

1 legislature acknowledges that the early care and education system
2 should strive to address the needs of Washington's culturally and
3 linguistically diverse populations. The legislature understands that
4 parental choice and provider diversity are guiding principles for
5 early learning programs.

6 (2) The legislature intends to prioritize the integration of
7 child care and preschool in an effort to promote full day
8 programming. The legislature further intends to reward quality and
9 create incentives for providers to participate in a quality rating
10 and improvement system that will also provide valuable information to
11 parents regarding the quality of care available in their communities.

12 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.215.100 and 2013 c 323 s 6 are each amended to
13 read as follows:

14 EARLY ACHIEVERS, QUALITY RATING, AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM. (1)
15 (~~Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this~~
16 ~~specific purpose,~~) The department, in collaboration with tribal
17 governments and community and statewide partners, shall implement a
18 ((voluntary)) quality rating and improvement system, called the early
19 achievers program((, that)). The early achievers program provides a
20 foundation of quality for the early care and education system. The
21 early achievers program is applicable to licensed or certified child
22 care centers and homes and early ((education)) learning programs such
23 as working connections child care and early childhood education and
24 assistance programs.

25 (2) The ~~((purpose))~~ objectives of the early achievers program
26 ~~((is))~~ are to:

27 (a) ~~((To))~~ Improve short-term and long-term educational outcomes
28 for children as measured by assessments including, but not limited
29 to, the Washington kindergarten inventory of developing skills in RCW
30 28A.655.080;

31 (b) Give parents clear and easily accessible information about
32 the quality of child care and early education programs((,));

33 (c) Support improvement in early learning and child care programs
34 throughout the state((,));

35 (d) Increase the readiness of children for school((, and));

36 (e) Close the ((disparity)) disparities in access to quality
37 care;

38 (f) Provide professional development and coaching opportunities
39 to early child care and education providers; and ((, to))