

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Article 1: Early Childhood Education, Prevention, Self-Sufficiency, and Lifelong Learning Overview

This article provides for early childhood education, prevention, self-sufficiency, and lifelong learning programs.

Section

- 1 **Early childhood health and development screening; purpose.** Amends § 121A.16. Requires charter schools that elect to provide a screening program to comply with the requirements of the early childhood health and development screening program.
- 2 **Developmental screening program information.** Amends § 121A.17, subd. 5. Requires charter schools that provide screening to inform families that apply for admission to the charter school.
- 3 **Federal, state, and local requirements.** Amends § 124D.10, subd. 8. Requires charter schools that provide early childhood health and developmental screening to comply with the requirements of the program.
- 4 **Membership; duties.** Amends § 124D.141, subd. 1. Adds the commissioner of health, or the commissioner's designee, to the membership of the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care.

5 **Additional duties.** Amends § 124D.141, subd. 2. Modifies the duties of the council by providing additional direction to the council regarding making recommendations on how to coordinate or co-locate early childhood and child care programs into one state Office of Early Learning and adding requirements that the council make recommendations to the governor and the legislature on creating a statewide school readiness report card and on how to screen and comprehensively assess children for school readiness. Lists items the council shall consider in making the recommendations. Allows the council to survey early childhood education and care programs to determine the screening and assessment tools being used or to rely on previously collected survey data, if available. For purposes of this subdivision, defines “school readiness,” “screening,” and “assessment.” Specifies that any costs incurred by the council in making these recommendations will be paid from private funds. Requires the council to report its recommendations to the governor and the legislature by January 15, 2012, with an interim report on February 15, 2011.

6 **Program requirements.** Amends § 124D.15, subd. 3. Modifies school readiness program requirements by removing the requirement to arrange for early childhood screening and appropriate referral.

7 **Program fees.** Amends § 124D.15, subd. 12. Requires school districts to use school readiness aid for eligible children. Allows children who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the program to participate on a fee-for-service basis.

8 **Eligibility.** Amends § 124D.15, by adding subd. 15. Specifies eligibility requirements for children to participate in school readiness programs.

9 **Uses of general revenue.** Amends § 124D.20, subd. 8. Allows general community education revenue to be used for school readiness programs. Makes technical changes.

Article 2: Child Care

Overview

This article contains provisions related to child care assistance.

1 **Factors which must be verified.** Amends § 119B.025, subd. 1. Defers redetermination of eligibility beyond six months, but not to exceed 12 months, for students who are under age 21 and meet certain other criteria.

 Adds paragraph (d), which specifies that families have the primary responsibility to verify information. Requires counties to consider the family’s circumstances and ability to produce verification when initiating a request for verification. Requires counties to request written consent from the family to obtain verification from other sources if the family is unable to verify an eligibility factor. Prohibits counties from requesting a specific form of verification if another is more readily available. Requires counties to accept a signed statement from the family attesting to the correctness of the information when verification of certain eligibility factors is not available. Requires counties to deny or end assistance to families who refuse or deliberately fail to verify information.

Makes this section effective October 15, 2010.

2 **Eligibility; annual income; calculation.** Amends § 119B.09, subd. 4. Defers recalculation of income beyond six months, but not to exceed 12 months, for students who are under age 21 and meet certain other criteria.

Makes this section effective October 15, 2010.

3 **Quality rating system training, coaching, consultation, and supports.** Directs the commissioner of human services to direct \$500,000 in federal child care development funds in fiscal year 2011 for the purpose of providing statewide child care provider training, coaching, consultation, and supports to prepare for the Minnesota quality rating system. Specifies that this is a onetime appropriation. To the extent that private funds are made available, requires the commissioner to designate those funds for this purpose.

4 **Child care assistance redetermination of eligibility and information verification.** Requires the commissioner of human services to use existing resources to implement the changes in this bill related to child care assistance redetermination of eligibility and information verification.

5 **Child care development fund unexpended balance.** Requires the commissioner to carryover and expend in fiscal year 2011 \$7.5 million of the TANF funds transferred in fiscal year 2010 which reflect the child care and development fund unexpended balance for the basic sliding fee child care assistance program. Requires the commissioner to ensure that all the funds are expended according to the federal child care and development fund regulations related to TANF transfers.

6 **Basic sliding fee.** Reduces the fiscal year 2011 general fund appropriation for the basic sliding fee child care program by \$7.5 million.