



## 102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2021 and 2022

HB1822

Introduced 2/17/2021, by Rep. William Davis

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Early Childhood Program Eligibility Screening Act. Establishes the Early Childhood Program Eligibility Screening Program to coordinate the enrollment of children into early childhood programs that receive 90% or more of their funding through federal and State funds and that provide services to children from birth to 5 years of age. Sets forth requirements for the program. Provides that the program shall be implemented and administered by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, which shall act in cooperation with other programs serving young children in the community. Requires the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development to develop a Universal Early Childhood Program Application. Provides that each early childhood program in a community that receives 90% or more of its funding through federal and State funds and that provides services to children from birth to 5 years of age shall use the application to determine a family's eligibility for any and all of the community's early childhood programs. Sets forth what must be included on the application. Contains provisions concerning enrollment and placement. Provides for rulemaking.

LRB102 04053 CMG 14069 b

FISCAL NOTE ACT  
MAY APPLY

STATE MANDATES  
ACT MAY REQUIRE  
REIMBURSEMENT

1 AN ACT concerning children.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Early  
5 Childhood Program Eligibility Screening Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. In this Act:

7 "Blended classroom" means a classroom that is operated  
8 under a program that gives the provider the option to operate  
9 classrooms that are shared by a Head Start program and an early  
10 childhood program in which children enrolled in the program  
11 are financially supported through several funding sources and  
12 agencies. Classrooms may be partially blended in which one or  
13 more classrooms are blended at one or more program locations  
14 but not all classrooms are blended, or classrooms may be fully  
15 blended in which every classroom is offered by a Head Start  
16 program and receives 90% of its funding from State or federal  
17 sources. However, other sources such as Title I and private  
18 tuition may also be used to support the enrollment of  
19 children.

20 "Classroom", with respect to a Head Start program, means a  
21 group of children who are supervised and taught by 2 paid staff  
22 members, both of whom are teachers or one of whom is a teacher  
23 and one of whom is a teacher's aide, and, if possible, a

1 volunteer.

2 "Communication" means a discussion by an early childhood  
3 program provider with the parents or guardians of all eligible  
4 participants in the program that must describe the program to  
5 the parents or guardians to ensure that the parents or  
6 guardians are made aware of and are informed about the program  
7 and their right to participate in the program.

8 "Full utilization" means an Early Head Start program's  
9 funded enrollment numbers for children from birth to 3 years  
10 of age are met or exceeded or a Head Start program's funded  
11 enrollment numbers for children 3 or 4 years of age are met or  
12 exceeded per federal requirements, whichever is applicable.

13 "Funded enrollment" means the number of participants that  
14 a Head Start or Early Head Start grantee is to serve as  
15 indicated on its federal grant award.

16 "Head Start or Early Head Start program" means a program  
17 that provides services to children and their families who live  
18 in extreme poverty, as set by guidelines established by the  
19 federal government that are tied to the poverty guidelines  
20 updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S.  
21 Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of  
22 42 U.S.C. 9902(2), or to children who are homeless or in foster  
23 care; provides the skills those children need to be successful  
24 in school and life; promotes the school readiness of those  
25 children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional  
26 development in a learning environment that supports children's

1 growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and  
2 emotional functioning, the creative arts, and physical skills;  
3 provides approaches to learning to low-income children and  
4 their families; and provides health, educational, nutritional,  
5 social, and other services that are determined based on a  
6 family needs assessment.

7 "Head Start or Early Head Start program eligibility" means  
8 that families who live in extreme poverty, as determined by  
9 the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the Federal  
10 Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
11 under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2), families who are  
12 homeless, children in foster care, and children from families  
13 who receive public assistance from this State's Temporary  
14 Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program or from  
15 Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are eligible regardless of  
16 income.

17 "Scientifically valid research" includes applied research,  
18 basic research, and field-initiated research in which the  
19 rationale, design, and interpretation are soundly developed in  
20 accordance with the principles of scientific research.

21 "Universal Early Childhood Program Application" means an  
22 application form for services that is required to be utilized  
23 by each early childhood program in this State that receives  
24 90% or more of its funding through federal and State funds and  
25 that provides services to children from birth to 5 years of  
26 age.

1 Section 10. Findings.

2 (a) Every young child and family has the right to  
3 equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their  
4 full potential as engaged learners and valued members of  
5 society regardless of race, ethnicity, and social  
6 circumstances. Early childhood programs, including Head Start  
7 and Early Head Start programs, provide essential support,  
8 structure, and opportunities for young children and blended  
9 classroom structures that provide support, encourage learning,  
10 and promote a healthy child.

11 (b) Head Start and Early Head Start programs:

12 (1) provide support for the whole child by promoting  
13 school readiness and actively ensuring each child is  
14 healthy, including nutrition, oral health, and mental  
15 health, and is ready to learn;

16 (2) provide comprehensive health, educational,  
17 nutritional, social, and other services needed to aid  
18 participating children in attaining their full potential  
19 and to prepare children to succeed in school;

20 (3) attract and retain qualified staff who are capable  
21 of delivering and implementing a high-quality and  
22 comprehensive program, including the ability to carry out  
23 a research-based curriculum aligned with State early  
24 learning standards;

25 (4) have child-to-teacher ratios, group size, and

1 family service worker caseloads that reflect best  
2 practices and are tied to high-quality service delivery;

3 (5) are based on scientifically valid research,  
4 including:

5 (A) curricula that are based on scientifically  
6 valid research, are developmentally appropriate, and  
7 promote the school readiness of children participating  
8 in the program involved; and

9 (B) teaching practices that are based, as  
10 appropriate, on scientifically valid research, that  
11 are developmentally appropriate, and that promote the  
12 school readiness of children participating in the  
13 programs.

14 (6) maintain strong fiscal controls and cost-effective  
15 fiscal management;

16 (7) coordinate and collaborate with other public or  
17 private entities providing early childhood education and  
18 developmental programs and services for young children in  
19 the community;

20 (8) coordinate with public and private entities that  
21 are willing to commit resources to assist the programs in  
22 meeting their program needs;

23 (9) facilitate the involvement of parents,  
24 grandparents, and kinship caregivers, as appropriate, of  
25 children participating in the programs and in activities  
26 at home and, if practicable, at the location of the

1 programs, which is designed to help such persons become  
2 full partners in the education of their children;

3 (10) provide an opportunity for parents to participate  
4 in the development and overall conduct of the programs at  
5 the local level;

6 (11) provide parenting-skills training;

7 (12) perform a family needs assessment with respect to  
8 each participating family that includes consultation with  
9 parents, foster parents, grandparents, and kinship  
10 caregivers, as applicable, in a manner and language that  
11 such persons can understand, to the extent practicable,  
12 about the benefits of parental involvement;

13 (13) meet the diverse needs of the population served,  
14 including, but not limited to:

15 (A) meeting the needs of limited  
16 English-proficient children and their families by  
17 implementing procedures to identify such children,  
18 implementing plans to provide trained personnel, and  
19 implementing plans to provide services to assist these  
20 children in making progress toward the acquisition of  
21 the English language, while making meaningful progress  
22 in attaining knowledge, skills, abilities, and  
23 development; and

24 (B) meeting the needs of children with  
25 disabilities by implementing procedures to identify  
26 such children and implementing procedures for referral

1 of these children for evaluation to State or local  
2 agencies providing services and plans for  
3 collaboration with those State or local agencies;

4 (14) reserve a percentage of their funding, as  
5 required and set by federal guidelines, for the enrollment  
6 of children with disabilities; and

7 (15) meet the needs of homeless children, including  
8 their transportation needs, and the needs of children in  
9 foster care.

10 (c) Blended classrooms in early childhood programs share  
11 all of the following characteristics:

12 (1) Costs are shared in that costs are prorated from  
13 each funding source.

14 (2) Separate audit trails are maintained for each  
15 funding source.

16 (3) A classroom must meet the operating requirements  
17 of all funding sources. If classroom standards are not  
18 comparable or the same between 2 or more classrooms, the  
19 most stringent standard applies.

20 (4) Children receive all services for which they are  
21 eligible.

22 (5) Wrap-around services provide before-school and  
23 after-school child care that is coordinated with child  
24 care providers and family resource centers.

25 (6) Head Start and Early Head Start programs  
26 coordinate with medical, health, mental health, and social



1 service agencies to meet the comprehensive needs of  
2 children and families.

3 Section 15. Early Childhood Program Eligibility Screening  
4 Program.

5 (a) The Early Childhood Program Eligibility Screening  
6 Program is created to coordinate the enrollment of children  
7 into early childhood programs that receive 90% or more of  
8 their funding through federal and State funds and that provide  
9 services to children from birth to 5 years of age. The Early  
10 Childhood Program Eligibility Screening Program shall provide  
11 improved program coordination to identify and serve this  
12 State's neediest children by avoiding a duplication of  
13 services and the supplanting of federal funds and shall  
14 maximize the use of Head Start and Early Head Start program  
15 funds. In addition, the Early Childhood Program Eligibility  
16 Screening Program shall prioritize families who meet Head  
17 Start or Early Head Start program eligibility guidelines for  
18 enrollment into those programs, which frees up enrollment  
19 slots for other early childhood programs in the local  
20 community that have broader eligibility guidelines.

21 (b) The Early Childhood Program Eligibility Screening  
22 Program shall be implemented and administered by the  
23 Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, which shall  
24 act in cooperation with other programs serving young children  
25 in the community, including public schools, child care

1 providers, special education cooperatives, Head Start and  
2 Early Head Start programs, Preschool for All and Preschool for  
3 All Expansion programs, Prevention Initiative programs, early  
4 intervention services or programs, Child and Family  
5 Connections offices, the Child Find Project, and the Maternal,  
6 Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

7 Section 20. Universal Early Childhood Program Application;  
8 enrollment.

9 (a) The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development  
10 shall develop a Universal Early Childhood Program Application.  
11 Each early childhood program in a community that receives 90%  
12 or more of its funding through federal and State funds and that  
13 provides services to children from birth to 5 years of age  
14 shall use the Universal Early Childhood Program Application to  
15 determine a family's eligibility for any and all of the  
16 community's early childhood programs. One of the eligibility  
17 criteria included on the Universal Early Childhood Program  
18 Application must be based on the family's household income  
19 level as determined by poverty guidelines updated periodically  
20 in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and  
21 Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2).

22 (b) If an applicant family meets the income eligibility  
23 guidelines established by a Head Start or Early Head Start  
24 program, the applicant family must be offered the opportunity  
25 for communication about enrollment into the Head Start or

1 Early Head Start program and to enroll in the Head Start or  
2 Early Head Start program prior to enrolling in any other  
3 community program. If the applicant family does not meet the  
4 income eligibility guidelines set forth by the Head Start or  
5 Early Head Start program, the applicant family must be offered  
6 the opportunity for communication about enrolling in another  
7 community program selected by the applicant family.

8 If a Head Start or Early Head Start program has met full  
9 utilization, a family may be placed in another early childhood  
10 program serving young children in the community.

11 Section 25. Waiting list. Each early childhood program  
12 that receives 90% or more of its funding through federal and  
13 State funds and provides services for children from birth to 5  
14 years of age shall coordinate with similar early childhood  
15 programs in the community to ensure that a child whose  
16 household income meets the eligibility requirements of the  
17 Head Start program and early childhood programs or the  
18 eligibility requirements of local, State, or federal early  
19 childhood programs remains on a waiting list for an eligible  
20 provider for no longer than 45 days.

21 Section 90. Rules. The Governor's Office of Early  
22 Childhood Development may adopt any rules necessary to  
23 implement this Act.