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**Early Learning & Human Services  
Committee**

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**HB 2608**

**Brief Description:** Requiring the department of early learning to develop state early learning guidelines.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kagi, Orwall, Sullivan, Haigh, Maxwell, Kenney and Tharinger; by request of Department of Early Learning.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the Department of Early Learning to develop and periodically review early learning guidelines in partnership with other entities.

**Hearing Date:** 1/26/12

**Staff:** Megan Palchak (786-7120).

**Background:**

The Department of Early Learning.

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) was created as an executive branch agency in 2006. Generally, the DEL's primary duties are to implement state early learning policy and coordinate, consolidate, and integrate child care and early programs in order to administer programs and funding as efficiently as possible, and to design programs in a way that respects and preserves the ability of parents and legal guardians to direct the education, development, and upbringing of their children, and in a way that recognizes and honors cultural and linguistic diversity. Parents must be included in the development of policies and program decisions affecting their children.

Nongovernmental private-public partnership.

Under the DEL statutes, "nongovernmental private-public partnership" is defined as an entity registered as a nonprofit corporation in Washington with a primary focus on early learning,

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school readiness, and parental support, and an ability to raise a minimum of \$5 million in contributions.

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is the primary agency charged with overseeing K-12 public education in Washington.

Washington State Early Learning and Development Benchmarks.

According to the DEL, since 2005, Washington has had a set of generally agreed-upon guidelines for child development that support families, caregivers, and teachers in their work with children to help support school readiness. These guidelines have been referred to as the Washington State Early Learning and Development Benchmark, but will be called "early learning guidelines." These guidelines are currently under review.

**Summary of Bill:**

The DEL must develop early learning guidelines in partnership with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the nongovernmental private-public partnership. The DEL must review and revise the guidelines periodically with a committee offering broad stakeholder representation. The DEL must make the early learning guidelines widely available.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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