

By the Committee on Commerce, Economic Opportunities, and Consumer Services; and Senator Garcia

310-2008-03

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to school readiness programs;
3 implementing s. 1(b) and (c), Art. IX of the
4 State Constitution; creating the voluntary
5 universal prekindergarten education program
6 within the Agency for Workforce Innovation;
7 providing for administration of the program by
8 the Florida Partnership for School Readiness
9 and the school readiness coalitions; limiting
10 the application of provisions relating to
11 school readiness programs; requiring the State
12 Board of Education to submit a report with
13 recommendations on the curriculum, design, and
14 standards of the voluntary universal
15 prekindergarten education program; directing
16 the Office of Program Policy Analysis and
17 Government Accountability and the Auditor
18 General to conduct audits and submit reports to
19 the Governor and Legislature; providing an
20 effective date.

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22 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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24 Section 1. Voluntary universal prekindergarten
25 education program.--
26 (1) There is created a voluntary universal
27 prekindergarten education program within the Agency for
28 Workforce Innovation. The program shall provide a high-quality
29 prekindergarten learning opportunity in the form of early
30 childhood development and education which is voluntary, of
31 high quality, delivered according to professionally accepted

1 standards, and free for every child in this state who is 4
2 years of age. The program must be organized, designed, and
3 delivered in accordance with Section 1(b) and (c), Article IX
4 of the State Constitution. The voluntary universal
5 prekindergarten education program shall be administered by the
6 Florida Partnership for School Readiness and the school
7 readiness coalitions. Except as otherwise expressly provided
8 by law, sections 411.01-411.011, Florida Statutes, do not
9 apply to the voluntary universal prekindergarten education
10 program.

11 (2) The State Board of Education shall conduct a study
12 on the curriculum, design, and standards for the voluntary
13 universal prekindergarten education program. By October 1,
14 2003, the State Board of Education shall submit a report to
15 the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the
16 House of Representatives, the director of the Agency for
17 Workforce Innovation, and the Florida Partnership for School
18 Readiness. The report must include the recommendations of the
19 board on each of the following program elements:

20 (a) Curriculum and standards.--Developmentally
21 appropriate curriculum and standards that provide children a
22 high-quality prekindergarten learning opportunity. These
23 curriculum and standards must be designed to:

- 24 1. Address and enhance each child's ability to make
25 age-appropriate progress;
- 26 2. Provide early childhood development of language and
27 cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and
28 moral capacities;
- 29 3. Provide education in basic skills and other
30 appropriate skills; and

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1 4. Deliver early childhood development and education
2 according to professionally accepted standards.

3 (b) High-quality learning opportunity.--Quality
4 standards that provide children a high-quality prekindergarten
5 learning opportunity. These quality standards must include
6 specific recommendations on the expected outcomes of the
7 voluntary universal prekindergarten education program.

8 (c) Quantity of instruction.--Standards for the
9 quantity of instruction to be provided as voluntary and free
10 for every child in the state who is 4 years of age. These
11 standards must include specific recommendations on each of the
12 following elements:

13 1. Hours per day; and

14 2. Days per year.

15 (d) Delivery system.--Standards for providers in order
16 to deliver children a high-quality prekindergarten learning
17 opportunity. These standards must include specific
18 recommendations on each of the following elements:

19 1. Appropriate range of settings, including both
20 public and private providers, with consideration of the
21 capacity in each available setting;

22 2. Licensing or regulatory requirements for providers;

23 3. Health and safety requirements for providers; and

24 4. Parental choice.

25 (e) Assessment and evaluation.--Methods for measuring
26 the performance of the voluntary universal prekindergarten
27 education program. These methods must include specific
28 recommendations on each of the following elements:

29 1. Assessment of age-appropriate progress for each
30 child;

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1 2. Evaluation of outcome measures for each provider in
2 each setting; and

3 3. Evaluation of school readiness coalitions.

4 (f) Funding.--Estimated cost per full-time-equivalent
5 child of the recommended curriculum, design, and standards.

6 This cost estimate must consider funding for each of the
7 board's recommendations on each of the program elements
8 described in this subsection.

9 (3) The report must also include the board's
10 recommendations of best practices to improve the outcomes of
11 school readiness coalitions and providers.

12 Section 2. (1) The Office of Program Policy Analysis
13 and Government Accountability shall conduct a performance
14 audit of the school readiness programs administered by the
15 Florida Partnership for School Readiness, the Agency for
16 Workforce Innovation, and the school readiness coalitions for
17 fiscal years 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and 2002-2003. The audit
18 shall reassess the implementation, efficiency, and outcomes of
19 the school readiness programs and shall examine the progress
20 achieved by the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and
21 the school readiness coalitions in response to the office's
22 findings and recommendations reported under section
23 411.01(10), Florida Statutes, as created by section 1, chapter
24 99-357, Laws of Florida. The office shall also:

25 (a) Monitor the study conducted by the State Board of
26 Education on the voluntary universal prekindergarten education
27 program;

28 (b) Evaluate the ability of the school readiness
29 system to effectively implement the voluntary universal
30 prekindergarten education program based upon the board's
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1 recommendations of curriculum, design, and standards for the
2 program; and

3 (c) Identify modifications to the school readiness
4 system necessary to effectively implement the voluntary
5 universal prekindergarten education program.

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7 A report of the audit's findings and recommendations shall be
8 submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and
9 the Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 15,
10 2004.

11 (2) The Auditor General shall conduct a financial and
12 operational audit of the school readiness programs
13 administered by the Florida Partnership for School Readiness,
14 the Agency for Workforce Innovation, and the school readiness
15 coalitions for fiscal years 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and
16 2002-2003. The Auditor General shall also examine compliance
17 with state and federal law and with rules adopted by the
18 Florida Partnership for School Readiness and shall review
19 implementation of the school readiness plans for compliance
20 with the approved plans. A report of the audit's findings and
21 recommendations shall be submitted to the Governor, the
22 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
23 Representatives by January 15, 2004.

24 Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
25 law.

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STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN
COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
Senate Bill 1334

The committee substitute replaces the original bill and implements Amendment No. 8 (Voluntary Universal Pre-Kindergarten Education), s. 1(b) and (c), Art. IX of the State Constitution; creates a new voluntary universal prekindergarten education program within the Agency for Workforce Innovation; specifies that the new program shall be administered by the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and the school readiness coalitions; requires the State Board of Education to conduct a study and submit a report on the curriculum, design, and standards for the new program; and requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability and the Auditor General to conduct audits and report findings and recommendations concerning the existing school readiness programs.