



Ninety-Seventh Legislature - First Session - 2001
Committee Statement
LB 326

Hearing Date: 1/23/01
Committee On: Education

Introducers: (Suttle, Foley)
Title: Adopt the Nebraska Read, Educate, and Develop Youth Act

Roll Call Vote – Final Committee Action:

- Advanced to General File
 - X Advanced to General File with Amendments
 - Indefinitely Postponed
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Vote Results:

Yes	Senators Coordsen, Maxwell, Suttle, Price, Stuhr, Raikes
No	None
Present, not voting	None
Absent	Senators Brashear, Wickersham

Proponents:
 Senator Deborah Suttle
 Harriet Egertson

John Fero

Representing:
 Introducer
 Department of Education
 State Board of Education
 Crete Public Schools

Opponents:

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

LB 326 creates the Nebraska Read, Educate, and Develop Youth Act. Under the Act, the Department of Education, in cooperation with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure, and the Department of Health and Human Services Finance and Support shall develop a packet entitled “Learning Begins at Birth” to be distributed to the parents of every child born in the state beginning January 1, 2002.

The packet shall contain information on the following topics and indicate appropriate information for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers:

- a. A list of the kinds of activities which will help the child learn;
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- b. A sample of an appropriate book for parents to read to a child;
- c. A child development chart; and
- d. A list of enjoyable books for children.

The packet shall also contain:

- a. Information about brain research and health development;
- b. Information about obtaining a library card;
- c. Information about childhood diseases and immunizations;
- d. Information about the effects of second-hand smoke on children;
- e. Information on the child care available and how to evaluate good child care;
- f. Information about the visual development and its relationship to learning;
- g. Information about infant hearing screening tests;
- h. Information about sudden infant death syndrome; and
- i. A list of resources to obtain further information.

The Department of Education shall develop a variety of packets, based on the needs of parents. The information may be in the form of printed material, video tapes, audio cassettes, or other appropriate media.

The Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure, and the Department of Health and Human Services Finance and Support shall assist the Department of Education in developing the packet and distribution methods.

The departments may solicit private financial assistance. The departments shall not endorse any private company or product, but private companies may have their names placed on materials in the packet to help underwrite the costs. The READY Fund is created to contain money received from private sources and shall be used by the departments to carry out the act. The fund shall be administered by the Department of Health and Human Services Finance and Support. Any money in the fund may be invested pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

The departments shall annually report to the Legislature and the Governor regarding the actions, activities, accomplishments, and shortcomings in carrying out the Act.

Explanation of amendments, if any:

The committee amendment simplifies the requirements contained in the original proposal. The specific lists of items to be included in the packets are replaced with a requirement to include information about “child development, child care, how children learn, children’s health, services available to children and parents, and any other information deemed relevant by the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure, the Department of Health and Human Services Finance and Support, or the State Department of Education.” The packet will need to indicate the appropriate information for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Senator Ron Raikes, Chairperson
