

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 50
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current research demonstrates a relationship between the education, experience, and compensation of early childhood educators and the quality of teaching and care in early childhood learning programs. Early childhood educators lack incentives and face barriers when pursuing professional development and higher education opportunities.

As proposed, S.B. 50 creates training opportunities and partnerships, establishes a means to increase compensation based on education and experience, and modifies standards and accountability as evaluated by the Texas Council on Early Childhood Education Career Development, as created by this bill, for licensing of early childhood educators. This bill also expands the Texas Early Education Model sites throughout Texas while increasing reimbursement rates for early childhood education centers that meet certain standards.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 29.153, Education Code, by adding Subsection (d-1), as follows:

(d-1) Prohibits the commissioner of education (commissioner) from exempting a school district from prekindergarten for certain children, provided a private entity in the district contracts with the district to operate the prekindergarten program under the requirements of this code and the commissioner rules, meets any standards of the district for the operation of the program, and notifies the district and commissioner not later than June 1 of the entity's ability and intent to operate the program.

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 29.160(c) and (c-2), Education code, as follows:

(c) Requires a coordinated demonstration project for government-funded child care and early education services under this subsection to contain provisions to ensure that the project does not result in a reduction of existing services or redirection of existing expenditures. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(c-2) Adds the promotion of the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development of young children to the requirements of a functioning demonstration project under Subsection (c).

SECTION 3. Amends Section 29.161(c), Education Code, by adding physical development to the requirements of a school readiness certification system.

SECTION 4. Amends Subchapter G, Chapter 2308, Government Code, by adding 2308.3155, as follows:

Sec. 2308.3155. ENHANCED REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR CERTAIN CHILD-CARE PROVIDERS. Requires the local workforce development board to provide enhanced reimbursement rates for child-care providers for services provided for children younger than six years of age from appropriated funds.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 42.0421, Human Resources Code, by adding Subsection (e), to require the Department of Family and Protective Services, in coordination with the State Center for Early Childhood Development, to develop or seek proposals for the development of online training modules as an acceptable option for complying with required training.

SECTION 6. Amends Section 42.0421, Human Resources Code, effective January 1, 2009, by adding Subsection (f), to set forth requirements of persons providing training for an employee of a day-care center or group day-care center.

SECTION 7. Amends the heading of Chapter 72, Human Resources Code, to read as follows:

CHAPTER 72. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES

SECTION 8. Designates Section 72.001, Chapter 72, Human Resources Code, as Subchapter A, and adds a heading to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 9. Amends Section 72.001, Human Resources Code, as follows.

Sec. 72001. New heading: DEFINITIONS. Defines "council."

SECTION 10. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 72, Human Resources Code, by adding Section 72.0015, as follows:

Sec. 72.0015. REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO STATE CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT. Requires the State Center for Early Childhood Development (center) to comply with the contract management requirements of Chapter 2262 (Statewide Contract Management), Government Code, and to prepare and submit a report detailing the use of appropriated funds to the center for the purposes of funding early childhood education services to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Appropriations Committee not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year.

SECTION 11. Amends Chapter 72, Human Resources Code, by designating Sections 72.002 and 72.003 as Subchapter B, renumbering Sections 72.002 and 72.003 as 72.051 and 72.052 respectively, and adding a subchapter heading to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER B. HEAD START PROGRAMS

SECTION 12. Amends Chapter 72, Human Resources Code, by adding Subchapters C and D, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER C. TEXAS COUNCIL ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Sec. 72.101. ESTABLISHMENT. Establishes the Texas Council on Early Childhood Education Career Development (council) to promote the recognition of early childhood educators as professionals and assist in the development of professional standards and educational opportunities for those educators.

Sec. 72.102. COMPOSITION. Sets forth the composition of the council.

Sec. 72.103. DUTIES. Sets forth the required duties of the council.

Sec. 72.104. PRESIDING OFFICER. Requires the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission to designate a presiding officer of the council.

Sec. 72.105. EXPENSES AND STAFF. Prohibits members of the council from receiving of compensation, but authorizes reimbursement for expenses. Requires the Health and Human Services Commission to provide staff to assist the council.

Sec. 72.106. CAREER PATH. Requires the council to develop a model career path and sets forth the requirements a the career path must meet.

[Reserves Sections 72.107-72.150 for expansion.]

SUBCHAPTER D. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Sec. 72.151. ESTABLISHMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS. Authorizes a partnership project to be established in any area of the state to facilitate increased participation in professional development and to encourage further education in regard to early childhood education professionals. Sets forth conditions which a partnership may include.

Sec. 72.152. PROJECT PLAN. (a) Requires a partnership project to develop a coordinated plan in which students or professionals under the plan may receive college credit or professional training and obtain approval from the council and the organization selected by the Texas Education Agency.

(b) Sets forth additional conditions for the coordinated plan to receive approval.

(c) Requires the coordinated plan to develop an evaluation component under certain criteria.

Sec. 72.153. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATING PROFESSIONALS. Requires an educator participating in a partnership project to complete 48 hours of training in the first 18-month period after the educator begins participation. Authorizes an individual with no previous training or employment to complete no less than 16 hours of preservice training and an additional 32 hours within the 18-month period following employment with a child-care facility to satisfy the training requirement.

Sec 72.154. STIPEND. Requires a partnership project to provide a stipend for an education professional who meets certain criteria.

Sec. 72.155. MANAGING ORGANIZATION. Requires the Texas Education Agency, in coordination with the council, to select an organization to manage partnership projects. Requires the organization be selected through a competitive process.

SECTION 13. Requires the Texas Council on Early Childhood Education Career Development to submit a report to the legislature evaluating the effectiveness of this Act not later than December 1, 2009.

SECTION 14. Effective date: September 1, 2007, except as otherwise provided by this Act.