

**House File 2621 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 2621

BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 2460)

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 2048)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to the statewide preschool program by modifying  
2 provisions relating to eligibility, funding, and compulsory  
3 attendance and including applicability provisions.  
4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 135.173A, subsection 4, paragraph p,  
2 Code 2020, is amended to read as follows:

3 *p.* One person who is part of a local program implementing  
4 the statewide preschool program for ~~four-year-old~~ young  
5 children under **chapter 256C**.

6 Sec. 2. Section 135.173A, subsection 6, paragraph f, Code  
7 2020, is amended to read as follows:

8 *f.* Make recommendations for improving collaborations  
9 between the child care programs involving the department of  
10 human services and programs supporting the education and  
11 development of young children including but not limited to the  
12 federal head start program; the statewide preschool program  
13 for ~~four-year-old~~ young children; and the early childhood,  
14 at-risk, and other early education programs administered by the  
15 department of education.

16 Sec. 3. Section 256C.1, subsections 1 and 4, Code 2020, are  
17 amended to read as follows:

18 1. "*Approved local program*" means a school district's  
19 program for ~~four-year-old~~ young children approved by the  
20 department of education to provide high quality preschool  
21 instruction.

22 4. "*Preschool program*" means the statewide preschool program  
23 for ~~four-year-old~~ young children created in accordance with  
24 this chapter.

25 Sec. 4. Section 256C.2, Code 2020, is amended to read as  
26 follows:

27 **256C.2 Statewide preschool program for ~~four-year-old~~ young**  
28 **children — purpose.**

29 1. A statewide preschool program for ~~four-year-old~~ young  
30 children is established. The purpose of the preschool program  
31 is to provide an opportunity for all young children in the  
32 state to enter school ready to learn by expanding voluntary  
33 access to quality preschool curricula ~~for all children who are~~  
34 ~~four-years-old~~.

35 2. The state board shall adopt rules in accordance with

1 chapter 17A as necessary to implement the preschool program as  
2 provided in [this chapter](#).

3 Sec. 5. Section 256C.3, subsection 1, paragraphs a and b,  
4 Code 2020, are amended to read as follows:

5 a. A child who is a resident of Iowa and who is four  
6 years of age on or before September 15 of a school year shall  
7 be eligible to enroll in the preschool program under this  
8 chapter. For school budget years beginning July 1, 2021, July  
9 1, 2022, and July 1, 2023, a child who is a resident of Iowa  
10 and who reaches five years of age on or after March 15 but on  
11 or before September 15 of the calendar year during which the  
12 school year begins shall be eligible to enroll in the preschool  
13 program under this chapter if the school district elects to  
14 enroll children who are five years of age for the three-year  
15 period. For school districts that elect to enroll children  
16 who are five years of age during such three-year period, a  
17 child who enrolled as a four-year-old may enroll again as a  
18 five-year-old. However, if insufficient space is available in  
19 a preschool program for all eligible children, priority for  
20 enrollment shall be given to children who are four years of age  
21 on or before September 15 of a school year. If such a child is  
22 enrolled under [this chapter](#), the child shall be considered to  
23 be of compulsory attendance age as provided in section 299.1A,  
24 subsection 3.

25 b. If space and funding are available, including funding  
26 from another school district account or fund from which  
27 preschool program expenditures are authorized by law, a school  
28 district approved to participate in the preschool program  
29 may enroll and pay the cost of attendance for a ~~younger or~~  
30 ~~elder~~ child in the preschool program who does not satisfy the  
31 requirements under paragraph "a"; however, the child shall not  
32 be counted for state funding purposes.

33 Sec. 6. Section 256C.3, subsection 4, paragraphs b and c,  
34 Code 2020, are amended to read as follows:

35 b. Subject to implementation of [chapter 28E](#) agreements

1 between a school district and community-based providers of  
2 services to four-year-old children and eligible five-year-old  
3 children, a four-year-old child or eligible five-year-old child  
4 who is enrolled in a child care center or child development  
5 home licensed or registered under [chapter 237A](#), or in an  
6 existing public or private preschool program, shall be eligible  
7 for services provided by the school district's local preschool  
8 program.

9 c. A school district shall participate in data collection  
10 and performance measurement processes and reporting as defined  
11 by rule. In addition to preschool program data collection,  
12 the school district data collected by the department shall  
13 include data related to the number and birth month and year  
14 of pupils who enroll in kindergarten, including all-day,  
15 half-day, or transitional kindergarten programs, for more  
16 than one school year and whether those pupils previously or  
17 concurrently enrolled in the school district's approved local  
18 program. To the extent feasible, the data reporting relating  
19 to kindergarten program enrollment shall be done in a manner  
20 so as to avoid duplication of individual pupil data within  
21 multiple categories.

22 Sec. 7. Section 256C.3, subsection 4, Code 2020, is amended  
23 by adding the following new paragraph:

24 NEW PARAGRAPH. e. For budget years beginning on or after  
25 July 1, 2021, each approved local program shall provide  
26 consultation services for parents or guardians of children  
27 enrolled in the approved local program and parents or guardians  
28 of children eligible to enroll in the approved local program to  
29 assist parents or guardians in assessing the child's readiness  
30 for enrollment in kindergarten or in a preschool program, as  
31 applicable.

32 Sec. 8. Section 256C.4, subsection 2, Code 2020, is amended  
33 to read as follows:

34 2. *Eligible student enrollment.*

35 a. To be included as an eligible student in the enrollment

1 count of the preschool programming provided by a school  
2 district approved to participate in the preschool program, a  
3 child must ~~be four years of~~ satisfy the age by September 15  
4 requirements of section 256C.3, subsection 1, paragraph "a" in  
5 the base year and be attending the school district's approved  
6 local program.

7     *b.* The enrollment count of eligible students shall not  
8 include a child who is included in the enrollment count  
9 determined under [section 257.6](#) or a child who is served by  
10 a program already receiving state or federal funds for the  
11 purpose of the provision of four-year-old or five-year-old  
12 preschool programming while the child is being served by the  
13 program. Such preschool programming includes but is not  
14 limited to child development assistance programs provided under  
15 chapter 256A, special education programs provided under section  
16 256B.9, school ready children grant programs and other programs  
17 provided under [chapter 256I](#), and federal head start programs  
18 and the services funded by Tit. I of the federal Elementary and  
19 Secondary Education Act of 1965.

20     Sec. 9. Section 298A.2, subsection 2, paragraph a,  
21 subparagraph (1), Code 2020, is amended to read as follows:

22     (1) An approved local program under the statewide preschool  
23 program for ~~four-year-old~~ young children under [chapter 256C](#).

24     Sec. 10. Section 298A.2, subsection 2, paragraph c,  
25 subparagraph (1), Code 2020, is amended to read as follows:

26     (1) Start-up costs for an approved local program under the  
27 statewide preschool program for ~~four-year-old~~ young children  
28 under [chapter 256C](#).

29     Sec. 11. Section 299.1A, subsection 3, Code 2020, is amended  
30 to read as follows:

31     3. A child who has reached the age of four ~~by September 15~~  
32 or five and who is enrolled in the statewide preschool program  
33 under [chapter 256C](#) shall be considered to be of compulsory  
34 attendance age unless the parent or guardian of the child  
35 submits written notice to the school district implementing the

1 program of the parent's or guardian's intent to remove the  
2 child from enrollment in the preschool program.

3 Sec. 12. APPLICABILITY. This Act applies to school budget  
4 years beginning on or after July 1, 2021.

5 EXPLANATION

6 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
7 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

8 The statewide preschool program for four-year-old children  
9 under Code chapter 256C provides that a child who is a resident  
10 of Iowa and is four years of age on or before September 15 of  
11 a school year shall be eligible to enroll in the preschool  
12 program. Additionally, to be included as an eligible student  
13 in the enrollment count of the preschool programming for  
14 state funding purposes, a child must be four years of age  
15 by September 15 in the base year and attending the school  
16 district's approved local program.

17 For school budget years beginning July 1, 2021, July 1,  
18 2022, and July 1, 2023, this bill expands the eligibility and  
19 state funding provisions of the statewide preschool program for  
20 four-year-old children under Code chapter 256C to also include  
21 five-year-old children who reach the age of five on or after  
22 March 15 but on or before September 15 of the calendar year  
23 during which the school year begins if the school district  
24 elects to enroll such children. For school districts that  
25 elect to enroll children who are five years of age during such  
26 three-year period, a child who enrolled as a four-year-old may  
27 enroll again as a five-year-old. However, if insufficient  
28 space is available in a preschool program for all eligible  
29 children, priority for enrollment shall be given to children  
30 who are four years of age on or before September 15 of a school  
31 year.

32 References to four-year-old children in the program named in  
33 Code chapter 256C and in related Code provisions are changed  
34 to "young children" or expanded to also refer to eligible  
35 five-year-old children and Code section 299.1A relating to

1 compulsory education is also modified to reflect changes made  
2 in the bill.

3     The bill also requires each approved local program to  
4 provide consultation services for parents or guardians of  
5 children enrolled in the approved local program and parents or  
6 guardians of children eligible to enroll in the approved local  
7 program to assist parents or guardians in assessing the child's  
8 readiness for enrollment in kindergarten or in a preschool  
9 program, as applicable.

10     The bill modifies provisions relating to school district  
11 participation in data collection and performance measurement  
12 processes under the statewide preschool program.

13     The bill applies to school budget years beginning on or after  
14 July 1, 2021.