

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Department of Education Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Prevention

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Education Subcommittee
Carrier: Senator Frederick

On February 9th, the Education Subcommittee recommended acknowledging receipt of a report from the Department of Education on development of the Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Prevention Program.

The Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Prevention program created by HB 2166 in the 2021 legislative session is intended to both reduce the use of suspension and expulsion from early childhood care and education programs and to reduce disparities in its use based on race, ethnicity, language, ability, or any other protected class. The Department reported on how it has developed a model for this program, where early childhood education teachers and care providers can request technical assistance from a statewide program when needed to support the stability of a child’s placement in an early childhood program. Key aspects of a successful program include flexibility, small caseloads, lengthy engagements, and an educated, culturally competent, and diverse workforce. The program will implement a “warm line” to connect early childhood educators to regional early childhood mental health consultants, and will provide funding regionally to pay for infant and early childhood mental health consultants as needed. The program is expected to begin operations in February 2023 with a portion of the \$5.8 million General Fund appropriation that was unscheduled pending this report.

The Education Subcommittee recommends approval.