

A bill for an act  
relating to early childhood education; expanding the kindergarten developmental  
assessment; proposing grant programs; appropriating money; proposing coding  
for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 124D.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **[124D.1625] EXPANDING MDE DEVELOPMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
ADMINISTERED TO ENTERING KINDERGARTNERS.**

(a) The commissioner of education shall encourage school districts to implement the  
voluntary school readiness kindergarten assessment initiative as follows:

(1) in the 2008-2009 school year, assess up to 30 percent of children;

(2) in the 2009-2010 school year, assess up to 50 percent of children;

(3) in the 2010-2011 school year, assess up to 75 percent of children; and

(4) in the 2011-2012 school year, assess up to 100 percent of children.

(b) The commissioner must report the assessment results for the current school year  
to the legislature by January 1 of the next year.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2007.

Sec. 2. **EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY HUB PLANNING AND  
IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.**

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** A two-year grant program is established to increase  
children's school readiness using early childhood community hubs. An early childhood  
community hub must promote children's school readiness from before birth to kindergarten  
by coordinating and improving families' access to:

(1) community early care and education services;

2.1 (2) school;  
2.2 (3) health services; and  
2.3 (4) other family support services that stabilize, support, and assist families in  
2.4 meeting their children's health and developmental needs.

2.5 Subd. 2. **Eligibility; application.** (a) An applicant for a grant must be a school  
2.6 district, a consortium of school districts, or a tribal school interested in collaborating with  
2.7 community-based early childhood care and education providers to maximize the services  
2.8 available to eligible families.

2.9 (b) An interested applicant must submit a plan to the commissioner of education,  
2.10 in the form and manner the commissioner determines, to implement an early childhood  
2.11 community hub that is located in a public school, a tribal school, or other appropriate  
2.12 community location. An applicant must include in the plan a community-based assessment  
2.13 of the existing resources and needs for providing high quality early care and education  
2.14 services, health and mental health services, and other social services that support healthy  
2.15 families and safe neighborhoods. A district superintendent or a designated representative,  
2.16 or a tribal school principal or a designated representative, must oversee the community  
2.17 collaboration.

2.18 (c) Interested applicants also may apply to make prekindergarten to grade 3 school  
2.19 readiness and academic success a community hub component.

2.20 Subd. 3. **Program components.** (a) Grant recipients must:

2.21 (1) provide for an ongoing assessment of local resources and needs for high quality  
2.22 early care and education services, health and mental health services, and other social  
2.23 services that support safe neighborhoods and healthy families;

2.24 (2) develop and implement, in consultation with an advisory committee under  
2.25 subdivision 4, a plan to improve the healthy development and school readiness of children  
2.26 from before birth to kindergarten;

2.27 (3) develop collaborative partnerships among school-based early childhood  
2.28 programs, kindergarten teachers and other school officials, community-based Head  
2.29 Start and child care programs including licensed centers, family child care homes,  
2.30 and unlicensed family friend and neighbor caregivers, early intervention interagency  
2.31 committees, and other appropriate partners that:

2.32 (i) use the Minnesota child care resource and referral network to provide parents  
2.33 with information on quality early care and education services and financial aid options for  
2.34 their children from birth to kindergarten;

2.35 (ii) provide high quality early care and education settings for children birth to  
2.36 kindergarten;

(iii) connect families to health, mental health, adult basic education, English language learning, family literacy programs, and other relevant social services; and

(iv) promote shared professional development activities in early care and education settings that integrate curriculum, assessment, and instruction and are aligned with kindergarten through grade 12 standards;

(4) provide meaningful kindergarten transition services for families that begin one school year before a child enters kindergarten;

(5) develop and implement an evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of the collaboration, the level of parent satisfaction, and children's kindergarten readiness before and after participating in the program; and

(6) assign an unduplicated MARSS number to each child participating in the program.

(b) An applicant must agree to contract with a qualified person to coordinate the hub who, at a minimum, must have:

(1) a bachelor's degree in early childhood development or a related field;

(2) experience working with low-income families from diverse cultural communities;  
and

(3) experience working with state and community school readiness providers.

(c) An applicant must agree to provide a 15 percent local match for any grant money it receives, of which five percent may be in in-kind contributions. A grant recipient must use the grant, including the local match, to supplement but not supplant existing early childhood initiatives in the community.

Subd. 4. **Advisory committees.** Each early childhood community hub grantee must have an advisory committee, which may be a preexisting early childhood committee or a newly formed early childhood advisory committee. A newly formed early childhood advisory committee must include at least the following members selected by the school administrator who oversees the community collaboration:

(1) 30 percent parents;

(2) the school administrator who oversees the community collaboration;

(3) licensed kindergarten through grade 3 teachers;

(4) licensed child care providers that include family child care and center-based providers;

(5) Head Start providers;

(6) early childhood family education and school readiness providers;

(7) early childhood special education providers;

(8) a child care resource and referral agency;

- (9) community business leaders;
- (10) an early intervention interagency committee liaison;
- (11) other appropriate community members serving young children and their families; and
- (12) an official from a county-recognized labor organization that serves as a partner with licensed family day care providers.

**Subd. 5. Prekindergarten to grade 3 school readiness and academic success grant component.** Interested applicants also may apply to the commissioner to include as part of the early childhood community hub a prekindergarten school readiness and academic success component that:

(1) provides high-quality prekindergarten programming for three- and four-year-olds with appropriate community early care and education partners that:

(i) where applicable, has an upper level rating based on a child care quality improvement and rating system for family child care or center-based care providers, consistent with section 119B.32;

(ii) is accredited under Minnesota Statutes, section 119B.13, subdivision 3a;

(iii) offers programs meeting Head Start performance standards; and

(vi) satisfies other commissioner-determined quality standards;

(2) provides all-day kindergarten that builds on children's prekindergarten experiences;

(3) aligns prekindergarten through grade 3 standards, curriculum, and assessments;

(4) requires an early childhood professional with a bachelor's degree and relevant specialized training to supervise early childhood classrooms;

(5) coordinates prekindergarten through grade 3 programs through co-location where possible;

(6) provides meaningful transition activities for four-year-olds that begin one school year before a child enters kindergarten;

(7) promotes ongoing parent involvement from prekindergarten through grade 3; and

(8) uses periodic, age-appropriate child assessments to determine program effectiveness.

**Subd. 6. Application review; grant awards.** Only those applicants that meet the requirements of this section are eligible to receive a grant. The commissioner must determine the amount of each grant based upon the number of children and families the grantee expects to serve, the nature of the programs and services the grantee expects to provide or facilitate, and whether or not the grantee expects to include a prekindergarten to grade 3 school readiness and academic success grant component in its community

hub program. The commissioner must award 60 percent of grant funds to applicants having 50 percent or more of enrolled children eligible for the federal free and reduced lunch program in the preceding school year; the remaining 40 percent of grant funds are available to other applicants. To the extent feasible, the commissioner must award grants in each of the governor's economic development regions and in each county in the metropolitan area. Grant recipients must use the grant to implement this program and must not use the grant to supplant existing early childhood initiatives. The Department of Education must provide technical assistance to grantees upon request.

Subd. 7. **Evaluation.** The commissioner must provide for an evaluation of this grant program and must recommend to the education policy and finance committees of the legislature by February 15, 2010, whether or not to expand the program throughout the state.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2007.

Sec. 3. **APPROPRIATION.**

Subdivision 1. **Department of Education.** The sums indicated in this section are appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Education for the fiscal years designated.

Subd. 2. **Early childhood community hub planning and implementation grants.** For planning and implementation grants under section 2:

|    |                  |              |             |
|----|------------------|--------------|-------------|
| \$ | <u>5,000,000</u> | <u>.....</u> | <u>2008</u> |
| \$ | <u>5,000,000</u> | <u>.....</u> | <u>2009</u> |

Subd. 3. **Prekindergarten through grade 3 program grants.** For grantees receiving community hub planning and implementation grants that include a prekindergarten through grade 3 program component under section 2, subdivision 5:

|    |                  |              |             |
|----|------------------|--------------|-------------|
| \$ | <u>5,000,000</u> | <u>.....</u> | <u>2008</u> |
| \$ | <u>5,000,000</u> | <u>.....</u> | <u>2009</u> |

Subd. 4. **Kindergarten readiness assessment.** For the kindergarten readiness assessment administered to entering kindergartners under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.1625:

|    |              |              |             |
|----|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| \$ | <u>.....</u> | <u>.....</u> | <u>2008</u> |
| \$ | <u>.....</u> | <u>.....</u> | <u>2009</u> |

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