

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1251

100TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE WALKER.

2378H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapter 160, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to early childhood education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 160, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 160.057, to read as follows:

160.057. 1. For purposes of this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Department", the department of elementary and secondary education;

(2) "Early childhood education program", a public, private, or collaborative public-private pre-kindergarten program providing early development and learning experiences to children three years of age or older and under five years of age;

(3) "Resident", a person who resides in the state.

2. Subject to appropriation, in school year 2021-22 and each school year thereafter, all children who are residents of the state and three years of age or older and under five years of age before August first of a school year shall be entitled, but not required, to attend an early childhood education program free of charge. The department shall be responsible for implementing, administering, and evaluating the early childhood education program and shall collaborate with the department of health and senior services.

3. The department shall promulgate rules and standards for early childhood education programs. At a minimum, the rules and standards shall include:

(1) A requirement that curricula and teaching strategies are research-based, developmentally appropriate, and designed to support child development and learning in each of the following areas:

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

- 18 **(a) Cognitive development;**
19 **(b) Creative arts;**
20 **(c) Language development;**
21 **(d) Literacy;**
22 **(e) Mathematics;**
23 **(f) Motor skills and physical development;**
24 **(g) Science; and**
25 **(h) Social and emotional development;**
26 **(2) A requirement for an operating schedule that ensures that each program**
27 **operates during the school year and provides for coordination with extended or year-round**
28 **services;**
29 **(3) A requirement for an operating schedule that ensures that each program**
30 **provides at least thirty hours of instruction each week. For purposes of this subdivision,**
31 **"instruction" means direct one-on-one instruction, instruction in small and larger groups,**
32 **and facilitated child-initiated engagements;**
33 **(4) The following requirements related to teachers:**
34 **(a) Programs shall employ at least one lead teacher in every classroom;**
35 **(b) Each lead teacher shall be required to hold a degree in early childhood**
36 **education or in a related field with specialized training in early childhood education;**
37 **(c) Each assistant teacher shall be required to hold at least a child development**
38 **associate credential or equivalent, based on coursework; and**
39 **(d) All teachers shall be required to have at least fifteen hours of annual in-service**
40 **training or its equivalent;**
41 **(5) The following requirements relating to class size and staff-child ratios:**
42 **(a) Class size shall not exceed twenty children; and**
43 **(b) There shall not be more than ten children per teacher in the classroom;**
44 **(6) A requirement that each program shall provide at least one full meal per day**
45 **for every student enrolled in the program;**
46 **(7) A requirement that each program shall provide screenings and referrals for**
47 **vision, hearing, dental, and general health services;**
48 **(8) The following requirements related to family involvement:**
49 **(a) Each program shall include regular events for meaningful family involvement**
50 **that, at a minimum, include:**
51 **a. Guidelines for communicating with parents or guardians;**
52 **b. Involvement of parents and guardians in decisions about the instructional needs**
53 **of their children; and**

54 **c. Opportunities for effective and meaningful parental or guardian participation**
55 **in the program; and**

56 **(b) Each program shall include regular parent or guardian conferences, home or**
57 **workplace visits, or other parental or guardian opportunities for participation and**
58 **interaction with a child's early childhood education program;**

59 **(9) A requirement that each program shall collaborate with participating families,**
60 **early care providers, and community partners to ensure that all children are offered access**
61 **to quality early childhood education and that there is coordination with child care and**
62 **other services the state provides to young children and their families; and**

63 **(10) A requirement that each program shall employ at least one teacher with**
64 **credentials or experience working with children with special needs and creating**
65 **individualized education programs for students.**

66 **4. There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Early Childhood Education**
67 **Fund". The fund shall consist of all moneys that may be appropriated to it by the general**
68 **assembly and any gifts, contributions, grants, or bequests received from federal, private,**
69 **or other sources. The state treasurer shall be custodian of the fund. In accordance with**
70 **sections 30.170 and 30.180, the state treasurer may approve disbursements. The fund shall**
71 **be a dedicated fund and, upon appropriation, moneys in the fund shall be used solely for**
72 **the administration of this section. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the**
73 **contrary, any moneys remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to**
74 **the credit of the general revenue fund. The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund**
75 **in the same manner as other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such**
76 **investments shall be credited to the fund.**

77 **5. The department shall distribute moneys from the early childhood education fund**
78 **to early childhood education programs in a manner determined according to rules the**
79 **department shall promulgate.**

80 **6. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in section 536.010, that is**
81 **created under the authority delegated in this section shall become effective only if it**
82 **complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable,**
83 **section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable, and if any of the powers**
84 **vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective**
85 **date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional, then the**
86 **grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or adopted after August 28, 2019,**
87 **shall be invalid and void.**

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