
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10 Act 178, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012, repealed the junior
11 kindergarten program and, starting 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 program must be in place by 2014 to serve the children
21 born from August 1 to December 31 who will be affected by the
22 change in kindergarten eligibility.



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 given 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 203A-411; and

10 (2) Underserved or at-risk children.

11 A parent or guardian may enroll their child in the program
12 on a voluntary basis.

13 A parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the program
14 shall share in the costs of the program through a co-payment
15 according to a sliding fee scale that is based on need and
16 through fulfillment of family participation requirements, as
17 established by rule.

18 No child shall be enrolled in the program who is enrolled
19 in or eligible for public elementary education.

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

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

13 (d) For the purposes of this section "low- and moderate-
14 income family" means a family whose income is no more than two
15 hundred fifty per cent of the federal poverty level.

16 (e) The office may adopt rules, pursuant to chapter 91,
17 necessary to carry out the purposes of this section."

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

20 "**§26-12 Department of education.** The department of
21 education shall be headed by an executive board to be known as
22 the board of education.



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

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

21 The management contract between the board of supervisors of
22 the county of Kauai and the Kauai public library association



1 shall be terminated at the earliest time after November 25,
2 1959, permissible under the terms of the contract and the
3 provisions of this paragraph shall constitute notice of
4 termination, and the functions and authority heretofore
5 exercised by the Kauai county library as heretofore constituted
6 and the Kauai public library association over the public
7 libraries in the county of Kauai shall thereupon be transferred
8 to the public library system established by this chapter.

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

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



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

8 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
9 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

10 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 07/01/2050. (SD2)

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

