

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6813

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Early Learning & K-12 Education, January 31, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to the roving early intervention specialist pilot program.

**Brief Description:** Creating a roving early intervention specialist pilot program.

**Sponsors:** Senators Rasmussen, Roach, Kastama, Kilmer, Franklin and Regala.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/28/08, 1/31/08 [DP-WM].

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

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

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Hobbs, Holmquist, Kauffman, McDermott, Oemig, Rasmussen and Weinstein.

**Staff:** Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

**Background:** In 2006 the Legislature created the Department of Early Learning (DEL) as an executive branch agency. The primary duties of DEL are to implement early learning policy and to coordinate, consolidate, and integrate child care and early learning programs in order to administer programs and funds efficiently.

DEL is required to work in conjunction with the statewide Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) Network and other stakeholders to create local R&R organizations. These organizations may carry out needs assessments, resource development, provider training, technical assistance, and parent information and training. DEL is required to provide staff support and technical assistance and actively seek public and private money for distribution as grants to the R&R Network and local organizations.

**Summary of Bill:** Subject to the availability of funds, DEL must administer the Roving Early Intervention Specialist Pilot Program beginning July 1, 2008. The purpose of the program is to provide assistance to licensed child care providers and families with children who are age birth to five with special needs. The pilot must be conducted in Pierce County.

One roving early intervention specialist must be housed at the local R&R in Pierce County. The specialist must, at a minimum, have a B.A. degree, preferably in child and family counseling or early intervention services. The specialist must assist families find child care

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and other related services; coordinate with families and child care providers to ensure a child's enrollment and smooth transition into a child care facility; provide professional and technical assistance to licensed child care providers; and encourage child care providers not to expel a child with special needs until the specialist has had the opportunity to ameliorate concerns. The professional and technical assistance includes site visits to assist with the providers' challenges and training for the providers.

By August 1, 2009, DEL must report findings to the Governor and the appropriate education and fiscal committees of the Legislature. DEL must report how often providers received timely consulting and evaluation assistance; how many children who might have been asked to leave a child care facility were retained due to the intervention of the specialist, and how many providers reported improvement with the children's learning progress and readiness. DEL must also provide recommendations for increasing the number of roving early intervention specialists to serve the statewide R&R Network.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 23, 2008.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Currently, parents call into the Pierce County Resource & Referral and receive good information and a list of providers. But parents who have children with delays have difficulty finding care. Additionally, special needs students are expelled from child care at higher rates than any other time in school because staff is not sufficiently trained. As a result, families give up seeking child care. They may choose Family, Friend, and Neighbor child care, unlicensed care, or quit their jobs and go on public assistance so that they can stay home with their child. This specialist would work with a family until the child is placed and would provide training to the providers, hopefully preventing expulsions.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Linda Lamkin, Pierce County Developmental Disabilities.