

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 2861

As of February 21, 2018

Title: An act relating to expanding the provision of trauma-informed child care.

Brief Description: Expanding the provision of trauma-informed child care.

Sponsors: Representatives Ortiz-Self, Lovick, Klippert, Kilduff, Kagi, Frame, Jenkins, Macri, Kloba, Pollet and Goodman.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/12/18, 70-27.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/19/18.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to convene an advisory group to develop a five-year strategy to expand training in trauma-informed child care for early learning providers and reduce expulsions from early learning environments.
- Requires the advisory group to submit the five-year strategy by November 1, 2018.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Child Care Consultation Program. Subject to appropriations, the Department of Early Learning (DEL) must establish a child care consultation program linking child care providers with evidence-based, trauma-informed, and best practice resources regarding caring for infants and young children who present behavioral concerns or symptoms of trauma. DEL may contract with an entity with expertise in child development and early learning programs in order to operate the child care consultation program. The 2017-19 operating budget provided \$200,000 for this purpose.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). State law defines ACEs as the following indicators of severe childhood stressors and family dysfunction that, when experienced in the first 18 years of life and taken together, are proven by public health research to be powerful determinants of physical, mental, social, and behavioral health across the lifespan:

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- child physical abuse;
- child sexual abuse;
- child 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.

Early Childhood Intervention Prevention Services. DEL administers this program and contracts to provide therapeutic child care and other specialized treatment services to abused, neglected, at-risk, or drug-affected children. Priority for services is given to children referred from the Children's Administration (CA) in the Department of Social and Health Services.

Early Achievers. This program rates the quality of child care and early learning programs on a scale of one to five. In 2015, the Early Start Act required licensed child care and early learning providers serving nonschool-age children and receiving state subsidies to be enrolled in Early Achievers and meet certain rating deadlines.

DCYF. In 2017, the Legislature created this new department. On July 1, 2018, early learning and child care programs from DEL and CA programs will move to DCYF.

Summary of Bill: DCYF must convene an advisory group to develop a five-year strategy to expand training in trauma-informed child care for early learning providers statewide and reduce expulsions from early learning environments. The five-year strategy must include:

- plans to deliver training to early learning providers and administrators in trauma-informed child care;
- recommended changes to Early Achievers to better rate and support providers serving high needs children;
- plans for outreach to parents to expand awareness about the availability of trauma-informed child care;
- an analysis of all available federal, state, and local funding sources that may be used for funding elements of the five-year strategy;
- best practices for supporting family day care providers in the provision of trauma-informed child care;
- recommended child care center staffing ratios, requirements for access to specialty providers, and subsidy rates for providers specializing in trauma-informed child care; and
- systems for tracking expulsions from child care and methods to reduce expulsions by 50 percent over five years.

Advisory group members are selected by DCYF and must include certain representatives.

DCYF must submit the five-year strategy to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature by November 1, 2018.

For the purposes of this section, trauma-informed child care means child care in which providers:

- recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in children;
- incorporate an understanding of both the impact of trauma and the potential paths for recovery; and
- respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices while actively seeking to avoid retraumatization.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: When children are exposed to trauma or ACEs, they may exhibit aggressive behavior or be developmentally delayed. There are not many child care providers equipped to handle children who have experienced or are experiencing trauma. This can lead to children being suspended and expelled from child care because of their behavior. Suspensions and expulsions do not set these children up for success in the K-12 system. This bill creates a strategic advisory group to look at a number of issues and develop solutions. Some providers that serve students who have experienced trauma and have a lot of needs are being rated lower in Early Achievers. The rating system needs to be reviewed with these student populations in mind. The advisory group will also look at how child care providers can work with parents.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self, Prime Sponsor; Melanie Smith, Wellspring Family Services.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.