

By: Deshotel

H.B. No. 2417

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to measures to ensure quality prekindergarten programs offered by school districts.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 29.1532, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsections (d), (e), (f), (g), and (h) to read as follows:

(b) If a school district contracts with a private entity for the operation of the district's prekindergarten program, the program must at a minimum comply with the applicable child-care licensing standards adopted by the Department of Family and Protective [and Regulatory] Services under Section 42.042, Human Resources Code. A private entity is eligible to contract with the district if the entity is:

(1) a Texas Rising Star Program provider with a three-star certification or higher; or

(2) able to satisfy the agency's prekindergarten guidelines.

(d) A school district shall implement in the district's prekindergarten program observation-based assessments and use the assessment results to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and to modify instruction methods used in the program.

(e) A school district shall select and implement instruction methods and academic goals based on prekindergarten

1 guidelines established by the agency and the Texas Rising Star
2 Program or another nationally recognized accreditation early
3 childhood education program.

4 (f) Each teacher for a prekindergarten program class must:

5 (1) be certified under Subchapter B, Chapter 21; and

6 (2) have been awarded or be working towards a Child
7 Development Associate (CDA) credential.

8 (g) Each prekindergarten class must have at least one
9 teacher qualified under Subsection (f). A school district must
10 maintain an average ratio in a prekindergarten class of not less
11 than one qualified teacher, paraprofessional, or educational aide
12 for each 10 students.

13 (h) A school district shall require that 25 percent of the
14 paraprofessionals or educational aids who are included in the
15 student to instructor ratio required under Subsection (g) have been
16 awarded or are actively working towards an associate's degree.
17 This subsection does not apply to a paraprofessional or educational
18 aide whose duties consist of only parental involvement activities
19 or translation services.

20 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2016-2017
21 school year.

22 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
23 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
24 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
25 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
26 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.