

SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
EIGHTY-EIGHTH SESSION

S.F. No. 2692

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DATE	D-PG	OFFICIAL STATUS
03/17/2014	6277	Introduction and first reading Referred to Education
03/19/2014	6320a	Comm report: To pass as amended and re-refer to Health, Human Services and Housing
03/20/2014	6404	Comm report: To pass and re-referred to Finance

A bill for an act

1.1 relating to early learning; expanding the availability of early learning
 1.2 scholarships; funding home health visit programs; providing assistance to child
 1.3 care providers to participate in the quality rating system; creating an early
 1.4 childhood scholarship pilot program; appropriating money; amending Minnesota
 1.5 Statutes 2013 Supplement, section 124D.165, subdivision 3, by adding a
 1.6 subdivision; Laws 2013, chapter 116, article 8, section 5, subdivision 8.
 1.7

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

1.9 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2013 Supplement, section 124D.165, subdivision 3,
 1.10 is amended to read:

1.11 Subd. 3. **Administration.** (a) The commissioner shall establish application
 1.12 timelines and determine the schedule for awarding scholarships that meets operational
 1.13 needs of eligible families and programs. The commissioner may prioritize applications on
 1.14 factors including family income, geographic location, and whether the child's family is on a
 1.15 waiting list for a publicly funded program providing early education or child care services.

1.16 (b) Scholarships may be awarded up to \$5,000 for each eligible child per year. The
 1.17 commissioner shall establish a target for the average annual scholarship amount per child
 1.18 based on the results of the rate survey conducted under section 119B.02.

1.19 (c) A four-star rated program that has children eligible for a scholarship enrolled
 1.20 in or on a waiting list for a program beginning in July, August, or September may notify
 1.21 the commissioner, in the form and manner prescribed by the commissioner, each year
 1.22 of the program's desire to enhance program services or to serve more children than
 1.23 current funding provides. The commissioner may designate a predetermined number of
 1.24 scholarship slots for that program and notify the program of that number.

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

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

2.9 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

2.10 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2013 Supplement, section 124D.165, is amended by adding
 2.11 a subdivision to read:

2.12 **Subd. 6. Program funding.** (a) Beginning in fiscal year 2016, the annual baseline
 2.13 appropriation for this program equals the lesser of:

2.14 (1) twice the appropriation for the previous year; or

2.15 (2) the actual amount necessary to fund all eligible scholarship requests.

2.16 (b) The amount necessary is annually appropriated from the general fund to the
 2.17 commissioner of education for early education scholarships according to paragraph (a).
 2.18 This amount must be reduced by the amount of any money specifically appropriated for
 2.19 the same purpose in any year from any state fund.

2.20 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

2.21 Sec. 3. Laws 2013, chapter 116, article 8, section 5, subdivision 8, is amended to read:

2.22 **Subd. 8. Early childhood education scholarships.** For transfer to the Office of
 2.23 Early Learning for early learning scholarships under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.165:

2.24 \$ 23,000,000 2014

2.25 ~~23,000,000~~

2.26 \$ 43,000,000 2015

2.27 Up to \$950,000 each year is for administration of this program.

2.28 Any balance in the first year does not cancel but is available in the second year.

2.29 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2014.

2.30 Sec. 4. **APPROPRIATIONS.**

3.1 Subdivision 1. **High-quality targeted home visiting.** \$500,000 in fiscal year 2015
3.2 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of health to consult with
3.3 representatives of community health boards and other stakeholders to:

3.4 (1) establish standards of best practice and measurable quality indicators for targeted
3.5 home visiting programs in Minnesota;

3.6 (2) develop a comprehensive culturally relevant training and competency building
3.7 program for home visitors around the state; and

3.8 (3) support the establishment of a coordinated system of home visiting intake and
3.9 service delivery at the local level.

3.10 This is a onetime appropriation.

3.11 Subd. 2. **Home visiting pilot project for highest risk families.** \$1,600,000 in
3.12 fiscal year 2015 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of health
3.13 for a pilot project to expand evidence-based high-quality home visiting, focusing on
3.14 the youngest children living in the highest risk families receiving assistance through
3.15 the Minnesota family investment program under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 256J, in
3.16 communities served by two counties, one county in the seven-county metropolitan area
3.17 and one nonmetropolitan county. The commissioner of health shall consult with the
3.18 commissioner of human services and the commissioner of education on the administration
3.19 of the pilot program. The commissioner of health shall provide a formative evaluation of
3.20 the pilot project to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees
3.21 with jurisdiction over health and human services policy and finance by January 1, 2016.

3.22 Funds are available until expended.

3.23 Subd. 3. **Licensed family child care voluntary quality improvement pilot project.**
3.24 \$2,750,000 in fiscal year 2015 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner
3.25 of human services for creating a pilot project to provide support to licensed family child
3.26 care providers seeking to participate in the state quality rating and improvement system.
3.27 Grants of up to \$8,000 may be made available to child care providers to apply to child
3.28 care provider mentoring, training, coaching, consultation, and supports to prepare for the
3.29 voluntary Minnesota quality rating system rating tool. As a condition of receiving a grant,
3.30 the provider shall commit to participating in the quality rating system. These grants must
3.31 help child care providers build quality child care programs, including, but not limited
3.32 to, relationship-based professional development through mentoring and coaching and
3.33 ensuring that training is offered to providers in primary languages other than English.
3.34 Funds shall be distributed evenly between metro and rural regions. The commissioner
3.35 may use a portion of the funds to increase capacity for providing mentoring, coaching, and

4.1 training, particularly in primary languages other than English. A report on the progress
4.2 of this pilot project must be provided to the chairs and ranking minority members of the
4.3 legislative committees with jurisdiction over health and human services policy and finance
4.4 by January 15, 2015. This is a onetime appropriation. Funds are available until expended.

4.5 Subd. 4. **Transformation zone early childhood scholarships; pilot program.** (a)
4.6 \$15,030,000 in fiscal year 2015 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner
4.7 of education for transformation zone early childhood scholarships under paragraph (b).
4.8 This is a onetime appropriation.

4.9 (b) An early childhood scholarship pilot program is created to extend opportunities
4.10 to families residing in any of Minnesota's four transformation zones. A family living in a
4.11 transformation zone that has a child under the age of three may apply for a transformation
4.12 zone early learning scholarship under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.165. The
4.13 commissioner, in consultation with administrators for the transformation zones, will
4.14 determine scholarship criteria and maximum rates consistent with the needs of each zone.
4.15 The commissioner may otherwise administer the transformation zone early childhood
4.16 scholarships under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.165. The duration of the pilot
4.17 program may be for up to four years.

4.18 (c) The commissioner must issue a preliminary report to the legislature by February
4.19 15, 2015, on the program's progress and must issue a midpilot report on February 15,
4.20 2017, and a final report at the conclusion of the pilot program, which must describe the
4.21 outcomes of the program and include recommendations to the legislature about the
4.22 continuation of the program.