



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

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May 9, 2001

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #455

### Children's Cabinet Board (Governor)

[LFB 2001-03 Budget Summary: Page 338, #3]

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#### CURRENT LAW

No provision.

#### GOVERNOR

Create a Children's Cabinet Board, attached to the Governor's Office. Create a GPR annual appropriation, funded at \$250,000 in 2002-03, for grants to be awarded by the Board and a PR continuing appropriation, funded at \$49,800 in 2001-02 and \$59,400 in 2002-03, for 1.0 unclassified position to provide staff support for the activities and responsibilities of the new Board. Funding for this position would come from assessments that would be levied against the Departments of Administration, Health and Family Services, Public Instruction and Workforce Development. Members of the new Board would be the Secretaries of the Departments of Administration, Health and Family Services and Workforce Development, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Governor, who would serve as chair of the Board. The Board would have the following responsibilities: (1) determine the amounts to be assessed DOA, DHFS, DPI and DWD for support of Board operations; (2) submit a biennial report to the Governor and Legislature containing the Board's recommendations for changes needed in state programs, policies and funding levels to improve the coordination among state agencies of programs for children and to streamline the delivery of those programs; and (3) establish and administer the GPR grant program. Under the program, grants would be awarded to local consortia to develop models for the delivery of programs for children who are at risk of not being ready to learn when they enter kindergarten or who are at risk of facing barriers to learning while in school.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Under the Governor's recommendation, the Children's Cabinet Board would have two principal functions: (a) to make biennial recommendations to the Governor (who would be on the Board and serve as chair of the Board) and the Legislature regarding changes needed in state programs, policies and funding levels that would improve the coordination among state agencies of programs for children and that would streamline the delivery of those programs; and (b) to administer a new grant program that would be created.

2. With regard to the first principal function, it could be argued that the statutory establishment of a new Board for this purpose is unnecessary. The Governor could direct that the Secretaries of Administration, Health and Family Services and Workforce Development and the Superintendent of Public Instruction jointly develop recommendations for needed improvements in state programs, policies and funding levels relating to programs for children and changes to streamline the delivery of such programs and submit their recommendations in a report to him and the Legislature. Moreover, if the Governor believes that a higher level emphasis should be given to such efforts, the Governor could issue an executive order to have those individuals be members of a special committee that would be created by the executive order and have such duties and responsibilities as the executive order would specify. Under this approach, future governors would then not be bound by a statutory creation that may not fit their priorities. In addition, another Board would not be added to state government entities.

3. The proposed grant program would be the Board's other principal reason for being created. Under the program, grants would awarded to local consortia to develop models for the delivery of programs for children who are at risk of not being ready to learn when they enter kindergarten or who are at risk of facing barriers to learning while in school. A local consortium would be defined as a combination of individuals, public agencies, nonprofit corporations, for-profit organizations, federally-recognized American Indian tribes or bands, or other persons who have agreed to participate in a joint effort to provide a model for the delivery of programs for children.

4. A local consortium awarded a grant under the program would be required to use the grant to develop a model for the delivery of the types of programs outlined above. Further, the model would have to conform to specifications and performance measures that would be developed by the Board. Finally, a pilot program granted funding would have to be designed to accomplish all of the following: (a) create closer links between school districts, human service providers and other community-based providers of programs for children; (b) enable children who are at risk of not being ready to learn when they enter kindergarten to be ready to learn when they enter kindergarten and children who are at risk of facing barriers to learning while in school to overcome those barriers; and (c) focus on providing services on a voluntary basis to children under five years of age and their families, but also provide services to children and their families, as needed throughout the elementary and high school grades.

5. The question that the Committee could consider in regard to this proposed new grant program would be whether it wishes to provide \$250,000 in new GPR spending in view of the fact that there are already a number of existing programs relating to at-risk children. The administration would likely argue that this proposed pilot program merits funding as a step in

finding or developing a model program (or programs) that would address the concerns regarding coordination between programs for at-risk children.

6. A new unclassified position, funded from program revenue assessments levied on DOA, DHFS, DPI and DWD, would also be authorized for the Governor's Office. The specific duties of this new position have not been identified except that it is understood that the new staff person would be responsible for providing support services to the Board and would be involved with administration of the new grant program.

7. If the Committee believes that the proposed Children's Cabinet Board and grant program is warranted, it could approve the Governor's recommendation. Alternatively, if the Committee believes that GPR funding for a new initiative such as the proposed grant program should not be undertaken in this budget, it could either delete the Governor's entire proposal (new Board, additional staff position and funding, and establishment of the new grant program) or delete just the funding for the new staff position and the new grant program. Finally, if the Committee believes that creation of the Children's Cabinet Board and grant program is warranted but feels that new GPR should not be used, it could approve the Governor's recommendation but with the change that funding for the new grant program should also come from assessments levied against DOA, DHFS, DPI and DWD, as determined by the Board.

## ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation.

2. Modify the Governor's recommendation to delete the \$250,000 GPR funding in 2002-03 for the grant program and instead provide that \$250,000 PR be authorized in 2002-03 in a new PR sum certain appropriation to fund the grant program. Provide that the Children's Cabinet Board would determine the amounts to be assessed the Departments of Administration, Health and Family Services, Public Instruction and Workforce Development to fund the new staff position and the grant program.

<b>Alternative 2</b>	<b>GPR</b>	<b>PR</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2001-03 FUNDING</b> (Change to Bill)	- \$250,000	\$250,000	\$0

3. Modify the Governor's recommendation to delete funding and authorization for 1.0 staff position and creation of and funding for, the grant program under the Board. *[Under this alternative, a Children's Cabinet Board would be created but have responsibilities only for providing recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature on improvements in the provision of state programs for children].*

<b>Alternative 3</b>	<b><u>GPR</u></b>	<b><u>PR</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
<b>2001-03 FUNDING</b> (Change to Bill)	- \$250,000	- \$109,200	- \$359,200
<b>2002-03 POSITIONS</b> (Change to Bill)	0.00	- 1.00	- 1.00

4. Maintain current law.

<b>Alternative 4</b>	<b><u>GPR</u></b>	<b><u>PR</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
<b>2001-03 FUNDING</b> (Change to Bill)	- \$250,000	- \$109,200	- \$359,200
<b>2002-03 POSITIONS</b> (Change to Bill)	0.00	- 1.00	- 1.00

Prepared by: Terry Rhodes