

HCS HB 1689 -- EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Swan

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 16 to 3.

This bill changes the laws regarding early childhood education programs by:

- (1) Establishing an August 1 cutoff birth date for participation of three-year-olds in prekindergarten programs; and
- (2) Allowing the inclusion of prekindergarten pupils in the calculation of average daily attendance for school funding purposes when the pupils are eligible for free or reduced price lunch and attending a program operated by a school district or charter school that provides full-day kindergarten that meets the standards established by the State Board of Education, not to exceed 4% of the district's or charter school's total number of pupils who are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

These provisions become applicable:

- (1) For districts that have been declared unaccredited and remain unaccredited as of July 1, 2014, beginning in the 2014-15 school year; for those declared unaccredited after July 1, 2014, immediately upon such declaration;
- (2) For districts that have been declared provisionally accredited and remain unaccredited as of July 1, 2014, beginning in the 2015-16 school year; for those declared unaccredited after July 1, 2014, the later of the 2015-16 school year or the declaration of provisional accreditation; and
- (3) For all other districts, in any school year subsequent to a school year when the school funding formula is fully funded.

The provisions of the bill do not change mandatory school attendance laws.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the achievement gap starts long before children reach school, and children who have received high quality early childhood education do better economically over the long run, as well as avoiding entanglement with the judicial or public assistance systems.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Swan; Representative Wright; Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Missouri

Alliance for Early Childhood Education; Mark Van Zandt, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and State Board of Education; Missouri National Education Association; Missouri School Boards Association; Missouri Association of School Administrators; Jack C. Jensen, First Chance for Children; Missouri Charter Public School Association; Children's Education Council of Missouri; American Federation of Teachers-Missouri; Missouri Children's Leadership Council; and Missouri State Teachers Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.