
Human Services & Early Learning Committee

HB 2865

Brief Description: Informing families of kindergarten readiness standards.

Sponsors: Representatives Chambers, Shewmake, Dent, McCaslin, Callan, Gildon, Senn and Eslick.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires state agencies to provide kindergarten readiness information to certain households with 3 and 4-year-old children.

Hearing Date: 2/4/20

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

Background:

Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills.

The Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKids) is a kindergarten readiness assessment administered to students enrolled in state-funded full-day kindergarten. The WaKids assessment is administered by teachers near the beginning of the school year and is used to connect teachers with families and to determine a child's skills in six domains:

- social-emotional;
- physical;
- cognitive;
- language;
- literacy; and
- mathematics.

Parents may excuse their children from participating in the assessment. In the 2017-18 school year, just over 46 percent of entering kindergarteners who participated in the assessment

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demonstrated kindergarten readiness in all six domains. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) notifies school districts of the requirement to implement WaKids and provides schools with guidance related to administering WaKids.

Child Profile.

The Department of Health (DOH) administers the Child Profile Health Promotion System (Child Profile), a program that mails age-specific information to parents of children under the age of 6. The materials include age-specific reminders for parents about well-child checkups and immunizations.

Apple Health for Kids.

The Health Care Authority (HCA) administers Apple Health, the state-federal Medicaid program that provides health care for eligible low-income individuals. Apple Health for Kids is available at low or no cost for children whose families meet income eligibility criteria.

Summary of Bill:

The OSPI must develop guidelines for families that describe the typical skills and characteristics of kindergarten-ready children that are assessed by WaKids. The guidelines must be reviewed annually, updated as needed, and posted on the OSPI website by July 15 each year.

The OSPI must provide an electronic brochure of the guidelines at no cost to state agencies that provide or contract for direct services for parents, caregivers of dependent children, and guardians of 3 and 4-year-olds, including the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the DOH, and the HCA.

The DCYF must annually provide the guidelines to all parents, caregivers of dependent children in out-of-home care, and guardians of 3 and 4-year-olds served by the DCYF and DCYF contractors.

The DSHS must annually provide the guidelines to all parents, caregivers of dependent children in out-of-home care, and guardians of 3 and 4-year-olds eligible for and receiving public assistance.

The DOH must annually include the guidelines in Child Profile health promotion materials sent to households with 3 and 4-year-old children.

The HCA must annually provide the guidelines to all parents, caregivers of dependent children in out-of-home care, and guardians of 3 and 4-year-olds enrolled in the Apple Health for Kids program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

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