

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 10: Department of Education Department of Early Learning and Care Special Purpose Appropriation

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Education Subcommittee
Carrier: Representative McLain

The Education Subcommittee recommends that the Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means recommend including proposed budgetary changes to implement the new Department of Early Learning and Care, after further review and refinement, in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2022 legislative session.

In the 2021 legislative session, HB 3073 established a new Department of Early Learning and Care, and HB 5006 provided funding to begin building the new agency. A special purpose appropriation of \$5.1 million was set aside to provide funding for 34 positions (12.38 FTE), services and supplies, and other expenses associated with both the new agency and the Department of Education. The Early Learning Division has requested the funding from the special purpose appropriation, an additional \$650,618 General Fund, and establishment of the 34 positions in order to continue preparing the Department of Early Learning and Care to be ready for its statutory start date of January 1st, 2023.

Planning for the new Department is well underway, but many decisions have yet to be made. One of these decisions is whether or not to move the statutory start date to July 1st, 2023 to provide more time to build the business processes needed to ensure a seamless transition. Regardless of the new agency's start date, though, the Early Learning Division will benefit from a bit more time prior to the February 2022 legislative session to refine costs, timelines, and operational plans.

The Subcommittee recommends approval.