

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6297

---

---

As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 7, 2020

**Title:** An act relating to recognizing the experience of existing early learning providers to meet educational requirements.

**Brief Description:** Recognizing the experience of existing early learning providers to meet educational requirements.

**Sponsors:** Senators Padden, Wellman, Wagoner, Wilson, C., Hawkins, Billig and Zeiger.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/29/20, 2/03/20, 2/07/20 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill**

- Directs the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to provide existing early learning providers who are required to have certain early childhood education certificates the option to meet these requirements through an experience-based demonstrated competence.

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6297 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Holy, Hunt, McCoy, Mullet, Padden, Pedersen, Salomon and Wagoner.

**Staff:** Ailey Kato (786-7434)

**Background:** Under the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) rules, new staffing qualifications for licensed child care providers went into effect on August 1, 2019. For example, lead teachers and family home licensees must have an initial certificate or equivalent within five years or five years from being employed or promoted into these positions. Lead teachers in centers and family home licensees must progress toward a short certificate or equivalent. They must receive the short certificate within two years of

---

*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.*

receiving the initial certificate or seven years from being employed or promoted into these positions.

Under DCYF rules, an initial certificate is 12 quarter credits and covers foundational content for early learning professionals. The short certificate is the initial certificate plus eight quarter credits.

DCYF is implementing a process to recognize experience for existing providers that have, or will have, at least seven years of experience by August 1, 2024. This process is called an experience-based competency demonstration.

**Summary of Bill (First Substitute):** DCYF must provide persons working as early learning providers on the effective date of this section, and who are required to have early childhood education initial certificates or short certificates, or both, the option to meet these requirements through an experience-based demonstrated competence.

An existing early learning provider is eligible to demonstrate their competence if the provider:

- has been employed by a licensed child care center or home, or both, for a total of seven years by August 1, 2024; and
- completed all training that was required during the seven years including in-service requirements and health and safety training.

The experience-based demonstrated competence is an individual determination and is portable between facilities.

DCYF must review applications for the experience-based demonstrated competence and inform applicants of their results on a quarterly basis.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (First Substitute):**

- Changes the term from “experience-based competency demonstration” to “experience-based demonstrated competence.”
- Removes the third requirement, which is that the provider is currently employed at a licensed child care family home or center that is in good licensing standing and has no current enforcement action.
- Specifies that the experience-based demonstrated competence is an individual determination and is portable between facilities.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 16, 2020.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill:** *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: There is a child care shortage, and this bill helps prevent child care providers from leaving the field. It recognizes the value of the experienced work force. Demonstrated competence is a better descriptor because it implies that the person already has the skill set. Requiring three years of experience is better than seven years given the current turnover in the field. The demonstrated competence should be portable like background checks.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Mike Padden, Prime Sponsor; Luc Jasmin, citizen; Suzie Hanson, Washington Federation of Independent Schools.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.