

Date of Hearing: May 8, 2013

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Joan Buchanan, Chair

ACR 45 (Weber) – As Amended: May 2, 2013

SUBJECT: Early care and education

SUMMARY: Urges the California State Legislature, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), and the Governor to restore budget funding to early care and education programs and to support efforts to fund and implement the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and other programs that support early care and education. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Makes declarations and findings that include the following:
 - a) Eighty percent of a child's brain development occurs by age three and 90 percent of brain development by age five. Children who attend quality early care and education programs are more likely to pass reading exams through third grade.
 - b) Poor African Americans and Latino students, and English learners are overrepresented among students scoring in the lowest levels on the National Assessment of Educational Progress and on state standards-based test.
 - c) A high-quality early care and education program that engages parents results in higher grades, better school attendance, increased motivation, and higher graduation rates.
 - d) An integral part of a sound public investment strategy to secure California's economic future must include the development of, and the appropriate compensation levels to recruit and retain a highly trained early care and education workforce.
 - e) President Barack Obama has proposed making high-quality preschool available to every single child in America, stating that "Every dollar we invest in high-quality early childhood education can save more than seven dollars later on – by boosting graduation rates, reducing teen pregnancy, even reducing violent crime."
- 2) Resolves by the Assembly, with the Senate concurring, that colleagues of the Legislature, the SPI, and the Governor are urged to restore budget funding to early care and education programs and to support efforts to fund and implement the QRIS and other programs that support early care and education.
- 3) Resolves that the Assembly urges its colleagues to commit to improving the public's understanding of the role that early care and education plays in securing an educated, nimble, and stable workforce to help keep California's economy vibrant and strong for years to come.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes eligibility for child care services and child development programs administered by the California Department of Education (CDE) and requires the SPI to adopt rules and

regulations on eligibility, enrollment and priority of services needed for implementation (Education Code (EC) Section 8263).

- 2) Establishes the California State Preschool Program (CSPP), comprised of funding from State Preschool, Prekindergarten and Family Literacy Programs (PKFL), and General Child Care center-based programs, for part-day and full-day services for three- and four-year old children. (EC Section 8235)

FISCAL EFFECT: None. This bill is keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS: Studies, such as those from the RAND corporation, have shown that quality early childhood education programs have a number of benefits, including improving children's readiness for school, higher test scores, reduced grade-level retention, higher rates of school completion, and higher likelihood of college attendance.

Background. The CDE administers a child care and development system, maintaining 1,401 service contracts with approximately 758 public and private agencies supporting and providing services to children from birth to 13 years of age. Contractors include school districts, county offices of education, cities, colleges, other public entities, community-based organizations, and private agencies. In fiscal year (FY) 2011-12, \$2.3 billion was provided for child care and development programs from state and federal funds, enrolling an estimated 345,000 children. This is down from \$2.669 billion initially provided in the FY 2010-11 budget (prior to midyear trigger cuts) with almost 416,000 slots. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, overall funding for the child care and development program has decreased by almost \$1 billion since 2008-09, with the elimination of 110,000 slots. The Governor's proposed FY 2013-14 budget provides an increase of \$12 million over FY 2012-13 funds for a total of \$2.2 billion for child care and development programs to provide an estimated 341,000 child care and preschool slots.

In February, President Obama announced his plans for early childhood education, including providing high-quality preschool for all low- and moderate-income four-year-old children at or below 200% of poverty, extending and expanding voluntary home visits, and investment in a new Early Head Start-Child Care partnership. In April, President Obama released his proposed 2014 budget, which includes over \$90 billion for early childhood programs, including the following:

- \$75 billion over the next decade to expand access to high quality preschool for all low- and moderate-income four-year-olds, funded by a \$.94 cent tobacco tax.
- \$15 billion for the voluntary home visiting program over the next 10 years. These voluntary programs provide nurses, social workers, and other professionals that meet with at-risk families in their homes and connect them to resources that impact a child's health, development, and ability to learn.
- \$1.4 billion for new early Head Start-Child Care partnerships to enhance and support early learning settings, provide new, full-day, comprehensive services that meet the needs of working families and prepare children for the transition into preschool.

This resolution urges the Legislature, the SPI and the Governor to restore funding for early care and education programs.

QRIS. This resolution also urges the Legislature, the SPI and the Governor to support efforts to fund and implement the QRIS. SB 1629 (Steinberg), Chapter 307, Statutes of 2008, established the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee and required the Committee to develop a policy and implementation plan for an Early Learning Quality Improvement System. The provisions of the bill repealed on January 1, 2012. The Committee's final report recommended creating a statewide, tiered-reimbursement QRIS to evaluate and reimburse programs based on five quality elements: ratios and group size; teaching and learning practices; family involvement; staff education and training; and program leadership. In 2011, California was awarded a \$52.6 million four-year federal grant, the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant, to strengthen the quality of early learning programs. California awarded the majority of the funds to 17 Regional Leadership Consortia, each led by an established organization that is already operating or developing a QRIS. The 17 Consortia in 16 counties includes: Alameda, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Merced, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Ventura, and Yolo.

According to the CDE, "As part of this grant, the Consortia will bring together organizations in their regions with the same goal of improving the quality of early learning and will expand their current areas of impact by inviting other programs to join their QRIS or reaching out to mentor other communities. By joining California's Race to the Top effort, the Consortia voluntarily agree to align their local QRIS to a common "Quality Continuum Framework" based on research-based elements and related assessment and improvement tools. They also agree to implement in their QRIS two common tiers using the Framework in addition to locally determined tiers and to set local goals to improve the quality of early learning and development programs." The consortias will set local goals to improve the quality of early learning and development programs in the following three areas: 1) child development and readiness for school; 2) teachers and teaching; and 3) program and environment quality.

The author states, "A child who attends quality early care and education programs is less likely to be arrested and more likely to earn higher incomes than a child who does not, and the opportunity to participate in such programs prepares children to attain a higher standard of living as adults and to become members of the high-skilled workforce that is critical to our nation's economic future."

Related legislation. AJR 16 (Bonilla), pending in the Assembly, urges Congress to enact President Barack Obama's budget proposal to increase funding for preschool and early learning and the SPI to prepare a plan for making California competitive for future increases in federal funding.

Previous legislation. AB 2592 (Buchanan), held by the author in the Senate in 2010, would have required the CDE to implement an early learning quality improvement rating scale pilot program that is based on the final recommendations developed by the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee.

SB 1629 (Steinberg), Chapter 307, Statutes of 2008, established the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee and required the Committee to develop a policy and

implementation plan for an Early Learning Quality Improvement System. The provisions of the bill sunset on January 1, 2012.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Sophia Kwong Kim / ED. / (916) 319-2087