

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5904

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As of Second Reading

**Title:** An act relating to high quality early learning.

**Brief Description:** Concerning high quality early learning.

**Sponsors:** Senators Hill, Hargrove, Litzow and Billig.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

None.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Early Learning (DEL) to increase enrollments in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) by 10 percent from the 2011-2013 biennium enrollments, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose.
- Requires the DEL to increase rates paid for early learning enrollments by 10 percent from the 2011-2013 biennium, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose.
- Requires the DEL and the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to develop an implementation plan for the expansion of ECEAP.
- Requires that the Washington State Institute for Public Policy conduct a retrospective study and return on investment analysis of ECEAP, examine family support programs, and conduct a literature review of components of successful early education program strategies.
- Recodifies RCW 43.215.141 and 43.215.142, relating to the establishment of the early learning voluntary preschool program, under the ECEAP sections within chapter 43.215.

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**Staff:** Lindsay Lanham (786-7120).

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*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.*

**Background:**

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is Washington's pre-kindergarten program that serves 3- and 4-year old children from families at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty level. Beginning in 1985 ECEAP aims to prepare young learners for school success by offering educational services. Additionally, ECEAP works to enhance the well-being of children by providing nutrition and child health coordination, as well as other family support services.

In 2010 the Legislature passed Second Substitute House Bill 2731, which established an early learning voluntary preschool program and outlined a phased implementation plan. The first phase of the implementation plan for the voluntary preschool program required that the Department of Early Learning (DEL) utilize ECEAP's program standards, eligibility criteria, and funded slot information to inform program expansion. By the 2018-2019 biennium, the early learning voluntary preschool program must be implemented statewide and serve any child determined eligible.

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**Summary of Bill:**

During the 2013-2015 biennium, the DEL is required to increase enrollments in ECEAP by 10 percent from the 2011-2013 biennium enrollments, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose. During the 2013-2015 biennium, rates paid for early learning enrollments must also be increased by 10 percent from the 2011-2013 biennium, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose. Additionally, the DEL and the Office of Financial Management (OFM) are required to develop a implementation plan for expanding ECEAP. This implementation plan is due to the Legislature by September 30, 2013.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy is required to conduct a retrospective study and return on investment analysis of ECEAP. The study is to examine both short and long term outcomes for children and provide findings from a literature review of components of successful early education program strategies. The study also is to examine family support services provided through early learning programs. The study is due to the Legislature by December 15, 2014.

The RCW 43.215.141 and 43.215.142, relating to the establishment of the early learning voluntary preschool program, are recodified under the ECEAP sections within chapter 43.215.

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**Appropriation:** None.**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) None.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** None.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.