

STORAGE NAME: h1567.wfts.doc

DATE: February 13, 2002

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON
WORKFORCE AND TECHNICAL SKILLS
ANALYSIS**

BILL #: HB1567

RELATING TO: Child Care/Home Operator Training

SPONSOR(S): Representative(s) Ausley

TIED BILL(S):

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COUNCIL(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:

- (1) WORKFORCE AND TECHNICAL SKILLS
 - (2) COUNCIL FOR LIFELONG LEARNING
 - (3)
 - (4)
 - (5)
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I. SUMMARY:

HB 1567 increases the required hours for childcare introductory courses from 40 to 45 to include brain research and computer technology. The bill stipulates that the 45-hour introductory course completed by childcare personnel will be articulated into 3 hours of community college credit in early childhood education. Successful completion of the introductory childcare course will require passage of a competency examination. Childcare personnel with a bachelor's degree in early childhood or child development will be exempted from certain portions of the required childcare training. Finally, reference to a repealed section of Florida Statute is removed.

This bill substantially amends sections 402.313 and 402.305 of the Florida Statutes.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. DOES THE BILL SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>Less Government</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. <u>Lower Taxes</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. <u>Individual Freedom</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. <u>Personal Responsibility</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. <u>Family Empowerment</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

For any principle that received a "no" above, please explain:

B. PRESENT SITUATION:

The established view of professionals and researchers in the childcare field is that the quality of childcare contributes to child development outcomes. One of the important aspects of quality childcare typically identified by professionals is staff preparation and qualifications. The level of staff preparation is affected by both the training provided to caregivers and the rate of caregiver turnover. Nationally, efforts to retain qualified staff have included recognizing the professional capabilities of child care givers and creating opportunities to improve and secure higher educational certification.

Section 402.305, F.S., provide for licensing and registration standards for child care programs including minimum staff training requirements based on the type of program. Section 402.302(2), F.S., defines a "child care facility" to includes any child care center or child care arrangement that is providing child care for a fee to more than five children who are unrelated to the operator of the program. Excluded from programs considered a child care facility are public and non-public schools, resident summer camps, summer day camps, bible schools, and child care services in transient programs.

A childcare facility is required to meet the licensing standards defined in s. 402.305, F.S., which include minimum training requirements for childcare personnel. All such childcare personnel are required to take an approved 40-hour introductory course in childcare that must begin within 90 days of employment and be completed within 1 year. The introductory childcare course is a 30-hour standardized statewide course which covers:

- State and local rules and regulations relative to child care;
- health, safety and nutrition;
- identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect;
- child development, including typical and atypical language, cognitive, motor, social and self-help skills development;
- and observation of developmental behaviors, including use of observation tools; and
- determining the child's developmental age level.

The additional 10 hours can be satisfied through one of the following specialized training modules: developmentally appropriate practices for young children, developmentally appropriate practices for

school-age children, developmentally appropriate practices for infants and toddlers, developmentally appropriate practices for children with special needs, and owner/operators of child care programs.

Successful completion of the stipulated coursework requires attendance for the full course, but no testing or examination of knowledge or competency acquired is required. Section 402.305(2), F.S., provides that childcare personnel can receive an exemption from a portion of the required childcare training based on educational credentials or passage of competency examination. Possession of a child development associate (or equivalent) or a 2 year degree or higher in early childhood or child growth and development can exempt child care personnel from the health, safety and nutrition module, as well as the child development module (Rule 65C-22, F.A.C.).

Section 402.302(7) F.S., defines a “family day care home” as a residence where child care is provided for payment for at least two unrelated families. Childcare in a family day care home can be provided to no more than 10 children, based on the ages of the children. All family child care home operators, whether licensed or registered, are required to complete an approved 30-hour introductory course in family child care, which, if licensed or registered after October 1, 1999, must be completed prior to caring for any children. Section 402.305(2)(d), F.S., also requires that the operators of family day care homes serving at-risk children as part of the subsidized program, pursuant to s. 402.3015, F.S., are required to take the 40-hour child care course required of child care facility personnel. Section 402.3015, F.S., was repealed effective January 1, 2002 with ch. 2001-170, L.O.F.

Section 402.302(8) F.S., defines a “large family child care home” as a residence where childcare is provided, but a maximum of 12 children may be served, based on the ages of the children. Operators of the large family child care homes are required to complete the 40-hour introductory child care course required of child care facility personnel.

Florida’s 1999 School Readiness Act (ch. 99-357, L.O.F.), established requirements related to early childhood career advancement and articulation in s. 240.115(1)(e), F.S. Specifically, the Commissioner of Education was directed to conduct a statewide assessment of the instruction of child care and early childhood education personnel and the market demands for personnel trained at various levels. The Articulation Coordinating Committee was required to establish an articulation career path for school readiness personnel based on this assessment, beginning at entry-level employment in childcare and leading to a baccalaureate degree. The result of this initiative was an October 2001 report, entitled *Pathways to Professionalism*, which contained recommendations organized around the proposed framework for an articulated career path. Some of the recommendations included increasing the current state-mandated 40-hour training for childcare personnel to 45 hours and making the training competency based. It was also recommended that a college-credit option for the state-mandated training be provided by increasing the state-mandated competency based 45-hour training to a state mandated competency based 60-hour training. Core knowledge and skills were outlined for different levels of early childhood professional, including the level for which a college credit option is recommended.

The Florida Education Code establishes a process for maximizing articulation and assuring accrediting bodies that certain courses, diplomas and degrees meet the content, contact hours and instructor qualifications that can be articulated to the next level on a statewide basis. Section 229.551(1)(g), F.S., directs the Articulation Coordinating Committee, to adopt guidelines to allow for public school districts and community colleges to offer courses that may be transferred to a certificate, diploma, or degree program. These guidelines are to include standards that address such aspects as admissions, program curricula, and faculty qualifications. The articulation between secondary and

postsecondary education and between the various postsecondary educational institutions is governed by an articulation agreement, as established by the Department of Education.

C. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

HB 1567 increases the required hours for the childcare introductory course from 40 to 45 to include brain research and computer technology. The bill stipulates that the 45-hour introductory course completed by childcare personnel will be articulated into 3 hours of community college credit in early childhood education. Successful completion of the introductory childcare course will require passage of a competency examination. Childcare personnel with a bachelor's degree in early childhood or child development will be exempted from certain portions of the required childcare training. Finally, the bill removes a reference to a repealed section of Florida Statutes

The clock hours required for the introductory course in childcare for both childcare personnel in childcare facilities and large childcare homes are increased from 40 to 45 hours. The topic areas which the course is required to cover are expanded to include brain research and computer technology. The bill removes in s. 402.305(2)(d), F.S., which requires operators of family child care homes serving at-risk children in a subsidized child care program, pursuant to s. 402.3015, F.S., to take the 40-hour course, the stipulation of serving the at-risk children and reference to s. 402.3015, F.S. This section and the requirement it imposed relative to the subsidized childcare program were repealed during the 2000 session.

Completion of the childcare course, pursuant to s. 402.305(2), F.S., is redefined to require passage of a competency examination. The bill exempts child care staff from the topic areas in the child care course on health, safety and nutrition; child development; and observation of developmental behaviors for those staff who possess a bachelor's degree in early childhood or child development. This provision conflicts with current administrative rule that requires only a 2-year degree to exempt staff from two of the modules.

Finally, the bill provides that successful completion of the 45-hour introductory course will articulate into 3 hours of community college credit in early childhood education. This provision begins the process of building a career path for childcare workers. However, the existing process for articulating coursework into postsecondary education credit as provided for in Florida Statutes, entails a thorough examination of the curriculum, faculty qualifications and other aspects by the Articulation Coordinating Committee. This process is in place to verify that the coursework meets the standards required for the postsecondary education credit. While the process for examining the core knowledge and skills for childcare workers that would both equate to community college credit and build to the next level on the career ladder was begun with the *Pathways to Professionalism* initiative, the initiative has not reached its conclusion of providing for an approved articulation agreement that guarantees the statewide articulation of the coursework. The Department of Education has examined the childcare introductory course and report they are comfortable with the articulation provided for in HB 1567.

D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

This section need be completed only in the discretion of the Committee.

III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

N/A

2. Expenditures:

The Department of Children and Families reports that to implement this legislation, four competency examinations will need to be developed for the existing introductory child care training modules at a cost of \$44,000. A new 5 hour training module, Brain Research and Computer Technology, will have to be developed along with a competency examination. The cost of the training module and the competency examination will be \$35,000. Spanish translation of all competency examinations and the new training module will cost \$8,500. These non-recurring costs total \$87,500. The estimated recurring costs for childcare training coordinating agencies to implement the new module and administer the competency examinations is \$100,000. Anticipating a 6-month development time for the modules and competency examinations, the first year cost for the childcare training coordinating agencies will be \$50,000.

The department reports that there will be minimal impact on the local county child care licensing agencies, which routinely review child care personnel files as part of their child care facility and large family child care home inspections. Review of the records to document completion of the new training requirement will become part of the inspection process. However, this additional responsibility will have minimal, if any, fiscal impact.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None

2. Expenditures:

None

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

The additional 5 clock hours of coursework will have some impact on child care personnel and operators of large family child care homes, in that this additional training may require more time away from the job and may be offered at an increased price. The actual increase in cost will depend upon the venue of delivery, i.e. community colleges, vocational-technical schools, central agencies, training coordinating agencies, etc.

The requirement that the child care training be competency based may result in individuals, who would like to become child caregivers, not passing the competency examination and not being able to work in a child care center.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:

Enactment of the measures proposed by HB 1567 would not require counties or municipalities to incur any expenses or take any action requiring either to incur any expenses.

REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:

Enactment of the measures proposed by HB 1567 would not reduce the authority of counties or municipalities to raise revenues.

B. REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:

Enactment of the measures proposed by HB 1567 would not reduce the percentage of any state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

V. COMMENTS:

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

N/A

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

N/A

C. OTHER COMMENTS:

Section 402.305(2), F.S., as amended by this bill, requires that all family day care homes complete the 40-hour introductory childcare course. This conflicts with the training requirement specific to family day care homes in s. 402.313(4), F.S., of a 30-hour course.

The State Coordinating Council for School Readiness, as identified in s. 402.305(2)(d)6., F.S., and included in this bill, no longer exists.

Introductory childcare coursework is required of childcare facility personnel, family day care home operators and large family child care homes operators. The bill, however, only requires that the introductory childcare course for the childcare facility be shifted to competency based training requiring passage of a competency examination.

And finally, dedicating the 5 additional training hours to brain research and computer technology may expand the required topic areas beyond the competencies that can be mastered in the 45 course hours to meet the articulation requirements.

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

A strike-all amendment will be offered to conform HB 1567 to the Senate bill (SB 1550) and address concerns expressed in this analysis.

VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE AND TECHNICAL SKILLS:

Prepared by:

Staff Director:

Ken Winker

Ken Winker