

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 47

Introduced by Assembly Member McCarty

December 1, 2014

An act to add and repeal Section 8235.1 of the Education Code, relating to preschool.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 47, as introduced, McCarty. State preschool program: report.

Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to administer all California state preschool programs, which include part-day age and developmentally appropriate programs for 3- and 4-year-old children, as provided. Existing law provides that 3- and 4-year-old children are eligible for the state part-day preschool program if the family meets one of several eligibility requirements, including income eligibility.

This bill would require the Department of Education to report to the Legislature and Department of Finance, by June 1, 2016, a plan for expanding the state preschool program to all eligible low-income children who do not have access to one year of state preschool or transitional kindergarten. The bill would require the report to contain an analysis of the need for new facilities for the state preschool program in order to provide access to all eligible children.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the
2 Preschool for All Act of 2015.

3 SEC. 2. The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the
4 following:

5 (a) Recent reforms such as the common core state standards
6 and the local control funding formula establish greater quality and
7 equity in California's public K–12 education system.

8 (b) None of these reforms, however, address the reality that the
9 achievement gap is present well before children first step through
10 the kindergarten classroom door.

11 (c) Recent research shows that by the age of two, low-income
12 children are six months behind in language development relative
13 to their higher income peers. By age five, low-income children are
14 more than two years behind in language development.

15 (d) Research shows that California children with the largest
16 gaps in school readiness and achievement are the least likely to
17 participate in any preschool and the least likely to attend
18 high-quality programs.

19 (e) Only one-half of California low-income preschoolers receive
20 state preschool or federal Head Start services, and only one-quarter
21 of all children attend transitional kindergarten.

22 (f) Children who are not reading proficiently by the end of 3rd
23 grade are four times more likely to not graduate from high school
24 on time.

25 (g) Only 48 percent of California 3rd graders test proficient or
26 better in English-language arts.

27 (h) More than 100 studies nationally have shown that
28 high-quality preschool significantly improves children's school
29 readiness and school performance.

30 (i) Numerous longitudinal studies show that high-quality
31 preschool decreases grade retention and special education
32 placements, and increases high school graduation rates, college
33 enrollment, and earnings as adults as well as decreases costs in
34 criminal justice and welfare.

35 (j) In the 2014–15 annual Budget Act, the Legislature and
36 Governor committed to providing all low-income children with at
37 least one year of state preschool or transitional kindergarten.

1 (k) An independent research analysis of over 20 preschool
2 programs demonstrated that quality preschool provides a return
3 of \$15,000 for every child served.

4 (l) If California were to invest in high-quality preschool, the
5 savings in the prison system alone are estimated to be \$1.1 billion
6 a year due to the reduction in prison population by 13,000.

7 SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature that both of the
8 following occur:

9 (a) All low-income children have access to either a state
10 preschool program or a transitional kindergarten.

11 (b) Funds are allocated to expand the state preschool program
12 to provide full day, full year preschool for all eligible low-income
13 children who otherwise would not be served in either state
14 preschool or transitional kindergarten.

15 SEC. 4. Section 8235.1 is added to the Education Code, to
16 read:

17 8235.1. (a) By June 1, 2016, the department shall report to the
18 Legislature and the Department of Finance a plan for expanding
19 the state preschool program to all eligible low-income children
20 who do not have access to one year of the preschool program or
21 a transitional kindergarten program.

22 (b) The department shall include in the report required pursuant
23 to subdivision (a) an analysis of the need for new facilities for the
24 state preschool program in order to provide access to all eligible
25 children.

26 (c) (1) The report required to be submitted to the Legislature
27 pursuant to this section shall be submitted in compliance with
28 Section 9795 of the Government Code.

29 (2) This section is inoperative on June 1, 2020, pursuant to
30 Section 10231.5 of the Government Code, and as of January 1,
31 2021 is repealed.