

1 direct the education, development, and upbringing of their children,
2 and that recognizes and honors cultural and linguistic diversity. The
3 department shall include parents and legal guardians in the development
4 of policies and program decisions affecting their children.

5 **Sec. 6.** RCW 43.215.100 and 2007 c 394 s 4 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
8 specific purpose, the department, in collaboration with community and
9 statewide partners, shall implement a voluntary quality rating and
10 improvement system, called the early achievers program, that is
11 applicable to licensed or certified child care centers and homes and
12 early education programs.

13 (2) The purpose of the ((voluntary quality rating and improvement
14 system)) early achievers program is: (a) To give parents clear and
15 easily accessible information about the quality of child care and early
16 education programs, support improvement in early learning programs
17 throughout the state, increase the readiness of children for school,
18 and close the disparity in access to quality care; and (b) to establish
19 a common set of expectations and standards that define, measure, and
20 improve the quality of early learning settings.

21 (3) Participation in the early achievers program is voluntary for
22 licensed or certified child care centers and homes.

23 (4) By fiscal year 2015, Washington state preschool programs
24 receiving state funds must enroll in the early achievers program and
25 maintain a minimum score level.

26 (5) Before final implementation of the ((voluntary quality rating
27 and improvement system)) early achievers program, the department shall
28 report on program progress, as defined within the race to the top
29 federal grant award, and expenditures to the appropriate policy and
30 fiscal committees of the legislature. Nothing in this section changes
31 the department's responsibility to collectively bargain over mandatory
32 subjects.

33 **Sec. 7.** RCW 43.215.430 and 1994 c 166 s 8 are each amended to read
34 as follows:

35 The department shall review applications from public or private
36 nonsectarian organizations for state funding of early childhood