

Subject Community education and early education programs for children in foster care; Northstar foster care child care allowance

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Overview

Under the Northstar foster care, kinship, and adoption assistance programs, each child is assessed to determine the benefits the child may receive under the program. This assessment must consider the caregiver's need for child care, resulting in a child care allowance. Currently, the child care allowance automatically reduces when a child reaches seven years of age – this bill removes this automatic reduction so that adjustments to the assessment levels are the same for all children under age 13.

The bill also adds or modifies enrollment and eligibility priorities for children in foster care for school-age community education before- and after-school programs, school readiness programs, early learning scholarships, and basic sliding fee child care assistance. Finally, the bill requires relevant agencies to provide more information to prospective child foster care provider licensees regarding foster care benefits, child care costs, and early childhood education programs.

Summary

Section	Description
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| 1 | School-age care programs; priority for children in foster care.
Amends § 124D.19 by adding subd. 13a. Requires each district operating a school-age community education program to give the highest priority for enrollment to children in foster care. |
| 2 | Community education; annual report.
Amends § 124D.19, subd. 14. Requires a district's annual report on community education to include information on its priority enrollment policies and compliance with the new subdivision 13a. |

Section	Description
3	<p>Child care allowance portion of assessment.</p> <p>Amends § 142A.607, subd. 4. For the child care allowance under Northstar foster care, kinship, or adoption assistance, removes the distinction between children younger than seven and children older than seven, so that the allowance is not automatically reduced for children older than seven.</p>
4	<p>Child foster care license application.</p> <p>Amends § 142B.06, subd. 5. Adds information a county or private child-placing agency must provide to a prospective relative foster care licensee, to include foster care benefits, child care costs, and early childhood education programs.</p>
5	<p>License holder qualifications for child in foster care.</p> <p>Amends § 142B.40, subd. 3. Adds paragraph (c) to require a child foster care licensing agency to explain the licensing process to a prospective licensee and provide information on foster care benefits, child care costs, and early childhood education programs.</p>
6	<p>Eligibility.</p> <p>Amends § 142D.05, subd. 8. Adds being in foster care to the risk factors determining a child’s eligibility for school readiness programs.</p>
7	<p>Applications; priorities.</p> <p>Amends § 142D.25, subd. 3. Moves children in foster care up to the second priority for early learning scholarships.</p>
8	<p>Funding priorities.</p> <p>Amends § 142E.04, subd. 4. For waiting lists for child care assistance under the basic sliding fee assistance program, makes eligible foster parents providing care to a child in foster care the third priority group.</p>



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