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Overview

This bill makes various changes to the early learning scholarship program for early childhood programs.

Section

1 Early learning scholarships.

Subd. 1. Establishment; purpose. Places the program within the Office of Early Learning in the Department of Education.

Subd. 2. Family eligibility. Clarifies that early learning scholarships are not subject to wage withholdings for union dues or fair share fees.

Subd. 3. Administration. Removes a \$5,000 scholarship cap per person for early learning scholarships, requires establishment of average scholarship amounts based on market surveys or other information, allows scholarship amount adjustments for other assistance programs, permits scholarship increases for programs rated under the Parent Aware rating system (at up to 15 percent for three-star rated programs, and up to 20 percent for four-star programs), and makes conforming changes.

Subd. 4. Early childhood program eligibility. Eliminates a requirement that starting July 1, 2016, an early childhood program must have a three- or four-star Parent Aware rating to be eligible to receive scholarship funds.

Provides for eligibility of certain early childhood programs that are not participating in the Parent Aware rating system, based on:

Section

- ▶ by July 1, 2016, ongoing commitment to participate in the Parent Aware program; and
- ▶ after July 1, 2016, a hardship, special circumstance, or determination of eligibility under a special review.