

Early Childhood Education & the 87th Session

children at Risk



Pre-Kindergarten Partnerships

Increase Child Care Capacity & Ensure Effective Use of Taxpayer Dollars

Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Partnerships are collaborative efforts between the public and private sector in which a public institution contracts with a privately funded child care center to provide additional seats for Pre-K children. In the 86th Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature passed HB 3 which provides full-day Pre-K to all eligible 4-year-old children.[i] Child care providers often use income earned from the 4-year-old children to offset losses resulting from providing care to infants and toddlers, which require lower ratios of educators to children per Texas law. Fewer 4-year-old children enrolled in child care settings reduces this critical source of income. Fortunately, HB 3 requires school districts to explore partnering with high-quality child care providers to offer Pre-K programming before constructing a new classroom space or submitting a waiver. These Pre-K Partnerships involve coordination among child care providers and school districts to provide Pre-K in a child care center or in a public school building.

Private child care centers have the potential to receive more funding with increased enrollment, which supports the retention of qualified educators and higher percentages of kindergarten readiness. In Texas, since the children eligible for public Pre-K are often eligible for subsidized child care assistance provided by the Texas Workforce Commission, Pre-K Partnerships allow districts and child care providers to access combined funding that is mutually beneficial and improves use of public funds. However, according to a recent CHILDREN AT RISK study, only a third of the Local Workforce Development Board members interviewed said they knew of Pre-K Partnerships in their area, and few were involved in establishing those cost-saving relationships.



POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Amend Texas law to require the Texas Education Agency to collect the child care providers operational ID number during Pre-K Partnership agreements to ensure the accountable and effective use of taxpayer dollars.

Currently, there is little to no information about providers and school districts that have formed Pre-K Partnerships, and school districts and child care providers have been hesitant to form Pre-K Partnerships. Current legislation does not mandate Texas Education Agency to report to Texas Workforce Committee on which independent school districts formed public/private partnerships with child care providers.



Requiring Texas Education Agency to report the provider operational ID will provide information about the type and location of partnerships, the number of children being served, and remaining barriers to making public/private Pre-K Partnerships successful. These data will also allow agencies to identify effective strategies for creating public/private Pre-K Partnerships and develop incentives for school districts and child care providers to enter into cost-saving partnerships.



[i] H.B. 3, 2019 Leg 86th Sess. (Tex. 2019).

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The following organizations and individuals are signed on in support.

Austin/Travis County Success By 6 Coalition

Brighton Center

Catholic Charities of Dallas

CHILDREN AT RISK

Circle Up, United Methodist Women

CitySquare

Commit Partnership

Dallas Early Education Alliance

Dillon Joyce Ltd

Dominican Sisters of Houston

Early Learning Alliance

Early Matters Dallas

Educational First Steps

Family Association of San Antonio, Inc.

Hancock Professional Development Resources &
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Ivy Kids - Hobbs

Kaleidoscope Child Development Center, Inc.

Kids Kountry Learning Center

Kids R Kids #5 Texas

Kids R Kids Learning Academy Westpointe

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Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

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CHILDREN AT RISK

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