

HOUSE No. 4795

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, May 18, 2022.

The committee on Education to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 539) of Brian M. Ashe and Michael P. Kushmerek relative to the mandatory minimum age for children to attend kindergarten, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 546) of Christine P. Barber and others relative to quality funding for early childhood education and care programs, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 549) of Antonio F. D. Cabral and others relative to compulsory full-day kindergarten, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 550) of Antonio F. D. Cabral and others for legislation to establish a special commission for the purpose of making an investigation and study relative to how to expand universal pre-kindergarten, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 569) of Marjorie C. Decker and others relative to full-day kindergarten, and the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 605) of Kenneth I. Gordon, Adrian C. Madaro and others relative to affordable and accessible high quality early education and care to promote child development and well-being and support the economy, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 628) of Bradley H. Jones, Jr., Mathew J. Muratore and Steven S. Howitt for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to degree requirements for early education professionals, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 639) of Hannah Kane, Carolyn C. Dykema and others that the Department of Early Education and Care promulgate regulations requiring that private child care programs ensure that license-exempt programs serving infants through kindergarten-age children comply with basic health and safety standards, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 647) of Kay Khan and others relative to licensing group care facilities under the control of the Department of Early Education and Care that serve students with special needs, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 649) of David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf, Vanna Howard and Lindsay N. Sabadosa that the Department of Early Education and Care establish a fund entitled the family childcare

sustainability fund, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 658) of Elizabeth A. Malia that the Commissioner of the Department of Early Education and Care be directed to ensure reasonable assignment levels for day care centers and family day care homes, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 679) of Alice Hanlon Peisch and others relative to high quality early childhood education, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 698) of Adam J. Scanlon, Patrick Joseph Kearney and others relative to tuition-free universal full-day kindergarten, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 701) of Danillo A. Sena and others relative to universal access to pre-kindergarten programs, the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 702) of Alan Silvia and others relative to universal pre-kindergarten education in gateway municipalities, and the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 4032) of David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf and others for legislation to establish within the Department of Education a pilot program for early education and care at public high schools and community colleges, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4795) ought to pass.

For the committee,

ALICE HANLON PEISCH.

HOUSE No. 4795

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act to expand access to high-quality, affordable early education and care.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The seventh paragraph of section 22N of chapter 7 of the General Laws, as
2 appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following sentence-

3 Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, childcare and school age programs
4 contracting with the department of early education and care or their agents shall be exempt from
5 the price limitations set forth by the bureau.

6 SECTION 2. Section 1A of Chapter 15D, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is
7 hereby amended by inserting the following definitions:

8 “Caregiver” shall mean a person living with and exercising guardianship over at least one
9 child whose parents are not living in the home with them.

10 “High needs” shall mean needs that may render an individual or family more costly to
11 serve, including but not limited to any physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, cognitive,
12 behavioral, or health related disability or condition, exposure to domestic violence, trauma

13 history, limited English proficiency, limited literacy, homelessness or housing instability, income
14 at or below the federal poverty line, or involvement with the department of children and families.

15 “Operational Grant” shall mean an amount of funding from the department to programs
16 currently enrolling children receiving state early education and care subsidies or certifying their
17 willingness to enroll a child receiving a state early education and care subsidy should a family
18 choose the program and there is an available opening, which funding shall be used for educator
19 compensation and credentialing as well as program quality and sustainability.

20 “Program” shall mean any childcare center, family childcare home, or out-of-school time
21 program licensed or exempt by the department of early education and care located within the
22 commonwealth of Massachusetts that provides early education and care programs and services.

23 “Subsidized child care provider” shall mean a child care center, a licensed family child
24 care home, or an out-of-school time program licensed or exempt by the department located
25 within the commonwealth of Massachusetts that provides early education and care programs and
26 services to income eligible and at-risk children receiving state early education and care
27 subsidizes, including programs that do not currently have a child receiving a subsidy enrolled,
28 but have certified their willingness to enroll a child receiving a state early education and care
29 subsidy should a family choose the program and there is an available opening.

30 SECTION 3. Section 2 of chapter 15D of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018
31 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out subsection (e) and inserting in place thereof
32 the following subsection:--

33 (e) establish and develop a schedule for revising: (i) a rate structure for voucher and
34 contracted payments to providers of subsidized early education and care programs and services

35 on behalf of income eligible and other at-risk children that is adequate to meet the cost of
36 providing high-quality early education and care programs to income eligible and other at-risk
37 children in conformity with federal and state law, regulations and quality and safety standards;
38 (ii) a sliding fee scale for participants in those programs which is updated at least every 5 years
39 to reflect affordability standards for participating families; (iii) notwithstanding the provisions of
40 any general or special law or regulation to the contrary, a method for reimbursement for voucher
41 and contracted payments to providers of subsidized early education and care programs and
42 services on behalf of income eligible and other at-risk children which is based on quarterly
43 enrollment rather than daily attendance of participants.

44 A public hearing under chapter 30A and the approval of the board shall be required
45 before the establishment or revision of the rate structure and sliding fee scale.

46 SECTION 4. Said section 2 of said chapter 15D, as so appearing, is hereby further
47 amended by inserting after subsection (u) the following subsection:--

48 (v) annually collect from early education and care providers licensed by the department,
49 data on: (i) the number of employees by race and ethnicity, (ii) the pay rates and employer-paid
50 benefits (iii) the tuition charged for full- and part-time early education and care services by age
51 group, (iv) numbers of children enrolled by age group, family income range, race, ethnicity,
52 country-of-origin, and preferred language

53 SECTION 5. Said chapter 15D, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting,
54 after section 13, the following section:--

55 Section 13A. Early education and care subsidy program

56 (a) The department shall use, for the purpose of providing subsidies under this section,
57 funding, from any source that is appropriated or otherwise provided to it for the purpose of
58 subsidizing or reducing the costs to families of fees for early education and care for their
59 children, including increasing per child rates set by the department.

60 (b) The early education and care subsidy program shall, subject to appropriation, provide
61 sufficient subsidies to enable all families to afford and access high-quality early education and
62 care for infants, toddlers, preschool-age, and school-age children, as defined in section 1A of this
63 chapter, provided that a school-age child's subsidy shall continue until at least the end of the
64 school year in which the child reaches the maximum age.

65 (c) Subsidies may be used for early education and care provided by public, private, non-
66 profit, and for-profit entities licensed or approved by the department, including but not limited
67 to: preschools, childcare centers, nursery schools, before and after school programs, out-of-
68 school time programs, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and independent and system-
69 affiliated family childcare homes.

70 (d) The department shall provide subsidies to families receiving services from the
71 department of children and families as provided in section 2 of chapter 18B of the General Laws.

72 (e) The department shall provide subsidies to recipients of transitional aid to families
73 with dependent children and to families participating in education and training services provided
74 by the department of transitional assistance and funded by the supplemental nutrition assistance
75 program.

76 (f) The department shall provide subsidies to families eligible in accordance with any
77 income limits in effect under subsections (g) and (h) of this section.

78 (g) The department shall, subject to appropriation, subsidize the cost of early education
79 and care services to all families in need of these services with incomes at or below 85 per cent of
80 the Massachusetts state median income. Provided, should appropriations be insufficient to
81 subsidize the cost of early education and care services to all families in need of these services
82 with incomes at or below 85 per cent of the Massachusetts state median income, first priority
83 shall be provided to those children whose family's household income is at or below 50 per cent
84 of the Massachusetts state median income or a child with a documented disability whose
85 family's household income is at or below 85 per cent of the Massachusetts state median income
86 and to all children in families who are experiencing homelessness or who are headed by a parent
87 under the age of 20. Provided further, second priority shall be given to children whose family's
88 household income is above 50 per cent, but not exceeding 85 per cent of the Massachusetts state
89 median income.

90 (h) Provided that additional funds shall be made available to the commonwealth through
91 the Child Care Development Fund or that the federal government shall otherwise obligate itself
92 to release additional funding not available upon the passage of this act, the department shall
93 allocate funding to increase the numbers of families receiving subsidies based on income
94 eligibility in stages: (i) to those eligible for subsidies as stipulated in subsection (g); (ii) to
95 subsidize the cost of early education and care services to all families in need of these services,
96 whose income is above 85 per cent, but not exceeding 100 per cent, of the Massachusetts state
97 median income; (iii) to subsidize the cost of early education and care services to all families in
98 need of these services, whose income is above 100 per cent, but not exceeding 110 per cent, of
99 the Massachusetts state median income; (iv) to subsidize the cost of early education and care
100 services to all families in need of these services, whose income is above 110 per cent, but not

101 exceeding 125 per cent, of the Massachusetts state median income.(i) Family income, for the
102 purposes of eligibility for early education and care subsidies shall include income of parents
103 living with the child receiving subsidized care but shall not include: any form of income of
104 foster parents, caregivers, or other adult family members; income of or for siblings who are not
105 receiving subsidized care; or earned income of any minor child.

106 (j) The department shall subsidize early education and care by: (i) providing vouchers for
107 payment to providers, enabling families to access early education and care providers of their
108 choice or (ii) offering families the alternative of an open space with a provider that is subsidized
109 under the provider's contract with the department.

110 (k) The department shall require early education and care providers, as a condition for
111 receiving subsidies from the department under this section, to enter into and comply with
112 contractual agreements with the department, developed by the department and requiring the
113 provider to comply with all applicable requirements of this chapter and any other federal or state
114 requirements necessary to receive funding for subsidies provided to families under this section.

115 (l) The department and its agents shall not reduce, terminate, or deny continued subsidies
116 to families until and unless the family is determined to be ineligible and is given the opportunity
117 for an administrative appeal hearing. In situations in which the department or its agents deny a
118 family's application for a subsidy, the department shall provide the family an opportunity for an
119 administrative appeal hearing and shall process such appeals within 60 days from date requested.

120 (m) The department and its agents shall not reduce, terminate, or deny continued
121 subsidies to families based on their household income until and unless the household income

122 exceeds at least 85 per cent of the Massachusetts state median income or the income threshold
123 for currently eligible families as prioritized in subsection (g) or (h), whichever is higher.

124 (n) The department shall review the early education and care subsidy program at least
125 annually to identify access barriers to families and opportunities to improve families' experience
126 with the subsidy process, including but not limited to department paperwork and verification
127 requirements. The department shall take action to remove any access barriers, including but not
128 limited to: (i) making technological improvements, (ii) streamlining the application and renewal
129 processes, (iii) improving outreach to potentially eligible families regarding the availability of
130 subsidies and the process for applying, and (iv) improving access for families whose primary
131 language is not English.

132 (o) The department shall adopt any additional regulations necessary to implement the
133 provisions of this section, after providing the opportunity for public comment, to be accepted
134 through both testimony at public hearings and written comments, and after consideration of these
135 comments.

136 SECTION 6. Said chapter 15D, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by adding the
137 following sections:--

138 Section 19. Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law or regulation to
139 the contrary and subject to appropriation, the department in fulfilling its responsibility in
140 subsection (e) of section 2 of chapter 15D shall establish and distribute operational grants.

141 (a) Operational grants shall be used for educator compensation and credentialing as well
142 as program quality and sustainability. Said operational grant uses shall include but not be limited
143 to: (i) compensating early education and care provider staff through increased salaries, benefits,

144 bonuses, professional development, or access to continuing education opportunities; (ii)
145 increasing affordability of early education and care to families by reducing the tuition and fees
146 paid by families or offering scholarships to families; (iii) enabling early education and care
147 providers to provide high-quality early education and care and to comply fully with all applicable
148 health, safety, educational, quality-assurance, and other requirements of this chapter as well as
149 any requirements imposed by the department consistent with this chapter; (iv) improving
150 facilities and physical spaces used by the program; (v) enabling early education and care
151 providers to address emergency situations, during which the cost of care significantly increases
152 due to additional federal, state, or department requirements, or the loss of fees due to absence or
153 unenrollment jeopardizes early education and care providers' ability to retain their facilities and
154 staff; or (vi) enabling early education and care providers to maintain or increase capacity to
155 provide voluntary supplemental services to enrolled children and their families, such as social
156 work services, health and disability-related services, and support to parents and caregivers.

157 (b) The department shall establish a formula for distributing operational grants to
158 programs which shall consider at a minimum the following: (i) the provider's current enrollment
159 and the ages of the children enrolled; (ii) the location of the provider, availability of care in the
160 area, and additional costs associated with the provider's location; (iii) the demographics of the
161 families served by the program including how many children receiving subsidies attend, the
162 income level of families, and other pertinent demographic data that may influence the needs of
163 the families and children served; (iv) the number of children with high needs enrolled including
164 those with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and other factors as determined by the
165 department; (v) the cost of quality care methodology established by the department and until
166 such time as the methodology is established, any available information regarding the cost of

167 quality early education and care including available credentialing frameworks and applicable
168 salary guidelines; and (vi) any other factors impacting costs to the provider of providing quality
169 care in areas of need such as serving infants and toddlers, providing non-standard hours of care,
170 or providing care in areas that have overall shortages of early education and care slots. The
171 department shall annually review and update this formula based on relevant data.

172 (c) The department shall require early education and care providers, as a condition for
173 receiving funding under this section, to: (i) enter into and comply with contractual agreements
174 with the department, which shall be developed by the department; (ii) continue or begin to enroll
175 children with subsidies through the department, provided the family chooses the provider and
176 the provider has an available opening; (iii) comply with any recommended salaries or
177 compensation put forth by the department; and (iv) provide data that the department requires, as
178 needed to carry out the department's assessment and reporting requirements under this chapter.

179 (d) Absent any changes in circumstances and assuming compliance with all requirements
180 in subsection (c) and otherwise determined as necessary by the department, operational grants
181 will be renewed to each provider annually.

182 (e) A public hearing under chapter 30A and the approval of the board shall be required
183 before the establishment or revision of the operational grant formula.

184 Section 20. The board shall, subject to appropriation, establish the early education and
185 care educator scholarship program for early education and care sector educators in the
186 commonwealth pursuant to clause (10) of section 5 of this chapter.

187 (a) The commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of higher education, shall
188 make recommendations to the board establishing appropriate guidelines, standards and

189 application criteria for the administration of the program, including mechanisms to ensure the
190 scholarship provides meaningful improvements in the delivery of high-quality early education
191 and care across the commonwealth.

192 (b) The scholarship program shall be administered by the department through a
193 memorandum of understanding with the department of higher education.

194 (c) The scholarship may be used to cover the cost of tuition, fees and related expenses,
195 including supports unique to the diverse learning needs of the field such as personal childcare
196 expenses in order to attend classes and class meetings, and other supports deemed appropriate by
197 the board for degree granting programs for early educators who are pursuing associate or
198 bachelor level degrees to meet the teacher and program quality standards of the department.

199 (d) The amount of each scholarship shall, at a minimum, be sufficient to cover the full
200 cost of tuition and associated fees for one semester of classes at a Massachusetts community
201 college.

202 (e) Eligible recipients shall be current or prospective early education and care educators
203 and providers employed in early education and care programs in the commonwealth who commit
204 to teaching in early education and care programs for a term of service after graduation to be
205 determined by the board and shall reflect the diversity of the commonwealth's early education
206 and care workforce.

207 (f) Preference shall be given to applicants identified as providers who have displayed a
208 proven commitment to early childhood education as demonstrated by longevity in the field.

209 (g) The program shall be administered by the department in a manner that ensures
210 recipients receive adequate support in selecting programs and courses which lead to credentials
211 and further their career in early education and care.

212 (h) The board shall, subject to appropriation, establish the early education and care
213 educator loan forgiveness program for early education and care sector educators in the
214 commonwealth pursuant to clause (10) of section 5 of this chapter with preference given to
215 applicants identified as providers who have displayed a proven commitment to early childhood
216 education and who work in communities predominantly serving high needs children and families
217 or areas with a shortage of early education and care slots.

218 Section 21. The department of early education and care, the executive office of labor and
219 workforce development and the commonwealth corporation in conjunction with the regional
220 workforce boards shall develop strategies and prioritize programming and funding opportunities
221 towards filling job positions in the early education and care field using existing resources
222 pursuant to clause (12) of section 5 of this chapter.

223 Section 22. Annually, by February 15, the department shall report to the legislature on:

224 (a) The cost and use of all early education and care subsidies provided by the department.
225 The report shall include: (i) the total cost of the subsidies provided; (ii) the utilization of
226 available contracted slots and vouchers by region and type of care provider; (iii) the total number
227 of all children receiving early education and care subsidies by region, age, type of care, race and
228 ethnicity, disability status of the child, primary language of the household, and income range of
229 the household; (iv) the monthly average number of children on the department's subsidy wait list
230 by region, age, type of care, race and ethnicity, disability status of the child, primary language of

231 the household, adults in the household, and income range of the household; and (v) the average
232 monthly number and percentage of utilized contracted slots by region.

233 (b) The cost and use of all allocations of funding to early education and care programs
234 under this chapter, including identifying the providers funded, the amount the provider received,
235 and information on the number of providers funded by region, ages served, type of provider, and
236 percentage of enrolled children receiving subsidies.

237 (c) Application information including: (i) the number of applications for subsidies; (ii)
238 the numbers of applications for subsidies denied, broken out by the reason for denial; (iii) the
239 numbers of requests for review made by families of the denial of their applications for or ending
240 of their subsidies, broken out by the reason for denial of the application for or end of the subsidy
241 and, of those, the numbers of requests for review that: (A) resulted in a decision that reversed the
242 application denial or subsidy ending, (B) resulted in a decision that upheld the denial or ending
243 of the family's subsidy, or (C) were undecided as of the end of the 12-month reporting period;
244 and (iv) the number of requests for an administrative hearing made by families of the denial of
245 their applications for or ending of their subsidies, broken out by the reason for denial of the
246 application for or ending of the subsidy and, of those, the numbers (A) that resulted in a hearing
247 decision that reversed the application denial or subsidy ending, (B) that resulted in a hearing
248 decision that upheld the application denial or subsidy ending, (C) in which a hearing was not
249 held as of the end of the 12-month reporting period, or (D) in which a hearing was held but the
250 decision was not issued as of the end of the 12-month reporting period.

251 (d) For providers including: (i) the number of employees by race and ethnicity; (ii) the
252 salary bands and employer-paid benefits provided to employees, broken out by job position, and

253 within that, broken out by part-time and full-time employee designation, race and ethnicity, and
254 job location within the commonwealth; and (iii) the levels of pay rates and employer-paid
255 benefits compared to levels reported in the previous three reporting years. All reports issued
256 under this section shall be posted on the department's website, in accordance with chapter 66.

257 SECTION 7. Not later than December 31, 2022, the executive office of labor and
258 workforce development, in consultation with the department of early education and care, shall
259 develop recommendations to the legislature requiring employers of a certain size to provide a
260 childcare benefit. Consideration should be given to benefits such as: pre-tax childcare spending
261 accounts funded in part by the employer, reduced tuition at a specific childcare provider, a
262 stipend to be used for childcare at a location of the employee's choice, or the availability of
263 onsite childcare, or other such strategies.

264 SECTION 8. Not later than December 31, 2022, the department of early education and
265 care shall file a report with the clerks of the house and the senate, who shall forward the report to
266 the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the joint committee on
267 education, on a plan to expand local partnerships including strategies and resources necessary to
268 address community-based program expansion plans currently in development under the
269 Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative grant. The report shall identify means by which
270 existing programming may be continued using existing resources available to providers in the
271 mixed delivery system. The report shall also identify strategies for expanding the number of slots
272 available in communities currently receiving Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Grants and
273 best practices to expand local partnerships to more communities including through mixed
274 delivery programs administered by the local school system, municipal scholarship programs

275 directly to families based on successful models already being implemented in certain
276 municipalities, and other approaches to expand access to public high-quality care.

277 SECTION 9. Not later than December 31, 2022, the department of early education and
278 care in consultation with the Children’s Investment Fund and the Community Economic
279 Development Assistance Corporation shall file a report with the joint committee on education
280 detailing proposed improvements to the Early Education and Out of School Time Capital fund
281 including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria, sizes of grants, ways to streamline the
282 application process, any other parameters to increase the impact of this fund, and any data
283 available on unmet need for early education and care facilities improvements.

284 SECTION 10. The department of early education and care, the executive office of labor
285 and workforce development and the commonwealth corporation shall jointly conduct a study and
286 report on enhancing the early education workforce pipeline to ensure that the early educator
287 workforce meets the needs of the commonwealth. Said report shall include but not be limited to,
288 providing the following recommendations: (i) recruitment of new early educators; (ii) the
289 development of apprenticeship programs and non-traditional recruitment opportunities; and (iii)
290 the retention of early educators. Said report shall take into consideration existing resources and
291 may make recommendations regarding additional resources which would be required to fully
292 implement the report. The department of early education and care, the executive office of labor
293 and workforce development and the commonwealth corporation shall file its report with the
294 clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the joint committee on education, the joint
295 committee on labor and workforce development, and the house and senate committees on ways
296 and means no later than January 1, 2023.

297 SECTION 11. Not later than January 15, 2023, the department of early education and
298 care shall file a report with the clerks of the house and the senate, who shall forward the report to
299 the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on
300 education, on design and implementation plans for the early education and care educator
301 scholarship program and loan forgiveness program pursuant to section 7 of this act.

302 SECTION 12. Not later than March 31, 2023, the department of early education and care
303 shall assess the extent of current supply and the unmet needs of families eligible for subsidies,
304 taking into account relevant differences among locations within the commonwealth including: (i)
305 subsidized transportation of children to and from early education and care providers; (ii) early
306 education and care services for time periods outside standard hours; (iii) substitute care on days
307 on which the family's regular early education and care provider is unavailable; and (iv) any other
308 factors that prevent families from accessing state early education and care subsidies and to assess
309 the cost of addressing these unmet needs.

310 The department of early education and care shall file a report with the clerks of the house
311 and the senate, who shall forward the report to the chairs of the house and senate committees on
312 ways and means, and the joint committee on education.

313 SECTION 13. Not later than March 31, 2023, the department of early education and care
314 shall establish a methodology that the department will use for assessing and updating the full
315 costs of high-quality early education and care throughout the commonwealth. This methodology
316 will be used to determine subsidy reimbursement rates and operational grant amounts which are
317 adequate to help meet the cost of providing high-quality early education and care. The
318 methodology shall take into account all aspects of providers' operations and responsibilities and

319 costs that vary with location, type of provider, age ranges of the children served, and service to
320 children with high needs.

321 The methodology shall include at least the following components: (i) pay and benefits to
322 all staff, taking into account staff-to-child ratios needed depending on age ranges and service to
323 children with high needs, as well as necessary non-educational staff activities, such as
324 communications with families and department staff; (ii) professional development and
325 instructional coaching for staff involved in the direct education and care of children; (iii)
326 occupancy, including rent, utilities, maintenance, and improvements to physical environment;
327 (iv) furnishings, appliances, equipment, office supplies and administration, including internet,
328 telephone, insurance, permits, and taxes or fees; (v) educational supplies and curricula,
329 observational tools, and toys; (vi) nutritious meals and snacks; (vii) transportation services for
330 children to, from, and between early education and care providers, schools, and home; and (viii)
331 costs of additional services to children and families with high needs including staff and staff
332 training needed for accommodating children with disabilities or other high needs, interpreter
333 services, mental health supports for children and staff, and staff time required to provide
334 comprehensive family engagement and services to ensure effective early education and promote
335 multi-generational success.

336 Said methodology shall annually be increased at the rate of inflation and the methodology
337 shall be reassessed and accordingly adjusted no less than once every 5 years.

338 SECTION 14. Not later than March 31, 2023, the department of early education and care
339 shall develop an early education and care career ladder pursuant to section 5 subsection 11 of
340 chapter 15D. The department shall file a report to include: (i) a copy of the career ladder; (ii)

341 recommendations for linking professional development and educational credentials to increased
342 compensation and leadership opportunities in the field of early education and care; (iii) minimum
343 recommended salaries and compensation for each level of the career ladder which are
344 commensurate with the salaries of public school teachers with equivalent credentials and training
345 when required for a position; (iv) minimum recommended benefits for provider staff, including
346 but not limited to health insurance, retirement benefits, paid vacation, and other leave time. The
347 department shall review the compensation structure and benefits guidelines annually and update
348 them, as needed, based on increased cost of living and other factors deemed relevant by the
349 department to determine appropriate compensation for the field.

350 SECTION 15. Not later than October 1, 2023, the department of early education and care
351 shall file a report with the clerks of the house and the senate, who shall forward the report to the
352 chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on
353 education a plan to pilot, scale, and evaluate on a regular basis shared services and quality
354 licensed hubs for early education and care programs including family childcare providers.

355 SECTION 16. Within 180 days following passage of this act, the department of early
356 education and care shall file a report with the clerks of the house and the senate, who shall
357 forward the report to the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the
358 joint committee on education, on the steps required to implement this Act and a preliminary
359 assessment of the funding and administrative resources that would aid the department in
360 implementing this act, such as technological resources, technical expertise, and staffing of the
361 department. This report shall be made publicly available on the department's website in
362 accordance with section 19 of chapter 66 of the General Laws.