

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 1, 2015

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 6, 2015

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 22, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 47

**Introduced by Assembly Member McCarty
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bonta and Eduardo Garcia)**

December 1, 2014

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 47, as amended, McCarty. State preschool program.

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, on or before January 1, 2017, all eligible children to have access to the state preschool program the year before they enter kindergarten, if their parents wish to enroll them. ~~The bill would state that it is the intent of the Legislature to provide them, contingent upon the appropriation of sufficient funding in the annual Budget Act for this purpose.~~

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 program and the least likely to attend
18 high-quality programs.

19 (e) Tens of thousands of eligible children do not attend state
20 preschool or federal Head Start services, and only one-quarter of
21 all four-year-old children are eligible to attend transitional
22 kindergarten.

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

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

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

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

36 (j) Research over the last decade has shown that early learning
37 in two or more languages increases children's ability to think

1 flexibly and builds skills that are increasingly critical to later
2 success in college and career.

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

6 (l) An independent research analysis of over 20 preschool
7 programs demonstrated that quality preschool provides a return
8 of \$15,000 for every child served.

9 (m) If California were to invest in high-quality preschool, the
10 overall savings in prison system expenditures alone are estimated
11 to be \$1.1 billion a year due to the reduction in prison population
12 by 13,000.

13 SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature that both of the
14 following occur:

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

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

21 SEC. 4. Section 8235.1 is added to the Education Code, to
22 read:

23 8235.1. On or before January 1, 2017, all eligible children,
24 pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 8263, shall have access to
25 the state preschool program the year before they enter kindergarten,
26 if their parents wish to enroll them. ~~It is the intent of the Legislature~~
27 ~~to provide them, contingent upon the appropriation of~~ sufficient
28 funding in the annual Budget Act for this purpose.