

Amendment No. ____ (for drafter's use only)

| | <u>Senate</u> | CHAMBER ACTION | <u>House</u> |
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ORIGINAL STAMP BELOW

Representative(s) Horan offered the following:

Amendment (with title amendment)

On page 8, line 6 through page 86, line 2,
remove from the bill: all of said lines

and insert in lieu thereof:

Section 1. School Readiness Commission.--

(1) The School Readiness Commission is established and assigned to the Executive Office of the Governor for administrative purposes. The commission shall carry out the duties and responsibilities provided in this section and delegated by the State Board of Education and is not subject to control, supervision, or direction by the Executive Office of the Governor or the State Board of Education. The commission shall serve as an advisory body to the State Board of Education and other appropriate state agencies and entities on all matters relating to achievement of the first state education goal, readiness to start school. In addition, the commission's reports and recommendations shall be made available to the Governor, the Legislature, the State Board of

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1 Education, other appropriate state agencies and entities,
2 district school boards, central agencies for child care, and
3 county public health units.

4 (2) The commission shall be composed of 12 members of
5 the public who shall be business, community, and civic leaders
6 in the state who are not elected to public office and who do
7 not earn their income in the early education and child care
8 industry. The members must be geographically and
9 demographically representative of the state. Each member shall
10 be appointed by the Governor. Eight of the members shall be
11 appointed from a list of 12 nominees, of which six must be
12 submitted by the President of the Senate and six must be
13 submitted by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
14 Members shall be appointed to 4-year terms of office. However,
15 of the initial appointees, three shall be appointed to 1-year
16 terms, three shall be appointed to 2-year terms, three shall
17 be appointed to 3-year terms, and three shall be appointed to
18 4-year terms. The members of the commission shall elect a
19 chairperson annually. Any vacancy on the commission shall be
20 filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

21 (3) The commission shall meet as often as it deems
22 necessary to carry out its duties and responsibilities.

23 (4) The commission shall appoint an executive director
24 to serve at its pleasure, who shall perform the duties
25 assigned to him or her by the commission. The executive
26 director shall be the chief administrative officer of the
27 commission and shall be responsible for appointing all
28 employees and staff members of the commission, who shall serve
29 under his or her direction and control.

30 (5) Members of the commission shall serve without
31 compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem

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1 and travel expenses incurred in the performance of their
2 duties as provided in section 112.061, Florida Statutes.

3 (6) The commission shall:

4 (a) Serve as a citizen board to coordinate the efforts
5 toward school readiness in this state and provide independent
6 policy analyses and recommendations to the Governor, the State
7 Board of Education, and the Legislature.

8 (b) Prepare and submit to the State Board of Education
9 a system for measuring school readiness. The system must
10 include a screening instrument, or instruments, which shall
11 provide objective data regarding the following expectations
12 for school readiness:

13 1. The child's immunizations and other health
14 requirements as necessary.

15 2. The child's display of physical development
16 appropriate for kindergarten.

17 3. The child's compliance with rules, limitations, and
18 routines.

19 4. The child's successful engagement in kindergarten
20 tasks.

21 5. The child's demonstration of appropriate
22 interactions with adults.

23 6. The child's demonstration of appropriate
24 interactions with peers.

25 7. The child's effective coping with challenges and
26 frustrations.

27 8. The child's demonstration of appropriate self-help
28 skills.

29 9. The child's ability to express his needs
30 appropriately.

31 10. The child's demonstration of verbal communication

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- 1 skills necessary to succeed in kindergarten.
- 2 11. The child's demonstration of problem-solving
3 skills necessary to succeed in kindergarten.
- 4 12. The child's following of verbal directions.
- 5 13. The child's demonstration of curiosity,
6 persistence, and exploratory behavior.
- 7 14. The child's demonstration of an interest in books
8 and other printed materials.
- 9 15. The child's paying attention to stories.
- 10 16. The child's participation in art and music
11 activities.
- 12 (c) Prepare a plan for implementing the system for
13 measuring school readiness in such a way that all children in
14 this state have the opportunity to undergo the screening in
15 the year prior to their entry into kindergarten. The plan must
16 include a way to make the screening instrument and the
17 training required to administer it available to public and
18 private providers of preschool and child care programs, and a
19 way to make the screening available to children who do not
20 participate in such programs. Because children with
21 disabilities may not be able to meet all of the identified
22 expectations for school readiness, the plan for measuring
23 school readiness shall incorporate mechanisms for recognizing
24 the potential variations in expectations for school readiness
25 when serving children with disabilities and shall provide for
26 communities to serve children with disabilities.
- 27 (d) Establish a method for collecting data from the
28 screening instrument and establish guidelines for using the
29 data so that the measurement, the data collection, and the use
30 of the data serve the statewide goal that all children will be
31 ready for school. The criteria for determining which data to

1 collect should be the usefulness of the data to state
2 policymakers and program administrators in administering
3 programs and allocating state funds.

4 (e) Contract with an independent entity for an
5 evaluation of the measurement system. The evaluation must
6 provide the information that local and state agencies, the
7 Governor, and the Legislature need to provide for the
8 effective administration of programs that serve preschool
9 children. The evaluation must provide information that will
10 assist providers of private preschool and child care programs
11 in assessing the success of preschool and child care programs
12 and making decisions about improving program services to
13 prepare children for school.

14 (f) Recommend to the Governor, the Commissioner of
15 Education, and the State Board of Education rules, and
16 revisions or repeal of rules, which would increase the
17 effectiveness of programs that prepare children for school.

18 (g) Conduct studies and planning activities related to
19 the overall improvement and effectiveness of school-readiness
20 measures.

21 (h) Submit an annual report of its activities to the
22 Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the
23 House of Representatives, and the minority leaders of both
24 houses of the Legislature.

25
26 To ensure that the system for measuring school readiness is
27 comprehensive and appropriate statewide, as the system is
28 developed and implemented, the commission must consult with
29 representatives of district school systems, providers of
30 public and private child care, health care providers, large
31 and small employers, experts in education for children with

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1 disabilities, and experts in child development.

2 (7) The commission may adopt rules necessary to
3 administer the provisions of this section relating to
4 preparation and implementation of the system for school
5 readiness, data collection, approving local coalition plans,
6 providing a method whereby a coalition could serve two or more
7 counties, awarding incentives to coalitions, and contracting
8 for an evaluation.

9 Section 2. School Readiness Coordinating Council.--

10 (1) The School Readiness Coordinating Council is
11 established with responsibility for advising the School
12 Readiness Commission regarding policies facilitating local
13 implementation, providing technical assistance, and helping to
14 secure waivers. The School Readiness Coordinating Council
15 shall consist of:

16 (a) The Deputy Commissioner of Education Programs in
17 the Department of Education;

18 (b) The Secretary of Children and Family Services or a
19 designated division director;

20 (c) The Secretary of Health or a designated division
21 director;

22 (d) The Chair of the Child Care Partnership Board;

23 (e) The Executive Director of the State WAGES Board;

24 (f) The President of the Florida Pediatric Society;

25 (g) The Chair of the Florida Council of 100;

26 (h) The President of the Head Start Directors'

27 Association;

28 (i) The President of the Florida Children's Forum;

29 (j) The Chair of the Developmental Disabilities

30 Council;

31 (k) The Director of the Healthy Start Coalition

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- 1 Association;
2 (l) The President of the Florida School Boards
3 Association;
4 (m) The Chair of the Florida Association of Family
5 Child Care Homes;
6 (n) The Chair of a School Readiness Coalition;
7 (o) The President of the Florida Association of Child
8 Care Management;
9 (p) The Executive Director of the Early Childhood
10 Association;
11 (q) The Chair of the Florida Interagency Coordinating
12 Council for Infants and Toddlers;
13 (r) The Coordinator of the Florida Parent Resource
14 Organization;
15 (s) A representative of the Family Network on
16 Disabilities of Florida;
17 (t) The President of the Children's Services Council
18 Association of Florida;
19 (u) The Director of the Agency for Health Care
20 Administration;
21 (v) The President of the Florida Association for Child
22 Development Education;
23 (w) An individual certified in this state to teach
24 children of pre-kindergarten age.
25 (x) An additional four members representing the
26 private-sector business community. These four members must be
27 selected by a majority vote of the other members. The members
28 must be geographically and demographically representative of
29 the state.
30
31 The School Readiness Coordinating Council shall select a chair

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1 from among the business community and a vice chair.

2 (2) School Readiness Coordinating Council members are
3 entitled to receive per diem and expenses for travel, as
4 provided in section 112.061, Florida Statutes, while carrying
5 out the official business of the council. For administrative
6 purposes only, the council shall be assigned to the Office of
7 the Governor.

8 (3) The School Readiness Coordinating Council shall
9 meet and conduct business at least quarterly or as needed to
10 carry out the duties of the council.

11 (4) The School Readiness Coordinating Council shall be
12 staffed by the Office of the Governor and draw upon state
13 agency personnel and resources as needed to implement policy
14 necessary to facilitate the early education and child care
15 program.

16 (5) Quarterly meetings of the School Readiness
17 Coordinating Council shall be open to the public and
18 opportunity for public comment shall be made available at each
19 such meeting. The staff of the School Readiness Coordinating
20 Council shall notify all persons who request such notice as to
21 the date, time, and place of each quarterly meeting.

22 Section 3. Section 402.265, Florida Statutes, is
23 created to read:

24 402.265 Early education and child care program.--

25 (1) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.--

26 (a) The Legislature recognizes that high-quality early
27 education and child care programs increase children's chances
28 of achieving future educational success and becoming
29 productive members of society. It is the intent of the
30 Legislature that such programs be developmental, serve as
31 preventive measures for children at risk of future school

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1 failure, enhance the educational readiness of all children,
2 and support family education and the involvement of parents in
3 their child's educational progress. Each early education and
4 child care program shall provide the elements necessary to
5 help prepare preschool children for school, including health
6 screening and referral, a developmentally appropriate
7 educational program, and opportunities for parental
8 involvement in the program.

9 (b) It is legislative intent that all programs and
10 services for Florida children in the first 5 years of life,
11 including health care, child care, child welfare, and formal
12 education, are school readiness programs.

13 (c) It is legislative intent that early education and
14 child care programs be operated within funding limits on a
15 full-day, year-round basis to enable parents to work and
16 become financially self-sufficient.

17 (d) It is legislative intent that early education and
18 child care programs not exist as isolated programs, but build
19 upon existing services and work in cooperation with other
20 programs for young children, and that these programs and
21 program funds be coordinated to achieve full effectiveness.

22 (e) It is legislative intent that the implementation
23 of an early education and child care program be optional on a
24 county-by-county basis.

25 (f) Publicly funded early education and child care
26 programs are defined as prekindergarten early intervention
27 programs, Head Start programs, programs offered by public or
28 private providers of child care, preschool programs for
29 children with disabilities, programs for migrant children,
30 Title I programs, subsidized child care programs, teen parent
31 programs, and other services.

1 (2) CREATION OF OPTIONAL PROGRAM; EXEMPTIONS.--The
2 early education and child care program consisting of publicly
3 funded programs listed in paragraph (1)(f) is established. The
4 early education and child care program is an optional program.

5 (3) PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY.--The early education and
6 child care program shall be established for children from
7 birth to 6 years of age. The program shall consist of the
8 programs listed in paragraph (1)(f), be administered by the
9 School Readiness Coalition, and receive funds pursuant to SB
10 180 or similar legislation. Within funding limitations, the
11 School Readiness Coalition, along with all providers, shall
12 make reasonable efforts to accommodate the needs of children
13 for extended-day and extended-year services without
14 compromising the quality of the program.

15 (4) STANDARDS; OUTCOME MEASURES.--

16 (a) All publicly funded early education and child care
17 programs must meet the following performance standards and
18 outcome measures developed by the Department of Education and
19 the Department of Children and Family Services:

20 1. They must help prepare preschool children to enter
21 kindergarten ready to learn, as measured by criteria
22 established by the School Readiness Commission or, in the
23 absence of such criteria, by the School Readiness Checklist of
24 the Department of Education.

25 2. They must provide extended-day and extended-year
26 services to the maximum extent possible.

27 3. There must be coordinated staff development and
28 teaching opportunities.

29 4. There must be expanded access to community services
30 and resources for families to help achieve economic
31 self-sufficiency.

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1 5. There must be a single point of entry and unified
2 waiting list.

3 6. If funding remains constant, they must serve at
4 least as many children as were served prior to implementation
5 of the program.

6 (b) All participating publicly funded early education
7 and child care programs must implement a comprehensive program
8 of children and family services that enhance the cognitive and
9 physical development of children to achieve the performance
10 standards and outcome measures specified in paragraph (a). At
11 a minimum, these programs must contain the following elements:

12 1. Developmentally appropriate curriculum.

13 2. An appropriate staff-to-child ratio, as required by
14 the respective participating programs.

15 3. A healthy and safe environment.

16 4. A resource and referral network to assist parents
17 in making an informed choice pursuant to s. 402.27.

18 (5) SCHOOL READINESS COALITIONS.--

19 (a)1. Each School Readiness Coalition must consist of
20 at least 12 members. Four members shall be appointed by the
21 district school board, four members shall be appointed by the
22 county commission for the county in which participating
23 schools are located, and four members shall be appointed by
24 the Department of Children and Family Services district
25 administrator. If a coalition has more than 12 members, the
26 additional members shall be appointed equally by the three
27 appointing entities.

28 2. School Readiness Coalition membership shall
29 include, in addition to private-sector business leaders, the
30 local public and private leaders in health care, education,
31 disabilities, and child welfare systems in each county. Three

1 members of the coalition must be administrators from each of
2 the following entities: The central agency for child care, the
3 district school board, and the Head Start program. School
4 Readiness Coalition membership must include representatives
5 from programs serving children in the early education and
6 child care programs, must include a representative from the
7 Department of Health, and may include representatives from
8 organizations such as Children's Services Councils, Central
9 Agencies for Child Care, Healthy Start Coalitions, district
10 school boards, child care licensing boards, local WAGES
11 Coalitions, Head Start, municipal and county governments, the
12 Department of Children and Family Services, the County Public
13 Health Unit, and chambers of commerce. A minimum of five
14 coalition members shall be from the private sector.

15 (b) The School Readiness Coalition will replace the
16 district interagency coordinating council in any county where
17 an early education and child care program is implemented.

18 (6) IMPLEMENTATION.--

19 (a) The early education and child care program may be
20 implemented in any county by a School Readiness Coalition with
21 agreement of the district school board and the Department of
22 Children and Family Services district, and with approval of
23 the School Readiness Commission. Approval by the School
24 Readiness Commission must be predicated on the submission of a
25 plan of implementation prepared and submitted by the School
26 Readiness Coalition.

27 (b) Each School Readiness Coalition shall develop a
28 plan for implementing the early education and child care
29 program to meet the requirements of this section. The plan
30 shall include a written description of the role of the program
31 in the district's effort to meet the first state education

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1 goal, readiness to start school, including a description of
2 the plan to involve prekindergarten early intervention
3 programs, Head Start programs, programs offered by public or
4 private providers of child care, preschool programs for
5 children with disabilities, programs for migrant children,
6 Title I programs, subsidized child care programs, and teen
7 parent programs. The plan shall also demonstrate how the
8 program will ensure that each 3-year-old and 4-year-old child
9 in a publicly funded early education and child care program
10 receives scheduled activities and instruction designed to
11 prepare children to enter kindergarten ready to learn. Prior
12 to implementation of the program, the School Readiness
13 Coalition must submit the plan to the School Readiness
14 Commission for approval. The plan shall be reviewed and
15 revised as necessary, but not less than every 3 years.

16 (c) The plan for the early education and child care
17 program shall include the following minimum standards and
18 provisions:

19 1. A sliding fee scale, which is the same for all
20 programs, to be implemented and reflected in each program's
21 budget.

22 2. A choice of settings and locations in licensed,
23 registered, religious exempt, or school-based programs to be
24 provided to parents.

25 3. Instructional staff who have completed the training
26 course as required in s. 402.305(2)(d)1., as well as staff who
27 have additional training or credentials as required by the
28 respective programs.

29 (d) Persons with an early childhood teaching
30 certificate may provide support and supervision to other staff
31 in the early education and child care program.

1 (7) REIMBURSEMENT RATE.--The School Readiness
2 Coalition shall develop a reimbursement rate schedule that
3 encompasses all publicly funded early education and child care
4 programs and complies with applicable state and federal laws
5 and regulations. The reimbursement rate schedule must include
6 the projected number of children to be served and must be
7 submitted to the School Readiness Commission for approval.
8 Informal child care arrangements shall be reimbursed at not
9 more than 50 percent of the rate developed for family child
10 care.

11 (8) REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO FISCAL AGENTS.--The
12 fiscal agent must be a public entity or a private nonprofit
13 organization. The fiscal agent shall be required to provide
14 all administrative and direct funding services as determined
15 by the School Readiness Coalition. The cost of these services
16 shall be negotiated between the fiscal agent and the School
17 Readiness Coalition. The fiscal agent shall be responsible for
18 monitoring all providers to ensure that coalition funds are
19 expended in the manner and for the purpose required by the
20 funding source. Funds from the Early Education and Child Care
21 Trust Fund may not be paid to a provider unless the provider
22 agrees to allow the fiscal agent access to fulfill its
23 monitoring responsibilities.

24 (9) PARENTAL CHOICE; PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT.--The early
25 education and child care program shall be provided in a manner
26 that ensures, to the maximum extent possible, parental choice
27 through flexibility in early education and child care
28 arrangements and payment arrangements. Payment arrangements
29 must be in accordance with all federal and state laws that
30 govern the respective participating programs.

31 (10) EVALUATION AND ANNUAL REPORT.--Each School

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1 Readiness Coalition shall conduct an evaluation of the
2 effectiveness of the early education and child care program,
3 including performance standards and outcome measures, and
4 shall provide an annual report and fiscal statement to the
5 School Readiness Commission, the Governor, and the President
6 of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives
7 for review by the Legislature. This report must conform to the
8 content and format specifications set by the School Readiness
9 Commission.

10 (11) CONFLICTING PROVISIONS.--In the event of a
11 conflict between the provisions of this section and federal
12 requirements, the federal requirements shall control.

13 Section 4. Nothing in this act shall have the effect
14 of increasing the standards that must be met by family child
15 care providers; however, children who receive child care
16 services from family child care providers will participate in
17 school readiness assessment upon entering public or private
18 kindergarten or the first grade.

19 Section 5. Effective July 1, 1998, subsection (4) of
20 section 411.222, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

21 Section 6. Except as otherwise expressly provided in
22 this act, this act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

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24
25 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

26 And the title is amended as follows:

27 On page 1, line 2, through page 7, line 13,
28 remove from the title of the bill: all of said lines

29
30 and insert in lieu thereof:

31 An act relating to early education and child

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1 care; creating the School Readiness Commission
2 to serve as an advisory body to the State Board
3 of Education and other state agencies on
4 matters that relate to school readiness;
5 providing for the commission to be assigned to
6 the Executive Office of the Governor for
7 administrative purposes; providing for the
8 Governor to appoint the members of the
9 commission; requiring the commission to appoint
10 an executive director; providing for payment of
11 per diem and travel expenses of commission
12 members; establishing duties of the commission;
13 requiring the commission to prepare a system
14 for measuring school readiness; specifying
15 objectives to be measured by such system;
16 requiring the commission to contract with an
17 independent entity to evaluate the measurement
18 system; requiring the commission to make
19 recommendations to the Governor and the State
20 Board of Education; authorizing the commission
21 to adopt rules; establishing a School Readiness
22 Coordinating Council; creating s. 402.265,
23 F.S.; providing legislative intent;
24 establishing the early education and child care
25 program and providing for optional
26 participation; providing for the council to be
27 assigned to the Executive Office of the
28 Governor for administrative purposes; providing
29 for oversight; providing performance standards
30 and outcome measures; providing for School
31 Readiness Coalitions; providing for

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1 implementation of programs; requiring
2 development of a plan and providing program
3 requirements; requiring a sliding fee scale;
4 providing for funding; requiring a
5 reimbursement rate schedule; providing
6 requirements relating to fiscal agents;
7 providing for parental choice and for payment
8 arrangements; providing for evaluation and
9 reporting; providing that federal requirements
10 control in the case of conflict; exempting
11 family child care providers from increased
12 standards; repealing s. 411.222(4), F.S.,
13 relating to the State Coordinating Council for
14 Early Childhood Services; providing an
15 effective date.

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