
HOUSE BILL 2764

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Representatives Pollet, Griffey, Senn, Reeves, Kloba, Stanford, Kagi, Stonier, Appleton, Goodman, Gregerson, Kilduff, Doglio, Peterson, Tharinger, Frame, Slatter, and Stambaugh

Read first time 01/15/18. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving access and completion for students
2 at public institutions of higher education, especially at community
3 and technical colleges, by removing restrictions on subsidized child
4 care; amending RCW 43.215.135, 43.216.135, and 43.216.135; creating a
5 new section; providing effective dates; and providing expiration
6 dates.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes the
9 following:

10 (a) In Washington, over four thousand six hundred community and
11 technical college (CTC) students, which represents twenty-three
12 percent of all CTC students in the state, are parents of dependent
13 children. Student parents represent more than one-quarter of CTC
14 students in Washington who receive financial aid. Financial
15 assistance; however, does not sufficiently cover many student
16 parents' college expenses.

17 (b) Caregiving demands affect student parents' ability to devote
18 the time needed to succeed in school. Nearly three-quarters of women
19 community college students living with dependents report spending
20 over twenty hours per week caring for dependents. Many of these
21 students report that care demands are likely to lead them to drop

1 out: Forty-three percent of women and thirty-seven percent of men at
2 two-year institutions who live with children say they are likely or
3 very likely to withdraw from college to care for dependents.

4 (c) In addition, child care costs represent a large financial
5 burden for parents who are in college. The annual cost of full-time,
6 center-based infant care averages over thirteen thousand dollars in
7 Washington, which would amount to half of the median state income for
8 single parents. Given the financial pressures experienced by student
9 parents, both married and single, assistance with paying for quality
10 child care services could dramatically improve their ability to make
11 ends meet and complete their higher education programs.

12 (d) Research suggests that child care helps parents persist in
13 and complete higher education programs. A study at Monroe Community
14 College in New York found that Monroe students with children under
15 the age of six who used the campus child care center were more likely
16 to return to school the following year than their counterparts who
17 did not use the center: Sixty-eight percent compared with fifty-one
18 percent. Parents who used child care were also nearly three times
19 more likely to graduate or go on to pursue a bachelor of arts degree
20 within three years of enrollment: Forty-one percent compared with
21 only fifteen percent.

22 (e) Work requirements imposed on student parents as a condition
23 for receiving child care assistance can have negative consequences
24 for parents in education or job training. Students working more than
25 fifteen hours per week achieve significantly lower college attainment
26 compared with those who work fewer hours. Nationally, fifty-eight
27 percent of community college student parents who work fifteen or more
28 hours per week leave school without earning a credential within six
29 years of enrollment, compared with forty-eight percent who work less
30 than fifteen hours per week.

31 (2) The legislature also recognizes that school districts across
32 Washington report that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find
33 K-12 certificated teachers not only in areas that have experienced
34 shortages for many years, but also teachers with elementary education
35 and early childhood endorsements. In 2016, legislation passed to help
36 address the issue of teacher shortage by, among other things,
37 providing one-time funding for a recruitment campaign and grants and
38 scholarships for new teachers. The legislature recognizes that
39 reducing the teacher shortage is necessary to be able to provide
40 basic education to Washington students.

1 (3) Therefore, the legislature intends to:

2 (a) Improve access and completion rates of student parents
3 enrolled in community and technical colleges by reducing existing
4 restrictions to subsidized child care; and

5 (b) Address the teacher shortage in the state by allowing
6 students receiving working connections child care program benefits to
7 pursue certificates and degrees in teaching, paraeducation, and early
8 childhood education, without losing their working connections child
9 care program benefits.

10 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.215.135 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 7 s 6 are each
11 amended to read as follows:

12 (1) The department shall establish and implement policies in the
13 working connections child care program to promote stability and
14 quality of care for children from low-income households. These
15 policies shall focus on supporting school readiness for young
16 learners. Policies for the expenditure of funds constituting the
17 working connections child care program must be consistent with the
18 outcome measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 and the standards
19 established in this section intended to promote stability, quality,
20 and continuity of early care and education programming.

21 (2) As recommended by Public Law 113-186, authorizations for the
22 working connections child care subsidy shall be effective for twelve
23 months beginning July 1, 2016, unless an earlier date is provided in
24 the omnibus appropriations act.

25 (3) Existing child care providers serving nonschool-age children
26 and receiving state subsidy payments must complete the following
27 requirements to be eligible for a state subsidy under this section:

28 (a) Enroll in the early achievers program by August 1, 2016;

29 (b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program by
30 August 1, 2017; and

31 (c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program by
32 December 31, 2019. If a child care provider rates below a level 3 by
33 December 31, 2019, the provider must complete remedial activities
34 with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher no later than
35 June 30, 2020.

36 (4) Effective July 1, 2016, a new child care provider serving
37 nonschool-age children and receiving state subsidy payments must
38 complete the following activities to be eligible to receive a state
39 subsidy under this section:

1 (a) Enroll in the early achievers program within thirty days of
2 receiving the initial state subsidy payment;

3 (b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program
4 within twelve months of enrollment; and

5 (c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program
6 within thirty months of enrollment. If a child care provider rates
7 below a level 3 within thirty months from enrollment into the early
8 achievers program, the provider must complete remedial activities
9 with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher within six
10 months of beginning remedial activities.

11 (5) If a child care provider does not rate at a level 3 or higher
12 following the remedial period, the provider is no longer eligible to
13 receive state subsidy under this section.

14 (6) If a child care provider serving nonschool-age children and
15 receiving state subsidy payments has successfully completed all level
16 2 activities and is waiting to be rated by the deadline provided in
17 this section, the provider may continue to receive a state subsidy
18 pending the successful completion of the level 3 rating activity.

19 (7) The department shall implement tiered reimbursement for early
20 achievers program participants in the working connections child care
21 program rating at level 3, 4, or 5.

22 (8) The department shall account for a child care copayment
23 collected by the provider from the family for each contracted slot
24 and establish the copayment fee by rule.

25 (9) By January 1, 2019, the department shall:

26 (a) In consultation with the state board for community and
27 technical colleges and the student achievement council, revise any
28 rules that require applicants or consumers who are not participating
29 in WorkFirst to work at least an average of twenty or more hours per
30 week, or at least an average of sixteen hours or more per week in a
31 federal or state work-study program, as a condition of receiving
32 working connections child care program benefits. The rules must be
33 revised to eliminate the work requirement as a condition of receiving
34 working connections child care program benefits; and

35 (b) Revise any rules regarding the types of certificate and
36 degree programs that applicants and consumers may pursue while
37 receiving working connections child care program benefits, to include
38 certificates and degrees in early childhood education, paraeducation,
39 and teaching.

1 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.216.135 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 7 s 6 are each
2 amended to read as follows:

3 (1) The department shall establish and implement policies in the
4 working connections child care program to promote stability and
5 quality of care for children from low-income households. These
6 policies shall focus on supporting school readiness for young
7 learners. Policies for the expenditure of funds constituting the
8 working connections child care program must be consistent with the
9 outcome measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 and the standards
10 established in this section intended to promote stability, quality,
11 and continuity of early care and education programming.

12 (2) As recommended by Public Law 113-186, authorizations for the
13 working connections child care subsidy shall be effective for twelve
14 months beginning July 1, 2016, unless an earlier date is provided in
15 the omnibus appropriations act.

16 (3) Existing child care providers serving nonschool-age children
17 and receiving state subsidy payments must complete the following
18 requirements to be eligible for a state subsidy under this section:

19 (a) Enroll in the early achievers program by August 1, 2016;

20 (b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program by
21 August 1, 2017; and

22 (c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program by
23 December 31, 2019. If a child care provider rates below a level 3 by
24 December 31, 2019, the provider must complete remedial activities
25 with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher no later than
26 June 30, 2020.

27 (4) Effective July 1, 2016, a new child care provider serving
28 nonschool-age children and receiving state subsidy payments must
29 complete the following activities to be eligible to receive a state
30 subsidy under this section:

31 (a) Enroll in the early achievers program within thirty days of
32 receiving the initial state subsidy payment;

33 (b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program
34 within twelve months of enrollment; and

35 (c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program
36 within thirty months of enrollment. If a child care provider rates
37 below a level 3 within thirty months from enrollment into the early
38 achievers program, the provider must complete remedial activities
39 with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher within six
40 months of beginning remedial activities.

1 (5) If a child care provider does not rate at a level 3 or higher
2 following the remedial period, the provider is no longer eligible to
3 receive state subsidy under this section.

4 (6) If a child care provider serving nonschool-age children and
5 receiving state subsidy payments has successfully completed all level
6 2 activities and is waiting to be rated by the deadline provided in
7 this section, the provider may continue to receive a state subsidy
8 pending the successful completion of the level 3 rating activity.

9 (7) The department shall implement tiered reimbursement for early
10 achievers program participants in the working connections child care
11 program rating at level 3, 4, or 5.

12 (8) The department shall account for a child care copayment
13 collected by the provider from the family for each contracted slot
14 and establish the copayment fee by rule.

15 (9) By January 1, 2019, the department shall:

16 (a) In consultation with the state board for community and
17 technical colleges and the student achievement council, revise any
18 rules that require applicants or consumers who are not participating
19 in WorkFirst to work at least an average of twenty or more hours per
20 week, or at least an average of sixteen hours or more per week in a
21 federal or state work-study program, as a condition of receiving
22 working connections child care program benefits. The rules must be
23 revised to eliminate the work requirement as a condition of receiving
24 working connections child care program benefits; and

25 (b) Revise any rules regarding the types of certificate and
26 degree programs that applicants and consumers may pursue while
27 receiving working connections child care program benefits, to include
28 certificates and degrees in early childhood education, paraeducation,
29 and teaching.

30 **Sec. 4.** RCW 43.216.135 and 2017 3rd sp.s. c 9 s 2 are each
31 amended to read as follows:

32 (1) The department shall establish and implement policies in the
33 working connections child care program to promote stability and
34 quality of care for children from low-income households. These
35 policies shall focus on supporting school readiness for young
36 learners. Policies for the expenditure of funds constituting the
37 working connections child care program must be consistent with the
38 outcome measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 and the standards

1 established in this section intended to promote stability, quality,
2 and continuity of early care and education programming.

3 (2) As recommended by Public Law 113-186, authorizations for the
4 working connections child care subsidy shall be effective for twelve
5 months beginning July 1, 2016, unless an earlier date is provided in
6 the omnibus appropriations act.

7 (3) Existing child care providers serving nonschool-age children
8 and receiving state subsidy payments must complete the following
9 requirements to be eligible for a state subsidy under this section:

10 (a) Enroll in the early achievers program by August 1, 2016;

11 (b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program by
12 August 1, 2017; and

13 (c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program by
14 December 31, 2019. If a child care provider rates below a level 3 by
15 December 31, 2019, the provider must complete remedial activities
16 with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher no later than
17 June 30, 2020.

18 (4) Effective July 1, 2016, a new child care provider serving
19 nonschool-age children and receiving state subsidy payments must
20 complete the following activities to be eligible to receive a state
21 subsidy under this section:

22 (a) Enroll in the early achievers program within thirty days of
23 receiving the initial state subsidy payment;

24 (b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program
25 within twelve months of enrollment; and

26 (c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program
27 within thirty months of enrollment. If a child care provider rates
28 below a level 3 within thirty months from enrollment into the early
29 achievers program, the provider must complete remedial activities
30 with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher within six
31 months of beginning remedial activities.

32 (5) If a child care provider does not rate at a level 3 or higher
33 following the remedial period, the provider is no longer eligible to
34 receive state subsidy under this section.

35 (6) If a child care provider serving nonschool-age children and
36 receiving state subsidy payments has successfully completed all level
37 2 activities and is waiting to be rated by the deadline provided in
38 this section, the provider may continue to receive a state subsidy
39 pending the successful completion of the level 3 rating activity.

1 (7) The department shall implement tiered reimbursement for early
2 achievers program participants in the working connections child care
3 program rating at level 3, 4, or 5.

4 (8) The department shall account for a child care copayment
5 collected by the provider from the family for each contracted slot
6 and establish the copayment fee by rule.

7 (9) The department shall establish and implement policies in the
8 working connections child care program to allow eligibility for
9 families with children who:

10 (a) In the last six months have:

11 (i) Received child protective services as defined and used by
12 chapters 26.44 and 74.13 RCW;

13 (ii) Received child welfare services as defined and used by
14 chapter 74.13 RCW; or

15 (iii) Received services through a family assessment response as
16 defined and used by chapter 26.44 RCW;

17 (b) Have been referred for child care as part of the family's
18 case management as defined by RCW 74.13.020; and

19 (c) Are residing with a biological parent or guardian.

20 (10) Children who are eligible for working connections child care
21 pursuant to subsection (9) of this section do not have to keep
22 receiving services through the department of social and health
23 services to maintain twelve-month authorization. The department of
24 social and health services' involvement with the family referred for
25 working connections child care ends when the family's child
26 protective services, child welfare services, or family assessment
27 response case is closed.

28 (11) By January 1, 2019, the department shall:

29 (a) In consultation with the state board for community and
30 technical colleges and the student achievement council, revise any
31 rules that require applicants or consumers who are not participating
32 in WorkFirst to work at least an average of twenty or more hours per
33 week, or at least an average of sixteen hours or more per week in a
34 federal or state work-study program, as a condition of receiving
35 working connections child care program benefits. The rules must be
36 revised to eliminate the work requirement as a condition of receiving
37 working connections child care program benefits; and

38 (b) Revise any rules regarding the types of certificate and
39 degree programs that applicants and consumers may pursue while
40 receiving working connections child care program benefits, to include

1 certificates and degrees in early childhood education, paraeducation,
2 and teaching.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Section 2 of this act expires July 1,
4 2018.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Section 3 of this act takes effect July 1,
6 2018.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Section 3 of this act expires December 1,
8 2018.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Section 4 of this act takes effect
10 December 1, 2018.

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