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## Human Services & Early Learning Committee

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### HB 2455

**Brief Description:** Supporting access to child care for parents who are attending high school or working toward completion of a high school equivalency certificate.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kilduff, Eslick, Senn, Ryu, Kloba, Valdez, Bergquist, Davis, Pollet, Goodman and Wylie; by request of Office of Financial Management.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows Working Connections Child Care eligibility for a parent attending high school or pursuing a high school equivalency who has an income at or below 85 percent of the state median income.
- Requires school districts to provide transportation upon request for parenting students who are transporting an infant.

**Hearing Date:** 1/17/20

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

#### Background:

##### Working Connections Child Care.

The Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program is a subsidized child care program administered by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). To receive authorizations for 12 months of child care subsidy, eligible families must have household incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG) at the time of application. Two hundred percent of the 2019 FPG is \$42,660 for a household of three.

The WCCC program is partially funded by the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The CCDF rules allow states to set the maximum household income eligibility for

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child care subsidy at 85 percent of the state's median income (SMI). In Washington, 85 percent of the SMI is \$65,520 for a household of three.

Depending on income and household size, the participant may be required to pay a copayment to their child care provider. A participant pays the minimum copayment of \$15 per month when he or she is a minor parent and is either a recipient of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or part of his or her parent or relative's TANF assistance unit.

The DCYF determines household size based on criteria adopted in rule. For a single parent, including a minor parent living independently, the DCYF counts the parent and the children in the household. If both parents are living in the household, both parents are counted and must be working or participating in a DCYF-approved activity to qualify for the WCCC. Approved activities may include satisfactory attendance at a high school or a high school equivalency program.

#### School District Transportation.

School districts may provide for the transportation of school children and school employees using school buses and drivers hired by the district, commercially chartered bus services, or through a pupil transportation services contract with a private nongovernmental entity. School districts may, when approved by the superintendent of an educational service district, approve payment for individual transportation arrangements for an eligible student.

Federal motor vehicle safety standards (FMVSS) adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regulate motor vehicle restraint systems for children as well as safety requirements for school buses. The FMVSS require small school buses and school-chartered buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or less to have lap/shoulder seat belt assemblies. For large school buses with a GVWR of more than 10,000 pounds, seat belts are not required under federal rules.

State law requires a child to be properly secured in a rear-facing child restraint system until the child is 2 years old or reaches the weight or height limit of the child restraint system set by the manufacturer. State child restraint system laws do not apply to school buses.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### Working Connections Child Care.

The DCYF must authorize full-day WCCC during the school year for a parent who is attending high school or working toward completing a high school equivalency certificate and has a household income of no more than 85 percent of the state median income. The parent must participate in at least 110 hours of an approved activity per month in order to receive full-day care.

When determining eligibility, the DCYF may not consider the availability of the other biological parent when authorizing care and may not require the parent to pay a copayment.

##### School District Transportation.

By July 1, 2021, at the request of an eligible student, a school district may allow the student to transport an infant on a school bus or other district transportation. The infant must be transported in a rear-facing child restraint system.

If the district denies a student request to transport the infant by bus, the district must authorize other arrangements for the student's transportation. An "eligible student" is defined as any student served by the transportation program of a school district or compensated for individual transportation arrangements whose route stop is outside the walk area for a student's school, except if the student to be transported is disabled.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 14, 2020.

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