

1-1 By: Zaffirini, Madla S.B. No. 23  
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed November 8, 2004; January 31, 2005,  
1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on Education;  
1-4 March 21, 2005, reported adversely, with favorable Committee  
1-5 Substitute by the following vote: Yeas 7, Nays 1; March 21, 2005,  
1-6 sent to printer.)

1-7 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 23 By: Zaffirini

1-8 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
1-9 AN ACT

1-10 relating to subsidized child-care services and early childhood care  
1-11 and education program coordination.

1-12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-13 Section 1. Section 29.1561, Education Code, is amended by  
1-14 adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

1-15 (c) The commissioner by rule may establish a program to  
1-16 award grants to providers of early childhood care and education  
1-17 programs that, to the greatest extent practicable, provide  
1-18 coordinated services authorized under Section 29.158(c).

1-19 SECTION 2. Section 29.160, Education Code, is amended by  
1-20 amending Subsection (c) and adding Subsections (c-1) and (c-2) to  
1-21 read as follows:

1-22 (c) A school district, regional education service center,  
1-23 institution of higher education, local government, local workforce  
1-24 development board, or community organization may develop one or  
1-25 more coordination-of-resources demonstration projects under which  
1-26 government-funded child-care and early education services,  
1-27 including Head Start and Early Head Start, prekindergarten, and  
1-28 after-school child-care program services, child-care services  
1-29 provided by nonprofit or for-profit entities, and faith-based  
1-30 child-care programs, are operated in a coordinated and integrated  
1-31 manner. An entity that develops a proposed demonstration project  
1-32 under this subsection must obtain approval of the project from the  
1-33 state agency or agencies with regulatory jurisdiction over the  
1-34 subject matter involved in the project. Approval of a project under  
1-35 this subsection must be made contingent on development of a  
1-36 memorandum of understanding regarding the child-care and early  
1-37 education coordination and integration that is:

1-38 (1) entered into by each entity participating in the  
1-39 project;

1-40 (2) certified by the State Center for Early Childhood  
1-41 Development as meeting any standards developed under Section  
1-42 29.155(g); and

1-43 (3) consistent with the applicable provisions of this  
1-44 section and applicable laws and regulations in a manner that at a  
1-45 minimum maintains existing child-care and early education program  
1-46 requirements and does not waive any existing health and safety  
1-47 standards.

1-48 (c-1) The memorandum of understanding required under  
1-49 Subsection (c) shall provide for:

1-50 (1) equal decision-making authority for entities  
1-51 participating in the project;

1-52 (2) uniform eligibility criteria for the project to  
1-53 the extent authorized by state and federal law;

1-54 (3) development of streamlined enrollment procedures  
1-55 and simplified forms for children eligible for services under the  
1-56 project;

1-57 (4) strategies for the colocation and management of  
1-58 staff and for facilitation of effective communication among staff  
1-59 members;

1-60 (5) alignment and coordination of program calendars;

1-61 (6) delineation of responsibilities for the provision  
1-62 of instructional supplies and materials and food services;

1-63 (7) development and implementation of a system by

2-1 which eligible children are referred for services among the  
2-2 participating entities in a manner that complies with applicable  
2-3 laws and regulations;

2-4 (8) periodic meetings of the participating entities to  
2-5 address concerns relating to the administration and operation of  
2-6 the project; and

2-7 (9) periodic meetings of the participating entities to  
2-8 address common standards for the professional development of  
2-9 program staff and to create opportunities to ensure that local  
2-10 communities have effective program staff.

2-11 (c-2) A demonstration project established under  
2-12 Subsection (c) must include a program evaluation component that, in  
2-13 addition to assessing child-care and early education outcomes for  
2-14 young children, demonstrates:

2-15 (1) the extent to which program quality has been  
2-16 enhanced;

2-17 (2) the extent to which the number of children being  
2-18 served by full-day, full-year programs has increased;

2-19 (3) the extent to which professional development  
2-20 training or activities engaged in by program staff has increased;  
2-21 and

2-22 (4) that there has been no weakening of standards or  
2-23 diminishment of services.

2-24 SECTION 3. Subchapter E, Chapter 29, Education Code, is  
2-25 amended by adding Section 29.161 to read as follows:

2-26 Sec. 29.161. SCHOOL READINESS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM.

2-27 (a) The State Center for Early Childhood Development, in  
2-28 conjunction with the P-16 Council established under Section 61.077,  
2-29 shall develop and adopt a school readiness certification system for  
2-30 use in certifying the effectiveness of prekindergarten programs,  
2-31 Head Start and Early Head Start programs, government-subsidized  
2-32 child-care programs provided by nonprofit or for-profit entities,  
2-33 government-subsidized faith-based child-care programs, and other  
2-34 government-subsidized child-care programs in preparing children  
2-35 for kindergarten. The system shall be made available on a voluntary  
2-36 basis to program providers seeking to obtain certification as  
2-37 evidence of the quality of the program provided.

2-38 (b) In developing and adopting the system, the center shall  
2-39 seek the active participation of all interested stakeholders,  
2-40 including parents and program providers.

2-41 (c) The system must:

2-42 (1) be reflective of research in the field of early  
2-43 childhood care and education;

2-44 (2) be well-grounded in the cognitive, social, and  
2-45 emotional development of young children; and

2-46 (3) apply a common set of criteria to each program  
2-47 provider seeking certification, regardless of the type of program  
2-48 or source of program funding.

2-49 SECTION 4. Subsection (a), Section 61.077, Education Code,  
2-50 as amended by Chapters 61, 818, and 820, Acts of the 78th  
2-51 Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, is reenacted and amended to  
2-52 read as follows:

2-53 (a) The P-16 Council shall advise the Texas Higher Education  
2-54 Coordinating Board and the State Board of Education in coordinating  
2-55 postsecondary career and technology activities, career and  
2-56 technology teacher education programs offered or proposed to be  
2-57 offered in the colleges and universities of this state, and other  
2-58 relevant matters, including those listed in Section 61.076. The  
2-59 council, in conjunction with the State Center for Early Childhood  
2-60 Development, shall also develop and adopt a school readiness  
2-61 certification system as required by Section 29.161.

2-62 SECTION 5. The State Center for Early Childhood Development  
2-63 shall adopt the school readiness certification system required by  
2-64 Section 29.161, Education Code, as added by this Act, not later than  
2-65 September 1, 2006.

2-66 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.

2-67 \* \* \* \* \*