

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 23
By: Zaffirini
Education
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current state law, enacted by S.B. 76 during the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, allows certain agencies to work with the State Center for Early Childhood Education to integrate and coordinate pre-kindergarten, Head Start, and after school child care programs, and to streamline eligibility and registration procedures for such programs. In addition, S.B. 76 authorized the coordination of agencies and service providers in a coordination of resources demonstration project. Preliminary findings from the 11 Texas Early Education Model (TEEM) demonstration projects established by S.B. 76 show substantial and often significant growth for children in many areas of literacy and language within two to three months.

S.B. 23 builds on the S.B. 76 integration model by requiring the commissioner of education to coordinate early childhood education services and by authorizing the commissioner to establish financial incentives for early childhood education providers that provide coordinated services. In addition, S.B. 23 authorizes the development of integration demonstration projects by an early childhood education program provider.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 (Section 29.1561, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 29.1561, Education Code, by adding Subsection (c), to authorize the commissioner of education by rule to establish a program to provide incentives to providers of early childhood care and education programs that, to the greatest extent practicable, provide coordinated services under Section 29.158(c) (Coordination of Services).

SECTION 2. Amends Section 29.160, Education Code, by amending Subsection (c) and adding Subsections (c-1) and (c-2), as follows:

(c) Authorizes certain educational institutions to develop one or more coordination-of-resources demonstration projects under which government-funded child care and certain early education services are operated in a coordinated and integrated manner. Requires the approval of a project under this subsection to be made contingent on development of a memorandum of understanding regarding the child-care and early education coordination and integration that adheres to certain criteria.

(c-1) Requires the memorandum of understanding required under Subsection (c) to provide for certain elements.

(c-2) Requires a demonstration project established under Subsection (c) to include a program evaluation component that, in addition to assessing child-care and early education outcomes for young children, demonstrates certain outcomes.

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter E, Chapter 29, Education Code, by adding Section 29.161, as follows:

Sec. 29.161. SCHOOL READINESS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM. (a) Requires the State Center for Early Childhood Development, in conjunction with the P-16 Council

(council) established under Section 61.077 (Joint Advisory Committee), to develop and adopt a school readiness certification system for use in certifying the effectiveness of certain programs in preparing children for kindergarten. Requires the system to be made available on a voluntary basis to program providers seeking to obtain certification as evidence of the quality of the program provided.

(b) Requires the center, in developing and adopting the system, to seek the active participation of all interested stakeholders, including parents and program providers.

(c) Requires the system to meet certain standards.

SECTION 4. Reenacts and amends Section 61.077(a), Education Code, as amended by Chapters 61, 818, and 820, Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, to require the council, in conjunction with the State Center for Early Childhood Development, to also develop and adopt a school readiness certification system as required by Section 29.161.

SECTION 5. Requires the State Center for Early Childhood Development to adopt the school readiness certification system required by Section 29.161, Education Code, as added by this Act, no later than September 1, 2006.

SECTION 6. Effective date: September 1, 2005.