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### Overview

This bill creates a new director of early education and development position and codes a new chapter of law. The director of early education and development is required to develop early education program policies, align funding streams, manage data, and coordinate evaluation of early child care and education programs. The director will direct the commissioner of education on how to administer early education programs, and direct the commissioner of human services on how to administer the quality rating and improvement system (QRIS).

#### Section

- 1 **Definitions.** Defines the following terms:
  - ▶ “Commissioner” means the commissioner of administration.
  - ▶ “Department” means the Department of Administration.
  - ▶ “Director” means the director of early education and development.
  - ▶ “Early education programs” includes the school readiness program, voluntary prekindergarten program, early learning scholarship program, and Head Start program.
- 2 **Policy and purpose.** The purpose of chapter 119C is to establish an office to coordinate early education and development programs and funding.
- 3 **Director of early education and development.**

**Section**

**Subd. 1. Appointment.** Requires the governor to appoint the director of early education and development. Requires the commissioner to provide administrative services to the director.

**Subd. 2. Qualifications.** Establishes the qualifications of the director, who serves in the unclassified service for a term of four years, and may be removed for cause.

**Subd. 3. Compensation.** Requires the compensation of the director to be established in accordance with chapter 15A.

**Subd. 4. Duties; powers.** Establishes the duties of the director, including setting policy, coordinating programs, and serving as executive director of the Children's Cabinet. Authorizes the director to direct and control money, enter into agreements with other state agencies, direct the commissioner of education and the commissioner of human services on the administration of certain programs, and review certain data.

**Subd. 5. Coordination with other agencies.** Requires the director to coordinate program activities with the commissioner of human services and commissioner of education.

**4 Program administration.**

**Subd. 1. Other funds.** Allows the director to apply for federal funds, and accept donations.

**Subd. 2. Sliding fee.** Allows the director to charge a sliding fee for programs.

**Subd. 3. Accountability.** Requires a child enrolled in early education and development programs to receive a kindergarten readiness assessment.

**Subd. 4. Program aid guarantee.** Guarantees that a program under chapter 119C will receive at least the same funding in fiscal year 2018 and later as it did in fiscal year 2017.

**5 Aid limits.**

**Subd. 1. Director to establish limits.** Requires the director to limit the maximum aid a child may generate from a combination of programs based on family income level.

**Subd. 2. Aid limit effect.** Requires the director to reduce the aid to a child that generates aid that exceeds the aid limit.

**Subd. 3. Programs included in the limit.** Includes federal Head Start aids in the aid limit.

**Subd. 4. Limit waiver.** Allows the director to waive the aid limit in certain cases.

**6 Early education resource hubs.** Allows the director to establish education resource hubs throughout the state. Requires the director to contract with appropriate organizations to serve as resource hubs. The hubs must consult with program participant parents to develop strategies to support outreach to families, connection to resources, and program choice.

**7 Report required.** Requires the commissioner of human services and commissioner of education to submit a report to the legislature making recommendations on integrating

## Section

programs, aligning income eligibility requirements under different programs, reducing paperwork, increasing accountability and efficiency, and transferring responsibility for early education and development programs administered by the Department of Education, Department of Human Services, and Department of Health. The report must include data on aid received by children through a combination of programs.

### **8 Appropriations.**

**Subd. 1. Commissioner of education.** Appropriates funds from the general fund to the commissioner of education.

**Subd. 2. School readiness.** Appropriates \$33,683,000 in fiscal year 2018 and \$33,683,000 in fiscal year 2019 for school readiness.

**Subd. 3. Early learning scholarships.** Appropriates an unspecified amount of money for early learning scholarships for fiscal years 2018 and 2019.

**Subd. 4. Head Start program.** Appropriates \$25,100,000 in fiscal year 2018 and \$25,100,000 in fiscal year 2019 for Head Start programs.

**Subd. 5. Quality rating and improvement system.** Appropriates \$1,750,000 in fiscal year 2018 and \$1,750,000 in fiscal year 2019 for QRIS and to increase supports to providers participating in QRIS. Allows the director of early education and development to transfer money to the commissioner of human services for the QRIS.

**Subd. 6. Administrative coordination.** Requires the director to coordinate payments with the commissioner of education.

### **9 Appropriations.**

**Subd. 1. Commissioner of human services.** Appropriates funds from the general fund to the commissioner of human services.

**Subd. 2. Quality rating and improvement system.** Appropriates \$1,750,000 in FY 2018 and \$1,750,000 in FY 2019 for the QRIS.

### **10 Revisor's instruction.** Instructs the revisor to revise and codify programs transferred to the director of early education and development in chapter 119C.