

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6018

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, January 25, 2024

Title: An act relating to early learning coordinators at educational service districts.

Brief Description: Designating early learning coordinators at educational service districts.

Sponsors: Senators Wilson, C., Torres, Hasegawa, Nobles, Salomon and Wellman.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/18/24, 1/25/24 [DP-WM, DNP, w/oRec].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires each educational service district to designate an early learning coordinator to support increased collaboration, recruitment, enrollment, and service delivery across Washington's prekindergarten through third grade continuum.
- Specifies certain minimum duties for these early learning coordinators.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hunt, Mullet and Pedersen.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Hawkins, Ranking Member; McCune.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Dozier.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Educational Service Districts. State law requires the nine educational service districts (ESDs) to lead certain coordination efforts including coordinating supports related to behavioral health and school-based threat assessments.

Early Learning Programs. A variety of early learning programs serve children ages three and four. According to a 2021 report published by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) titled "Integrated Pre-K - Aligning and Integrating Early Learning Programs," these early learning programs include:

- Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program administered by DCYF;
- Head Start administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;
- preschool for students who have an Individualized Education Program administered by OSPI and the U.S. Department of Education;
- transition to Kindergarten programs administered by OSPI;
- Title I prekindergarten classrooms administered by OSPI and the U.S. Department of Education;
- Working Connections Child Care administered by DCYF and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;
- Licensed child care not receiving any subsidies; and
- Private kindergartens or preschools.

Summary of Bill: Subject to appropriations, each ESD must designate an early learning coordinator to support increased collaboration, recruitment, enrollment, and service delivery across Washington's prekindergarten through third grade continuum.

The coordinator has certain minimum duties including:

- facilitating and improving access to high-quality early learning programs and inclusive services;
- coordinating and collaborating with the statewide and regional child care resource and referral organizations, early learning providers in the community, school districts, OSPI, and other partners;
- providing technical assistance, training, and coaching on certain topics including:
 1. effective transitions;
 2. coordinated recruitment, student placement, enrollment, and implementation of various models of preschool programs;
 3. identification of available programs and slots and braiding funding;
 4. implementation of transition to kindergarten programs;
 5. developmentally appropriate instructional practices for all-day kindergarten; and
 6. strengthening alignment between grades; and
- supporting instructional leaders in improving student learning across prekindergarten through grade 12 within the early learning coordinator's local context including:

1. implementation of the Washington kindergarten inventory of developing skills;
2. school improvement requirements;
3. the transitional bilingual instruction program;
4. inclusion;
5. multi-tiered systems of support; and
6. the teacher and principal evaluation systems.

Appropriation: The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: PRO: Early learning programs help prepare children for kindergarten and set them up for success. ESDs allows smaller school districts to work cooperatively. Seven of the nine ESDs are the home of early learning programs and are engaged in cross-sector work. Early learning is a mixed-delivery system, and this bill will help families and schools navigate this system. These ESD coordinators can help facilitate access for children because they have relationships with early learning providers in the community and school districts. These coordinators can provide technical assistance and regional support for high-quality programs. These positions have never received dedicated state funding. This bill closes a gap after the transition to kindergarten bill that passed last year. It will help communities effectively coordinate the early learning offerings in their community and meet families' unique needs.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Claire Wilson, Prime Sponsor; John Welch, Association of Educational Service Districts; Kristi Dominguez, Superintendent; Jim Kowalkowski, Rural Education Center; Emily Murphy, Child Care Aware of Washington; Samantha Bowen, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); Kevin Alfano, Fife Public Schools.

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