
The original instrument was prepared by Jeanne Johnston. The following digest, which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared by Cathy Wells.

DIGEST

Appel (SB 581)

Proposed law provides for an Early Childhood Care and Education Network and requires BESE to:

1. By July 1, 2013, create a comprehensive and integrated network through which to manage and oversee publicly-funded programs that provide early childhood educational services.
2. Establish performance targets for children under the age of three and academic standards for kindergarten readiness for three - and four-year old children to be used in publicly-funded early childhood education programs.
3. Create a uniform assessment and accountability system for publicly-funded early childhood education programs that includes a letter grade indicative of student performance.
4. Coordinate with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) to align the standards for the licensing of child care facilities, including the requirements for participation in the La. Quality Start Child Care Rating System, with the standards established for early childhood education programs.
5. Establish a timeline for the creation and implementation of the early childhood care and education network that shall be fully implemented by the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.
6. Work cooperatively and collaboratively with DCFS and DHH, to establish a seamless early childhood educational system that is coordinated and integrated across all programs and related state agencies, regardless of public funding source.
7. Submit recommendations for any legislative changes needed to implement proposed law prior to the beginning of the 2013 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.
8. Promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the APA to implement proposed law.

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Education to submit the plans and recommendations formulated by the impacted agencies to Louisiana's Early Childhood Advisory Council, the Child Care Association of Louisiana, and the nonpublic school commission appointed by BESE for

review and comment. Further requires each reviewing entity to submit its comments and recommendations to the Dept. of Education and requires the department to prepare a summary report to BESE for its consideration not later than January 1, 2013.

Provides that proposed law shall not apply to early childhood programs that receive public funds solely for food and nutrition assistance.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:407.21 through 407.25)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Education to the original bill.

1. Changes reference from "day care centers" to "child care facilities".
2. Provides that agency plans/recommendations shall be submitted for review to the Child Care Association of La. (in addition to La.'s Early Childhood Advisory Council) and moves responsibility for submission of such plans/recommendations from BESE to DOE.
3. Provides that proposed law shall not apply to early childhood programs that receive public funds solely for food and nutrition programs.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Senate Floor Amendments to engrossed bill.

1. Makes certain technical corrections.
2. Requires agency plans/recommendations be submitted for review to the non-public school commission appointed by BESE (in addition to La.'s Early Childhood Advisory Council and Child Care Association of La.).
3. Requires each reviewing entity to submit its comments and recommendations to DOE and requires DOE to prepare a summary report to BESE.