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

DIGEST

LaFleur (SB 533)

Proposed law establishes Louisiana Early Learning Enrollment Coordination procedures and requires BESE to authorize local early learning enrollment coordinators to conduct a process for informing families about early childhood care and education programs in a coverage area, collect family preferences, develop and use a common application process, determine demand, and make recommendations to the Department of Education (DOE).

Proposed law provides that prior to authorizing local early learning enrollment coordinators, BESE shall:

- (1) By September 1, 2014, provide the governing authority of each public school system and each early learning center, nonpublic school which provides publicly-funded early childhood services, and Head Start grantee located within the geographic boundaries of the public school system with an assessment of the extent to which these providers of early childhood services coordinate their efforts to inform families about the availability of publicly-funded early childhood care and education programs serving students four years of age or younger.
- (2) By October 1, 2015:
 - (a) Publish a list of public school systems within whose geographic boundaries there is no coordinated effort by the public school system and the early learning centers, nonpublic schools which provides publicly-funded early childhood services, and Head Start grantees to inform families about the availability of publicly-funded early childhood care and education programs serving students four years of age or younger.
 - (b) Collect family preferences regarding enrollment choices.
 - (c) Enroll at-risk children, using available public funds, based upon stated family preferences.
- (3) Approve a process no later than 6/30/2015 to authorize entities as local early learning enrollment coordinators to begin performing required services in school systems as early as the 2015-2016 school year.
- (4) Not certify any entity as a local early learning enrollment coordinator under proposed law unless it is in compliance with procedures and regulations established by BESE. The entity shall be a state agency, a public school system, or a nonprofit or for-profit corporation having an educational or social services mission, including but not limited to a nonprofit corporation of a philanthropic or policy nature, a Louisiana public postsecondary education institution, or a nonprofit corporation established by the

governing authority of a parish or municipality.

- (5) Review each proposed local early learning enrollment coordinator in a timely manner and determine whether each proposed coordinator complies with the law and rules and whether the proposal is valid, complete, and financially well-structured.
- (6) Approve a process by which the department serves as the local early learning enrollment coordinator for those coverage areas without an approved entity.
- (7) Initially authorize the local early learning enrollment coordinators for a period up to five years. After the initial authorization period, BESE may grant renewal of authorization for additional periods of not less than three years nor more than five years after thorough review of the local early learning enrollment coordinator activities.
- (8) Promulgate rules establishing an appeals process and designating DOE to oversee the process through which families and early learning centers may appeal decisions made by local early learning enrollment coordinators.

Proposed law provides that local early learning enrollment coordinators shall support families in accessing high-quality publicly-funded early childhood care and education by:

- (1) Conducting a process for disseminating information about early childhood care and education programs and collecting family preferences in order to make distribution recommendations.
- (2) Using a common application process, annually determine family demand for publicly-funded early childhood care and education within the coverage area.
- (3) Producing an annual recommendation to DOE of the distribution of available publicly-funded early childhood care and education slots within the region.

Proposed law provides that pursuant to rules adopted by BESE, DOE shall allocate from public funds appropriated for early childhood care and education programs within public school systems that require an enrollment coordinator, an amount not to exceed 1% of such programs to fund local early learning enrollment coordinators in performing required services. Provides that if the per-child allocation or subsidy amount for a program funded through a state-appropriated funding stream is below the state average per-child amount or subsidy, the amount deducted from the funding stream for the program to support the enrollment system shall be a proportionate amount based upon the number of children funded by the funding stream. Further provides that once the per-child allocation or subsidy amount for a program funded through a state-appropriated funding stream is equal to or greater than the state average per-child allocation or subsidy for all publicly funded early childhood programs, the amount deducted from the funding stream for the program to support the enrollment system shall be a proportionate amount based upon the total statewide enrollment funded by that funding stream. DOE may additionally use such funds to support any local enrollment pilot programs during the 2014-2015 school year in order to inform the

establishment of rules adopted by BESE on or before 6/30/2015.

Proposed law authorizes BESE to establish start-up or incubation grants to encourage sufficient supply of high-quality local early learning enrollment coordinators.

Proposed law requires the local early learning enrollment coordinator to annually submit to DOE an independent financial audit conducted by a certified public accountant who has been approved by the legislative auditor, along with the auditor's statement that the report is free of material misstatements. The audit shall be limited in scope to those records necessary to ensure that the coordinator has used funds to perform required services, and it shall be submitted to the legislative auditor for review and investigation of any irregularities or audit findings. Requires the local early learning enrollment coordinator to return to the state any funds that the legislative auditor determines were expended in a manner inconsistent with state law or state board regulations. The cost of such audit shall be paid by the department from funds provided pursuant to proposed law.

Requires all rules required in the proposed law to be adopted pursuant to the APA.

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

(Adds R.S. 17:407.41-407.45)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

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

1. Makes technical corrections.
2. Removes prohibition against authorizing an entity currently providing early childhood care and education as a local learning enrollment coordinator.
3. Removes prohibition against authorizing an entity which has a potential conflict of interest with an early learning center as a local learning enrollment coordinator.
4. Removes requirement that BESE make every attempt to ensure statewide coverage no later than the 2016-2017 school year.
5. Allows a public school system to be a local early learning enrollment coordinator.
6. Reduces the percentage DOE may deduct from program funds to fund enrollment coordinators from 2% to 1% and provides that this deduction will be made from "appropriated" funds instead of "available" funds. Provides for deductions in proportional amounts based on enrollment for programs funded through state appropriation.