

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDREDTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION
LEGISLATIVE BILL 520

Introduced by Howard, 9

Read first time January 17, 2007

Committee: Education

A BILL

1 FOR AN ACT relating to early childhood education; to create an
2 Early Childhood Education Legislative Study Group; to
3 require the appointment of certain members; to prescribe
4 duties; and to require a report.

5 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. The Early Childhood Education Legislative
2 Study Group is hereby created. The commission shall consist of
3 sixteen members: (1) Three members of the Legislature; (2) the
4 Commissioner of Education or his or her representative; (3) a
5 representative of the Governor; (4) two early childhood educators
6 from non-school preschool programs; (5) two early childhood
7 educators from school-based preschool programs; (6) two individuals
8 from postsecondary education with expertise in early childhood
9 education; (7) one representative from the Department of Health
10 and Human Services with responsibilities related to early childhood
11 health and development; (8) one representative from a nonprofit,
12 public interest organization with a primary focus on meeting the
13 needs of children; and (9) two representatives of the general
14 public from the state at large.

15 The members described in subdivisions (3) through (9) of
16 this section shall be appointed by the Governor with the approval
17 of the Legislature. The members described in subdivision (1) shall
18 be appointed by the Executive Board of the Legislature. The member
19 described in subdivision (2) of this section shall be appointed by
20 the Commissioner of Education.

21 All appointments shall be made by July 1, 2007. Members
22 shall serve through June 30, 2009. No member of the study group
23 shall receive any compensation from the state for his or her
24 services. Members shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary
25 expenses incurred as provided in sections 81-1174 to 81-1177.

1 Sec. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature to establish
2 financing to support, through the Tax Equity and Educational
3 Opportunities Support Act and other coordinated funding programs,
4 universally available early childhood education programs in all
5 areas of the state through the public school system. It is
6 further the intent of the Legislature to design a system of
7 state accreditation for early childhood programs in public schools
8 which assure adequate training and education of teachers, a
9 developmentally sound curriculum and instructional materials, and
10 the adoption of minimum health and safety standards.

11 Sec. 3. The Early Childhood Education Legislative Study
12 Group shall conduct an indepth review of the currently available
13 early childhood education programs and the financing available to
14 support such programs and make projections of the state investment
15 needed to finance a system of universally available early childhood
16 education to young children across the state. The study group
17 shall:

18 (1) Examine methods to phase in funding to fully fund
19 early childhood education beginning with the age group three to
20 five years;

21 (2) Examine financing methods used in other states
22 and nations which provide universal access to early childhood
23 education;

24 (3) Examine methods to coordinate early childhood
25 education programs available through private nonprofit and

1 for-profit organizations with public school programs, including
2 school districts contracting for services with entities that meet
3 state program standards;

4 (4) Examine the impact of current budget and tax
5 limitations on the growth of early childhood education;

6 (5) Examine program standards that promote optimal
7 learning for young children and that are integrated with the state
8 curriculum content standards;

9 (6) Examine minimum licensure and certification standards
10 for teachers in early childhood education programs; and

11 (7) Prepare a report with recommendations and a plan
12 to implement its recommendations. The preliminary report shall be
13 presented to the Education Committee of the Legislature by March
14 1, 2008. A final report shall be presented to the Legislature by
15 January 1, 2009.

16 Sec. 4. The Early Childhood Education Legislative Study
17 Group and sections 1 to 4 of this act shall terminate on June 30,
18 2009.