



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2404-2020, **Version:** 1

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Mayor Ginther's vision for Columbus, America's Opportunity City, is that all children are ready for kindergarten. Addressing early childhood learning means bringing awareness and resources to a critical learning stage in childhood development. Children who come to school ready to learn are more likely to succeed academically and in life.

Child care and early learning programs also fulfill a critical need for our community's workforce. The availability of safe, nurturing environments for children, provides parents, family members, and caregivers the opportunity to attend their jobs or pursue their education.

However, in Ohio and nationwide, the child care industry is neither adequately nor equitably funded. Most providers, both center-based and home-based, are small, minority-owned business and many teachers earn poverty-level wages. Most providers who serve low-income children survive on state child care subsidies and struggle to meet the expenses incurred in operating a center.

These difficulties have been further exasperated by new child-to-teacher ratios and maximum class sizes required to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. To support child care programs in Ohio, the state is providing subsidies to eligible providers from their CARES Act funding. Even with this additional funding however, child care providers are having difficulty in sustaining their businesses.

Because of this, on July 27, 2020 Columbus City Council approved ordinance 1762-2020 that allowed the Department of Education to partner with Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services to provide CARES funds to eligible childcare providers in Franklin County to assist them to sustain their operations.

For various reasons, some undetermined, many of the eligible providers did not complete the grant application. Therefore, the Department of Education requests permission to modify the existing contract to make the grant available to all Franklin County providers that serve disadvantaged children and providers who provide a majority of their services to children with individualized education plans or family service plans.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** No additional funds are needed to modify these agreements.

**EMERGENCY DESIGNATION:** Emergency designation is requested to ensure that the funding can be expended by the County before the November 30, 2020 deadline.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Education to modify a contract with the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services to increase the number of child care providers to whom they could provide CARES Act funding by making the grant available to all Franklin County providers that serve disadvantaged children and providers who provide a majority of their services to children with individualized education plans or family service plans; and to declare an emergency.

**WHEREAS,** Mayor Ginther's vision for Columbus, America's Opportunity City, is that all children are ready for kindergarten; and

**WHEREAS,** children who participate in high-quality early learning experiences significantly improve their early literacy, language, and math skills; and

**WHEREAS**, child care and early learning programs also fulfill a critical need for our community's workforce; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in child care centers in Columbus and Franklin County, already under and inequitably funded, being in danger financially due to recent requirements necessary to reduce the spread of the virus; and

**WHEREAS**, expenditure of CARES Act funding to provide grants to child care providers in Franklin County is necessary to address the loss of revenue and support caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, for various reasons, many eligible child care providers did not complete grant application; and

**WHEREAS**, a contract modification would allow the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services to expand the number of child care providers with whom they could support; and

**WHEREAS**, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Department of Education in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to modify the contract with Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services so that they County may expend the grant to providers before the November 30, 2020 deadline, all for the preservation of public health, peace, property, and safety; now, therefore:

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:**

**SECTION 1.** That the Director of the Department of Education is authorized to modify a contract with Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services.

**SECTION 2.** That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications associated with this ordinance.

**SECTION 3.** That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or 10 days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.