

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1639

As Reported by House Committee On:
Early Learning & Human Services

Title: An act relating to creating a specialized child care pilot program for vulnerable children.

Brief Description: Creating a specialized child care pilot program for vulnerable children.

Sponsors: Representatives Ortiz-Self, Dent, Frame, Kagi, Goodman, Fey and Doglio.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Early Learning & Human Services: 2/14/17, 2/15/17 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes a two-year pilot program to provide multi-tiered behavior support and trauma-informed child care to children from birth to 5 years of age.
- Creates an advisory council on trauma-informed care convened by the Department of Early Learning.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Senn, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Frame, Goodman, Griffey, Kilduff, Klippert, Lovick, McCaslin, Muri and Ortiz-Self.

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

Background:

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) is the lead agency for the Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Services (ECLIPSE) program. The DEL contracts with two community-based programs to provide therapeutic child care and other specialized treatment services to abused, neglected, at-risk, and/or drug-affected children from birth to age 5. Priority for the ECLIPSE services is given to children referred by the Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration.

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.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are indicators of severe childhood stressors and family dysfunction experienced before the age of 18 that can negatively impact physical and behavioral health across their lifespan. The ACEs indicators include:

- child physical, sexual, and emotional abuse;
- child emotional or physical neglect;
- alcohol or other substance abuse in the home;
- mental illness, depression, or suicidal behaviors in the home;
- incarceration of a family member;
- witnessing intimate partner violence; and
- parental divorce or separation.

The DEL administers the Early Achievers program to provide a common set of standards to measure and improve the quality of early learning and child care. Early Achievers participants advance through program levels based on child outcomes, facility curriculum and learning environment, professional development, and family engagement and partnership.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The DEL must establish a two-year pilot program to provide multi-tiered behavior support and specialized trauma-informed care in licensed child care facilities to children from birth to age 5. The DEL must select four pilot sites that equally represent urban and rural areas. At least one site must be located west of the Cascade Mountains, and one site must be located east of the Cascade Mountains.

The pilot sites must reserve at least 50 percent of available spaces for children with ACEs. Sites must:

- participate in an evaluation study at the end of the pilot;
- agree to a nonexpulsion policy for the children;
- keep records on social, emotional, and behavioral development for the children in the program; and
- keep records on discipline outcomes for children participating in the program.

The DEL must report to the Governor and the Legislature on the results of the pilot by December 1, 2019. The evaluation report must include recommendations for:

- optimal staffing levels and necessary staff support for effectively working with high-needs children in a child care or early learning environment;
- necessary family supports;
- how to best transition children to other schools or programs; and
- how to best serve high-needs children.

The DEL must convene an advisory council (Council) on trauma informed care, consisting of members selected by the DEL. Members must include one or more child psychologists; child care providers specializing in working with traumatized children and children with development disabilities; an expert on ACEs research; a childcare provider who operates a

facility in which at least 50 percent of the children served are children of color; an expert in racial bias in education; an ECLIPSE provider; a representative from the University of Washington; and a representative from a nonprofit entity that provides quality improvement services to participants in the Early Achievers program.

The Council must:

- advise the DEL on the pilot program development;
- assist with the development of training and consultation resources;
- evaluate the Early Achievers program quality rating and improvement system and make recommendations to change rating system criteria as necessary to incentivize child care providers to serve high-needs children;
- develop recommendations for the delivery of intermediate and advanced training in trauma-informed care;
- establish a tracking method for child expulsions from subsidized child care and early education programs; and
- provide parents with information about programs with experience in trauma informed care

The act expires on January 1, 2020.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill adds a definition of trauma-informed care and creates a Council on trauma-informed care consisting of members selected by the DEL from specified groups. The Council must advise the DEL on the pilot program development, assist with the development of training and consultation resources, evaluate the early achievers quality rating and improvement system and make recommendations, develop recommendations for the delivery of intermediate and advanced training in trauma-informed care, establish a tracking method for child expulsions from subsidized child care and early education programs, and provide parents with information about programs with experience in trauma-informed care.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 16, 2017.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Kids who have experienced trauma often get kicked out of preschool and then have an educational gap. When kids experience trauma, it can have negative effects on their development. These challenges impact a child's ability to take advantage of an early learning environment. Typical child care centers are not able to deal with children with these issues, and the first step is often expulsion. National data suggests children are three times more

likely to be expelled from early child care than from kindergarten. If these kids are expelled, there is no place for them to go. The ECLIPSE program and providers like Childhaven, do great work with kids who need medically-necessary care, but there are not providers to provide care for children who might need less intensive support. When these kids are ready to move on to another provider, it is difficult to find providers who are able to receive them. This effort allows others to become equipped to serve these children and is a first step in building out mid-level providers to give them the expertise to work with these children. Child care businesses often operate on a shoestring budget. When looking at taking on a child with severe needs or has experienced trauma, child care businesses might question whether they can take on that risk to their livelihood.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Ortiz-Self, prime sponsor; Melanie Smith and Megan Beers, Wellspring Family Services; Bethany Larsen, Childhaven; and Ryan Pricco, Child Care Aware.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.