



# Colorado Legislative Council Staff

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## MEMORANDUM

July 14, 2014

**TO:** Members of the Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission

**FROM:** Lisa Gezelter, Research Analyst, 303-866-3264  
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**SUBJECT:** Commission Overview and Charge

This memorandum provides the following information regarding the Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission (ECSRLC):

- background and membership of the commission;
- the commission's statutory charge; and
- ECSRLC proposed legislation from 2009 to 2013.

### Background and Commission Membership

The Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission was created through the passage of House Bill 09-1343 and operated during the 2009 and 2011 interim sessions. During this time, the commission included ten legislative members and was required to meet at least six times per year to study issues concerning early childhood and school readiness. The commission repealed on July 1, 2012.

During the 2013 legislative session, the commission was re-created and the word "Legislative" was added to its name. The commission's membership was reduced to six legislative members with three members from each chamber representing the Education and the Health and Human Services committees of the General Assembly. The commission does not have non-legislative members.

The ECSRLC is chaired by a House member in even-numbered years and by a Senate member in odd-numbered years. For the 2014 interim session, the commission's membership includes: Representative Brittany Pettersen, Chair; Senator Nancy Todd, Vice-chair; Representative Beth McCann; Representative James Wilson; Senator John Kefalas; and Senator Vicki Marble. Staff support to the commission for the 2014 interim session is provided by Legislative Council Staff.

## **Statutory Charge**

Pursuant to state law, the ECSRLC must meet at least four times per year to study issues concerning early childhood and school readiness. Topics to be studied include: health care, mental health, parental involvement, family support, child care, and early learning. The commission is required to solicit input from the public, especially from those who have expertise in early childhood and school readiness issues. The commission is also required to meet with the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, which is a group focused on improving outcomes for young children ages birth to eight, to discuss policy concerning early childhood and school readiness.

## **Statutory Authority**

The commission is authorized to recommend legislation deemed necessary by the ECSRLC. Legislation recommended by the ECSRLC is treated as interim committee legislation for the purposes of legislative deadlines imposed by the General Assembly rules. The commission is authorized to recommend up to five bills for Legislative Council approval. The commission must report its recommendations to the Legislative Council by October 15, 2014.

In even-numbered years, the Legislative Council must review interim committee recommendations by October 15. Requests for bills to be drafted must be completed by September 10, 2014, and the commission must vote by October 1, 2014, to determine the bill drafts that will be forwarded to the Legislative Council for approval. The commission will make drafting requests at its meeting on September 2, 2014, and will vote on bills to forward to the Legislative Council at its meeting on September 22, 2014.

Commission bills that are approved by the Legislative Council do not count against a member's five-bill limit for the regular legislative session. Bills recommended by the commission that are not approved by the Legislative Council may be introduced in the regular session, but such bills will count against a member's five-bill limit. Interim committee bills must have prime sponsors prior to consideration by the Legislative Council.

## **ECSRLC Proposed Legislation - 2009 to 2013**

From the 2009 interim to the 2013 interim, the ECSRLC proposed 10 bills that were approved by the Legislative Council. Of the 10 bills, 5 became law. Table 1 provides the ECSRLC legislation approved by the Legislative Council by year, a brief summary of each bill, and each bill's disposition.

**Table 1. Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission  
Bills Approved by the Legislative Council by Year - Interim Sessions 2009 through 2013**

| Bill Number   | Bill Title                                       | Brief Description of Bill  | Became Law? |
|---|--|--|-------------|
| <b><i>Bills Approved During 2013 Interim Session</i></b>  |  |  |             |
| HB 14-1022  | Child Care Assistance Authorization Period       | The bill clarifies that, if a child is enrolled in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), the duration of the child care authorization notice, which authorizes payment of child care costs, is the same as the period for which the child's family is eligible for child care assistance. The bill authorizes the State Board of Human Services, by rule, to identify specific circumstances in which the authorization notice term may be less than the full period of eligibility. A county may reduce the number of families served by the CCAP if necessary to avoid overspending its child care block grant allocation for a fiscal year. The bill was signed into law on March 14, 2014.  | Yes         |
| HB 14-1039  | Linking Student Data Preschool to Kindergarten   | The bill would have required the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), and the Office of Information Technology (OIT) to work together to establish and implement procedures to link student data collected by publicly funded early childhood education programs with the student data collected by school districts and public schools in the state. The bill was postponed indefinitely on March 31, 2014.  | No          |
| HB 14-1076  | Early Childhood Quality Incentive Program        | The bill would have created the Early Childhood Quality Incentive grant program in the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) at the CDE. The bill would have required the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt rules for the grant program. School districts with a CPP-authorized preschool program would have been eligible to participate in the program. The bill would have provided money for quality improvement and incentive funding for high-quality CPP classrooms. The bill was postponed indefinitely on April 11, 2014.  | No          |
| SB 14-006   | Early Childhood Educator Development Scholarship | The bill would have expanded the Early Childhood Educator Development Scholarship Program within the CDE. The bill would have required the SBE to award stipends to assist persons employed in early childhood education in offsetting the costs associated with obtaining an postsecondary degree or certificate in early childhood education, or a related field. The bill also provided additional stipend award criterion. The bill was postponed indefinitely on February 12, 2014.   | No          |
| <b><i>Bills Approved During 2012 Interim Session - The commission sunset July 1, 2012, pursuant to SB 09-1343</i></b> |  |  |             |
| <b><i>Bills Approved During 2011 Interim Session</i></b>  |  |  |             |
| SB 12-130   | Governance of Child Development Programs         | The bill would have created the Office of Early Childhood within the CDHS and would have transferred several programs from within the CDHS and other agencies into the newly created office. It would have also created the Division of Youth and Community Development within the CDHS and would have transferred the Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program and related initiatives from the Department of Public Health and Environment (DPHE) to the new division. The Office of Early Childhood would have been required to coordinate with various state and local agencies providing early childhood services, review funding for early childhood programs, develop performance measures, and develop a state plan for the provision of services to pregnant women and children aged 0 to 8 years. The bill was postponed indefinitely on April 25, 2012. | No          |

**Table 1. Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission  
Bills Approved by the Legislative Council by Year - Interim Sessions 2009 through 2013 (Cont.)**

| Bill Number   | Bill Title                                 | Brief Description of Bill  | Became Law? |
|---|--|--|-------------|
| <i>Bills Approved During 2010 Interim Session - All interim committee activity was suspended during the 2010 interim session, pursuant to SB 10-213</i> |  |  |             |
| <i>Bills Approved During 2009 Interim Session</i>   |  |  |             |
| HB 10-1026  | Quality Child Care Grant Incentive Program | The bill created the Colorado Quality in Child Care Incentive Grant Program within the CDHS to increase the quality of early child care and education providers. County governments, in collaboration with an early childhood council, are eligible to apply for grants from the program and awards are made based on criteria established by the State Board of Human Services. The bill was signed into law on April 15, 2010.   | Yes         |
| HB 10-1028  | Early Childhood Universal Application      | The bill created a 12-member subcommittee of the Government Data Advisory Board, called the Early Childhood Universal Application Subcommittee, to make recommendations to the state's chief information officer on how to create and implement a universal application for early childhood care and education services. The subcommittee was required to make its first recommendations by December 1, 2010, and sunset on July 1, 2013. The bill was signed into law on April 5, 2010.   | Yes         |
| HB 10-1030  | Early Childhood Teacher Scholarships       | The bill created the Early Childhood Educator Development Scholarship Program within the CDE to assist persons employed in early childhood education in obtaining an associate of arts degree. The CDE was required to establish rules, application procedures, and award amounts for the scholarship program. The bill was signed into law on April 15, 2010.   | Yes         |
| HB 10-1035  | Eligibility Child Care Assistance Program  | The bill made changes to the eligibility determination process for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program within the CDHS. Specifically, it extended the eligibility redetermination period from 6 months to 12 months; removed the requirement that a parent report income and activity changes during the 12-month eligibility period, unless the change raised the family's income above 85 percent of median state income; and aligned the eligibility redetermination period for children who are enrolled in Head Start so that child care assistance and Head Start eligibility are redetermined at the same time. The bill also prohibited counties from determining a parent ineligible for child care assistance as a result of taking maternity leave or being a separated spouse or parent where the other spouse or parent had disqualifying financial resources. The bill was signed into law on June 3, 2010. | Yes         |
| SB 10-005   | Continuity of Services in Kindergarten     | The bill would have created a grant program within the CDE to distribute moneys to local education providers to maintain continuity of services to kindergarten students who were enrolled the previous year either in the CPP or in a federal Head Start program. School districts receiving the grant moneys would have been permitted to use the funds in any manner designed to serve the needs of the kindergarten students. The SBE would have been required to establish rules for the implementation and administration of the program. The bill was postponed indefinitely on April 16, 2010.   | No          |