

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HJM 19

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .191007.3

Short Title: J. Paul Taylor Early Childhood Task Force

Sponsor(s): Representative Gail Chasey and Others

Analyst: LaNysha Adams

Date: February 13, 2013

Bill Summary:

HJM 19 requests that the Health Sciences Center at the University of New Mexico (UNM) create the J. Paul Taylor Early Childhood Task Force as an initiative to improve collaboration among early childhood development stakeholders to:

- recommend means and methods to improve collaboration among early childhood development stakeholders;
- develop a system to identify invisible, unserved, and underserved at-risk infants and young children;
- develop an early childhood mental health plan and process for infants and children through age eight, ranging from prevention through early intervention and treatment, that is community health-based and outcomes-driven to ensure that children and infants at-risk for child abuse and neglect and adverse childhood environments have a full cadre of services, with multiple access points, and that informs state and local funding decisions and the growth of the early childhood system;
- identify how the early childhood system can be used for child abuse prevention; and
- promote evidence-based, community early childhood programs in New Mexico by establishing a link to state data for early childhood research.

HJM 19 further requests that the J. Paul Taylor Early Childhood Task Force be chaired by the chairperson of the Children's Trust Fund Board of Trustees and include members from a number of specific community organizations, who represent the interests of early childhood development in Native American communities, immigrant communities, several state agencies, and university departments with expertise in early childhood cognitive and social development research.

Among its other provisions, HJM 19 requests that:

- the UNM Health Sciences Center Office of Community Health coordinate and administer the J. Paul Taylor Early Childhood Task Force with the Legislative Council Service; and
- no later than November 2013, the J. Paul Taylor Early Childhood Task Force report its findings and recommendations to the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee and the Legislative Finance Committee.

Fiscal Impact:

Legislative memorials do not carry appropriations.

Substantive Issues:

According to the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) bill analysis:

- the J. Paul Taylor Early Childhood Task Force created by this joint memorial duplicates the existing responsibilities and tasks of the governor-appointed Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC), which was created under the *Early Childhood Care and Education Act* (see “Background,” below);
- CYFD has funded the UNM Center for Educational Policy Research (CEPR) to conduct extensive data collection to provide the ELAC with detailed information regarding the location of children who are most at-risk compared to where current early childhood services are located; and
- CYFD Early Childhood Services/Office of Child Development has contracted with an expert in the field and convened an interagency planning team to develop an Early Childhood Mental Health Plan.

In a similar vein, the Department of Health (DOH) bill analysis states:

- CYFD has been convening an interagency planning team to develop an early childhood mental health plan to address the social and emotional needs of children birth to age five, and many of the agencies specified in HJM 19 are already participating in this interagency planning team; and
- the Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program at the DOH provides early intervention in accordance with the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part-C* to children aged birth to age three with and at-risk for developmental delays and disabilities, including children eligible due to family risk factors such as abuse and neglect, domestic violence, and substance abuse.

The DOH bill analysis also suggests that in order to achieve the objectives of the early childhood development community in New Mexico, it would be important to add the DOH Title V Program to the J. Paul Taylor Early Childhood Task Force, if HJM 19 is enacted.

The UNM bill analysis presents some different views, however:

- behavioral health services to children ages birth to five have been reduced and altered significantly, which jeopardizes a system of care for vulnerable at-risk young children, infants and families;
- FIT Program services for children at-risk for poor developmental outcomes have also been reduced;
- CYFD and Medicaid have eliminated individualized services for children ages three to five; and
- while the ELAC is already established in statute, specific reference to at-risk children and child abuse prevention is not noted, and the focus of the ELAC has not been specific.

Background:

University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center

The UNM Health Sciences Center, established in 1994, is the largest academic health complex in New Mexico. The UNM Health Sciences Center combines its four mission areas of education, research, patient care, and community outreach to provide New Mexicans with healthcare.

According to the UNM Health Sciences Center website, its Core Strategic Goal, called “2020 Vision” is: “Working with our community partners, UNM Health Sciences Center will help New Mexico make more progress in health than any other state by 2020.” Toward that goal, the Institute for Community Health Sciences (formerly known as the Office of Community Health) serves as an umbrella and central point of contact and coordination for programs that engage New Mexico communities in improving health and building the health professions pipeline.

Early Childhood Care and Education Act

Legislation enacted in 2011 created the *Early Childhood Care and Education Act* (ECCEA), whose purpose is “to establish a comprehensive early childhood care and education system through an aligned continuum of state and private programs, including home visitation, early intervention, child-care, Early Head Start, Head Start, early childhood special education, family support and pre-K, and to maintain or establish the infrastructure necessary to support quality in the system’s programs.”

Provisions in the ECCEA create the ELAC, which is attached to CYFD and which comprises 15 members, as follows:

- three *ex officio* members:
 - the Secretary of Public Education or designee;
 - the Secretary of CYFD or designee; and
 - the director of the Head Start State Collaboration office within CYFD; and
- twelve other members, most of them appointed by the Governor for staggered terms, no more than five of whom may be from the same political party:
 - one representative from an institution of higher education;
 - one representative of a local educational agency;
 - one representative from a Head Start or Early Head Start organization;
 - two providers of early care and education services, at least one of whom represents a privately owned facility;
 - one representative from the state agency responsible for programs under Section 619 or Part C of the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA);
 - one representative from the state agency responsible for children’s health or mental healthcare issues;
 - two public members with knowledge and experience in early childhood care and education programs; and
 - three members of the New Mexico Business Roundtable appointed by and with terms set by the Board of Directors.

Among its other provisions, the ECCEA:

- designates ELAC as the required federal Head Start program council¹;
- creates the Early Childhood Care and Education Fund, a non-reverting fund administered by CYFD for carrying out the provisions of the act;
- allows ELAC to apply for grants and funds from any source, and to contract with any federal or state agency or private organization, to further the purposes of the act;
- requires ELAC to make recommendations to CYFD and the Legislature on the most efficient and effective way to leverage state and federal early childhood program funds, including grant applications by CYFD;
- requires ELAC to terminate on July 1, 2017 pursuant to the provisions of the *Sunset Act*; and
- requires ELAC to make recommendations to CYFD and the Legislature on the coordination and alignment of an early childhood care and education system, recommendations that take a number of factors into consideration, among them:
 - the consolidation and coordination of funding streams;
 - a seamless transition from prenatal to early childhood programs to kindergarten;
 - the parent’s “decisive role in the planning, operation, and evaluation of programs that aid families in the care and education of children”;
 - the development and management of effective data collection systems;
 - the diversity and cultural heritage of families and communities;
 - professional development for providers; and
 - the establishment of an effective administrative framework.

Committee Referrals:

HEC

Related Bills:

HB 332 *Education for Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing Students*

SB 68 *CYFD Childhood Home Visiting Program*

SB 225 *Early Childhood Teacher Retention Project*

SB 380 *Compulsory Education for Children Age 4 & Up*

¹ The Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) is mandated through the federal *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*. According to a 2011 Legislative Finance Committee Fiscal Impact Report on ECCEA, the council was funded through the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* and ELAC may require funds from the Head Start collaboration grant to carry out its activities.