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**Children & Family Services  
Committee**

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**HB 2596**

**Brief Description:** Providing for early intervention services for children with disabilities.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Dickerson, Kagi, Kirby, Quall, Schual-Berke, Simpson, G., Tom, Kenney, McDermott, Boldt, Wood, Linville, Chase, Lantz, O'Brien, Haigh, Conway, Morrell, Miloscia, Kessler, Santos and Clibborn.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires school districts to provide or contract for early intervention services to eligible children with disabilities from birth to 3 years of age.
- Establishes a Birth-to-Three Task Force.

**Hearing Date:** 1/28/04

**Staff:** Cynthia Forland (786-7152).

**Background:**

Special education is instruction and related services that are specially designed to meet the unique needs and abilities of students with disabilities. It is provided at no cost to eligible students in the state between 3 and 21 years of age.

School districts may provide early intervention services to eligible preschool-age children with a disability. School districts that provide these services are entitled to the regular apportionments from state and county school funds, as provided by law, in addition to allocations from state excess cost funds made available for special services for children with disabilities.

If school districts opt to serve eligible preschool-age children, they must do so in the birth-to-three age group under state regulations implementing Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is the lead state agency responsible for early intervention services to children with a disability in the birth-to-three age group.

**Summary of Bill:**

By September 1, 2008, each school district is required to provide or contract for early intervention services to all eligible children with disabilities from birth to 3 years of age. Eligibility must be determined according to Part C of the IDEA and as specified in state regulation.

School districts are required to provide or contract for early intervention services in partnership with local birth-to-three lead agencies and birth-to-three providers. The early intervention services provided under this bill must not supplant services or funding currently provided in the state for early intervention services to eligible children with disabilities from birth to 3 years of age.

The state-designated birth-to-three lead agency must be payor of last resort for birth-to-three early intervention services provided under this bill.

There is established a Birth-to-Three Task Force (Task Force) to make recommendations concerning policies, procedures, and regulations in order to ensure implementation of an equitable statewide comprehensive system for all eligible children with disabilities from birth to 3 years of age.

Members of the Task Force must be jointly appointed by the Governor and the Superintendent of Public Instruction by July 1, 2004, and must include, at a minimum, the following:

- representatives of the following: Special Education Operations within the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; the Washington Association of School Administrators; the Washington State School Directors' Association; an Educational Service District; the Special Education Advisory Council; the Infant Toddler Early Intervention Program within the DSHS; the Developmental Disabilities Section of the Association of County Human Services; the Medical Assistance Administration within the DSHS; the Governor's Head Start State Collaboration Office; the Division of Child Care and Early Learning within the DSHS; the Children with Special Health Care Needs Program within the Department of Health; a local health department/district; an Indian tribe providing early intervention services; the Washington State Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; the Early Childhood Development Association of Washington; the Neurodevelopmental Centers of Washington; a nonprofit local birth-to-three lead agency, which is not already represented in the membership of the Task Force; and an advocacy group for children with disabilities from birth to 3 years of age and their families; and
- a Special Education Director from a school district providing early intervention services; a Special Education Director from a school district not providing early intervention services; and four members of the State Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and Their Families, three of whom must be parents.

The Birth-to-Three Task Force is required to submit a report to the Governor and the Superintendent of Public Instruction by December 1, 2006, outlining their recommendations.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 16, 2004.

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