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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
53rd Legislature, 1st Session, 2017

Bill Number	<u>SM23/aSRC</u>	Sponsor	<u>Campos</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.206013.1</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>SRC/SEC</u>
Short Title	<u>Early Childhood Service Collaboration</u>		
Analyst	<u>McCorquodale</u>	Original Date	<u>2/13/17</u>
		Last Updated	<u>2/15/17</u>

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Amendment

The Senate Rules Committee amendment to Senate Memorial 23 (SM23/aSRC) assigns the duties proposed in the original bill to the state Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) instead of creating a new task force to address gaps in early education services.

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Memorial 23 (SM23) requests the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) to establish a new task force to study methods to increase communication and collaboration among entities involved with early childhood services: the Public Education Department (PED); Indian Affairs Department (IAD); New Mexico Head Start; New Mexico Tribal Head Start Association; the New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children; The New Mexico Child Care and Education Association; the New Mexico Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC); and Family Child Care Homes. SM23 points out disparities among early education services for young children, such that in some communities, children are under-served and in others, available slots are not filled. The memorial also indicates that in some cases, funds are returned to the federal government for not filling slots for Head Start.

FISCAL IMPACT

SM23 does not have an appropriation. However, agencies reported they would have to assign personnel to attend its meetings.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

New Mexico needs to better coordinate early childhood programs to prevent duplication and fragmentation of services, and to build capacity by braiding federal and state dollars to strategically expand services for children birth through kindergarten. An effective model of governance for early childhood programs should create coherence among policies and services. Build Initiative, a national organization that helps state leaders develop a comprehensive system

of early childhood programs, indicated programs that are delivered to young children have different designs and purposes, including Head Start, and state child care programs that represent a combination of federal and state funds and requirements, as well as state-funded prekindergarten. A well-built structure of early childhood programs is a crucial step in reducing fragmentation, uneven quality, and inequity in early childhood programs and services.

A recent Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) gap analysis found enough publically funded slots for 4-year-old students exist to provide nearly all low-income 4-year-olds with some form of early childhood education, though many children currently served are not low-income. An estimated 27 thousand 4-year-olds live in New Mexico and 73 percent are low-income as measured by free or reduced-fee lunch status. Roughly 17,500 slots for 4-year-old early care and education programs are funded annually, including state funded prekindergarten, four and five star childcare, Head Start, and special education preschool. However, only 80 percent of prekindergarten students are low-income.

As noted in Volume I of the LFC Report for FY18, New Mexico is close to providing sufficient funding to ensure low-income 4-year-olds receive some type of early education when child care assistance, prekindergarten, and Head Start are considered. Possibly as a result of increased access for 4-year-olds to childcare and prekindergarten, enrollment in federally funded Head Start has experienced a significant decline, and New Mexico is losing federal revenues due to a decline in enrollment. The state needs to better coordinate across programs to prevent over-saturation for one age group, while other age groups are under-served. New Mexico could consider shifting more prekindergarten funding to 3-year-olds or encourage Head Start programs to shift more services to Early Head Start.

RELATED BILLS

SB206a, State Early Learning Advisory Council Changes, improves opportunities for stakeholder input to the State Early Learning Advisory Council.

SJM5, Reconvene J. Paul Taylor Childhood Task Force, proposes to be reconvened for an additional year to implement and sustain the task force's recommended early childhood behavioral health action and child abuse plans.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Legislative Education Study Committee Files

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