

HCS HB 1689 -- EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (Swan)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education

This bill changes the laws regarding accreditation and 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 latter 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.

The bill requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop a process and scoring guide that awards additional performance points on the School Improvement Program to a school district that provides full-day kindergarten to students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, students under an individualized education program, and students who are identified as at-risk.

The current prohibition on the development of a quality rating system for early childhood education except by statute or

initiative defines early childhood education as being from birth to kindergarten; the bill revises it to cover birth to age three.