

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H.F. 1220
Version: As introduced

DATE: March 7, 2015

Authors: Kresha and others

Subject: Clarifications regarding early learning scholarships

Analyst: Lisa Larson

This publication can be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please call 651-296-6753 (voice); or the Minnesota State Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY) for assistance. Summaries are also available on our website at: www.house.mn/hrd/.

Overview

Proposes to allow the education commissioner to increase the scholarship amount for children enrolled in a three-star or four-star Parent Aware-rated program. Allows the education commissioner, after awarding scholarships to all qualified families who applied, to award remaining funds to predetermined programs. Allows the education commissioner to determine a program is eligible to accept early learning scholarships based on an evidence-based program evaluation or program review. Appropriates unspecified general fund sums in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for early learning scholarships.

Section

1 Early learning scholarships.

Subd. 3. Administration. (b) Allows the education commissioner to increase by up to 15 percent the scholarship amount for children enrolled in a three-star Parent Aware-rated program and to increase by up to 20 percent the scholarship amount for children enrolled in a four-star Parent Aware-rated program as long as the added increase does not exceed the actual program rate or tuition.

(c) Allows the education commissioner, after awarding scholarships to all the qualified families who applied, to award any remaining scholarship funds to predetermined programs and to notify program providers of the scholarship funds. Requires scholarships awarded under this paragraph to be paid to the eligible program provider designated by the award recipient, and to be transferred to another eligible provider at the recipient's request.

Section

(f) Strikes language allowing a school district or Head Start program, for fiscal year 2017 and later, that enrolls scholarship recipients to apply to the education commissioner for direct payment of state aid for those scholarship recipients.

Subd. 4. Early childhood program eligibility. (a) To be eligible to accept an early learning scholarship, requires a program, among other alternatives, to be a program the commissioner determines is eligible based on an evidence-based program evaluation or program review.

Makes this section effective for fiscal year 2016 and later.

- 2** **Early learning scholarships.** Appropriates unspecified general fund amounts in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to the education commissioner for early learning scholarships.