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 Chairman Phil Mendelson

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

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IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the Day Care Policy Act of 1979 update the minimum salaries child development facilities must pay assistant and lead teachers beginning in January 2025 to participate in the Early Childhood Pay Equity Program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Early Childhood Educator Pay Scales Emergency Amendment Act of 2024”.

Sec. 2. (a) Early childhood educators and child development facilities are essential to providing children with foundational mental, emotional, and social skills prior to formal schooling, while supplying a stable and reliable form of childcare for working families and a more robust economy. Despite their importance to families’ and children’s wellbeing, early childhood educators have historically been underpaid, affecting their ability to stay in the profession and provide families with stable and quality childcare. To meet the needs of educators and families alike, the Council adopted the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund Establishment Act of 2021, effective November 21, 2021 (D.C. Law 24-45; D.C. Official Code § 1-325.431).

(b) The Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund (“pay equity fund”) was established in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget to provide supplemental payments to child development facilities to implement an Early Childhood Educator salary scale through the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Program (“program”). Following adoption of the Fiscal Year 2025 budget, the Early Childhood Educator Equitable Compensation Task Force (“task force”) was tasked with recommending changes to limit fiscal pressures on the program through the financial plan and beyond.

(c) The Fiscal Year 2025 budget necessitated reductions across DC Government. Of the $70,000,000 allocated to the pay equity fund in Fiscal Year 2025, and annually over the next four years, 5% of the fund is allocated to administrative costs and $12,000,000 is allocated to the DC Health Exchange Benefit Authority. These financial parameters require changes to the program formula and salary scale to keep early childhood educator salaries comparable to DC Public Schools and local education agencies in Washington, DC.

(d) On September 30, 2024, the task force released a report that includes a proposal for a lead and assistant teacher compensation scale based on the pay equity fund in the FY25 budget. The proposed compensation scale establishes new minimum salaries based on credentials, balancing the limits of the pay equity fund and the compensation and benefits of pre-k and kindergarten teachers employed at the District of Columbia Public Schools and District public charter schools.

(e) Therefore, there exists an immediate need to amend the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Program to update the current compensation scale to ensure the District has minimum educator salaries in place by the expiration of the current compensation scales on December 1, 2024. This amendment would provide child development facilities in Washington, DC with a clear salary structure that strives to improve compensation for early childhood educators within the limits established by the FY25 budget.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the Early Childhood Educator Pay Scales Emergency Amendment Act of 2024 be adopted after a single reading.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.