

A RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the Day Care Policy Act of 1979 to establish a pilot community-based Quality Improvement Network that will allow children and families to benefit from early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support engagement services, including educational, health, nutritional, behavioral, and family support services.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Early Learning Quality Improvement Network Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2014”.

Sec. 2. (a) The District of Columbia leads the nation in providing high-quality pre-K to over 70% of the District’s three-year olds and over 90% of the District’s four-year olds. In order to ensure that the District’s youngest children are prepared when they enter our pre-K programs, a need exists to increase the level of high-quality child care and services that our 0-3 year old population receives.

(b) Currently, 3,542 children ages 0-3 receive child care subsidy in the District of Columbia, and of those children, 38% come from families with no income, 63% come from families whose incomes are under 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL), and 75% come from families whose incomes are under 130% of the FPL. These are generally the District’s most

1 vulnerable residents who need comprehensive services and a continuity of care to ensure that
2 they are poised to succeed when they enter pre-K and Kindergarten.

3 (c) In order to address the needs of the population discussed in subsection (b) above and
4 their families, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is creating a pilot
5 Early Learning Quality Improvement Network (QIN) comprised of child development facilities
6 that will serve as hubs to provide quality improvement technical assistance and comprehensive
7 services to licensed child development centers and licensed child development homes. The child
8 development centers and child development homes will provide low-income infants and toddlers
9 high-quality, full-day, full-year comprehensive early learning and development services,
10 including health, mental health, nutrition, and family engagement support, and a continuum of
11 care.

12 (d) The pilot QIN will allow the District to demonstrate the efficacy of an evidence-
13 based model of infant and toddler child care on supporting children's learning and development
14 outcomes. Federal studies of use of the Early Head Start standards have shown improved
15 cognitive skills and social development by the age of three. Thus, better preparation of the
16 District's youngest children will allow them to be more successful later in school, as well as lead
17 to long-term positive social and educational outcomes.

18 (e) Under current District law, children receiving child care subsidy are not guaranteed
19 continuity of care, as their subsidy status is linked to their guardian's employment status. Thus,
20 if a parent loses his or her job, his or her child will lose subsidy and thus child care. This
21 disruption is particularly detrimental to these children, as they are often the population with the
22 greatest need for consistency and continuity. Thus, a need exists to allow the children in the
23 pilot QIN to continue to receive child care subsidy, and therefore child care, despite the
24 employment status of their guardian.

1 (f) In August 2014, OSSE applied for a federal Department of Health and Human
2 Services grant to support the QIN. This federal grant requires recipients to provide a continuum
3 of care for children participating in the QIN. To date, OSSE has heard from the HHS that we are
4 in the fundable range and thus anticipate receiving the federal grant, thereby further elevating the
5 need for this legislation.

6 (g) Additionally, the federal HHS grant requires recipients to provide children enrolled in
7 the QIN free child care and comprehensive services. Under current District law, this is not
8 possible. While a child's family may receive subsidy to cover his or her child care, the law still
9 requires the parent to pay for a portion of the child care based on a sliding scale adjusted for the
10 guardian's income level. Therefore, in order to fulfill the requirement of the federal grant, as
11 well as to ensure that the District's most vulnerable population has access to complete and
12 comprehensive health, mental health, nutrition, and family engagement services, a need exists for
13 the children included in the pilot QIN to be exempt from the payment requirement sections of the
14 Daycare Amendment Act of 1979.

15 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances
16 enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the "Early
17 Learning Quality Improvement Emergency Amendment Act of 2014" be adopted after a single
18 reading.

19 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.