
DIGEST

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Guinn

HB No. 373

Abstract: Authorizes certain nonpublic schools to offer pre-K and provides that the minimum entrance age shall be three years old by Sept. 30 of the year of such pre-K entrance.

Present law authorizes public school boards to develop and offer prekindergarten instruction (pre-K). Proposed law additionally grants this authority to approved nonpublic elementary schools and provides that the minimum age for pre-K entrance at such schools shall be three years old by Sept. 30 of the year of pre-K entrance. Further requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with the Nonpublic School Commission, to adopt rules and regulations to protect the health and safety of three-year-old children who attend pre-K at such schools.

Present law requires public school boards, prior to implementing a pre-K program, to set forth a statement of needs the program is intended to address, the anticipated results, and the basis upon which such results are expected, an outline of implementation steps, a plan for staff usage, a budget, and a plan for results evaluation. Proposed law applies this same requirement to approved nonpublic elementary schools.

Present law (R.S. 17:222(A)) requires a child to be six years old on or before Sept. 30 of the calendar year in which the school year begins to enter first grade at any public school. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 17:222(C)(1) and (2)) provides for an exception to the first grade minimum age requirement through the 1995-1996 school year. Proposed law deletes present law.

(Amends R.S. 17:24.8 and 222(C))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill.

1. Deletes proposed law provision lowering the minimum age to enter public school pre-K from four to three.
2. Deletes proposed law provision requiring that a child be at least six to enter first grade at an approved nonpublic elementary school.

3. Provides that the minimum entrance age for nonpublic pre-K is three years old by Sept. 30 of the pre-K entrance year.
4. Adds requirement that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with the Nonpublic School Commission, adopt rules and regulations protecting the health and safety of three-year-olds attending nonpublic pre-K.
5. Adds provision requiring approved nonpublic schools to fulfill the same requirement as public schools relative to setting forth a statement of program details before implementing a pre-K program.