

RCW 43.216.075 Early learning advisory council—Policy development and implementation—Early achievers review subcommittee.

(1) The early learning advisory council is established to advise the department on statewide early learning issues that contribute to the ongoing efforts of building a comprehensive system of quality early learning programs and services for Washington's young children and families.

(2) The council shall work in conjunction with the department to:

(a) Assist in policy development and implementation that promotes alignment of private and public sector actions, objectives, and resources, with the overall goal of promoting school readiness for all children;

(b) Provide recommendations annually to the governor and the legislature, beginning August 31, 2022, regarding the phased implementation of strategies and priorities identified in RCW 43.216.772;

(c) Maintain a focus on racial equity and inclusion in order to dismantle systemic racism at its core and contribute to statewide efforts to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty;

(d) Maintain a focus on inclusionary practices for children with disabilities;

(e) Partner with nonprofit organizations to collect and analyze data and measure progress; and

(f) Assist the department in monitoring and ensuring that the investments funded by the fair start for kids account created in RCW 43.216.770 are designed to support the following objectives:

(i) Advance racial equity and strengthen families by recognizing and responding to the growing diversity of our state's population;

(ii) Promote access to affordable, high quality child care and early learning opportunities for all families, paying particular attention to the needs of rural and other underserved communities;

(iii) Promote kindergarten readiness by enhancing child development, including development of social-emotional skills, and eliminating exclusionary admissions practices and disproportionate removals in child care and early learning programs; and

(iv) Contribute to efforts to strengthen and grow our state's economy by supporting working parents as well as stabilizing and supporting the child care and early learning workforce.

(3) In collaboration with the council, the department shall consult with its advisory groups and other interested stakeholders and shall submit a biennial report to the governor and legislature describing how the investments funded by the fair start for kids act have impacted the policy objectives stated in subsection (2)(f) of this section. The first report under this section is due September 15, 2023. The council shall include diverse, statewide representation from public, nonprofit, and for-profit entities. Its membership shall include critical partners in service delivery and reflect regional, racial, and cultural diversity to adequately represent the interests of all children and families in the state.

(4) Councilmembers shall serve two-year terms. However, to stagger the terms of the council, the initial appointments for twelve of the members shall be for one year. Once the initial one-year to two-year terms expire, all subsequent terms shall be for two years, with the terms expiring on June 30th of the applicable year. The terms shall be staggered in such a way that, where possible, the terms of members representing a specific group do not expire simultaneously.

(5) The council shall consist of members essential to coordinating services statewide prenatal through age 12, as follows:

- (a) In addition to being staffed and supported by the department, the governor shall appoint one representative from each of the following: The department of commerce and the department of health;
- (b) One representative from the student achievement council, to be appointed by the student achievement council;
- (c) The military spouse liaison created within the department of veterans affairs under RCW 43.60A.245;
- (d) One representative from the state board for community and technical colleges, to be appointed by the state board for community and technical colleges;
- (e) One representative from the office of the superintendent of public instruction, to be appointed by the superintendent of public instruction;
- (f) Two members of the house of representatives, one from each caucus, to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and two members of the senate, one from each caucus, to be appointed by the majority leader in the senate and the minority leader in the senate;
- (g) Two parents, one of whom serves on the department's parent advisory group, to be appointed by the parent advisory group;
- (h) One representative of the private-public partnership created in RCW 43.216.065, to be appointed by the partnership board;
- (i) One representative from the developmental disabilities community representing children and families involved in part C of the federal individuals with disabilities education act and one representative from the developmental disabilities community representing children and families involved in part B of the federal individuals with disabilities education act;
- (j) Two representatives from early learning regional coalitions;
- (k) Up to five representatives of underserved communities who have a special expertise or interest in high quality early learning, one to be appointed by each of the following commissions:
 - (i) The Washington state commission on Asian Pacific American affairs established under chapter 43.117 RCW;
 - (ii) The Washington state commission on African American affairs established under chapter 43.113 RCW;
 - (iii) The Washington state commission on Hispanic affairs established under chapter 43.115 RCW;
 - (iv) The Washington state women's commission established under chapter 43.119 RCW; and
 - (v) The Washington state office of equity established under chapter 43.06D RCW;
- (l) Two representatives designated by sovereign tribal governments, one of whom must be a representative of a tribal early childhood education assistance program or head start program;
- (m) One representative from the Washington federation of independent schools;
- (n) One representative from the Washington library association;
- (o) One representative from a statewide advocacy coalition of organizations that focuses on early learning;
- (p) One representative from an association representing statewide business interests, to be appointed by the association and one representative from a regional business coalition;
- (q) One representative of an advocacy organization for immigrants and refugees;

(r) One representative of an organization advocating for expanded learning opportunities and school-age child care programs;

(s) One representative from the largest union representing child care providers;

(t) A representative of a head start, early head start, or migrant and seasonal head start program, to be appointed by the head start collaboration office;

(u) A representative of educational service districts, to be appointed by a statewide association of educational service district board members;

(v) A provider responsible for programs under section 619 of the federal individuals with disabilities education act, to be appointed by the superintendent of public instruction;

(w) A representative of the state agency responsible for part C of the federal individuals with disabilities education act, to be appointed by the department;

(x) A representative of the early childhood education and assistance program, to be appointed by an association representing early childhood education and assistance programs;

(y) A representative of licensed family home providers, to be appointed by the largest union representing child care providers;

(z) A representative of child care centers, to be appointed by an association representing child care centers;

(aa) A representative from the home visiting advisory committee established in RCW 43.216.130, to be appointed by the committee;

(bb) An infant or early childhood mental health expert, to be appointed by the Barnard center for infant and early childhood mental health at the University of Washington;

(cc) A family, friend, and neighbor caregiver, to be appointed by the largest union representing child care providers;

(dd) A representative from prenatal to three services;

(ee) A pediatrician, to be appointed by the state chapter of the American academy of pediatrics; and

(ff) A representative of the statewide child care resource and referral organization, to be appointed by the statewide child care resource and referral organization.

(6) The council shall be cochaired by two members, to be elected by the council for two-year terms and not more than one cochair may represent a state agency.

(7) At the direction of the cochairs, the council may convene advisory groups, such as a parent caucus, to evaluate specific issues and report related findings and recommendations to the full council.

(8) The council shall appoint two members and stakeholders with expertise in early learning to sit on the technical working group created in section 2, chapter 234, Laws of 2010.

(9) Each member of the council shall be compensated in accordance with RCW 43.03.240 and reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of the council in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(10)(a) The council shall convene an early achievers review subcommittee to provide feedback and guidance on strategies to improve the quality of instruction and environment for early learning and provide input and recommendations on the implementation and refinement of the early achievers program. The subcommittee shall at a minimum provide feedback and guidance to the department and the council on the following:

(i) Adequacy of data collection procedures;

(ii) Coaching and technical assistance standards;
(iii) Progress in reducing barriers to participation for low-income providers and providers from diverse cultural backgrounds, including a review of the early achievers program's rating tools, quality standard areas, and components, and how they are applied;
(iv) Strategies in response to data on the effectiveness of early achievers program standards in relation to providers and children from diverse cultural backgrounds;
(v) Status of the life circumstance exemption protocols;
(vi) Analysis of early achievers program data trends; and
(vii) Other relevant early learning data including progress in serving students with disabilities ages birth to five and least restrictive environment data.

(b) The subcommittee must include consideration of cultural linguistic responsiveness when analyzing the areas for review required by (a) of this subsection.

(c) The subcommittee shall include representatives from child care centers, family child care, the early childhood education and assistance program, contractors for early achievers program technical assistance and coaching, tribal governments, the organization responsible for conducting early achievers program ratings, and parents of children participating in early learning programs, including working connections child care and early childhood education and assistance programs. The subcommittee shall include representatives from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

(11)(a) The council shall convene a temporary licensing subcommittee to provide feedback and recommendations on improvement to the statewide licensing process.

(b) Members of the subcommittee must include two representatives of the department, two child care providers, and two parents of children in child care. One child care provider and one parent representative must reside east of the crest of the Cascade mountains and one child care provider and one parent representative must reside west of the crest of the Cascade mountains.

(c) The subcommittee shall:

(i) Examine strategies to increase the number of licensed child care providers in the state, including meeting with prospective licensees to explain the licensure requirements and inspect and provide feedback on the physical space that is contemplated for licensure;

(ii) Develop model policies for licensed child care providers to implement licensing standards including, but not limited to, completing the child care and early learning licensing guidebook, to be made available to support providers with compliance; and

(iii) Develop recommendations regarding incentives and financial supports to help prospective providers navigate the licensing process.

(d) The subcommittee shall provide feedback and recommendations to the department of children, youth, and families pursuant to this subsection (11) by December 1, 2022.

(12) The department shall provide staff support to the council. [2021 c 199 § 104; 2020 c 262 § 4; 2017 c 171 § 1; 2015 3rd sp.s. c 7 § 16; 2012 c 229 § 589; 2011 c 177 § 2. Prior: 2010 c 234 § 3; 2010 c 12 § 1; 2007 c 394 § 3. Formerly RCW 43.215.090.]

Short title—Findings—Intent—Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 199: See notes following RCW 43.216.770.

Finding—Intent—2015 3rd sp.s. c 7: See note following RCW 43.216.085.

Effective date—2012 c 229 §§ 101, 117, 401, 402, 501 through 594, 601 through 609, 701 through 708, 801 through 821, 902, and 904: See note following RCW 28B.77.005.

Finding—Purpose—2011 c 177: "The legislature finds that to fully comply with requirements in section 642B of the federal head start act, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 9837b, regarding state advisory council membership, Washington must amend existing law to reflect necessary changes in early learning advisory council membership in accordance with the federal requirement.

Accordingly, the purpose of this act is to specify four of the governor's appointees as permanent members on the early learning advisory council to comply with state advisory council requirements as follows: The head start state collaboration office director or a designee; a representative of a head start, early head start, migrant/seasonal head start, or tribal head start program; a representative of a local education agency; and a representative of the state agency responsible for programs under section 619 or part C of the federal individuals with disabilities education act. This act also revises the categories of groups from which the governor may appoint additional representatives as members of the council." [2011 c 177 § 1.]

Intent—2010 c 234: "The department of early learning, the superintendent of public instruction, and thrive by five's joint early learning recommendations to the governor, and the quality education council's January 2010 recommendations to the legislature both suggested that a voluntary program of early learning should be included within the overall program of basic education. The legislature intends to examine these recommendations and Attorney General Opinion Number 8 (2009) through the development of a working group to identify and recommend a comprehensive plan." [2010 c 234 § 1.]

Finding—Declaration—Captions not law—2007 c 394: See notes following RCW 43.216.010.