

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5247

As of February 7, 2017

Title: An act relating to updating certain department of early learning advising and contracting mechanisms to reflect federal requirements, legislative mandates, and planned system improvements.

Brief Description: Updating certain department of early learning advising and contracting mechanisms to reflect federal requirements, legislative mandates, and planned system improvements.

Sponsors: Senators Zeiger, Mullet, Fain, Billig, Chase and Kuderer; by request of Department of Early Learning.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/02/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds additional members to the Early Learning Advisory Council.
- Requires the Department of Early Learning, rather than a private-public partnership, to administer home visiting programs.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC). ELAC advises the Department of Early Learning (DEL) on statewide early learning issues that would build a comprehensive system of quality early learning programs and services for Washington's children and families by assessing needs and the availability of services, aligning resources, developing plans for data collection and professional development of early childhood educators, and establishing key performance measures. ELAC must work in conjunction with DEL to develop a statewide early learning plan.

ELAC must consist of not more than 23 members, which are listed in current law. The federal Head Start Act requires states receiving a collaboration grant to establish a state advisory council with representatives from nine types of state or local entities.

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.

Home Visiting. Home visiting programs are voluntary services offered to expectant parents and families with new babies and young children to support the physical, social, and emotional health of the child. DEL is the lead state agency for home visiting system development. DEL may not exceed an average of 4 percent in administrative costs in any two consecutive fiscal years.

Since 2013, a nongovernmental private-public partnership has administered the Home Visiting Service Delivery System and provides implementation support functions to funded programs. Nongovernmental private-public partnership means an entity registered as a nonprofit corporation in Washington state with a primary focus on early learning, school readiness, and parental support, and an ability to raise a minimum of \$5 million in contributions. This partnership is known as Thrive Washington.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): Early Learning Advisory Council. Certain responsibilities of ELAC are removed and replaced with the responsibilities of contributing to the ongoing efforts of building a comprehensive system of quality early learning programs and services and assisting in policy development and implementation.

ELAC members must include critical partners in service delivery and be essential to coordinating services statewide, prenatal through age five. ELAC must consist of 29 members and include representatives from the following:

- Early Childhood Education and Assistance program;
- licensed family day care providers;
- child day care centers;
- Home Visiting Advisory Committee;
- Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs;
- Washington State Commission on African-American Affairs;
- Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs;
- tribal Early Childhood Education and Assistance program or Head Start program;
- Washington Library Association; and
- regional Early Learning Coalitions.

Representatives from DEL, the Office of Financial Management, the Department of Social and Health Services, and the private-public partnership are removed.

Home Visiting Private-Public Partnership. The nongovernmental private-public partnership must support, rather than administer, the Home Visiting Service Delivery System and provide support functions to funded programs. DEL must administer home visiting programs, and administrative costs may not exceed an average of 10 percent, rather than 4 percent, in any two consecutive fiscal years.

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 on Proposed Substitute: PRO: DEL and Thrive have consulted with the home visiting advocacy committee, and it is supportive of the direction that this bill takes with home visiting. The regional early learning coalitions play an important role by bringing local voice to ELAC. These coalitions geographically represent the entire state and provide a crucial link to service providers, including ones that are geographically isolated. As early learning policies and programs are developed, children's and communities' challenges and strengths must be taken into account. DEL would like to have more representatives on ELAC to reflect the diversity of communities, service providers, and partners. Currently, ELAC has four legislative seats. These seats could be turned into a legislative council that meets with ELAC.

OTHER: ELAC is a critical mechanism for DEL to engage with stakeholders and partners and to get real-time advice about the impacts of proposed policies and programs. The effectiveness of ELAC depends on its members and well-rounded participation of diverse perspectives. The Early Learning Action Alliance should also be included on ELAC. This Alliance is a statewide coalition of more than 60 organizations engaged in early learning advocacy. Early learning programs are often not designed to be inclusive of children with disabilities. There should be a representative on ELAC who has expertise on developmental delays and disabilities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Hans Zeiger, Prime Sponsor; Erica Hallock, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids; Frank Ordway, Dept. of Early Learning; Susan Barbeau, First 5 FUNDamentals; Nancy Spurgeon, North Central WA Early Learning Collaborative.

OTHER: Emily Murphy, Children's Alliance; Ramona Hattendorf, Arc of King County.

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