhoods
2 within high-need geographical areas.

3 (b) Following the priority in (a) of this subsection, preference
4 shall be given to programs meeting at least one of the following
5 characteristics:

6 (i) Programs offering an extended day program for early care and
7 education;

8 (ii) Programs offering services to children diagnosed with a
9 special need; or

10 (iii) Programs offering services to children involved in the
11 child welfare system.

12 (4) The (~~director~~) secretary shall adopt rules for the
13 following program components, as appropriate and necessary during the
14 phased implementation of the program, consistent with early achievers
15 program standards established in RCW (~~43.215.100~~) 43.216.085:

16 (a) Minimum program standards;

17 (b) Approval of program providers; and

18 (c) Accountability and adherence to performance standards.

19 (5) The department has administrative responsibility for:

20 (a) Approving and contracting with providers according to rules
21 developed by the (~~director~~) secretary under this section;

22 (b) In partnership with school districts, monitoring program
23 quality and assuring the program is responsive to the needs of
24 eligible children;

25 (c) Assuring that program providers work cooperatively with
26 school districts to coordinate the transition from preschool to
27 kindergarten so that children and their families are well-prepared
28 and supported; and

29 (d) Providing technical assistance to contracted providers.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act takes effect July 1, 2018."

31 Correct the title.

EFFECT: (1) Provides that children eligible for the state-
supported Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP)
receive first priority for enrollment in ECEAP.

(2) Establishes priority for the enrollment, as space is
available, of certain populations of children who do not meet the
minimum eligibility requirements for the state-supported ECEAP.

(3) Makes technical corrections.

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