

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1451

As Reported by House Committee On:
Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning

Title: An act relating to expanding the child care workforce.

Brief Description: Expanding the child care workforce.

Sponsors: 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.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning: 1/31/23, 2/7/23 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to establish a child care worker pilot program.
- Requires the OSPI to work with qualifying schools to develop model materials that can be used by other districts with an interest in establishing or expanding early childhood development instructional offerings to students.
- Requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to contract with an early learning organization to develop a model program manual for a program to assist middle and high school aged youth who routinely care for younger relatives or other children.
- Requires the DCYF to develop detailed recommendations to utilize funds to expand the substitute pool for child care and early learning providers and provide additional support to substitute providers.
- Requires the DCYF to contract with an organization to establish new affordable high quality child care and early learning programs.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, YOUTH, & EARLY LEARNING

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Cortes, Vice Chair; Taylor, Vice Chair; Eslick, Ranking Minority Member; Callan, Goodman, Ortiz-Self and Rule.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Couture, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dent and Walsh.

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) oversees school districts and educational service districts that provide institutional education services. As part of its duties, the OSPI has numerous and broad responsibilities prescribed in statute, including:

- making rules and regulations necessary for the administration of public education requirements;
- preparing courses of study and other materials and books for the discharge of education duties;
- fulfilling financial responsibilities, including distributing legislatively allocated funds to districts for the operation of the public school system, and awarding numerous state and federally funded grants; and
- satisfying numerous reporting and other duties assigned by the Legislature.

Career and Technical Education.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs support local middle and high school programs that provide academic and technical skills for all students. Teachers participate in the professional development of curricula and instruction, standards and assessment, and academic integration. Every CTE course is approved by the OSPI. The CTE classes fall into one of 16 career clusters, which are groupings of jobs and industries that are related by skills or products. The Human Services Career Cluster is organized into seven career pathways, including an early childhood development and services pathway.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is responsible for overseeing the state's programs related to children and youth, including child welfare, juvenile rehabilitation, and child care and early learning. In its child care and early learning portfolio, the DCYF is responsible for regulating and licensing child care businesses, administering the state's child care subsidy program, Working Connections Child Care, as well as various state-funded early learning programs, including the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and the Birth-to-Three ECEAP program, among others. The DCYF also administers the Early Achievers program, which is the

state's quality rating and improvement system for child care and early learning programs.

Legislation enacted in 2021 established the Fair Start for Kids Account (Account), allowing expenditures exclusively for child care and early learning purposes. A number of spending goals and strategies are outlined for the Account. Among these goals and strategies is providing professional development opportunities and supporting the substitute pool for child care and early learning providers.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Child Care Worker Pilot Program.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must select one or two high schools that offer established courses in the Career and Technical Education 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. The model materials must be developed by January 1, 2024.

The OSPI must establish a child care worker pilot program (Pilot Program) to promote opportunities for students to earn credit and experience by participating in courses and hands-on work practices in early childhood development and child care services.

The OSPI must select up to four school districts that choose to participate in the child care worker Pilot Program during the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years. Participating school districts must agree to employ a program based on the model materials, and preference must be given to school districts that have or are pursuing career launch programs.

The OSPI must provide grants to the school districts selected for the Pilot Program; establish requirements for the grant application and award process, the number of awards, and the authorized use of funds; and begin distributing funds by September 1, 2024, with the distribution of funds completed by September 1, 2025.

To be eligible, a school district must, at a minimum:

- describe how Pilot Program funds would be used to employ a program based on the model materials;
- demonstrate community support for the program, 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
- agree to coordinate and collaborate with other school districts participating in the Pilot Program.

School districts participating in the Pilot Program are responsible for:

- coordinating background checks for participating students;
- providing a stipend or hourly wage to the students;
- supporting efforts of qualifying students to earn dual credit, work credit, or both;
- facilitating additional training relevant to early childhood education certification if desired by students, including connecting students with local community colleges offering relevant coursework; and
- partnering with, and providing funding to, an early learning organization to: (1) identify sites and match students with programs that will partner with the school district; (2) support participating child care providers and students; (3) provide incentives to child care educators; and (4) provide feedback about curriculum.

School districts participating in the Pilot Program must submit information to the OSPI by September 1, 2025, and September 1, 2026, detailing the use of grant funds. By November 10, 2026, the OSPI must report to the appropriate committees of the Legislature with findings from and recommendations regarding the Pilot Program, including: (1) whether the program is meeting the early learning community's needs and should be extended, expanded, or both; (2) a compilation of the use of grant funds; and (3) options for further supporting and promoting opportunities for students to earn credit and relevant experience.

Model Program Manual for Youth Caregivers.

By December 1, 2023, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) must contract with an early learning organization to develop 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. The program manual must be completed by July 1, 2024.

The manual must contain guidance regarding:

- providing key curriculum covering topics such as child development, nutrition, and home safety;
- incorporating elements of experiential learning and peer learning and support;
- proficiency with cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid; and
- the benefits of partnering with community-based organizations to provide program content and reach youth most in need of the program.

The DCYF must provide training and technical assistance to community-based programs wishing to implement the program.

Supporting and Expanding Availability of Substitute Child Care Providers.

The DCYF must develop detailed recommendations regarding ways to utilize funds, in line with the spending goals and strategies identified for the Fair Start for Kids Account, to continue to expand the substitute pool for child care and early learning providers and provide additional career coaching to substitute providers. In its recommendations, the DCYF must include options for offering grants, scholarships, or other financial assistance to

assist substitute providers in obtaining certificates or higher education degrees in early childhood education that will enable them to secure permanent employment in the child care and early learning field.

The DCYF must provide a report with relevant data to Legislature by December 1, 2023, detailing the recommendations and including an update as to any milestones achieved as of the reporting date and projections for achievement of future goals.

Supporting Efforts to Establish New Child Care and Early Learning Programs.

The DCYF must by September 1, 2023, contract with an organization that provides relationship-based professional development support to child care providers to expand the child care workforce and establish new affordable high quality child care and early learning programs.

At a minimum, to be eligible to be awarded a contract, an organization must:

- provide professional development services for child care providers and early childhood educators, including training and mentorship programs;
- provide mentorship and other services to assist with child care provider and facility licensing;
- administer or host a system of shared services and consulting related to operating a child care business; and
- administer a state-sponsored substitute pool of substitute child care providers.

The DCYF must compile and make available by December 1, 2024, information regarding the outcome of the contract, including the number of new child care businesses and additional child care slots created, the substitute hours provided, and the number of substitute child care providers who have entered into full-time employment in the child care industry.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Changes are made to the child care worker pilot program (Pilot Program), including: (1) requiring that the model materials are developed by January 1, 2024, and that school districts participating in the Pilot Program employ a program in alignment with the model materials (rather than establish or expand student instruction in courses that are part of the early childhood development and services career pathway of career and technical education); (2) moving the start date of the Pilot Program to the 2024-25 school year, rather than the 2023-24 school year; and (3) requiring participating school districts to partner with an early learning organization and provide funding to that organization to perform specified functions, including identifying child care sites to partner with the school district, and providing support to students, providing support and incentives to participating child care organizations, and providing feedback about the program curriculum.

Changes are made to the provision requiring the Department of Children, Youth, and

Families (DCYF) to develop a model program manual for youth who care for younger relatives to: (1) require the DCYF to contract with an early learning organization to develop the manual; (2) describe the purpose of the program; (3) require a completion date of July 1, 2024; and (4) require the DCYF to provide training and technical assistance to community-based programs wishing to implement the program.

The requirement that the DCYF develop detailed recommendations related to utilizing funding to increase and support substitute providers is modified to add that the DCYF must include options for offering financial assistance to assist substitute providers in obtaining certificates or higher education degrees in early childhood education to enable them to secure permanent employment.

Instead of administering a grant program to establish new affordable high quality child care and early learning programs, the DCYF must instead contract with an organization that provides relationship-based professional support to child care providers to fulfill this purpose. The reporting requirement is replaced with a requirement for the DCYF to compile and make information available regarding the outcome of the contract.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available. New fiscal note requested on February 7, 2023.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) There is not enough child care, and there are also not enough workers. This bill is a child care workforce pipeline bill that covers: (1) skill building for young people who are taking care of their siblings; (2) high school training and connection with community colleges where students can obtain stacking early childhood education certificates and enter into working in the child care and early learning industry; and also substitute pools with more senior workers who are supported to get permanent work and perhaps open a child care business. Based on current data, many children do not have their care needs met. Child care is needed in order for parents to obtain meaningful employment outside the home. There is a Brothers and Sisters program designed for middle and high school youth who take care of younger siblings, which has been widely used in historically marginalized communities and in families with children with special needs. The program is highly beneficial and gets participants thinking about working in this industry in the future. There is a current program in Tacoma placing high school interns in child care sites through which interns are introduced to the early learning field and gain mentorship. The participants may also be hired into programs, or pursue early childhood education through Early Achievers

program scholarships. Another current program supports and helps create new child care businesses through a system of shared services, a substitute pool, and technical resources and support. All of these programs should be made more widely available.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Tana Senn, prime sponsor; Anthony Varela, Veterans Legislative Coalition; and Pauli Owen, Sarah Brady, and Zivit Shecter Nissim, Child Care Resources.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.