

Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission (ECSRLC) Bill Summaries

Early Childhood Educator Development Scholarship, LLS14-0146

There exists in statute an early childhood educator development scholarship that offers stipends to early childhood education workers for Associate degree (AA) tuition. With this bill, that law is expanded in two important ways. First, it allows individuals to apply for the scholarship if they are seeking a training certificate or degree higher than an AA, in a field related to early childhood education. Second, it allows the State Board of Education to award stipends to individuals who reflect the diversity of the children in the community. The bill authorizes the appropriation of state monies, including State Education Fund monies, to fund the scholarship program. This bill fits with the ECSRLC because in order to provide high-quality early childhood care and education for children age 0-5, it is essential that educators and caregivers obtain appropriate training and education.

Early Childhood Quality Incentive Program (ECQIP), LLS14-0147

The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) serves children in school districts and community sites across the state. To improve quality in these programs, this bill allows CPP sites to be rated to assess their quality, on a two-year cycle. A report will then be issued to each site identifying its rating from 1-5 and the changes needed to improve quality. Examples of changes include connecting families to mental health consultation and reducing group sizes and ratios to improve interactions between children and caregivers. This bill provides a financial incentive for the sites to make the necessary changes. If a program site is rated a 1, 2 or 3, it will receive a quality improvement grant to work on changing the program's quality. A program site that is rated a 4 or 5 will receive an additional per child reimbursement that is 10% or 20%, respectively, of the base per pupil revenue established for the CPP. The bill allows for funding from the State Education Fund. The bill fits the purpose of the ECSRLC to have children arrive at kindergarten thriving and ready to learn.

Child Care Assistance Authorization Period, LLS14-0148

The bill clarifies that if a child is enrolled in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP), the duration of the child care *authorization* notice, which authorizes payment of child care costs, aligns with the period for which the child's family is *eligible* for child care assistance. This alignment could improve the ability for a child to attend an early childhood program with less disruption in service time. Counties would reduce the number of families served by CCCAP if necessary to avoid overspending its child care block grant allocation for a fiscal year. This bill fits with the ECSRLC's intention to support families as much as possible while their child is in an early childhood program.

Linking Student Data Preschool to Kindergarten, LLS14-0149

This bill directs the Department of Education (CDE) to work with the Department of Human Services (CDHS) and the office of information technology (OIT) to establish *procedures* to link the student data collected by publicly funded early childhood education programs with the student data collected by school districts and public schools. The departments and the office must begin implementing the procedures by October 1, 2014. The department of education may receive State Education Fund moneys to implement the procedures. The bill fits with the ECSRLC purposes because it allows for the analysis of the success of publicly funded early childhood education programs, and it measures the return to the state on investments in early childhood education.