
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: SCR 125
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Consultant: Olgalilia Ramirez
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Fiscal: No

Subject: Kindergarten readiness assessment tool

SUMMARY

This resolution resolves that the Legislature will work towards the adoption of a statewide, developmentally appropriate kindergarten readiness assessment tool.

BACKGROUND

Existing law requires:

- 1) The State Department of Education to develop prekindergarten learning development guidelines in accordance with specified criteria, and requires the guidelines for focus on preparing four and five-year old children for kindergarten. (Education Code § 8203.3)
- 2) The Superintendent of Public Instruction to ensure that all contracts for child care and development programs include a requirement that each public or private provider maintain a developmental profile to appropriately identify the emotional, social, physical, and cognitive growth of each child in order to promote the child's success in the public schools. (EC § 8203.3)
- 3) A state-funded preschool or infant/toddler program, when a child will be transferring to a local public school, to provide the parent with information from the previous year deemed beneficial to the student and the public school teacher, including development issues, social interaction abilities, health background, and diagnostic assessment. (EC § 8282)

ANALYSIS

This resolution resolves that the Legislature will work towards the adoption of a statewide, developmentally appropriate kindergarten readiness assessment tool to assess the readiness of children entering transitional kindergarten and kindergarten. Specifically, this resolution:

- 1) States that:
 - a) Children entering kindergarten who have the physical and motor development, social and emotional skills, language development and

cognitive development to be active and engaged learners are more likely to meet expectations of California state standards by grade 3.

- b) Readiness assessments are a multidimensional measure of a child's developing abilities upon entering transitional kindergarten and kindergarten.
 - c) A kindergarten readiness assessment should measure the range of developmental domains, including language, problem solving, self-regulation, interpersonal skills, fine and gross motor skills, and disposition towards learning.
 - d) Without consistent widespread use of a valid and reliable readiness assessment tool that measures a child's learning and development holistically, the state currently has no meaningful way to gauge the diverse and changing needs of its youngest learners.
 - e) Federal leaders are increasingly seeking to invest in states that are gather and use comprehensive data to build and drive their early childhood systems.
 - f) A statewide kindergarten readiness tool will ensure consistent assessment to of readiness through the state and will provide critical data to guide planning and resource allocation.
- 2) Resolves that the Legislature will work towards the adoption of a statewide, developmentally appropriate kindergarten readiness assessment tool to assess the readiness of children entering transitional kindergarten and kindergarten.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "Schools that coordinate between preschool and kindergarten and provide transitional kindergarten help kids build the skills needed to learn, thrive and succeed. Kindergarten readiness tools help coordinate the transition from preschool. Currently, however, California isn't one of the 29 states consistently collecting readiness data. When California schools do assess the readiness of kindergartners, they rarely capture information on social-emotional development. This is problematic because research shows the connection between social-emotional readiness and long-term success. California must work to improve its preschool and transitional kindergarten, and increase kindergarten readiness so all students get a strong start."
- 2) ***Existing school readiness assessment tool.*** The California Department of Education developed the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) as a formative assessment instrument to be used to inform instruction and program development. The DRDP is used in state subsidized child care and preschool settings as an observation tool; it is not a test. Arguably, the DRDP measures the developmental progress of individual children or students at a given point in time, but is not necessarily a tool for determining whether or not a child is ready to enter kindergarten. This resolution seeks the adoption of a statewide,

developmentally appropriate kindergarten readiness assessment tool to assess the readiness of children entering transitional kindergarten and kindergarten.

- 3) **Related legislation.** AB 2410 (Bonta) requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop prekindergarten learning development guidelines that focus on preparing four- and five-year-old children for kindergarten, establishes the California Committee for Kindergarten Readiness, and requires that committee to submit to the State Board of Education a kindergarten readiness definition that has clear benchmarks for skills that are predictive of later success in academics and social-emotional and executive functioning skills as evidenced by current research. AB 2410 is scheduled to be heard in the Assembly Education Committee on April 20.
- 4) **Prior legislation.** AB 2553 (Brownley, 2010) established guidelines for the development of a voluntary statewide kindergarten readiness data collection tool or tools. AB 2553 was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors
Children Now
Early Edge California
First 5 Association of California

OPPOSITION

None received.

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