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# 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 per cent 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 per cent of students  
11 who entered kindergarten had attended preschool. This  
12 percentage is lower than in years past. According to  
13 kindergarten teachers in the department of education, many of  
14 the children who do not have experiences in pre-kindergarten  
15 programs could be eighteen to twenty-four months behind  
16 developmentally than their peers who do. The link between  
17 school readiness and success in school is indisputable. Act 13,  
18 Session Laws of Hawaii 2002, defined school readiness to mean



1 that "young children are ready to have successful learning  
2 experiences in school when there is a positive interaction among  
3 the child's developmental characteristics, school practices, and  
4 family and community 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10 Act 178, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012, repealed the junior  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 in either of Hawaii's two  
5 official languages. The statewide school readiness program will  
6 be administered by the executive office on early learning and is  
7 a major component of the early learning system established  
8 pursuant to section 302L-2, Hawaii Revised 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 through either of the  
17       State's two official languages;  
18       (2) Provide access to school readiness services that  
19       address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic,  
20       social, and emotional development; and  
21       (3) Give priority to children from low- and moderate-  
22       income families.



1 The school readiness program shall not provide instructional  
2 services that supplant or duplicate the academic program of any  
3 public or private school established for the purpose of  
4 compliance with section 302A-1132.

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

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

12 (2) Underserved or at-risk children.

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



1        (d) The office may contract with eligible providers of  
2 school readiness services to increase the capacity of the  
3 program to provide school readiness services. Eligible  
4 providers shall:

5        (1) Be:

6            (A) The department of education;

7            (B) An entity licensed by the department of human  
8 services to provide child care under part VIII of  
9 chapter 346;

10           (C) An entity exempt from licensure under section  
11 346-152;

12           (D) An entity providing family-child interaction  
13 learning programs as defined in section 302L-1;  
14 or

15           (E) An entity providing Hawaiian language medium  
16 early learning programs;

17        (2) Meet Hawaiian or English language medium education  
18 standards, as applicable, established under the school  
19 readiness program pursuant to rules adopted by the  
20 office, which may include qualifications for staff who  
21 work with children and provisions for data collection  
22 regarding participating children. The office may



1           provide support to providers to meet these standards;  
 2           and  
 3           (3) Comply with all other applicable state and federal  
 4           laws.

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

7           (e) The office may adopt rules, pursuant to chapter 91,  
 8 necessary to carry out the purposes of this section, including  
 9 compliance with all applicable state and federal laws."

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

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

15           Under policies established by the board, the superintendent  
 16 shall administer programs of education and public instruction  
 17 throughout the State, including education at the preschool,  
 18 primary, and secondary school levels, adult education, school  
 19 library services, health education and instruction (not  
 20 including dental health treatment transferred to the department  
 21 of health), and [~~such~~] other programs as may be established by  
 22 law[-]; provided that this section shall not apply to the



1 executive office on early learning and programs under its  
2 jurisdiction pursuant to chapter 302L.

3       The state librarian, under policies established by the  
4 board of education, shall be responsible for the administration  
5 of programs relating to public library services and transcribing  
6 services for the blind.

7       The functions and authority heretofore exercised by the  
8 department of education (except dental health treatment  
9 transferred to the department of health), library of Hawaii,  
10 Hawaii county library, Maui county library, and the transcribing  
11 services program of the bureau of sight conservation and work  
12 with the blind, as heretofore constituted are transferred to the  
13 public library system established by this chapter.

14       The management contract between the board of supervisors of  
15 the county of Kauai and the Kauai public library association  
16 shall be terminated at the earliest time after November 25,  
17 1959, permissible under the terms of the contract and the  
18 provisions of this paragraph shall constitute notice of  
19 termination, and the functions and authority heretofore  
20 exercised by the Kauai county library as heretofore constituted  
21 and the Kauai public library association over the public



1 libraries in the county of Kauai shall thereupon be transferred  
2 to the public library system established by this chapter.

3 The management contracts between the trustees of the  
4 library of Hawaii and the Friends of the Library of Hawaii, and  
5 between the library of Hawaii and the Hilo library and reading  
6 room association, shall be terminated at the earliest time after  
7 November 25, 1959, permissible under the terms of the contracts,  
8 and the provisions of this paragraph shall constitute notice of  
9 termination.

10 Upon the termination of the contracts, the State or the  
11 counties shall not enter into any library management contracts  
12 with any private association; provided that in providing library  
13 services the board of education may enter into contracts  
14 approved by the governor for the use of lands, buildings,  
15 equipment, and facilities owned by any private association.

16 Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the board of  
17 education may establish, specify the membership number and  
18 quorum requirements for, appoint members to, and disestablish a  
19 commission in each county to be known as the library advisory  
20 commission, which shall in each case sit in an advisory capacity  
21 to the board of education on matters relating to public library  
22 services in their respective county."





1 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2013-2014 and the  
4 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
5 2014-2015 for the purpose of establishing a statewide school  
6 readiness program.

7 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the executive  
8 office on early learning for the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
10 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

11 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

School Readiness Program; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the School Readiness Program within the Early Learning System. Effective July 1, 2050. (SB1093 HD2)

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

