

## ONE HUNDRED SECOND LEGISLATURE

## SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 510**

Introduced by Nordquist, 7; Campbell, 25; Conrad, 46; Council, 11; Harms, 48; Howard, 9; Mello, 5.

PURPOSE: Over forty-seven thousand Nebraska children five years of age and younger are subject to risk factors that threaten their ability to succeed in school and beyond. These children can be found in every county throughout the state and are growing at a faster rate in rural areas. Science shows that meeting a child's cognitive, emotional, and social needs in their first five years, during the period of rapid brain growth, is imperative for the success of the child and provides for the state a greater return on investment than investments at any other time in a person's life.

The purpose of this interim study is for a select committee to gather information and provide recommendations for an early learning and development reform agenda and to develop a preliminary budget to implement and sustain the agenda. The committee should examine the early learning and development system across the state to determine how to make the current system more effective in preparing children to succeed in school and later in life.

This study shall be conducted by a select committee consisting of three members of the Appropriations Committee of the Legislature appointed by the chairperson of the committee, three members of the Education Committee of the Legislature appointed by the chairperson of the committee, and three members of the Health and Human Services Committee of the

Legislature appointed by the chairperson of the committee. The chairperson of the select committee shall be selected by the members of the committee.

In conducting the study, the select committee shall consult with licensed and license-exempt child care practitioners, parents, early childhood professionals, business leaders, the Department of Health and Human Services, the State Department of Education, members of higher education, and other interested parties.

Issues considered by the select committee may include, but shall not be limited to:

(1) Developing shared decisionmaking processes between the Department of Health and Human Services and the State Department of Education regarding early childhood;

(2) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development standards and practices across the state;

(3) Developing, promoting, rating, monitoring, and increasing access to high-quality, accountable programs;

(4) Reviewing barriers posed by family income and geography to the accessibility of high-quality early childhood care and learning opportunities;

(5) Addressing, supporting, and promoting early learning and development outcomes for children;

(6) Supporting and incentivizing the early childhood workforce in the development of their knowledge, skills, and abilities;

(7) Developing standards for early childhood provider education and staff development;

(8) Measuring outcomes and progress to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies; and

(9) Developing innovative funding strategies to maximize early childhood outcomes for children.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the select committee shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature on or before December 31, 2012.