
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 expected 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 is a
12 lower percentage than in years past. According to kindergarten
13 teachers in the department of education, many of the children
14 who do not have experiences in pre-kindergarten programs could
15 be eighteen to twenty-four months behind in development than
16 their peers who do. The link between school readiness and
17 success in school is indisputable. Act 13, Session Laws of
18 Hawaii 2002, defined school readiness to mean that "young



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

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

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11 2012, repealed the junior kindergarten program and starting with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

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



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

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

11 "§302L- School readiness program. (a) There is
 12 established within the early learning system a school readiness
 13 program to be administered by the executive office on early
 14 learning. The school readiness program shall:

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

20 The program shall not provide any instructional services that
 21 supplant or duplicate the academic program of any public or

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

3 (b) The program shall serve four-year-old children, with
4 priority for:

5 (1) Children who are not eligible to attend public school
6 kindergarten in the calendar year they turn five years
7 of age because their birthdates occur after the July
8 31 cut-off for kindergarten eligibility; and

9 (2) Underserved or at-risk children.

10 Families may enroll their children in the program on a
11 voluntary basis.

12 Families shall share in the costs of the program through a
13 copayment according to a sliding fee scale that is based on need
14 and through fulfillment of family participation requirements,
15 pursuant to rules adopted by the office.

16 The program shall not serve children who are enrolled in or
17 eligible for public elementary education.

18 (c) The office may contract with eligible providers of
19 school readiness services to increase the capacity of the
20 program to provide school readiness services to children across
21 the State. Eligible providers shall:



- 1 (1) Be either the department of education or an entity
- 2 licensed by the department of human services to
- 3 provide child care under part VIII of chapter 346; and
- 4 (2) Meet the standards established under the program
- 5 pursuant to rules adopted by the office, which shall
- 6 include qualifications for staff who work with
- 7 children and data collection regarding participating
- 8 children. The office may provide support to providers
- 9 to meet these standards.

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

12 (d) The office may adopt rules necessary to carry out the
 13 purposes of this section."

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

16 "**§26-12 Department of education.** The department of
 17 education shall be headed by an executive board to be known as
 18 the board of education.

19 Under policies established by the board, the superintendent
 20 shall administer programs of education and public instruction
 21 throughout the State, including education at the preschool,
 22 primary, and secondary school levels, adult education, school



1 library services, health education and instruction (not
2 including dental health treatment transferred to the department
3 of health), and such other programs as may be established by
4 law. The state librarian, under policies established by the
5 board of education, shall be responsible for the administration
6 of programs relating to public library services and transcribing
7 services for the blind. This section shall not apply to the
8 executive office on early learning and its programs.

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

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



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

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

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

17 Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the board of
18 education may establish, specify the membership number and
19 quorum requirements for, appoint members to, and disestablish a
20 commission in each county to be known as the library advisory
21 commission, which shall in each case sit in an advisory capacity



1 to the board of education on matters relating to public library
2 services in their respective county."

3 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

4 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

5



Report Title:

School Readiness Program

Description:

Establishes the school readiness program within the early learning system. (SD1)

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

