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**HOUSE BILL 1451**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Senn, Harris, Fitzgibbon, Santos, Berry, Callan, Ortiz-Self, Chapman, Springer, Schmidt, Bergquist, Ryu, Abbarno, Reeves, Reed, Doglio, Fosse, Eslick, Pollet, Davis, Macri, Goodman, Leavitt, Cortes, and Simmons

AN ACT Relating to expanding the child care workforce; adding a new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 43.216 RCW; creating a new section; and providing expiration dates.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Like other states around the country, there is a child care workforce crisis in Washington state. High school students who already provide child care for young siblings and neighbors should be able to turn that experience into a rewarding career in an in-demand field. As we expand access to high quality child care in Washington, the opportunities in the child care industry will continue to increase. Therefore, the legislature intends to grow and support the pipeline of child care workers and nurture the development of new child care providers.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.630 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall establish a child care worker pilot program as described in this section. The purpose of the program is to support and promote opportunities for students to earn credit and experience by participating in courses and hands-on work practices as part of the early childhood development and services career pathway of career and technical education.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall select:

(a) Two or fewer public high schools that offer established courses in the early childhood development and services career pathway for the purpose of consulting with the applicable schools and districts and developing model materials to be employed by other school districts with an interest in establishing or expanding similar instructional offerings to students; and

(b) Four or fewer school districts that choose to participate in the child care worker pilot program during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years. Participating school districts must agree to establish or expand student instruction in courses that are part of the early childhood development and services career pathway of career and technical education, and preference shall be given to school districts that have or are pursuing career launch programs under chapter 28C.30 RCW.

(3) School districts participating in the child care worker pilot program established in this section must:

(a) Coordinate background checks for participating students;

(b) Connect students with local community colleges offering coursework in early learning that meets early achievers requirements under chapter 43.216 RCW;

(c) Coordinate with organizations that support access to high quality child care and early learning programs for the purpose of supporting students in professional settings and communicating with child care providers;

(d) Provide a stipend or hourly wage to the students; and

(e) Support efforts of qualifying students to earn dual credit, work credit, or both.

(4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall:

(a) Administer a grant program to provide grants to eligible school districts that participate in the child care worker pilot program;

(b) Establish requirements for the application and grant award process, the number of awards, and the authorized use of grant funds; and

(c) Begin distributing funds by September 1, 2023, with the distribution of funds completed by September 1, 2024.

(5) At a minimum, to be eligible for grant funding, a school district must:

(a) Describe how the funds would be used to establish or expand the early childhood development and services career pathway of career and technical education;

(b) Demonstrate community support for the established or expanded instructional offerings, including describing the actual or perceived need and efforts to coordinate instructional offerings with community colleges, child care providers, and organizations that support access to high quality child care and early learning programs; and

(c) Agree to coordinate and collaborate with other school districts participating in the child care worker pilot program.

(6) Grant recipients must submit information to the office of the superintendent of public instruction by September 1, 2024, and September 1, 2025, detailing the use of grant funds.

(7) By November 10, 2025, and in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall report to the appropriate committees of the legislature with findings from and recommendations regarding the child care worker pilot program, including whether the program should be extended, expanded, or both, a compilation of the use of grant funds as reported under subsection (5) of this section, and options for further supporting and promoting opportunities for students to earn credit and experience by participating in the early childhood development and services career pathway of career and technical education.

(8) This section expires July 1, 2026.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.216 RCW to read as follows:

(1) By December 1, 2023, the department must develop and publish on its website a model program manual for a program to assist middle and high school-aged youth who routinely care for younger relatives, such as siblings, cousins, nieces and nephews, and other young children while those children's parents are away at work or school. In developing the manual, the department must consult with organizations that currently operate similar, well-established programs.

(2) The manual must contain guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) Providing key curriculum covering topics such as child development, nutrition, and home safety;

(b) Incorporating elements of experiential learning and peer learning and support;

(c) Proficiency with cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid; and

(d) The benefits of partnering with community-based organizations to provide program content and reach youth most in need of the program.

(3) This section expires July 1, 2025.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.216 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The department must develop detailed recommendations regarding ways to utilize funds, in line with the spending goals and strategies under RCW 43.216.772(1)(i), to continue to expand the substitute pool for child care and early learning providers and provide additional career coaching to substitute providers.

(2) The department must provide a report with relevant data to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2023, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, detailing the recommendations developed under subsection (1) of this section and including an update as to any milestones achieved as of the reporting date and projections for achievement of future goals.

(3) This section expires July 1, 2025.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.216 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department must administer a grant program to provide grants to one or more organizations that focus on working with child care workers to establish new affordable, high quality child care and early learning programs. The department must establish requirements for the application and grant award process, the number of awards, and the authorized use of grant funds, and must begin distributing funds by September 1, 2023.

(2) At a minimum, to be eligible for grant funding, an organization must:

(a) Provide professional development services for child care providers and early childhood educators, including training and mentorship programs;

(b) Provide resources to assist with child care provider and facility licensing;

(c) Contribute to or host a system of shared resources and consulting related to operating a child care business; and

(d) Facilitate a substitute child care provider program.

(3) Grant recipients must provide information to the department by October 1, 2024, detailing the use of grant funds.

(4) The department must compile the information submitted by grantees under subsection (3) of this section and provide a report on the grant program and use of funds to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2024, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036.

(5) This section expires July 1, 2026.

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