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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2377**

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**State of Washington**

**63rd Legislature**

**2014 Regular Session**

**By** House Early Learning & Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Hunter, Kagi, Walsh, Sullivan, Farrell, Carlyle, Senn, Moeller, Tharinger, Ryu, Reykdal, Morrell, Roberts, Goodman, Tarleton, Freeman, Pollet, and Habib)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/14.

1       AN ACT Relating to improving quality in the early care and  
2 education system; amending RCW 43.215.100, 43.215.135, 43.215.1352,  
3 43.215.425, 43.215.415, and 43.215.455; reenacting and amending RCW  
4 43.215.010; adding new sections to chapter 43.215 RCW; creating new  
5 sections; and repealing 2013 2nd sp.s. c 16 s 2 (uncodified).

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** INTENT. The legislature finds that quality  
8 early care and education builds the foundation for a child's success in  
9 school and in life. The legislature acknowledges that quality is a  
10 necessary underpinning of the early care and education system in  
11 Washington. The legislature recognizes that empirical evidence supports  
12 the conclusion that high quality programs consistently yield more  
13 positive outcomes for children, with the strongest positive impacts on  
14 the most vulnerable children. The legislature further understands that  
15 the proper dosage, duration of programming, and stability of care are  
16 critical to enhancing program quality and improving child outcomes.  
17 The legislature acknowledges that the early care and education system  
18 must be culturally responsive and meet the needs of Washington's  
19 diverse populations. The legislature intends to prioritize the

1 integration of child care and preschool in an effort to promote full  
2 workday programming. The legislature further intends to reward quality  
3 and create incentives for providers to participate in a quality rating  
4 and improvement system that will also provide valuable information to  
5 parents regarding the quality of care available in their communities.

6 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.215.010 and 2013 c 323 s 3 and 2013 c 130 s 1 are  
7 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

8 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter  
9 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

10 (1) "Agency" means any person, firm, partnership, association,  
11 corporation, or facility that provides child care and early learning  
12 services outside a child's own home and includes the following  
13 irrespective of whether there is compensation to the agency:

14 (a) "Child day care center" means an agency that regularly provides  
15 early childhood education and early learning services for a group of  
16 children for periods of less than twenty-four hours;

17 (b) "Early learning" includes but is not limited to programs and  
18 services for child care; state, federal, private, and nonprofit  
19 preschool; child care subsidies; child care resource and referral;  
20 parental education and support; and training and professional  
21 development for early learning professionals;

22 (c) "Family day care provider" means a child care provider who  
23 regularly provides early childhood education and early learning  
24 services for not more than twelve children in the provider's home in  
25 the family living quarters;

26 (d) "Nongovernmental private-public partnership" means an entity  
27 registered as a nonprofit corporation in Washington state with a  
28 primary focus on early learning, school readiness, and parental  
29 support, and an ability to raise a minimum of five million dollars in  
30 contributions;

31 (e) "Service provider" means the entity that operates a community  
32 facility.

33 (2) "Agency" does not include the following:

34 (a) Persons related to the child in the following ways:

35 (i) Any blood relative, including those of half-blood, and  
36 including first cousins, nephews or nieces, and persons of preceding  
37 generations as denoted by prefixes of grand, great, or great-great;

1 (ii) Stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, and stepsister;

2 (iii) A person who legally adopts a child or the child's parent as  
3 well as the natural and other legally adopted children of such persons,  
4 and other relatives of the adoptive parents in accordance with state  
5 law; or

6 (iv) Spouses of any persons named in (a)(i), (ii), or (iii) of this  
7 subsection, even after the marriage is terminated;

8 (b) Persons who are legal guardians of the child;

9 (c) Persons who care for a neighbor's or friend's child or  
10 children, with or without compensation, where the person providing care  
11 for periods of less than twenty-four hours does not conduct such  
12 activity on an ongoing, regularly scheduled basis for the purpose of  
13 engaging in business, which includes, but is not limited to,  
14 advertising such care;

15 (d) Parents on a mutually cooperative basis exchange care of one  
16 another's children;

17 (e) Nursery schools that are engaged primarily in early childhood  
18 education with preschool children and in which no child is enrolled on  
19 a regular basis for more than four hours per day;

20 (f) Schools, including boarding schools, that are engaged primarily  
21 in education, operate on a definite school year schedule, follow a  
22 stated academic curriculum, accept only school-age children, and do not  
23 accept custody of children;

24 (g) Seasonal camps of three months' or less duration engaged  
25 primarily in recreational or educational activities;

26 (h) Facilities providing child care for periods of less than  
27 twenty-four hours when a parent or legal guardian of the child remains  
28 on the premises of the facility for the purpose of participating in:

29 (i) Activities other than employment; or

30 (ii) Employment of up to two hours per day when the facility is  
31 operated by a nonprofit entity that also operates a licensed child care  
32 program at the same facility in another location or at another  
33 facility;

34 (i) Any entity that provides recreational or educational  
35 programming for school-age((d)) children only and the entity meets all  
36 of the following requirements:

37 (i) The entity utilizes a drop-in model for programming, where

1 children are able to attend during any or all program hours without a  
2 formal reservation;

3 (ii) The entity does not assume responsibility in lieu of the  
4 parent, unless for coordinated transportation;

5 (iii) The entity is a local affiliate of a national nonprofit; and  
6 (iv) The entity is in compliance with all safety and quality  
7 standards set by the associated national agency;

8 (j) A program operated by any unit of local, state, or federal  
9 government or an agency, located within the boundaries of a federally  
10 recognized Indian reservation, licensed by the Indian tribe;

11 (k) A program located on a federal military reservation, except  
12 where the military authorities request that such agency be subject to  
13 the licensing requirements of this chapter;

14 (l) A program that offers early learning and support services, such  
15 as parent education, and does not provide child care services on a  
16 regular basis.

17 (3) "Applicant" means a person who requests or seeks employment in  
18 an agency.

19 (4) "Conviction information" means criminal history record  
20 information relating to an incident which has led to a conviction or  
21 other disposition adverse to the applicant.

22 (5) "Department" means the department of early learning.

23 (6) "Director" means the director of the department.

24 (7) "Early achievers" means a program that improves the quality of  
25 early learning programs and supports and rewards providers for their  
26 participation.

27 (8) "Early start" means an integrated high quality continuum of  
28 early learning programs for children birth-to-five years of age.  
29 Components of early start include, but are not limited to, the  
30 following:

31 (a) Home visiting and parent education and support programs;  
32 (b) The early achievers program described in RCW 43.215.100;  
33 (c) Integrated full-day and part-day high quality early learning  
34 programs; and  
35 (d) High quality preschool for children whose family income is at  
36 or below one hundred ten percent of the federal poverty level.

37 (9) "Employer" means a person or business that engages the services

1 of one or more people, especially for wages or salary to work in an  
2 agency.

3 (10) "Enforcement action" means denial, suspension, revocation,  
4 modification, or nonrenewal of a license pursuant to RCW 43.215.300(1)  
5 or assessment of civil monetary penalties pursuant to RCW  
6 43.215.300(3).

7 (11) "Negative action" means a court order, court judgment, or an  
8 adverse action taken by an agency, in any state, federal, tribal, or  
9 foreign jurisdiction, which results in a finding against the applicant  
10 reasonably related to the individual's character, suitability, and  
11 competence to care for or have unsupervised access to children in child  
12 care. This may include, but is not limited to:

13 (a) A decision issued by an administrative law judge;

14 (b) A final determination, decision, or finding made by an agency  
15 following an investigation;

16 (c) An adverse agency action, including termination, revocation, or  
17 denial of a license or certification, or if pending adverse agency  
18 action, the voluntary surrender of a license, certification, or  
19 contract in lieu of the adverse action;

20 (d) A revocation, denial, or restriction placed on any professional  
21 license; or

22 (e) A final decision of a disciplinary board.

23 (12) "Nonconviction information" means arrest, founded allegations  
24 of child abuse, or neglect pursuant to chapter 26.44 RCW, or other  
25 negative action adverse to the applicant.

26 (13) "Nonschool age child" means a child birth through five years  
27 of age who has yet to enter kindergarten.

28 (14) "Probationary license" means a license issued as a  
29 disciplinary measure to an agency that has previously been issued a  
30 full license but is out of compliance with licensing standards.

31 ((+14)) (15) "Requirement" means any rule, regulation, or standard  
32 of care to be maintained by an agency.

33 ((+15)) (16) "School-age child" means a child not less than five  
34 years of age through twelve years of age who is attending kindergarten  
35 or school.

36 (17) "Washington state preschool program" means an education  
37 program for children three-to-five years of age who have not yet

1 entered kindergarten, such as the early childhood education and  
2 assistance program.

3 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.215.100 and 2013 c 323 s 6 are each amended to read  
4 as follows:

5 (1) ~~((Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this~~  
6 ~~specific purpose,))~~ The department, in collaboration with community and  
7 statewide partners, shall implement a voluntary quality rating and  
8 improvement system, called the early achievers program, that is  
9 applicable to licensed or certified child care centers and homes and  
10 early education programs. The early achievers program establishes the  
11 framework for strengthening the quality of the early care and education  
12 system in Washington.

13 (2) The ~~((purpose))~~ objectives of the early achievers program  
14 ~~((is))~~ are to:

15 (a) ~~((To))~~ Improve short-term and long-term outcomes for children  
16 as measured by assessments including, but not limited to, the  
17 Washington kindergarten inventory of developing skills in RCW  
18 28A.655.080;

19 (b) Give parents clear and easily accessible information about the  
20 quality of child care and early education programs~~((,))~~;

21 (c) Support improvement in early learning and care programs  
22 throughout the state~~((,))~~;

23 (d) Increase the readiness of children for school~~((, and))~~;

24 (e) Close the disparity in access to quality care;

25 (f) Provide professional development opportunities to early care  
26 and education providers; and ~~((b) to))~~

27 (g) Establish a common set of expectations and standards that  
28 define, measure, and improve the quality of early learning and care  
29 settings.

30 (3) Participation in the early achievers program is voluntary for  
31 licensed or certified child care centers and homes.

32 (4) ~~((By fiscal year 2015, Washington state preschool programs~~  
33 ~~receiving state funds must enroll in the early achievers program and~~  
34 ~~maintain a minimum score level.~~

35 ~~((5))~~ There are five levels in the early achievers program.  
36 Participants are expected to actively engage in the program and

1 continually advance from level one, or the foundation level, to level  
2 five.

3 (5) Participants may request ratings at any time after enrollment  
4 in the early achievers program.

5 (6)(a) Effective July 1, 2015, the department shall publish on the  
6 department's web site or offer a link on its web site the early  
7 achievers program rating levels one through five for all child care  
8 programs, early childhood education and assistance programs, and  
9 federal head start programs in Washington.

10 (b) The early achievers program ratings must be published on the  
11 department's web site or have a link on the department's web site  
12 within thirty days from the time a program becomes licensed or  
13 certified or receives a rating.

14 (c) The early achievers program rating levels must be published on  
15 the department's web site or have a link on the department's web site  
16 in a manner that is easily accessible to parents and caregivers and  
17 takes into account the linguistic needs of parents and caregivers.

18 (7)(a) The department must charge a fee for optional rerating  
19 requests made by program participants that are outside the established  
20 rating cycle.

21 (b) Fees charged are based on, but may not exceed, the cost to the  
22 department for the class of activities associated with the early  
23 achievers program.

24 (8)(a) The department shall create a professional development  
25 pathway for early achievers participants to obtain a high school  
26 diploma or higher education credential in early childhood education,  
27 early childhood studies, child development, or an academic field  
28 related to early care and education.

29 (b) The professional development pathway must include opportunities  
30 for scholarships and grants to assist early achievers participants with  
31 the costs associated with obtaining an educational degree.

32 (c) The professional development pathway must be culturally and  
33 linguistically reflective of participants needs and demographics.

34 (9) The department shall implement tiered reimbursement for early  
35 achievers participants rating at level 3, 4, or 5.

36 (10) The department shall design a plan to incorporate school-age  
37 child care providers into the early achievers program.

1       (11) The early achievers quality improvement awards shall be  
2 reserved for participants offering programs that are composed of at  
3 least five percent of children receiving subsidy.

4       (12) Before final implementation of the early achievers program,  
5 the department shall report on program progress, as defined within the  
6 race to the top federal grant award, and expenditures to the  
7 appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the legislature. Nothing  
8 in this section changes the department's responsibility to collectively  
9 bargain over mandatory subjects.

10       NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW  
11 to read as follows:

12       THE EARLY ACHIEVERS PROGRAM DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION.     (1)  
13 The department shall collect longitudinal, student-level data on all  
14 children attending a working connections child care program or an early  
15 childhood education and assistance program. Data collected should  
16 capture at a minimum the following characteristics:

- 17       (a) Daily program attendance;
- 18       (b) Identification of classroom and teacher;
- 19       (c) Early achievers program quality level rating;
- 20       (d) Program hours;
- 21       (e) Program duration;
- 22       (f) Distinct ethnic categories within racial subgroups that align  
23 with categories established by the education data center established in  
24 RCW 43.41.400; and
- 25       (g) Developmental results from the Washington kindergarten  
26 inventory of developing skills in RCW 28A.655.080.

27       (2) Data collected pursuant to this section shall be provided to  
28 the education data center established in RCW 43.41.400.

29       (3) Data collected pursuant to this section shall be provided to  
30 the Washington state institute for public policy.

31       (4) The department shall provide child care and early learning  
32 providers student-level data collected pursuant to this section that  
33 are specific to the child care provider's or the early learning  
34 provider's program.

35       (5)(a) The Washington state institute for public policy shall  
36 conduct a longitudinal analysis examining relationships between the



1 early achievers program quality ratings levels and outcomes for  
2 children participating in subsidized early care and education programs.

3 (b) The institute shall submit the first report to the appropriate  
4 committees of the legislature by December 31, 2017. The institute  
5 shall submit subsequent reports annually to the appropriate committees  
6 of the legislature by December 31st, with the final report due December  
7 31, 2020. The final report shall include a cost-benefit analysis.

8 **Sec. 5.** RCW 43.215.135 and 2013 c 323 s 9 are each amended to read  
9 as follows:

10 (1) The department shall establish and implement policies in the  
11 working connections child care program to promote stability ~~((and))~~,  
12 quality of care for children from low-income households, and support  
13 school readiness for young learners. Policies for the expenditure of  
14 funds constituting the working connections child care program must be  
15 consistent with the outcome measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 and the  
16 standards established in this section intended to promote quality early  
17 care and education programming, and stability and continuity of care  
18 for children.

19 ~~((Beginning in fiscal year 2013,))~~ Authorizations for the  
20 working connections child care subsidy ((shall be)) are effective for  
21 twelve months ~~((unless a change in circumstances necessitates~~  
22 ~~reauthorization sooner than twelve months. The twelve-month~~  
23 ~~certification applies only if the enrollments in the child care subsidy~~  
24 ~~or working connections child care program are capped.~~

25 ~~((3))~~ ~~Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this~~  
26 ~~specific purpose, beginning September 1, 2013, working connections~~  
27 ~~child care providers shall receive a five percent increase in the~~  
28 ~~subsidy rate for enrolling in level 2 in the early achievers programs.~~  
29 ~~Providers must complete level 2 and advance to level 3 within thirty~~  
30 ~~months in order to maintain this increase)).~~ A child is eligible for  
31 working connections child care for a twelve-month enrollment period and  
32 may not be deemed ineligible due to any change in circumstance  
33 including, but not limited to, the following:

34 (a) A change in family composition or household;

35 (b) A change in a parent's or a caregiver's employment status;

36 (c) A change in a parent's or a caregiver's employment status due

1 to health, maternity or paternity leave, or other family leave  
2 condition as provided for in chapter 49.78 RCW; or

3 (d) A change in a parent's or a caregiver's income.

4 (3) Working connections child care is a capped program. The  
5 working connections child care cap is established in the operating  
6 budget.

7 (4)(a) The department shall adopt rules pertaining to the working  
8 connections child care program that outline the following:

9 (i) Allowable periods of child absences;

10 (ii) Required contact with parents or caregivers to discuss child  
11 absences and encourage regular program attendance; and

12 (iii) A de-enrollment procedure when allowable child absences are  
13 exceeded.

14 (b) The implementation of rules pertaining to child absences and  
15 de-enrollment procedures must align with the implementation of the  
16 electronic time and attendance record system. Rules pertaining to  
17 child absences and de-enrollment procedures shall be adopted no later  
18 than July 31, 2015.

19 (5) Child care providers serving nonschool age children and  
20 receiving state subsidy payments must enroll in the early achievers  
21 program and complete level two activities by July 1, 2017.

22 (6) Child care providers serving nonschool age children and  
23 receiving state subsidy payments must be rated at level three in the  
24 early achievers program by July 1, 2019.

25 (7) Effective July 1, 2015, a new child care provider serving  
26 nonschool age children and receiving state subsidy payments must:

27 (a) Enroll in the early achievers program within thirty days;

28 (b) Complete the early achievers program quality level two  
29 activities within twelve months from receiving a state subsidy; and

30 (c) Rate as an early achievers program quality level three within  
31 thirty months from receiving a state subsidy payment.

32 (8)(a) Family, friend, and neighbor child care providers who  
33 receive state subsidy payments and are exempt from child care licensure  
34 are not required to join early achievers while qualifying as an  
35 unlicensed provider.

36 (b) Family, friend, and neighbor child care providers who receive  
37 state subsidy payments are required to obtain a child care license

1 thirty-six months after receiving the first subsidy payment or after  
2 simultaneously or consecutively caring for more than six children.

3 (c) Family, friend, and neighbor child care providers who do not  
4 obtain child care licensure under this section are not able to receive  
5 state subsidies.

6 **Sec. 6.** RCW 43.215.1352 and 2012 c 251 s 2 are each amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 When an applicant or recipient applies for or receives working  
9 connections child care benefits, (~~(he or she)~~) the applicant or  
10 recipient is required to(~~(+~~

11 ~~(1))~~) notify the department of social and health services, within  
12 five days, of any change in providers(~~(+and~~

13 ~~(2) Notify the department of social and health services, within ten~~  
14 ~~days, about any significant change related to the number of child care~~  
15 ~~hours the applicant or recipient needs, cost sharing, or eligibility)).~~

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW  
17 to read as follows:

18 CONTRACTED CHILD CARE SLOTS. (1) The department shall employ a  
19 combination of vouchers and contracted slots for the subsidized child  
20 care program in RCW 43.215.135. Child care vouchers preserve parental  
21 choice. Child care contracted slots promote access to continuous  
22 quality care for children, provide parents and caregivers stable child  
23 care that supports employment, and allow providers to have predictable  
24 funding.

25 (2) The department's duties relating to child care contracted slots  
26 include, but are not limited to:

27 (a) Contracting at least twenty percent of the working connections  
28 child care program slots by January 1, 2016;

29 (b) Awarding contracted slots via a competitive process and  
30 prioritizing child care programs with at least one of the following  
31 characteristics:

32 (i) Programs located in a high-need geographic area;

33 (ii) Programs partnering with elementary schools to offer  
34 transitional planning and support to children as they advance to  
35 kindergarten; or

1 (iii) Programs serving children involved in the child welfare  
2 system or children diagnosed with a special need;

3 (c) Paying a provider for each contracted slot, unless a contracted  
4 slot is not used for thirty days;

5 (d) Charging a child care copayment for each contracted slot; and

6 (e) Establishing a copayment fee by rule.

7 (3) Only a child care provider who participates in the early  
8 achievers program and rates at a level three, four, or five is eligible  
9 to be awarded a contracted slot.

10 (4) Only providers offering full workday early care and education  
11 opportunities are eligible to be awarded a contracted slot.

12 **Sec. 8.** RCW 43.215.425 and 1994 c 166 s 6 are each amended to read  
13 as follows:

14 (1) The department shall adopt rules under chapter 34.05 RCW for  
15 the administration of the early childhood education and assistance  
16 program. Approved early childhood education and assistance programs  
17 shall conduct needs assessments of their service area, identify any  
18 targeted groups of children, to include but not be limited to children  
19 of seasonal and migrant farmworkers and native American populations  
20 living either on or off reservation, and provide to the department a  
21 service delivery plan, to the extent practicable, that addresses these  
22 targeted populations.

23 (2) The department, in developing rules for the early childhood  
24 education and assistance program, shall consult with the advisory  
25 committee, and shall consider such factors as coordination with  
26 existing head start and other early childhood programs, the preparation  
27 necessary for instructors, qualifications of instructors, adequate  
28 space and equipment, and special transportation needs. The rules shall  
29 specifically require the early childhood programs to provide for  
30 parental involvement in participation with their child's program, in  
31 local program policy decisions, in development and revision of service  
32 delivery systems, and in parent education and training.

33 (3)(a) The department shall adopt rules pertaining to the early  
34 childhood education and assistance program that outline allowable  
35 periods of child absences, required contact with parents or caregivers  
36 to discuss child absences and encourage regular attendance, and a  
37 de-enrollment procedure when allowable child absences are exceeded.

1       (b) The implementation of rules pertaining to child absences and  
2 de-enrollment procedures must align with the implementation of the  
3 electronic time and attendance record system.

4       (c) Rules pertaining to child absences and de-enrollment procedures  
5 shall be adopted no later than July 31, 2015.

6       (4) The department shall adopt rules requiring early childhood  
7 education and assistance program employees and volunteers who have  
8 access to children to submit to a fingerprint background check.  
9 Fingerprint background check procedures for the early childhood  
10 education and assistance program shall be the same as the background  
11 check procedures in RCW 43.215.215.

12       **Sec. 9.** RCW 43.215.415 and 1994 c 166 s 5 are each amended to read  
13 as follows:

14       (1) Approved early childhood programs shall receive state-funded  
15 support through the department. Public or private nonsectarian  
16 organizations, including, but not limited to school districts,  
17 educational service districts, community and technical colleges, local  
18 governments, or nonprofit organizations, are eligible to participate as  
19 providers of the state early childhood program.

20       (2) Funds appropriated for the state program shall be used to  
21 continue to operate existing programs or to establish new or expanded  
22 early childhood programs(~~(, and shall not be used to supplant federally~~  
23 ~~supported head start programs)~~).

24       (3) Funds obtained by providers through voluntary grants or  
25 contributions from individuals, agencies, corporations, or  
26 organizations may be used to expand or enhance preschool programs so  
27 long as program standards established by the department are  
28 maintained(~~(, but shall not be used to supplant federally supported~~  
29 ~~head start programs or state supported early childhood programs)~~).

30       (4) Persons applying to conduct the early childhood program shall  
31 identify targeted groups and the number of children to be served,  
32 program components, the qualifications of instructional and special  
33 staff, the source and amount of grants or contributions from sources  
34 other than state funds, facilities and equipment support, and  
35 transportation and personal care arrangements.

36       (5) Early childhood education and assistance providers must enroll

1 in the early achievers program and be rated at a level three by July 1,  
2 2015.

3 (6) Early childhood education and assistance providers must be  
4 rated at a level four in the early achievers program by July 1, 2019.

5 (7) Effective January 1, 2014, new early childhood education and  
6 assistance program slots are only available to early achievers program  
7 participants rated at a level three, four, or five.

8 (8) Effective July 1, 2017, any provider administering an early  
9 childhood education and assistance program must institute a working  
10 connections child care program and maintain an optional full workday  
11 program.

12 **Sec. 10.** RCW 43.215.455 and 2010 c 231 s 3 are each amended to  
13 read as follows:

14 (1) Beginning September 1, 2011, an early learning program to  
15 provide voluntary preschool opportunities for children three and four  
16 years of age shall be implemented according to the funding and  
17 implementation plan in RCW (~~43.215.142~~) 43.215.456. The program must  
18 be a comprehensive program providing early childhood education and  
19 family support, options for parental involvement, and health  
20 information, screening, and referral services, as family need is  
21 determined. Participation in the program is voluntary. On a space  
22 available basis, the program may allow enrollment of children who are  
23 not otherwise eligible by assessing a fee.

24 (2) The first phase of the program shall be implemented by  
25 utilizing the program standards and eligibility criteria in the early  
26 childhood education and assistance program in RCW 43.215.400 through  
27 43.215.450.

28 (3) For school year 2014-15, the program implementation in this  
29 section shall prioritize programs meeting at least one of the following  
30 characteristics:

31 (a) Programs located in a high-need geographical area;

32 (b) Providers participating in the early achievers program and  
33 rated at level 3, 4, or 5; or

34 (c) Programs offering services to children diagnosed with a special  
35 need or children involved in the child welfare system.

36 (4) For school year 2014-15, only providers offering full workday

1 early care and education programming are eligible for program  
2 implementation under this section.

3 (5) For school year 2015-16, only providers meeting both of the  
4 following requirements are eligible for the program implementation  
5 under this section:

6 (a) Providers participating in the early achievers program and  
7 rated at a level 3, 4, or 5; and

8 (b) Providers offering full workday early care and education  
9 programming.

10 (6) The director shall adopt rules for the following program  
11 components, as appropriate and necessary during the phased  
12 implementation of the program:

13 (a) Minimum program standards, including lead teacher, assistant  
14 teacher, and staff qualifications;

15 (b) Approval of program providers; and

16 (c) Accountability and adherence to performance standards.

17 ~~((+4))~~ (7) The department has administrative responsibility for:

18 (a) Approving and contracting with providers according to rules  
19 developed by the director under this section;

20 (b) In partnership with school districts, monitoring program  
21 quality and assuring the program is responsive to the needs of eligible  
22 children;

23 (c) Assuring that program providers work cooperatively with school  
24 districts to coordinate the transition from preschool to kindergarten  
25 so that children and their families are well-prepared and supported;  
26 and

27 (d) Providing technical assistance to contracted providers.

28 NEW SECTION. Sec. 11. A new section is added to chapter 43.215  
29 RCW to read as follows:

30 SINGLE SET OF LICENSING STANDARDS. No later than July 1, 2015, the  
31 department shall implement a single set of licensing standards for  
32 child care and the early childhood education and assistance program.  
33 The new licensing standards must:

34 (1) Use the early achievers program as a foundational framework and  
35 eliminate additional burdensome regulations for providers who  
36 demonstrate higher levels of quality care;

- 1 (2) Take into account the separate needs of family care providers  
2 and child care centers; and  
3 (3) Promote the continued safety of child care settings.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215  
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 INTEGRATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFORTS. (1) The foundation of  
7 the early care and education system in Washington is the quality rating  
8 and improvement system entitled the early achievers program. In an  
9 effort to build on the existing quality framework, enhance access to  
10 quality care for children, and strengthen the entire early care and  
11 education system in the state, it is important to integrate the efforts  
12 of local government.

13 (2) Local government is encouraged to collaborate with the  
14 department when establishing early learning programs for residents.

15 (3) Local government may contribute funds to the department for the  
16 following purposes:

17 (a) Initial investments to build capacity and quality in local  
18 early care and education programming; and

19 (b) Reductions in copayments charged to parents or caregivers.

20 (4) Funds contributed to the department by local government must be  
21 deposited in the early start account established in section 13 of this  
22 act.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215  
24 RCW to read as follows:

25 The early start account is created in the state treasury. Revenues  
26 in the account shall consist of appropriations by the legislature and  
27 all other sources deposited into the account. Moneys in the account  
28 may only be used after appropriation. Expenditures from the account  
29 may be used only to improve the quality of early care and education  
30 programming.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215  
32 RCW to read as follows:

33 The department shall implement an electronic time and attendance  
34 records system by July 1, 2015. The savings generated from the



1 electronic time and attendance records system shall be used to improve  
2 quality in the early learning system.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 15.** 2013 2nd sp.s. c 16 s 2 (uncodified) is  
4 repealed.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 16.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 Chapter . . ., Laws of 2014 (this act) may be known and cited as  
8 the early start act.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 17.** If specific funding for the purposes of  
10 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not  
11 provided by June 30, 2014, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act  
12 is null and void.

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