
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. For example, only forty per cent of
5 kindergarten classes had a majority of students entering the
6 2012-2013 school year with school behaviors and skills, and even
7 fewer students demonstrated the necessary approaches to
8 learning, according to the Hawaii State School Readiness
9 Assessment.

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



1 Session Laws of Hawaii 2002, defined school readiness as when
2 "young children are ready to have successful learning
3 experiences in school [and] when there is a positive interaction
4 among the child's developmental characteristics, school
5 practices, and family and community support."

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

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12 2012, repealed the junior kindergarten program and changed the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



1 The program must be in place by 2014 to serve the children
2 who will be affected by the change in kindergarten eligibility -
3 those born between August 1 and December 31, inclusive.

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

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

15 "§302L- School readiness program. (a) There is
16 established within the early learning system a school readiness
17 program to be administered by the executive office on early
18 learning. The school readiness program shall:

- 19 (1) Prepare children for school;
20 (2) Provide access to school readiness services that
21 address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic,
22 social, and emotional development; and



1 (3) Prioritize low- and moderate-income families.

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

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

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

12 (2) Underserved or at-risk children.

13 (c) Enrollment in the program shall be voluntary.

14 Families shall share in the costs of the program through a
15 copayment according to a sliding fee scale that is based on need
16 and through fulfillment of family participation requirements,
17 pursuant to rules adopted by the office. Children who are
18 enrolled in or eligible for public elementary education shall
19 not be eligible for the school readiness 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 to children across
2 the state. Eligible providers shall:

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

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

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

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

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

19 "**§26-12 Department of education.** The department of
20 education shall be headed by an executive board to be known as
21 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[7]; adult education[7];
5 school library services[7]; health education and instruction
6 (not including dental health treatment transferred to the
7 department of health) [7]; and such other programs as may be
8 established by law. This section shall not apply to the
9 executive office on early learning and programs under its
10 jurisdiction pursuant to chapter 302L.

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

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



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

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

18 Upon the termination of the contracts, the State or the
19 counties shall not enter into any library management contracts
20 with any private association; provided that in providing library
21 services, the board of education may enter into contracts



1 approved by the governor for the use of lands, buildings,
2 equipment, and facilities owned by any private association.

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

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

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



Report Title:

School Readiness Program

Description:

Establishes the School Readiness Program within the State's
Early Learning System. (HB862 HD1)

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

