

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Authors: Peterson and others

Subject: Early Childhood Program for At-Risk Four-Year-Olds

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Overview

This bill creates an early childhood education program for at-risk four-year-olds and creates a levy for the program.

Section

1 Early childhood program for at-risk four-year-olds. Amends § 124D.19, by adding subd. 15. Paragraph (a) allows school boards to offer, as part of a community education program, an early childhood program for at-risk four-year-olds who are at least four years of age by September 1 of the program year, not yet enrolled in kindergarten, and who meet certain other criteria.

Paragraph (b) requires school boards to employ necessary licensed teachers for its early childhood program for at-risk four-year-olds. Allows the Board of Teaching to grant an applicant certain variances. Requires an emphasis to be placed on ongoing professional development, focusing on specified areas.

Paragraph (c) contains programmatic requirements related to the child-to-adult ratio, maximum class size, and number of hours of class time per year.

Paragraph (d) requires a particular emphasis on scientifically researched literacy curriculum to be a component of the program.

Paragraph (e) requires home visits by program staff and parent education in early literacy activities to be part of the program.

Paragraph (f) requires programs to submit to the department a biennial plan describing how the program addresses program components and assessments. Requires the department to approve a district's plan for this program before the district receives state aid for the program.

Paragraph (g) contains program requirements related to screening and assessing children.

Paragraph (h) makes districts eligible, beginning in fiscal year 2013, to levy for at-risk four-year-olds when an approved and current biennial plan and annual report is on file with the department. Specifies that districts do not need to have an approved plan and annual report on file to levy in fiscal year 2012.

- 2 **Early childhood program for at-risk four-year-olds levy.** Amends § 124D.20, by adding subd. 4b. Establishes the levy for the early childhood program for at-risk four-year-olds. Makes this section effective for revenue for fiscal year 2012.