

SENATE FILE 2227
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DVORSKY, SHEARER, and
GRONSTAL

Passed Senate, Date _____ Passed House, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act providing for the establishment and funding of a
2 prekindergarten instruction program, and providing an
3 effective date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

SF 2227
EDUCATION

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1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 256.25 PREKINDERGARTEN
2 INSTRUCTION PROGRAM.

3 A prekindergarten instruction program is established to
4 provide four-year-old children with learning experiences to
5 enhance school readiness and develop social and preacademic
6 skills which shall increase their chances of success in
7 kindergarten and throughout subsequent educational
8 experiences. The goal of the program is to facilitate the
9 availability of a voluntary prekindergarten instruction
10 program on a no-cost basis for every four-year-old child in
11 participating school districts. The program shall be
12 administered by the department of education, as follows:

13 1. Children four years of age on September 1 of a school
14 budget year, whose parents or legal guardians are residents of
15 the state, shall be eligible to participate in the program.
16 The program shall be voluntary for both families and school
17 districts, and shall furnish prekindergarten instruction
18 pursuant to the regular school system calendar for the length
19 of a typical school day, as provided in section 256.7,
20 subsection 19, and section 279.10. Prekindergarten
21 instruction program services shall be offered at local public
22 school facilities, or by contractual arrangement with the
23 school district through private providers of preschool
24 services as provided in subsection 3.

25 2. The school readiness goals of the prekindergarten
26 instruction program shall be to provide a developmentally
27 appropriate preschool program emphasizing growth in language
28 and literacy, math concepts, science, arts, physical
29 development, and personal and social competence. The
30 department shall establish prekindergarten instruction
31 curriculum guidelines, sample instructional materials, and
32 furnish inspection and consultation services to ensure
33 compliance with program goals and requirements.
34 Prekindergarten instruction program service providers shall
35 coordinate with the department regarding specific curriculum

1 requirements and assessment practices. At a minimum,
2 providers shall be required to keep accurate attendance,
3 illness, and disciplinary records, document compliance with
4 curriculum requirements, and implement a progress monitoring
5 procedure subject to departmental approval.

6 3. A school district may submit an application to provide
7 prekindergarten instruction program services directly at a
8 public school facility in the school district, or by contract
9 with a private child care center for the provision of
10 services. An applicant shall furnish information relating to
11 a proposed prekindergarten instruction program service
12 delivery plan, the education and experience of school or
13 private child care center staff relating to the provision of
14 prekindergarten instruction, and a proposed budget.
15 Application forms and approval criteria shall be established
16 by the department by rule. A school district which proposes
17 to contract with a private child care center shall provide
18 documentation regarding the private child care center's
19 ability to comply with program requirements in the
20 application. A private child care center contracting with a
21 school district shall be a licensed child care center pursuant
22 to section 237A.2, or shall meet the requirements for a child
23 care program pursuant to section 279.49, and shall be required
24 to maintain an enrollment of at least four children who are
25 four years of age for every seven children enrolled at the
26 center.

27 4. Prekindergarten instruction program services offered by
28 a school district participating in the program shall be
29 available free of charge to parents or legal guardians seeking
30 to enroll four-year-old children in the program. A school
31 district which is participating in the program shall maintain
32 a list of school facilities and private child care centers
33 within the district offering prekindergarten program
34 instruction. The department shall establish by rule health
35 screening certification criteria, procedures for accommodation

1 of special needs children, and a permissible fee schedule for
2 the provision of meals and field trips.

3 5. A participant school district shall be eligible to
4 receive additional supplementary weighting pursuant to section
5 257.11, subsection 8. Amounts received by a school district,
6 or a private child care center contracting with a school
7 district, shall be in addition to, and shall not supplant, any
8 other source of funding relating to the provision of preschool
9 or child day care services, including amounts received for
10 programs and services for at-risk children.

11 6. School districts participating in the prekindergarten
12 instruction program shall annually submit a report to the
13 department regarding program status, observed successes and
14 problem areas, adequacy of funding, and additional information
15 as determined appropriate by the department. The department
16 shall compile a prekindergarten instruction program summary
17 report and submit the report to the general assembly by
18 January 1 each year.

19 Sec. 2. Section 257.11, Code 1999, is amended by adding
20 the following new subsection:

21 NEW SUBSECTION. 8. PREKINDERGARTEN INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS.
22 Pupils attending classes in a school district which is
23 participating in the prekindergarten instruction program
24 pursuant to section 256.25 for the budget year beginning July
25 1, 2000, and succeeding budget years, are assigned a
26 weighting, in addition to the weighting assigned in subsection
27 1, of five thousandths. Amounts received pursuant to the
28 additional weighting provided in this subsection shall be
29 utilized by school districts to furnish prekindergarten
30 instruction programs either in public school facilities, or
31 pursuant to contract in a private child care center licensed
32 pursuant to section 237A.2, or child care program as provided
33 in section 279.49.

34 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act, being deemed of
35 immediate importance, takes effect upon enactment.

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EXPLANATION

This bill provides for the establishment and funding of a prekindergarten instruction program. The bill provides that the purpose of the program shall be to provide four-year-old children with learning experiences to enhance school readiness and develop social and preacademic skills which shall increase their chances of success in kindergarten and throughout subsequent educational experiences. The bill provides that the program will be administered by the department of education, and shall facilitate the availability of a voluntary prekindergarten instruction program on a no-cost basis for every four-year-old child in participating school districts.

The bill provides that children who shall be four years of age on September 1 of a school budget year, whose parents or legal guardians are residents of the state, shall be eligible to participate in the program. The bill provides that the program shall furnish prekindergarten instruction pursuant to the regular school system calendar for the length of a typical school day, offered at local public school facilities or by contractual arrangement with the school district through private providers of preschool services.

The bill provides that the school readiness goals of the program shall be to provide a developmentally appropriate preschool program emphasizing growth in language and literacy, math concepts, science, arts, physical development, and personal and social competence. The bill provides that the department shall establish prekindergarten instruction curriculum guidelines, sample instructional materials, and furnish inspection and consultation services to ensure compliance with program goals and requirements.

The bill provides that a school district may submit an application to provide prekindergarten program services directly at a public school facility in the school district, or may contract with a private child care center for the

1 provision of services. The bill provides that a school
2 district which proposes to contract with a private child care
3 center shall provide documentation regarding the private child
4 care center's ability to comply with program requirements in
5 the application, and that the district shall also furnish
6 information relating to a proposed prekindergarten program
7 service delivery plan, the education and experience of school
8 or private child care center staff relating to the provision
9 of prekindergarten instruction, and a proposed budget. The
10 bill provides that application forms and approval criteria
11 shall be established by the department by rule. The bill
12 provides that a private child care center contracting with a
13 school district shall be a licensed child care center pursuant
14 to Code section 237A.2, or shall meet the requirements for a
15 child care program pursuant to Code section 279.49, and shall
16 be required to maintain an enrollment of at least four
17 children who are four years of age for every seven children
18 enrolled at the center.

19 The bill provides that prekindergarten program services
20 offered by a school district participating in the program
21 shall be available free of charge to parents or legal
22 guardians seeking to enroll four-year-old children in the
23 program, and that a school district which is participating in
24 the program shall maintain a list of school facilities and
25 private child care centers within the district offering
26 prekindergarten program instruction.

27 The bill provides that a participant school district shall
28 be eligible to receive additional supplementary weighting
29 equal to .005 per pupil attending classes in the school
30 district pursuant to Code section 257.11, subsection 8, as
31 created in the bill. The bill further provides that amounts
32 received by a school district, or a private child care center
33 contracting with a school district, shall be in addition to,
34 and shall not supplant, any other source of funding relating
35 to the provision of preschool or child day care services,

1 including amounts received for programs and services for at-
2 risk children. The bill provides that school districts
3 participating in the prekindergarten instruction program shall
4 annually submit a report to the department regarding program
5 status, observed successes and problem areas, adequacy of
6 funding, and additional information as determined appropriate
7 by the department, and that the department shall compile a
8 prekindergarten instruction program summary report and submit
9 the report to the general assembly by January 1 each year.

10 The bill takes effect upon enactment.

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