

This Document can be made available in alternative formats upon request

State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETIETH SESSION

H. F. No. 1491

02/20/2017 Authored by Loon
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Education Finance

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; modifying the administration of the early learning scholarship
1.3 program; prohibiting the commissioner from designating scholarships for use in
1.4 predetermined qualifying programs; amending Minnesota Statutes 2016, section
1.5 124D.165, subdivision 3.

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

1.7 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 124D.165, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

1.8 Subd. 3. Administration. (a) The commissioner shall establish application timelines
1.9 and determine the schedule for awarding scholarships that meets operational needs of eligible
1.10 families and programs. The commissioner may prioritize applications on factors including
1.11 family income, geographic location, and whether the child's family is on a waiting list for
1.12 a publicly funded program providing early education or child care services. The commissioner
1.13 shall not designate scholarships for use in predetermined qualifying programs.

1.14 (b) For fiscal years 2014 and 2015 only, scholarships may not exceed \$5,000 per year
1.15 for each eligible child. For fiscal year 2016 and later, the commissioner shall establish a
1.16 target for the average scholarship amount per child based on the results of the rate survey
1.17 conducted under section 119B.02.

1.18 (c) A four-star rated program that has children eligible for a scholarship enrolled in or
1.19 on a waiting list for a program beginning in July, August, or September may notify the
1.20 commissioner, in the form and manner prescribed by the commissioner, each year of the
1.21 program's desire to enhance program services or to serve more children than current funding
1.22 provides. The commissioner may designate a predetermined number of scholarship slots
1.23 for that program and notify the program of that number. Beginning July 1, 2016, a school
1.24 district or Head Start program qualifying under this paragraph subdivision 4 may use its

2.1 established registration process to enroll scholarship recipients and may verify a scholarship
2.2 recipient's family income in the same manner as for other program participants.

2.3 (d) A scholarship is awarded for a 12-month period. If the scholarship recipient has not
2.4 been accepted and subsequently enrolled in a rated program within ten months of the
2.5 awarding of the scholarship, the scholarship cancels and the recipient must reapply in order
2.6 to be eligible for another scholarship. A child may not be awarded more than one scholarship
2.7 in a 12-month period.

2.8 (e) A child who receives a scholarship who has not completed development screening
2.9 under sections 121A.16 to 121A.19 must complete that screening within 90 days of first
2.10 attending an eligible program.

2.11 (f) For fiscal year 2017 and later, a school district or Head Start program enrolling
2.12 scholarship recipients under paragraph (c) may apply to the commissioner, in the form and
2.13 manner prescribed by the commissioner, for direct payment of state aid. Upon receipt of
2.14 the application, the commissioner must pay each program directly for each approved
2.15 scholarship recipient enrolled under paragraph (c) according to the metered payment system
2.16 or another schedule established by the commissioner.

2.17 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2017.