

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2007-165

State of Arkansas
86th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2007

A Bill

DRAFT CLR/JLH
HOUSE BILL

By: Representative Blount

Filed with: House Interim Committee on Education
pursuant to A.C.A. §10-3-217.

A PROPOSAL TO CREATE AN INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE
TO CONSIDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INCLUSIVE
BIRTH-TO-KINDERGARTEN TEACHING LICENSE IN
ARKANSAS.

Subtitle

A PROPOSAL TO CREATE AN INTERIM STUDY
COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF
AN INCLUSIVE BIRTH-TO-KINDERGARTEN
TEACHING LICENSE IN ARKANSAS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

WHEREAS, the State of Arkansas has long been a leader in the field of
early childhood education; and

WHEREAS, this leadership includes providing an increasingly
sophisticated array of professional development options for persons working
with young children; and

WHEREAS, at present, there is no clear professional pathway for
individuals who wish to work primarily with children birth-to-kindergarten
age; and

WHEREAS, while few positions currently require baccalaureate level

DRAFT

03-01-2007 11:28 CLR204

1 training for working with infants and toddlers, licensure may be required to
2 work with children three (3) years of age and older; and

3
4 WHEREAS, some professional development is available for Head Start and
5 Early Head Start staff, and for persons who move through the Arkansas Early
6 Childhood Professional Development System, a clear pathway should be created
7 for those interested in pursuing professional development pathways that do
8 not lead primarily to public school education; and

9
10 WHEREAS, as an Inclusive Birth-to-Kindergarten teaching license, a
11 recognized professional pathway would strengthen the existing infrastructure
12 that supports very young children and their families; and

13
14 WHEREAS, national recommendations suggest that those who work with very
15 young children need preparation specific to that age group; and

16
17 WHEREAS, the licensure program would specifically address the education
18 and care needs of very young children,

19
20 NOW THEREFORE,

21 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION:

22
23 THAT the House Interim Committee on Education establishes an Interim
24 Study Committee to conduct a study to consider the development of an Arkansas
25 teaching license for birth-to-kindergarten age children. The Interim Study
26 Committee shall be comprised of stakeholders involved in providing education
27 and care to children ages birth to kindergarten and stakeholders involved in
28 providing professional development for these individuals.

29
30 (a) The Interim Study Committee shall include representatives from:

31 (1) A community-based early care and education provider serving
32 children birth to five (5) years of age;

33 (2) An early Head Start/Head Start Agency;

34 (3) A developmental disabilities service provider;

35 (4) Licensed prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers;

36 (5) An Arkansas Better Chance Program serving infants and

1 toddlers;

2 (6) A two-year college providing an associate degree in early
3 childhood education or a similar degree;

4 (7) A four-year college providing a bachelor's degree in Family
5 and Consumer Science/Child Development;

6 (8) A four-year college providing a bachelor's degree leading to
7 P4 licensure;

8 (9) The Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Development
9 System;

10 (10) The Director of the Division of Child Care and Early
11 Childhood Education or his or her designee;

12 (11) The Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources of the
13 Arkansas Department of Education or his or her designee;

14 (12) The Arkansas Early Childhood Commission;

15 (13) The Arkansas Education Association;

16 (14) The Arkansas Early Childhood Association;

17 (15) The Arkansas Child Care Providers Association; and

18 (16) Two (2) members of the House Early Childhood Committee.
19

20 (b) The powers and duties of the Interim Study Committee are as
21 follows:

22 (1) If a vacancy on the Interim Study Committee occurs, a
23 successor shall be appointed in the same manner as provided in the initial
24 appointment;

25 (2) A chair shall be selected by the members of the committee;

26 (3) The chair shall call the first meeting, which shall be held
27 no later than sixty (60) days after the effective date of this proposal;

28 (4) The Interim Study Committee shall meet no less than
29 quarterly at dates to be determined by the chair;

30 (5) A majority of the membership of the Interim Study Committee
31 shall constitute a quorum;

32 (6) A majority vote of the members present shall be required for
33 any action of the Interim Study Committee;

34 (7) Legislative members shall be entitled to reimbursement for
35 expenses and per diem at the same rate and from the same source as provided
36 by law for members of the General Assembly attending meetings of interim

1 committees; and

2 (8) The taskforce shall receive staff support from the Bureau of
3 Legislative Research.

4
5 (c) The purposes of the study are to:

6 (1) Gain information about existing and similar teaching
7 licenses in other states;

8 (2) Convene relevant stakeholders in assessing the need and
9 support for an Inclusive Birth-to-Kindergarten license;

10 (3) Develop a statement of the expected knowledge, skills, and
11 dispositions for those obtaining the license;

12 (4) Develop partnerships among two-year and four-year programs
13 to create articulated degree programs that lead to the Inclusive Birth-to-
14 Kindergarten licensure;

15 (5) Coordinate with the Arkansas Early Childhood Professional
16 Development System to develop a smooth professional pathway for individuals
17 currently in the field;

18 (6) Coordinate with the Department of Education for the
19 implementation of the license;

20 (7) Pursue funding necessary to implement the license; and

21 (8) Make recommendations concerning the implementation of the
22 license.

23
24 (d) The Interim Study Committee shall report its recommendations to
25 the House Early Childhood Committee prior to November 1, 2008. The terms of
26 the members of the study committee shall expire on December 31, 2008.

27
28 Respectfully submitted,

29
30
31
32 _____
33 Representative Nancy Duffy Blount

34 District 52

35 Filed: By: CR/jlh Revised Billcode CLR223

36