
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL READINESS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that more of our children
2 are entering kindergarten without the physical, cognitive,
3 linguistic, social, and emotional skills necessary to prepare
4 them for success in school life. For example, according to the
5 Hawaii State School Readiness Assessment, only forty percent of
6 kindergarten classes had the majority of their students entering
7 the 2012-2013 school year with school behaviors and skills, and
8 even fewer demonstrated the necessary approaches to learning.

9 It is no coincidence that the Hawaii State School Readiness
10 Assessment also reports that fifty-seven percent of students who
11 entered kindergarten had attended preschool. This percentage is
12 lower than in years past. According to kindergarten teachers in
13 the department of education, many of the children who do not
14 have experiences in pre-kindergarten programs could be eighteen
15 to twenty-four months behind developmentally than their peers
16 who do. The link between school readiness and success in school
17 is indisputable. Act 13, Session Laws of Hawaii 2002, defined
18 school readiness to mean that "young children are ready to have



1 successful learning experiences in school when there is a
2 positive interaction among the child's developmental
3 characteristics, school practices, and family and community
4 support."

5 The State must commit to efforts to promote school
6 readiness, especially in light of its expectation that
7 kindergarten students master the grade-level common core state
8 standards to develop the academic competencies and habits of
9 mind necessary for college and career success.

10 Act 178, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012, repealed the junior
11 kindergarten program and beginning with the 2014-2015 school
12 year, required that a child must be five years old by July 31 of
13 the school year to attend a public school kindergarten. The
14 legislature's intent was to align the changes with the
15 implementation of a program that would more effectively provide
16 a developmentally appropriate experience to prepare children
17 physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially, and
18 emotionally prior to beginning the public education provided by
19 the department of education.

20 The school readiness program must be in place by 2014 to
21 serve children born between August 1 and December 31 who will be
22 affected by the change in kindergarten eligibility.



1 The purpose of this Act, therefore, is to establish a
2 statewide school readiness program consisting of school
3 readiness services providers to assist families in preparing
4 their children for success in school. The statewide school
5 readiness program will be administered by the executive office
6 on early learning and is a major component of the early learning
7 system established pursuant to section 302L-2, Hawaii Revised
8 Statutes.

9 SECTION 2. Chapter 302L, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
11 and to read as follows:

12 "§302L- School readiness program. (a) There is
13 established within the early learning system a school readiness
14 program to be administered by the office. The school readiness
15 program shall:

- 16 (1) Prepare children for school;
17 (2) Provide access to school readiness services that
18 address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic,
19 social, and emotional development; and
20 (3) Prioritize low- and moderate-income families.

21 The school readiness program shall not provide instructional
22 services that supplant or duplicate the academic program of any



1 public or private school established for the purpose of
2 compliance with section 302A-1132.

3 (b) The school readiness program shall serve four-year-old
4 children, with priority extended to:

5 (1) Children who are not eligible to attend public school
6 kindergarten in the calendar year in which they turn
7 five years of age because their birth date occurs
8 after the July 31 cutoff for kindergarten eligibility
9 pursuant to section 302A-411; and

10 (2) Underserved or at-risk children.

11 (c) Enrollment in the school readiness program shall be
12 voluntary. A parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the
13 school readiness program shall share in the costs of the program
14 through a copayment according to a sliding fee scale that is
15 based on need and through fulfillment of family participation
16 requirements, pursuant to rules adopted by the office. A child
17 who is enrolled in or eligible for public elementary education
18 shall not be eligible for enrollment in the school readiness
19 program.

20 (d) The office may contract with eligible providers of
21 school readiness services to increase the capacity of the



1 program to provide school readiness services. Eligible
2 providers shall:

3 (1) Be the department of education, an entity licensed by
4 the department of human services to provide child care
5 under part VIII of chapter 346, or an entity exempt
6 from licensure under section 346-152; and

7 (2) Meet standards established under the school readiness
8 program pursuant to rules adopted by the office, which
9 shall include qualifications for staff who work with
10 children and data collection regarding participating
11 children. The office may provide support to providers
12 to meet these standards.

13 For the purposes of this program, eligible providers shall
14 not be deemed to be educational institutions.

15 (e) For the purposes of this section, "low- and moderate-
16 income family" means a family whose income is no more than
17 per cent of the federal poverty level.

18 (f) The office may adopt rules, pursuant to chapter 91,
19 necessary to carry out the purposes of this section."

20 SECTION 3. Section 26-12, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
21 amended to read as follows:

1 "**§26-12 Department of education.** The department of
2 education shall be headed by an executive board to be known as
3 the board of education.

4 Under policies established by the board, the superintendent
5 shall administer programs of education and public instruction
6 throughout the State, including education at the preschool,
7 primary, and secondary school levels, adult education, school
8 library services, health education and instruction (not
9 including dental health treatment transferred to the department
10 of health), and [~~such~~] other programs as may be established by
11 law[-]; provided that this section shall not apply to the
12 executive office on early learning and programs under its
13 jurisdiction pursuant to chapter 302L.

14 The state librarian, under policies established by the
15 board of education, shall be responsible for the administration
16 of programs relating to public library services and transcribing
17 services for the blind.

18 The functions and authority heretofore exercised by the
19 department of education (except dental health treatment
20 transferred to the department of health), library of Hawaii,
21 Hawaii county library, Maui county library, and the transcribing
22 services program of the bureau of sight conservation and work



1 with the blind, as heretofore constituted are transferred to the
2 public library system established by this chapter.

3 The management contract between the board of supervisors of
4 the county of Kauai and the Kauai public library association
5 shall be terminated at the earliest time after November 25,
6 1959, permissible under the terms of the contract and the
7 provisions of this paragraph shall constitute notice of
8 termination, and the functions and authority heretofore
9 exercised by the Kauai county library as heretofore constituted
10 and the Kauai public library association over the public
11 libraries in the county of Kauai shall thereupon be transferred
12 to the public library system established by this chapter.

13 The management contracts between the trustees of the
14 library of Hawaii and the Friends of the Library of Hawaii, and
15 between the library of Hawaii and the Hilo library and reading
16 room association, shall be terminated at the earliest time after
17 November 25, 1959, permissible under the terms of the contracts,
18 and the provisions of this paragraph shall constitute notice of
19 termination.

20 Upon the termination of the contracts, the State or the
21 counties shall not enter into any library management contracts
22 with any private association; provided that in providing library



1 services the board of education may enter into contracts
2 approved by the governor for the use of lands, buildings,
3 equipment, and facilities owned by any private association.

4 Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the board of
5 education may establish, specify the membership number and
6 quorum requirements for, appoint members to, and disestablish a
7 commission in each county to be known as the library advisory
8 commission, which shall in each case sit in an advisory capacity
9 to the board of education on matters relating to public library
10 services in their respective county."

11 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
12 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

School Readiness Program

Description:

Establishes the School Readiness Program within the Early Learning System. Effective July 1, 2050. (SB1093 HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

