

Subject Governor's early education policy and finance bill

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Overview

H.F. 4228 is the governor's supplemental early education policy and finance bill. The bill makes changes to and modifies funding for several early education programs, including Head Start, voluntary prekindergarten, early learning scholarships, early childhood developmental screening, and early childhood family education (ECFE).

Summary

Section	Description
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1	Distribution of appropriation. [Head Start]
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Provides that the state appropriation for Head Start programs may be used for costs associated with program operations, infrastructure, or reconfiguration to serve children from birth to age five in center-based services.

Designates 10.72 percent of the total state appropriation to Tribal Head Start programs and specifies an order in which the state appropriation must be distributed.

2	Age limitations; pupils.
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Provides that a child cannot be admitted to a voluntary public prekindergarten (VPPK) program unless the child is at least four years old as of September 1 of the year in which the child seeks admission.

3	Length of school year; hours of instruction.
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Provides that the school calendar must include 850 hours of instruction in a school year for a VPPK student who does not have a disability.

4	Screening program. [Early childhood developmental screening]
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Provides that a parent reported developmental screening instrument meets the requirement for undergoing a developmental assessment as part of early childhood

Section	Description
	developmental screening if a parent or child is unable to complete the screening in person due to an immunocompromised status or other health concerns.
5	Developmental screening aid. Increases the amount of state aid paid to school districts for each child who is screened prior to or within 30 days of enrolling in public school kindergarten.
6	Grants for Grow Your Own early childhood educator programs. Subd. 1. Establishment. Establishes a Grow Your Own program to enhance and diversify the early childhood workforce. Subd. 2. Grow Your Own early childhood educator programs. Authorizes a licensed child care program, school district, charter school, Head Start program, institute of higher education, or other community partnership nongovernment organization to apply for a grant to host, build, or expand an early childhood educator preparation program that leads to a credential or degree. Requires applicant programs to prioritize program participants who represent the demographics of the populations served. Requires that at least 80 percent of the grant funds are used for student stipends and tuition scholarships. Allows programs providing financial support to require teaching commitments of no more than one year from the individuals awarded. Subd. 3. Grant procedure. Requires grant applicants to apply in the form and manner specified by the commissioner. The commissioner must award an equal number of grants between grant applicants located in greater Minnesota and those grant applicants located in the seven-county metropolitan area. Subd. 4. Grow Your Own early childhood educator program account. Creates a Grow Your Own early childhood educator program account in the special revenue fund in the state treasury. Requires any funds appropriated for the program to be deposited in the account. Annually appropriates money from the account to the commissioner to award grants to applicants. Authorizes a grant to last for up to five years. Authorizes the commissioner to use up to \$300,000 annually from the account for program administration and monitoring. Subd. 5. Report. Requires grant recipients to report in the form and manner determined by the commissioner. Requires each report to summarize participants' demographic, credentialing, and program advancement activities.
7	Program requirements. [ECFE programs] Allows adults who provide child care, or caregivers, to participate in early childhood family education (ECFE) programs.

Section	Description
8	<p>Substantial parental involvement. [ECFE programs]</p> <p>Makes conforming changes so that adults who provide child care, or caregivers, may participate in ECFE.</p>
9	<p>Additional duties.</p> <p>Strikes two requirements to produce recommendations that the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care has fulfilled.</p> <p>Requires that the council review and provide input on the work produced by the Great Start for All Minnesota Children Task Force.</p>
10	<p>Voluntary public prekindergarten program for eligible four-year-old children.</p> <p>Establishes a new voluntary public prekindergarten (VPPK) program for eligible four-year-old children.</p> <p>Subd. 1. Establishment; purpose. Allows a school district, charter school, licensed child care center, licensed family child care provider, or Head Start agency that meets specified requirements to establish a voluntary public prekindergarten (VPPK) program for eligible four-year-old children.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Program requirements. Specifies the requirements a VPPK program provider must meet, including: assessing each child’s progress toward state standards at program entrance and exit; providing program content aligned with the state’s early learning standards; providing at least 850 hours of instruction per year; paying salaries equivalent to the salaries of public elementary school staff with similar credentials and experience for school district and charter school programs, and to the extent practicable for Head Start and licensed child care programs; employing a lead teacher who has at least a bachelor’s degree in each classroom no later than July 1, 2028; including parents in program decision making; ensuring that staff-to-child ratios and group size requirements meet specified criteria; and providing professional development, training, and coaching for teachers.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Mixed delivery program plan. Requires school districts and charter schools that receive funding under this section to annually submit to the Department of Education a mixed delivery program plan that ensures alignment of all VPPK program providers within the school district boundary in meeting the program requirements.</p> <p>Subd. 3a. Funding. Provides that school district and charter school VPPK programs are funded based on the number of eligible pupils enrolled. Provides that Head Start and licensed child care VPPK programs receive \$11,000 per child served per year. Directs the commissioner to establish a process for allocating</p>

Section	Description
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seats for Head Start and licensed child care VPPK programs that match community strengths, capacity, and needs. Up to 2.5 percent of amounts appropriated for Head Start and licensed child care VPPK programs may be used for distribution of funds.

Subd. 4. Eligibility. Defines an “eligible child” for purposes of a VPPK program as a child who: (1) is four-years-old as of September 1 in the calendar year in which the student will enroll; and (2) meets one or more of the specified criteria. Provides that an eligible child can participate in a VPPK program free of charge. Allows VPPK programs to charge a sliding fee for instructional hours that exceed the 850 hours required during the school year, any hours provided before or after school, or any hours for child care provided in the summer. Provides that a child who is not eligible may participate in the same classroom as eligible children and may be charged a sliding fee as long as state funding is not awarded for the child.

Subd. 5. Application process; priority for high poverty schools. Strikes this subdivision.

Subd. 6. Participation limits. Strikes this subdivision.

Subd. 7. Financial accounting. Directs school district and charter schools to record expenditures attributable to VPPK pupils according to the guidelines prepared by the commissioner of education for a uniform system of records. Directs Head Start and licensed child care programs to record expenditures for VPPK pupils according to guidelines developed by the commissioner of education.

11 **Family eligibility. [Early learning scholarships]**

Makes families that have a child who is referred as in need of child protective services or placed in foster care eligible for scholarships regardless of a family’s income level.

Changes a child’s eligibility for scholarships to include all children from birth through age four on September 1 of the current school year.

12 **Administration. [Early learning scholarships]**

Paragraph (a) directs the commissioner to give highest priority for scholarships to children who are younger than four years old and adds children who have incarcerated parents to the priority list.

Strikes the language in paragraph (c) that allows for Pathway II scholarships.

Section	Description
	<p>Paragraph (d) allows the commissioner to establish exploratory efforts to increase parent education and family support services for families receiving scholarships.</p> <p>Paragraph (e) provides that a scholarship cancels if a recipient has not enrolled in an eligible program within three months, rather than 10 months, of receiving the scholarship. Allows extensions if a program is unavailable to a child within the three-month timeline.</p>
13	<p>Pupil unit.</p> <p>Provides that a kindergarten student with a disability counts as 1.0 pupil units, which is the same as a kindergarten student without a disability.</p> <p>Counts a student who does not have a disability and is enrolled in a VPPK program as a 1.0 pupil unit.</p> <p>Deletes language made obsolete by establishing the VPPK program.</p>
14	<p>Compensation revenue pupil units.</p> <p>Deletes language made obsolete by establishing the VPPK program.</p>
15	<p>Declining enrollment revenue.</p> <p>Excludes VPPK pupil units from the calculation of declining enrollment revenue in fiscal year 2023 only.</p>
16	<p>Establishment and authority.</p> <p>Allows the commissioner of human services to make grants to school districts and charter schools to provide services related to children’s mental health.</p>
17	<p>Early learning scholarships; appropriation.</p> <p>Increases the appropriation for early learning scholarships in fiscal year 2023 by \$51,356,000 and increases the base appropriation for later years.</p> <p>Allows MDE, in fiscal year 2023 only, to allocate scholarship money to Head Start programs, licensed child care centers, and licensed family child care providers to implement the transition year for the VPPK program.</p>
18	<p>Early childhood family education aid.</p> <p>Adjusts the early childhood family education (ECFE) aid to match the February forecast.</p>
19	<p>Developmental screening aid.</p> <p>Increases the appropriation for developmental screening aid.</p>

Section	Description
20	<p>Transition year in 2023.</p> <p>Provides that fiscal year 2023 may serve as a transition year for current voluntary prekindergarten, school readiness plus, and early learning scholarships Pathway II programs to transition to the new VPPK program for eligible four-year-old children.</p> <p>Allows school districts, for fiscal year 2023 only, to apply to MDE to continue to operate their voluntary prekindergarten and school readiness plus programs as they existed prior to enactment of this bill.</p>
21	<p>Appropriations.</p> <p>Subd. 1. Department of Education. Appropriates funding for this article from the general fund to the Department of Education for the purposes and years specified.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Mental health services and early childhood social workers. Appropriates \$2,500,000 in fiscal year 2023 for grants to school districts and charters schools with early learning programs to fund social workers focused solely on early childhood systems. Up to 5 percent of the appropriation may be retained for grant administration.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Voluntary public prekindergarten through mixed delivery. Appropriates \$96,920,000 in fiscal year 2023 for VPPK programs provided by Head Start and licensed child care providers.</p> <p>Subd. 4. Infant and early childhood mental health consultation in schools. Appropriates \$3,759,000 in fiscal year 2023 for transfer to the commissioner of human services for grants to school districts and charter schools for early childhood mental health consultation. Makes \$3,350,000 available for the grants.</p> <p>Subd. 5. BOLD literacy. Appropriates \$5,000,000 in fiscal year 2023 for BOLD literacy efforts. Funding includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ \$1,750,000 for MDE to establish science of reading academies to offer free services to public school teachers to complete Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training and authorizes educators who have completed LETRS training to become LETRS facilitators;<li>▪ \$800,000 is for MDE to maintain a literacy unit within its ranks;<li>▪ \$1,200,000 is to expand MDE’s literacy and dyslexia data collection and analysis capabilities;<li>▪ \$1,000,000 is for state library services grants to school and community libraries to support evidence-based early literacy practices based on the science of reading; and

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- \$250,000 is for a grant to Reach out and Read.

Subd. 6. Grow Your Own early childhood educator programs. Appropriates \$3,860,000 in fiscal year 2023 for the Grow Your Own early childhood educator program.

Subd. 7. Early childhood family education licensure grant. Appropriates \$177,000 in fiscal year 2023 to the University of Minnesota to provide scholarships for prospective teachers enrolled in the parent and family education licensure program. Describes the report the grant recipient must make to the commissioner of education. Sets an additional onetime program base amount of \$177,000 for fiscal year 2024.



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