



# HOUSE BILL 259: 2023 Appropriations Act, Sec. 9D.5: Smart Start Initiatives

2023-2024 General Assembly

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<b>Committee:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	December 5, 2023
<b>Introduced by:</b>		<b>Prepared by:</b>	Debbie Griffiths Staff Attorney
<b>Analysis of:</b>	Sec. 9D.5 of S.L. 2023-134		

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**OVERVIEW:** *Section 9D.5 of S.L. 2023-134 establishes the policies and procedures for Smart Start Initiatives including:*

- *The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. must ensure policies focus on improving child care quality in North Carolina for children from birth to five years old including utilization of funds for activities which assist child care facilities in improving quality and implementing pre-kindergarten programs. Improvement of quality includes helping one-, two-, and three-star programs increase their star ratings.*
- *State funding for local partnerships must also be used for evidence-based and evidence-informed programs for children from birth to five years old which increase children's literacy; increase the parent's ability to raise healthy, successful children; improve children's health; and assist four- and five-star facilities improve and maintain quality.*
- *This section establishes the requirements for the administration of the initiative including capping the administrative costs at no more than 10% of the total statewide allocation to all local partnerships.*
- *This section also establishes the criteria for the salary schedule for the Executive Director of the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. and the directors of the local partnership which must be used to determine the maximum amount of State funds which can be used for payment of those salaries. There is no prohibition on using non-State funds to supplement those salaries.*
- *In addition, this section requires that the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc., and the local partnerships comply with the following:*
  - *In the aggregate, they must match 100% the funds allocated by the State for each year of the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium which can be done through a minimum of a 13% cash contribution and a maximum of 6% in-kind contributions.*
  - *Utilize competitive bidding in contracting for goods and services which is based upon the cost of the goods or services being sought.*
- *The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. must not reduce the allocation of a county with a population less than 35,000 below the 2012-2013 level.*
- *The Department of Health and Human Services must continue with the implementation of a performance-based evaluation system.*

Jeffrey Hudson  
Director



Legislative Analysis  
Division  
919-733-2578

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- *Capital expenditures and expenditures of State funds for advertising and promotional activities are prohibited for the 2023-2025 biennium. Up to 1% of State funds can be used by the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. for fundraising. Its required annual report must include the amount of funds spent on fundraising, any return on fundraising investments, and any other pertinent information.*

*This section became effective July 1, 2023.*