

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 725
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Education
5/3/2021
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current law allows children who are or who ever have been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to qualify for free prekindergarten. Children who were in foster care in another state and now reside in Texas, however, do not qualify for free pre-k. Foster children already struggle academically, and missing the developmental benefits of pre-k would increase the risks of lower academic achievement and decreased school completion.

H.B. 725 would provide access to quality pre-k to children who have been part of the foster system, regardless of the state, and set them up to be successful Texans. Although this change would increase the number of eligible students for prekindergarten, this number is not anticipated to be large enough to have a significant fiscal impact.

H.B. 725 amends current law relating to the eligibility of certain children who are or were in foster care for free prekindergarten programs in public schools.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Provides that this Act may be cited as Jace's Law.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 29.153(b), Education Code, as follows:

(b) Provides that a child is eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten class under Section 29.153 (Free Prekindergarten for Certain Children) if the child is at least three years of age and meets certain criteria, including if the child is or ever has been in foster care in another state or territory, if the child resides in Texas. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.