
DIGEST

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HB 304 Engrossed

2021 Regular Session

Lyons

Abstract: Requires the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to coordinate and report data relative to early childhood care and education and to consider this data when allocating certain funding; also requires the creation of a program for providing instructional materials for home use.

Present law provides for BESE's creation of a network through which to manage and oversee all publicly funded programs that provide early childhood care or educational services. Proposed law further provides that BESE shall coordinate and report data in a manner that assists legislators in evaluating the effectiveness of the network and in determining the most efficient and effective allocation of funding and services to maximize opportunities for children aged birth through five to achieve kindergarten readiness. Requires BESE to submit to the House Committee on Education, Senate Committee on Education, House Committee on Appropriations, and Senate Committee on Finance a written report, not later than 60 days prior to each regular session, that includes, at minimum, the following information:

- (1) The number of children participating in the network and demographic information pertaining to their age, race, and socioeconomic status.
- (2) The areas of greatest need according to geographic location and student population for the purpose of prioritizing funding and services.

Present law provides for the La. Early Childhood Education Fund and for BESE's administration of the fund. Provides that subject to legislative appropriation, monies in the fund shall be awarded annually to local entities approved by BESE according to specified parameters and conditions. Proposed law additionally requires BESE to consider the data it coordinates pursuant to proposed law in determining how to allocate awards it makes pursuant to present law.

Proposed law requires BESE to create a program administered by the state Dept. of Education (DOE) through which parents whose children are not able to enroll in an early learning center due to a lack of available seats or funding are able to access instructional materials in order to provide instruction to the children at home. Requires DOE to use the data ascertained in accordance with proposed law in order to conduct outreach to communities and families in need of such materials and to identify the most effective and efficient means of delivering them. Requires materials to be aligned to the BESE's birth to five early learning and development standards in order to maximize the children's opportunity to achieve kindergarten readiness.

(Adds R.S. 17:407.23(E) and (F) and 407.30(D)(3))