

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 556  
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/26/17

Short Title: Study Early Childhood Education.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 5, 2017

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO CREATE THE TASK FORCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.  
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 **SECTION 1.(a)** There is created the Task Force on Early Childhood Education  
5 (Task Force) to study the governance of State government-wide management and provision of  
6 services for early childhood education and development and the role of a centralized agency or  
7 office that would be responsible for early childhood related issues.

8 **SECTION 1.(b)** The Task Force shall consist of the following 10 members:

- 9 (1) Two members of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the  
10 Senate.  
11 (2) Two members of the House Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the  
12 House of Representatives.  
13 (3) The Superintendent of Department of Public Instruction or the  
14 Superintendent's designee.  
15 (4) The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services or the  
16 Secretary's designee.  
17 (5) Two public members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate  
18 who represent organizations that focus on early childhood education and  
19 development.  
20 (6) Two public members appointed by the Speaker of House of Representatives  
21 who represent organizations that focus on early childhood education and  
22 development.

23 The Task Force shall have two cochairs, one designated by the President Pro Tempore of  
24 the Senate and one designated by the Speaker of the House of Representatives from among  
25 their appointees. The Task Force shall meet upon the call of the cochairs. Vacancies shall be  
26 filled by the appointing authority. A quorum of the Task Force shall be a majority of the  
27 members.

28 **SECTION 1.(c)** The Task Force shall study the following:

- 29 (1) The development and best methods of implementation of a plan for a  
30 coordinated system of early care, education, and child development services  
31 with a focus on program outcomes in satisfying the health, safety,  
32 developmental, and educational needs of all children from birth to eight  
33 years of age that includes at least the following:  
34 a. Any recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction on  
35 necessary organizational changes within the Department of Public  
36 Instruction, including an outline of projected efficiencies that would



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- 1 be realized through the operation of a new organizational structure  
2 for the coordination of early childhood programs within the  
3 Department.
- 4 b. Consultation with the administrators and personnel of the NC Infant  
5 Toddler Program and the North Carolina Pre-K Program on  
6 coordination of the administration of those two programs.
- 7 c. The development of an early childhood information system that  
8 facilitates and encourages the sharing of data between and among  
9 early childhood service providers and State agencies.
- 10 d. An early childhood accountability plan that includes identification of  
11 appropriate population indicators and program and system  
12 performance measures of the health, safety, and kindergarten  
13 readiness, and identifying markers of early success of children,  
14 including the North Carolina Pathways to Grade-Level Reading  
15 measures of success.
- 16 (2) The best methods to implement a statewide longitudinal evaluation of the  
17 educational progress of children from prekindergarten programs through  
18 grade three.
- 19 (3) The collaboration needed amongst the Department of Public Instruction, the  
20 Department of Health and Human Services, and other relevant State  
21 agencies to achieve the goal of a coordinated system of early care, education,  
22 and child development services for children from birth to eight years of age.
- 23 (4) The delivery of services to young children and their families to ensure  
24 optimal health, safety, and learning for each young child.
- 25 (5) The collaboration and sharing of data elements necessary to perform quality  
26 assessments and longitudinal analysis across early childhood education and  
27 development services.
- 28 (6) The coordination of home visitation services across programs for young  
29 children.
- 30 (7) Access to information and technical assistance to persons seeking early care  
31 and education and child development programs and services.
- 32 (8) Available assistance for State agencies and municipalities in obtaining  
33 available federal funding for early care and education and child development  
34 programs and services.
- 35 (9) Available technical assistance to providers of early care and education  
36 programs and services to obtain licensing and improve program quality.
- 37 (10) The coordination of a comprehensive statewide system of professional  
38 development for providers and staff of early care and education and child  
39 development programs and services.
- 40 (11) Integration of early childhood care and education and special education  
41 services.
- 42 (12) Areas of duplication in monitoring and evaluation of early care and  
43 education and child development programs and services.
- 44 (13) The coordination and support of public and private partnerships to aid early  
45 childhood initiatives.
- 46 (14) The reports submitted, pursuant to Section 12B.5 of S.L. 2016-94, to the  
47 Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and  
48 the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by the Department of  
49 Health and Human Services, the Department of Public Instruction, and other  
50 agencies or organizations that administer, support, or study early education  
51 programs in this State on (i) the development and implementation of a

1 statewide vision for early childhood education and (ii) the development and  
2 implementation of a program for transitioning children from preschool to  
3 kindergarten.

4 (15) Any other issues the Task Force deems relevant.

5 **SECTION 1.(d)** The Task Force, while in the discharge of its official duties, may  
6 exercise all powers provided for under G.S. 120-19 and G.S. 120-19.1 through G.S. 120-19.4.  
7 The Task Force may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant services, as provided by  
8 G.S. 120-32.02. If the Task Force hires a consultant, the consultant shall not be a State  
9 employee or a person currently under contract with the State to provide services. Members of  
10 the Task Force shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowance as provided in  
11 G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, or 138-6, as appropriate. The expenses of the Task Force shall be  
12 considered expenses incurred for the joint operation of the General Assembly.

13 **SECTION 1.(e)** The Legislative Services Officer shall assign professional and  
14 clerical staff to assist the Task Force in its work. The Director of Legislative Assistants of the  
15 House of Representatives and the Director of Legislative Assistants of the Senate shall assign  
16 clerical support to the Task Force.

17 **SECTION 1.(f)** The Task Force shall submit an interim report on the results of its  
18 study to the General Assembly on or before April 1, 2018, by filing a copy of the report with  
19 the Office of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Office of the Speaker of the House  
20 of Representatives, and the Legislative Library. The Task Force shall submit a final report,  
21 including any proposed legislation, to the 2019 General Assembly by filing a copy of the report  
22 with the Office of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Office of the Speaker of the  
23 House of Representatives, and the Legislative Library. The Task Force shall terminate on  
24 December 15, 2018, or upon the filing of its final report, whichever comes first.

25 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.