



State of Wisconsin
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-1262/P5
EHS:skw&wlj

DOA:.....Rice, BB0257 - Child care access program

FOR 2025-2027 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

AN ACT ...; relating to: the budget.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CHILDREN

Child care access program

This bill requires DCF to contract with Wonderschool, Inc., and Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, Inc., to increase access to high-quality child care. The bill requires DCF to enter into a \$4,500,000 contract with Wonderschool to 1) increase the child care workforce by launching an online software platform that is linked to DCF's website to connect child care providers with child care workers and a pool of substitute child care workers and 2) build child care capacity in this state. The bill also requires DCF to enter into a \$5,500,000 contract with Wisconsin Early Childhood Association to provide 1) existing or prospective child care providers with licensing and certification assistance, 2) coaching and other support services, and 3) tax education assistance for child care centers that provide care and supervision for between four and eight children.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 20.437 (2) (bp) of the statutes is created to read:

20.437 (2) (bp) *Child care access program.* The amounts in the schedule for the program under s. 49.1335.

****NOTE: This SECTION involves a change in an appropriation that must be reflected in the revised schedule in s. 20.005, stats.

SECTION 2. 49.1335 of the statutes is created to read:

BILL**SECTION 2**

49.1335 Child care access program. (1) In this section, “family child care center” has the meaning given in s. 49.136 (1) (j).

(2) From the appropriation under s. 20.437 (2) (bp), the department shall enter into contracts with all of the following organizations, at the following amounts, to increase access to high-quality child care in this state:

(a) Wonderschool, Inc., or a successor organization, at \$4,500,000, to do any of the following:

1. Increase the child care workforce in this state by launching an online software platform that is linked to the department’s website to connect child care providers with child care workers and a pool of substitute child care workers.

2. Build child care capacity in this state.

(b) Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, Inc., at \$5,500,000, to provide any of the following for child care providers or prospective child care providers:

1. Assistance with licensing under s. 48.65 and certification under s. 48.651, prioritizing locations with a high need for child care services and child care providers that serve infants and toddlers.

2. Coaching services and other support services, including for substitute child care workers.

3. Tax education assistance for family child care centers.

(END)