

Senate Education

March 22, 2017

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Deputy Commissioner, AHS

DCF/CDD

Dr. Amy Fowler

Deputy Secretary,

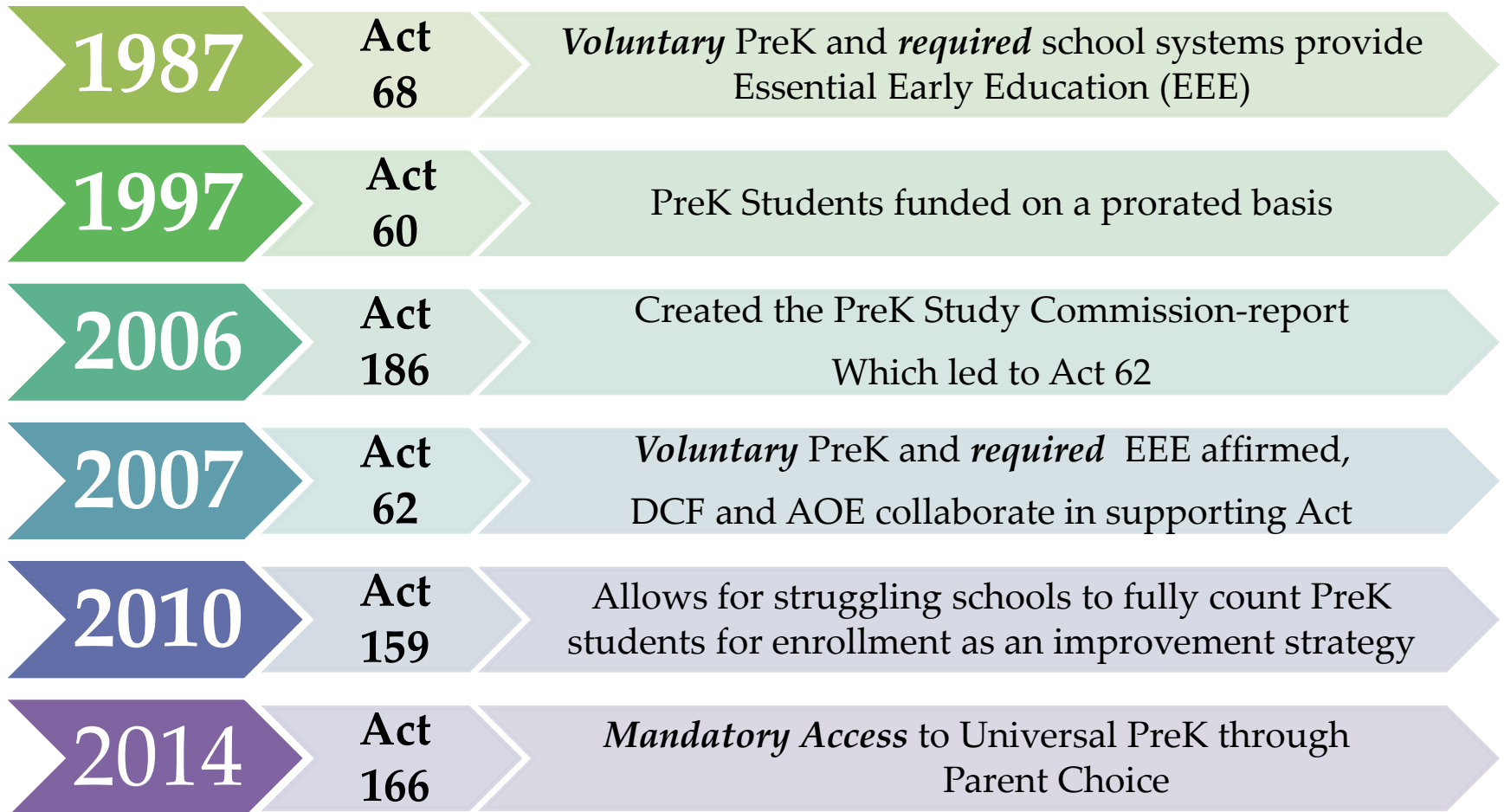
AOE

The Purpose of Act 166: Universal PreK

To provide young children in Vermont with opportunities to reach their full growth and developmental potential through voluntary universal access to high quality prekindergarten education.



Progression of PreK in Vermont



Act 166 Program Quality Standards

Any prequalified PreK program, regardless of setting, must fulfill one of the following:

- Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) **OR**
- Achieved 4 or more Stars with 2 points in each arena in Vermont's Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS) **OR**
- Achieved 3 Stars with a plan for achieving 4 Stars with 2 points in each arena within 2 years. The plan must be approved by the Secretary of Education and the Commissioner for the Department for Children and Families

AND must also:

- Use a curriculum that is aligned with the Vermont Early Learning Standards
- Provide assurance that the program does not provide "religious prekindergarten education"
- Assess children's progress using Teaching Strategies Gold at least twice during the school year (Fall and Spring)
- Employ or contract with a qualified Teacher

Act 166 Qualified Teacher Standards

Act 166 requires a licensed educator endorsed in either early childhood education (ECE) or early childhood special education (ECSE). This requirement is different by program type, as shown below:

School Operated PreK Program	Private PreK Center Based Program	Private Family Child Care Home
Every classroom must employ a teacher licensed by the Agency of Education in Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE).	Employ or contract with at least one teacher licensed by the Agency of Education in ECE or ECSE. At minimum this teacher must be present during 10 hours of prekindergarten education 35 weeks per year.	Family Child Care Provider must be licensed by the Agency of Education in ECE or ECSE. OR Receive regular, active supervision and training from a teacher licensed by the Agency of Education in ECE or ECSE for a minimum of 3 hours per week.

Early Care and Learning Programs in Vermont

Prequalified
Prekindergarten
Programs (375)

237 private
138 public school operated

STARS programs

75% of all regulated programs

Regulated Programs (1471)

CBCCPP (694) and FCCH (777)

Informal Family Friend and Neighbor Care

Act 166 Basics

Beginning in Fall 2016, all School Systems are required to **offer** Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) options:

- Parents can choose whether or not their child participates in UPK
- Publicly-funded prekindergarten services are provided in prequalified PreK programs operated by public schools and those operated by private providers (homes and centers)
- Parents choose which prequalified UPK program best meets the needs of their child and family
- UPK In Vermont is defined as at least 10 hours per week, for 35 weeks per year during the school year
- Children must be at least 3 years old by the date established by the local school for Kindergarten entry

Act 166 Basics

- Weighted education funding for resident prekindergarten children enrolled in UPK is .46 of 1 average daily membership
- Schools budget for the costs of school operated programs AND
- For tuition they pay on behalf of children receiving UPK services in private prequalified programs
- In the 2016-2017 school year the state-wide tuition rate for UPK services is \$3,092 per year
- Private prequalified programs are required to provide 10 hours of UPK, 35 weeks per year for free. 100% of UPK tuition must be credited toward parent costs for the program.

How has PreK enrollment changed?

Finding: Enrollment in PreK has increased by 1,045 students.

Table 1: Enrollment in PreK from 2014-15 (no Act 166) to 2015-16 (Partial Implementation of Act 166 and Expansion Grant)

School Year	Enrollment
2014-2015	6,281
2015-2016	7,326
<i>Change</i>	+1,045

(students identified in the October census)

How has PreK enrollment changed in terms of poverty?

Finding: The distribution of students in terms of Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility has not changed in the first year of Act 166 implementation

Table 2a: Enrollment in PreK and Free and Reduced Lunch Participation

School Year		PreK	
		Not Eligible FRL	FRL Eligible
2014-15	#	4,366	1,915
	%	70%	31%
2015-16	#	5,089	2,237
	%	70%	31%

(students identified in the October census)

How has PreK enrollment changed in terms of special education status?

Finding: The distribution of students in terms of eligibility for special education has not changed much in the first year of Act 166 implementation.

Table 2b: Enrollment in PreK and eligibility for special education

School Year		PreK	
		No IEP	IEP
2014-15	#	5,199	1,082
	%	83%	17%
2015-16	#	6,165	1,161
	%	84%	16%

(students identified in the October census)

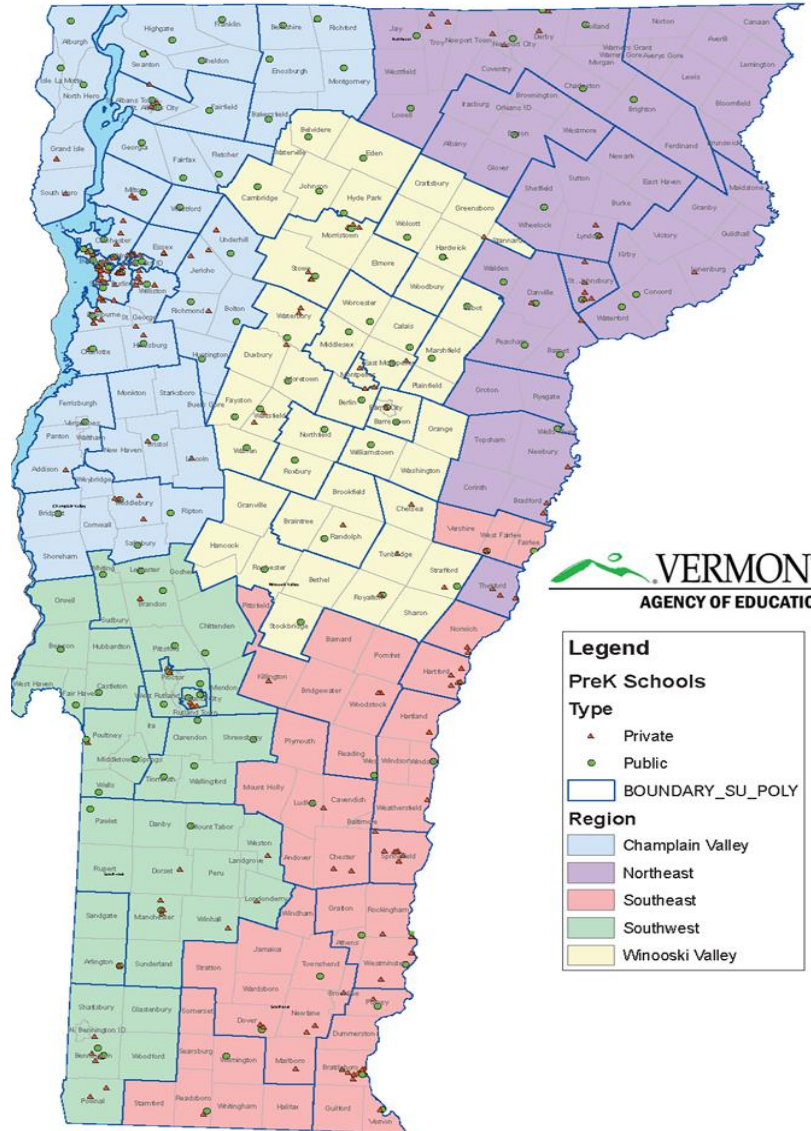
How has PreK enrollment changed in terms of student race/ethnicity?

Finding: The distribution of students in terms of race/ethnicity has not changed much in the first year of Act 166 implementation.

Table 2c: Enrollment in PreK and Race/Ethnicity			
School Year		PreK	
		Caucasian	Non-Caucasian
2014-15	#	5,756	525
	%	92%	8%
2015-16	#	6,767	559
	%	92%	8%

(students identified in the October census)

Geographic Distribution



Legend

PreK Schools Type

- ▲ Private
- Public

Region

- BOUNDARY_SU_POLY
- Champlain Valley
- Northeast
- Southeast
- Southwest
- Winooski Valley

Where are students participating in PreK?

Finding: The relative distribution of students enrolling in PreK across the state is consistent with the distribution of students enrolling in K-3.

Table 3: Enrollment in PreK

by Supervisory Union/Districts Region in 2015-16

Grade Level	Champlain Valley		Northeast		Southeast		Southwest		Winooski Valley	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
PreK	3,194	44%	827	11%	1,065	15%	945	13%	1,295	18%

(students identified in the October census)

Did Early Adoption enrollment in PreK differ by region?

Finding: In 2015-16, Early Adoption PreK enrollment through Act 166 is skewed towards Champlain Valley Supervisory Unions/Districts.

Table 5: Enrollment in PreK Early Adoption of Act 166 by Supervisory Union/District Region

Act 166 Status:		Champlain Valley	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Winooski Valley	Total
Total	#	3,194	827	1,065	945	1,295	7,326
	%	44%	11%	15%	13%	18%	100%
Early Adopter	#	1,771	276	407	296	181	2,931
	%	60%	9%	14%	10%	6%	100%
Not Early Adopter	#	1,423	551	658	649	1,114	4,395
	%	32%	13%	15%	15%	25%	100%

Green = High # of programs entering their 2nd year
 Orange = Low # of programs entering their 2nd year

What are the pre-qualified programs?

Finding: The majority of programs are 4 and 5 Star Programs.

Table 4: Program Quality for Pre-Qualified Programs for Act 166

	Quality Level		
	NAEYC Accredited or 5 Stars	4 Stars	3 Stars/App. plan
%	54%	36%	10%
Public Provider	81	47	12
Private Provider	105	76	21

(students identified in the October census)

More Information

- For information on Early Education & UPK

<http://education.vermont.gov/student-support/early-education>

- For information on teacher licensing endorsements

http://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-educator-quality-licensing-vsbspe-endorsements-5440_0.pdf

- For information on Licensing Standards

<http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/laws-regs>

- For more information on STARS

<http://dcf.vermont.gov/childcare/parents/stars>

- To search for Prequalified UPK programs:

<http://www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us/> then click the “Find a Provider” tab

Questions?

