

Subject Early learning scholarships program

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Overview

The early learning scholarships program helps low-income families with the cost of early care and learning programs. Under current law, scholarships are primarily directed at three- and four-year-old children in families with income less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level (\$55,500 in annual income for a family of four in 2023), but younger children may receive scholarships in certain circumstances.

This bill increases eligibility for scholarships to include all children under the age of five years old in families with income equal to or less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level (\$60,000 in annual income for a family of four in 2023). The bill also adds children to the scholarship priority list and increases the appropriation for scholarships to \$1,111,418,000 each biennium.

Summary

Section	Description
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| 1 | Family eligibility.
Increases eligibility for scholarships to include families with income equal to or less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Changes a child's eligibility for scholarships to include all children from birth through age four on September 1 of the current school year. |
| 2 | Administration.
Adds the following as priority groups for receiving scholarships: children who have an incarcerated parent or a parent in a substance use or mental health treatment program, children who have experienced domestic violence, and children with family income equal to or less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level. |
| 3 | Appropriations; early learning scholarships.
Appropriates \$555,709,000 in each of fiscal years 2024 and 2025 from the general fund for scholarships. This is \$485,000,000 over the current base for scholarships. |



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