S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

9372

I N A S S E M B L Y

February 29, 2016

Introduced by M. of A. RICHARDSON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Children and Families

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to establishing a division of early childhood within the office of children and family services

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Section 500 of the executive law is amended by adding a new subdivision 4 to read as follows:

4. (A) THERE IS HEREBY ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES A DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD. THE DIVISION SHALL BE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES. THE DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SHALL BE HEADED BY THE DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD WHO SHALL BE APPOINTED BY A COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THE GOVERNOR OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE, THE SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY, THE TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE ASSEMBLY AND THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE SENATE.

(B) THE PRIMARY DUTIES OF THE DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD ARE TO COORDINATE, CONSOLIDATE AND INTEGRATE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS, IN ORDER TO ADMINISTER PROGRAMS AND FUNDING AS EFFICIENTLY AS POSSIBLE. THE DIVISION'S DUTIES SHALL INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING:

(I) TO DEVELOP, COORDINATE AND SUPPORT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO AID EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS ACROSS THE STATE;

(II) TO WORK COOPERATIVELY AND IN COORDINATION WITH THE EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL;

(III) TO COLLABORATE WITH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO ENSURE PROPER AND APPROPRIATE CONNECTIONS AND SMOOTH TRANSITIONS BETWEEN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE TWELVE PROGRAMS;

(IV) TO COORDINATE THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES TO ENSURE THE STATE IS UTILIZING ALL AVAILABLE FUNDING STREAMS IN A UNIFIED FASHION; AND

(V) TO PERFORM ANY OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT WILL ASSIST IN THE DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [ ] is old law to be omitted.

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(C) THE DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICIES AND DIRECTIVES OF THE DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD. THE DIRECTOR MAY SEEK AND SHALL BE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES SUCH ASSISTANCE AS MAY BE REQUIRED TO PERFORM SUCH DIRECTOR'S DUTIES PURSUANT TO THIS SUBDIVISION. THE DIRECTOR MAY APPOINT SUCH OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS AND CONSULTANTS AS HE OR SHE MAY DEEM NECESSARY. TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, THE DIRECTOR SHALL APPOINT THE OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS AND CONSULTANTS FOR THE DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD, FROM AMONG THE EXISTING OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES.

(D) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY FIRST, TWO THOUSAND SEVENTEEN, THE DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SHALL BEGIN A STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF THE CURRENT FUNDING STREAMS FOR THE STATE. THE DIVISION SHALL, ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER FIRST, TWO THOUSAND SEVENTEEN, PROVIDE TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE PROGRAMMATIC AND LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS, BASED ON ITS STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION.

(E) THE DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SHALL SUBMIT TO THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE, WITHIN ONE YEAR OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS SUBDIVISION, A REPORT AS THE VARIOUS EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS THAT ARE AVAILABLE IN THE STATE. THE REPORT SHALL INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS AND AN ACTION PLAN TO FURTHER CONSOLIDATE AND COORDINATE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND FUNDING SOURCES THAT SUPPORT THESE PROGRAMS.

S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.