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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 1278

02/18/2021 Authored by Boldon, Pinto, Freiberg, Becker-Finn, Olson, L., and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Early Childhood Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to early childhood programs; establishing a task force on early care and
1.3 education affordability and workforce compensation; requiring a report;
1.4 appropriating money.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. AFFORDABLE, HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION
1.7 FOR ALL FAMILIES.

1.8 Subdivision 1. Goal. It is the goal of the state for all families to have access to affordable,
1.9 high-quality early care and education, for children from birth up to age five, that enriches,
1.10 nurtures, and supports children and their families. The goal will be achieved by:

1.11 (1) creating a system under which no family pays more than seven percent of its income
1.12 for early care and education;

1.13 (2) ensuring that a child's access to high-quality early care and education is not determined
1.14 by the child's race, income, or zip code; and

1.15 (3) increasing compensation and professional development opportunities for the early
1.16 care and education workforce.

1.17 Subd. 2. Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force; establishment. The
1.18 Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force is established to develop strategies that
1.19 will meet the goal identified in subdivision 1.

1.20 Subd. 3. Membership. (a) The task force shall consist of the following 19 voting
1.21 members, appointed by the governor or governor's designee, except as otherwise specified:

2.1 (1) two members of the house of representatives, appointed first from the majority party
2.2 by the speaker of the house and second from the minority party by the minority leader. One
2.3 of the members must represent a district outside of the seven-county metropolitan area, and
2.4 one member must represent a district that includes the seven-county metropolitan area. The
2.5 appointment by the minority leader must ensure that the requirement for geographic diversity
2.6 in appointments is met;

2.7 (2) two members of the senate, appointed first from the majority party by the majority
2.8 leader and second from the minority party by the minority leader. One of the members must
2.9 represent a district outside of the seven-county metropolitan area, and one member must
2.10 represent a district that includes the seven-county metropolitan area. The appointment by
2.11 the minority leader must ensure that the requirement for geographic diversity in appointments
2.12 is met;

2.13 (3) one individual who is the director of a licensed child care center with at least 50
2.14 percent of its enrolled children eligible for or currently receiving public assistance for early
2.15 care and education;

2.16 (4) two individuals who are license holders of family child care programs, one from
2.17 greater Minnesota and one from the seven-county metropolitan area;

2.18 (5) one individual who is both a licensed early childhood teacher and a member of a
2.19 licensed early childhood educator union;

2.20 (6) two parents of children under the age of five who are enrolled in early care and
2.21 education programs, one parent from greater Minnesota and one parent from the seven-county
2.22 metropolitan area;

2.23 (7) one representative of an organization that organizes licensed child care centers and
2.24 employees;

2.25 (8) one representative from the statewide child care resource and referral network, known
2.26 as Child Care Aware;

2.27 (9) one representative of a trade organization representing the interests of licensed child
2.28 care centers;

2.29 (10) one representative of a federally recognized tribe;

2.30 (11) one representative from the Minnesota Association of County Social Service
2.31 Administrators;

2.32 (12) one nationally recognized expert in early care and education financing;

3.1 (13) one representative from an association representing business interests;

3.2 (14) one representative of a statewide advocacy organization that supports and promotes
3.3 early childhood education and welfare; and

3.4 (15) one representative from the Children's Cabinet.

3.5 (b) One representative from each of the following state agencies shall serve as a nonvoting
3.6 member of the task force who participates in meetings and provides data and information
3.7 to the task force upon request:

3.8 (1) the Department of Education;

3.9 (2) the Department of Employment and Economic Development;

3.10 (3) the Department of Health;

3.11 (4) the Department of Human Services;

3.12 (5) the Department of Labor and Industry;

3.13 (6) the Department of Management and Budget; and

3.14 (7) the Department of Revenue.

3.15 Subd. 4. **Administration.** (a) The governor must select a chair or cochaIRS for the task
3.16 force from among the voting members. The first task force meeting shall be convened by
3.17 the chair or cochaIRS and held no later than September 1, 2021. Thereafter, the chair or
3.18 cochaIRS shall convene the task force at least monthly and may convene other meetings as
3.19 necessary. The chair or cochaIRS shall convene meetings in a manner to allow for access
3.20 from diverse geographic locations in Minnesota.

3.21 (b) Members of the task force shall be compensated according to Minnesota Statutes,
3.22 section 15.059, subdivision 3.

3.23 (c) The commissioner of management and budget shall provide staff and administrative
3.24 services for the task force.

3.25 (d) The task force shall expire upon submission of the final report required under
3.26 subdivision 9.

3.27 (e) The duties of the task force in this section shall be transferred to an applicable state
3.28 agency if specifically authorized under law to carry out such duties.

3.29 (f) The task force is subject to Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13D.

4.1 Subd. 5. **Plan development.** (a) The task force must develop a plan to achieve the goal
4.2 outlined in subdivision 1 by 2031. The plan must incorporate strategies that:

4.3 (1) create a system under which no family pays more than seven percent of its income
4.4 for early care and education;

4.5 (2) ensure that a child's access to high-quality early care and education is not determined
4.6 by the child's race, income, or zip code; and

4.7 (3) increase compensation to at least a livable wage and increase professional development
4.8 opportunities for the early care and education workforce.

4.9 (b) Development of the strategies must incorporate or otherwise take into account the
4.10 factors identified in subdivisions 6 and 7.

4.11 Subd. 6. **Affordable, high-quality early care and education.** In developing the plan
4.12 under subdivision 5, the task force must:

4.13 (1) identify the benefit mechanisms and infrastructure under which families will access
4.14 financial assistance so early care and education is affordable;

4.15 (2) describe how the plan will be administered, including the roles for state agencies,
4.16 local government agencies, and community-based organizations;

4.17 (3) consider how provider payment rates will be determined and updated under a seven
4.18 percent cap; and

4.19 (4) consider how the state can develop and implement diverse methods of assessing and
4.20 monitoring developmental and achievement benchmarks in early care and education settings
4.21 to assess kindergarten readiness.

4.22 Subd. 7. **Workforce compensation.** In developing the plan under subdivision 5, the
4.23 task force must:

4.24 (1) endeavor to preserve and increase racial and ethnic equity and diversity in the early
4.25 care and education workforce and recognize the value of cultural competency and
4.26 multilingualism;

4.27 (2) include a salary floor that supports recruitment and retention of a qualified workforce
4.28 in every early care and education setting;

4.29 (3) consider the need for and development of a mechanism that ties provider
4.30 reimbursement rates to employee wages;

5.1 (4) increase compensation to incentivize advancements in relevant higher education
 5.2 credentials, training, years of experience, and credential equivalencies, including certified
 5.3 demonstrations of competencies developed through apprenticeships, peer learning models,
 5.4 and community-based training; and

5.5 (5) set compensation for providers by reference to compensation for licensed early
 5.6 childhood teachers, and consider differentiating base compensation for:

5.7 (i) varying levels of responsibility, including but not limited to center directors, assistant
 5.8 directors, lead teachers, assistant teachers, paraprofessionals, family child license holders,
 5.9 second adult caregivers, substitutes, and helpers; and

5.10 (ii) different geographic areas of the state.

5.11 Subd. 8. **Implementation timeline.** The task force must develop an implementation
 5.12 timeline for the plan developed under subdivision 5 that phases in the plan over a period of
 5.13 no more than six years, beginning in July 2025 and finishing no later than July 2031. In
 5.14 developing the implementation timeline, the task force must consider:

5.15 (1) how to simultaneously apply the seven percent cap to as many families as possible
 5.16 while minimizing disruptions in the availability and cost of currently available early care
 5.17 and education arrangements;

5.18 (2) the capacity for the state to increase the availability of different types of early care
 5.19 and education settings from which a family may choose;

5.20 (3) how the inability to afford and access early care and education settings
 5.21 disproportionately affects certain populations; and

5.22 (4) how to provide additional targeted investments for early care and education providers
 5.23 serving a high proportion of families currently eligible for or receiving public assistance
 5.24 for early care and education.

5.25 Subd. 9. **Required reports.** By July 1, 2022, the task force must submit to the governor
 5.26 and committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over early childhood programs preliminary
 5.27 findings and draft implementation plans pursuant to the plan required under subdivision 5.
 5.28 By February 1, 2023, the task force must submit to the governor and committees of the
 5.29 legislature with jurisdiction over early childhood programs final recommendations and
 5.30 implementation plans pursuant to subdivision 5.

- 6.1 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION; GREAT START FOR ALL MINNESOTA CHILDREN**
- 6.2 **TASK FORCE.**
- 6.3 \$..... in fiscal year 2022 and \$..... in fiscal year 2023 are appropriated from the general
- 6.4 fund to the commissioner of management and budget for the Great Start for All Minnesota
- 6.5 Children Task Force.