

BILL SUMMARY
1st Session of the 55th Legislature

Bill No.:	HB 1281
Version:	Introduced
Request Number:	6223
Author:	Rep. Cockroft
Date:	2/10/2015
Impact:	Program terminates if funds unavailable

Research Analysis

Fiscal Analysis

HB 1281, as introduced, establishes in statute, scholarships for Child Development Associates/Professionals. The State Regents for Higher Education administers the Scholars for Excellence in Childcare Program as funds are available. The program will be terminated if funding is not available.

Prepared By: Andrea Kearney

The program is subject to termination if funding is not available (subsection J of the new section of law). DHS funding is not available for this program, so no fiscal impact on DHS.

Prepared by Stacy Johnson

Other Considerations

Child Care Services would be impacted by the proposed law. The Division has the responsibility to respond to current research in child development with intentional strategies (services) to recruit and retain a qualified and effective child care workforce that will meet the needs of child care programs. The proposed law would not allow the DHS to change strategies when the current programs are not effective.

The proposed legislation as written duplicates some of program services that are currently provided by the Scholars for Excellence program. The Department of Human Services (DHS) contracts with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. The contract provides State System two-year colleges, with child development or early childhood academic programs, an opportunity to develop and implement a model to recruit licensed child care staff to further their education in the field of early childhood and improve the overall quality of child care offered in licensed facilities. Eligible child care professionals, from licensed child care facilities can choose to earn a credential, Certificate of Mastery, Director's Certificate of Completion, or an associate degree in early childhood education

The child care providers receiving the scholarship for a Child Development Associate (CDA) or Child Care Professional (CCP) credential must complete approved professional development (Pathway to a National Credential) provided by Oklahoma State Career Technology Centers. An assessment scholarship is also available to those completing the requirements. The policies

guiding the scholarship program include eligibility criteria are part of the contract agreement and are more rigorous as to lead to higher quality professionals working in child care programs.

Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines (OELG) training is a requirement for Master Teachers working in programs that participate in QRIS. The Pathway to National Credential incorporates the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines and those receiving the credential meet the OELG requirement.

Child Care Services contracts with The Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD) at the University of Oklahoma to provide a professional development registry. The contract includes the policies, procedures and guidelines for the implementation of the Registry, professional development programs, curriculum development and aligns with the Licensing Requirements for Child Care Homes and Child Care Facilities.

The proposed legislation does not identify the source of funding. Child Care Services at DHS utilizes Child Care Development Fund and must adhere to CCDBG Act of 2014 rules. Professional development must provide for a progression of training that leads toward a higher level credential or certification. There are articulation agreements with Career Technology and Community Colleges that allow those with a CDA to take college coursework and have the CDA credit turned into college credit. This aligns with the Oklahoma Registry: Early Care and Education Professional Development Ladder. In addition professional development must incorporate the State's early learning guidelines and are appropriate for child care providers caring for children of different age groups, and for child care providers caring for children receiving child care subsidies. The Child Development Fund rules do not allow Child Care Services to prohibit providers of care for school-age children and Head Start staff from participation in professional development programs.

Child Care Services goal is to ensure child care providers are receiving quality training and professional development statewide and are on a successful career path that will lead to improving the quality of early care and education programs.

DHS/ MEC