H.B. 1098
By: Zerwas
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to interested parties, family cost share provisions currently generate less than one percent of the overall budget for the early childhood intervention program (ECI) within the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). These parties assert that, because local ECI providers do not currently submit to DARS information specifically relating to the administration of the family cost share system or manage family cost share collections or enter adjusted gross income through the data system used for collecting and maintaining ECI information, DARS does not have the information necessary to make informed recommendations to increase revenue from family cost share provisions.

In addition, these parties contend that, unlike other states with family cost share programs that require higher income families to pay a greater amount for services received, Texas does not provide for a family's monthly payment to be tied to the amount of services received. H.B. 1098 seeks to ensure that DARS is able to obtain the information necessary to consider changes to the early childhood intervention program by providing a mechanism by which the department can acquire certain data.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1098 amends the Human Resources Code to require the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to collect data, including data on administrative costs and adjusted family income, sufficient to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the family cost share provisions of the early childhood intervention program and changes necessary to improve the cost-effectiveness of the program.

H.B. 1098 requires DARS to modify as necessary the Texas Kids Intervention Data System to accept adjusted family income data submitted by early childhood intervention program providers and to require all providers to enter adjusted family income data into the system. The bill requires DARS to use the data collected to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of existing family cost share provisions in the early childhood intervention program and to consider changes that may improve the cost-effectiveness of the program, including the adoption of a family cost share provision, under which the amount a family pays to participate in the early childhood intervention program is based on the amount of service the family receives under the program. The bill requires such a family cost share provision implemented by DARS to establish a maximum amount to be paid by a family participating in the early childhood intervention program that is based on the family's size and adjusted gross income, with families in higher income brackets required to pay more under the provision than those families paid before the provision's implementation.

H.B. 1098 requires DARS to implement any changes considered by DARS that the department determines will make the early childhood intervention program more cost-effective. The bill authorizes DARS to decline to implement the considered changes if none is determined to make the program more cost-effective. The bill requires DARS to evaluate existing family cost share provisions and consider and implement changes, if appropriate, to the early childhood intervention program on a periodic basis established by the department and at other times at the request of the Legislative Budget Board (LBB).

H.B. 1098 adds a temporary provision, set to expire September 1, 2015, requiring DARS, not later than December 1, 2014, to conduct the initial evaluation of cost-effectiveness and implement any changes resulting from that evaluation and to submit a report to the governor and the LBB summarizing the results of the initial evaluation and explaining any changes that were implemented.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2013.