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Sixty-second
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

FIRST ENGROSSMENT

ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2298

Introduced by

Senators Heckaman, Marcellais, Mathern

Representatives Delmore, Kilichowski, Metcalf

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 50-11.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the establishment of early childhood services inclusion support services and a grant program for licensed early childhood services providers who care for children with special needs; to provide a continuing appropriation; and to provide an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. A new section to chapter 50-11.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Early childhood services inclusion support services and grant program.

1. The department shall establish an early childhood services inclusion grant program for licensed early childhood services providers that provide care for children with disabilities or developmental delays. The grant program must be designed to:
   a. Increase the number of staff in the adult-to-child ratio to expand supervision and the ability to care for children with disabilities or developmental delays; and
   b. Assist in modifying or adapting the early childhood services setting as needed to address the health and safety needs of children with disabilities or developmental delays.
2. The department shall fund early childhood services specialists to make available technical assistance to early childhood services providers that care for children with special needs or developmental delays. The technical assistance program must be designed to:
   a. Assist early childhood services providers that request support and information regarding caring for children with special needs or developmental delays;

b. Assist early childhood services providers in adapting the program environment and care practices to meet the individual child's needs and to build the early childhood services providers' capacity to serve children with special needs or developmental delays;

c. In partnership with the child's parents and health care provider, assist the early childhood services provider in the development or coordination of care plans for children with special needs or special health care needs relevant to the care setting;

d. In partnership with the child's parents, foster communication with the team of specialists serving the child to ensure consistency in therapy practices and appropriate approaches;

e. Provide classroom training to early childhood services providers to assist the providers in the integration of children with special needs; and

f. As requested by the early childhood services providers, conduct one-on-one training at the provider's business to assist the provider in the integration of children with special needs.

~~2.~~3. The department shall establish a grant review committee to assist in the development of grant guidelines, the review of applications, and the determination of awards or denials. The membership of the grant review committee must include representation from each of the following:

a. The department of human services;

b. The department of public instruction;

c. The North Dakota training and information center;

d. North Dakota child care resource and referral; and

e. Parents of children with disabilities or at risk for developmental delays.

~~3.~~4. To be eligible for the grant program, the early childhood services provider must:

a. Be state-licensed;

b. Submit a letter from the provider's county social services office confirming the provider's licensing status;

c. Submit a letter from a service provider that provides formal supports to the child confirming an increased funding need to assist the provider in serving the child with disabilities; and

d. Work with the child's family and an inclusion or health specialist to complete a care plan appropriate for the child care setting.

~~4.~~5. The department shall give priority consideration to licensed early childhood services providers that care for children with disabilities.

~~5.~~6. For purposes of this section, a child with disabilities or who is at risk for developmental delays includes any child in this state between the ages of birth and twelve years who receives support through either public or private services and includes a child who is in the process of being evaluated for public or private formal support. A child who is at risk for developmental delays includes any child between the ages of birth and twelve years who received foster care services; who has a previous substantiated history as a victim of child abuse, neglect, or domestic violence; who is homeless; who has documented special health care needs; or who has a parent with a significant disability.

~~6.~~7. The department may accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source to assist the department in the establishment and implementation of the early childhood services inclusion support services and grant program. Any gifts, grants, and donations received are appropriated to the department on a continuing basis for the purpose of funding the early childhood services inclusion support services and grant program under this section.

SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION. The funds provided in this section, or so much of the funds as may be necessary, are appropriated out of any moneys in the lands and minerals trust fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, to the department of human services for the purpose of funding the early childhood services inclusion support services and for establishing an early childhood services provider inclusion grant program as provided for in section 1 of this Act, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013, as follows:

Early childhood services inclusion support	~~$450,000~~$100,000
Early childhood services grant program	~~300,000~~50,000
Total lands and minerals trust fund appropriation	~~$750,000~~$150,000