

1 Introduced by Committee on Education

2 Date:

3 Subject: Education; prekindergarten

4 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to (1) permit a  
5 supervisory union to establish a prekindergarten region within which member  
6 districts of the supervisory union shall pay tuition to prequalified providers  
7 located within the region; (2) require supervisory unions and school districts  
8 that are part of a prekindergarten region to form a prekindergarten  
9 collaborative with prequalified providers located within the prekindergarten  
10 region to coordinate the delivery of prekindergarten services throughout the  
11 region; (3) permit a school district to pay tuition to a prequalified provider that  
12 operates a prekindergarten program outside the district's academic year; and  
13 (4) permit a public prequalified provider to receive additional payment directly  
14 from a parent or guardian for the provision of prekindergarten services in  
15 excess of publicly funded prekindergarten education that is required under  
16 State law. [consider means testing]

17 An act relating to prekindergarten education

1 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

2 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 829 is amended to read:

3 § 829. PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

4 \* \* \*

5 (d) Tuition, budgets, and average daily membership.

6 (1) On behalf of a resident prekindergarten child, a district shall pay  
7 tuition for prekindergarten education for ten hours per week for 35 weeks  
8 annually to a prequalified private provider or to a public school outside the  
9 district that is prequalified pursuant to subsection (c) of this section; ~~provided,~~  
10 ~~however, that the district shall pay tuition for weeks that are within the~~  
11 ~~district's academic year.~~ Tuition paid under this section shall be at a statewide  
12 rate, which may be adjusted regionally, that is established annually through a  
13 process jointly developed and implemented by the Agencies of Education and  
14 of Human Services. A district shall pay tuition upon:

15 (A) receiving notice from the child's parent or guardian that the child  
16 is or will be admitted to the prekindergarten education program operated by the  
17 prequalified private provider or the other district; and

18 (B) concurrent enrollment of the prekindergarten child in the district  
19 of residence for purposes of budgeting and determining average daily  
20 membership.

1           (2) In addition to any direct costs of operating a prekindergarten  
2 education program, a district of residence shall include anticipated tuition  
3 payments and any administrative, quality assurance, quality improvement,  
4 transition planning, or other prekindergarten-related costs in its annual budget  
5 presented to the voters.

6           (3) Pursuant to subdivision 4001(1)(C) of this title, the district of  
7 residence may include within its average daily membership any  
8 prekindergarten child for whom it has provided prekindergarten education or  
9 on whose behalf it has paid tuition pursuant to this section.

10           (4) A prequalified ~~private~~ provider, whether public or private, may  
11 receive additional payment directly from the parent or guardian only for  
12 prekindergarten education in excess of the hours paid for by the district  
13 pursuant to this section or for child care services, or both. A school district  
14 that operates a prequalified program in which a parent or guardian enrolls a  
15 prekindergarten child who is a resident of the district may receive additional  
16 payment directly from the parent or guardian only for prekindergarten  
17 education in excess of the hours paid for by the district pursuant to this section  
18 or for child care services, or both. The provider is not bound by the statewide  
19 rate established in this subsection when determining the rates it will charge the  
20 parent or guardian.

21   \* \* \*

1 (h) Geographic limitations.

2 (1) Notwithstanding the requirement that a district pay tuition to any  
3 prequalified public or private provider in the State, a the school board for the  
4 district or the board of the supervisory union of which the district is a member  
5 may choose to limit the geographic boundaries within which the district shall  
6 pay tuition by paying tuition solely to those prequalified providers in which  
7 parents and guardians choose to enroll resident prekindergarten children that  
8 are located within the district's or supervisory union's "prekindergarten  
9 region" as determined in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

10 (2) For purposes of this subsection, upon application from the district's  
11 or supervisory union's school board, a district's or supervisory union's  
12 prekindergarten region shall be determined jointly by the Agencies of  
13 Education and of Human Services in consultation with the ~~school~~ board,  
14 private providers of prekindergarten education, parents and guardians of  
15 prekindergarten children, and other interested parties pursuant to a process  
16 adopted by rule under subsection (e) of this section. A prekindergarten region:

17 (A) shall not be smaller than the geographic boundaries of the school  
18 district or supervisory union that makes the application;

19 (B) shall be based in part upon the estimated number of  
20 prekindergarten children residing in the district and in surrounding districts or  
21 in the supervisory union, the availability of prequalified private and public

1 providers of prekindergarten education, commuting patterns, and other  
2 region-specific criteria; and

3 (C) shall be designed to support existing partnerships between the  
4 school district or supervisory union that makes the application and private  
5 providers of prekindergarten education.

6 (3) If a prekindergarten region is established upon the application by the  
7 board of a supervisory union, all school districts that are members of the  
8 supervisory union shall pay tuition to providers solely within that  
9 prekindergarten region, and the prekindergarten region established upon the  
10 application by the board of the supervisory union shall supercede and render  
11 void any prekindergarten region established upon the application by the board  
12 of one or more member districts of the supervisory union.

13 ~~(4)~~ If a ~~school board chooses to pay~~ district pays tuition to providers  
14 solely within ~~its~~ a prekindergarten region, and if a resident prekindergarten  
15 child is unable to access publicly funded prekindergarten education within that  
16 region, then the child's parent or guardian may request and in its discretion the  
17 district may pay tuition at the statewide rate for a prekindergarten education  
18 program operated by a prequalified provider located outside the  
19 prekindergarten region.

20 ~~(4)~~(5) Except for the narrow exception permitting a school board for the  
21 district or the board of the supervisory union of which the district is a member

1 to limit geographic boundaries under subdivision (1) of this subsection, all  
2 other provisions of this section and related rules shall continue to apply.

3 (i) Prekindergarten collaborative. Districts or supervisory unions that are  
4 part of a prekindergarten region formed under subsection (h) of this section  
5 shall form a prekindergarten collaborative with prequalified providers located  
6 within the prekindergarten region. Members of the prekindergarten  
7 collaborative shall meet on a regular basis to coordinate the delivery of  
8 prekindergarten services throughout the region.

9 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 This act shall take effect on passage.