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ACT 11 PREKINDERGARTEN STUDY – INTERIM REPORT

Presentation to the Vermont House
Committees on Education and on Human
Services and the Senate Committees on
Education and on Health and Welfare

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Agenda

- 1 Study background
- 2 Overview of study & status report
- 3 Interim report findings
- 4 Next steps

Study background

- Act 166, passed in 2014, was fully implemented beginning 2016/17
 - 75% of 4 year olds
 - 60% of 3 year olds
- Act 11, section E.500.7 – how to more effectively and efficiently provide state-funded, universal preK
- Study timeline:
October 2018 > Interim Report March 2019 > Final Report July 2019

Key areas of interest for Act 11 preK study



How well is the funding model working?



How are families making choices about preK?



Does the system provide equitable access?



Does the current system create undesired outcomes?



How can oversight be simplified?

Status update – completed activities

- Conducted, analyzed, and summarized findings from 13 semi-structured interviews
 - the state legislature, AOE, AHS, Vermont School Boards Association, Vermont Superintendents Association, Building Bright Futures, and the University of Vermont
- Systematic review of research literature

Next steps

- Conduct, analyze, and summarize findings from 30 semi-structured interviews
 - Randomly-selected, representative sample of public and private program directors and principals
- Survey of families regarding preK program choice
- Analysis of data from AOE
- Draft final report and submit by July 1, 2019

QUESTIONS?

Delivery models

- Most interviewees supported the mixed-delivery system
 - Positives: Caregiver choice, convenience, enrollment capacity, cross-sector collaboration
 - Shortcomings: Misperceptions and mistrust between public and private, cross-sector applicability of regulations
- Some experts commend mixed-delivery systems while others raise concerns over inequities across public and private settings

Funding models

- Interviewee **concerns** included
 - Distribution of **public funds to private providers**
 - Possible **inequities** in the amount of funding provided to public vs. private providers
- **K-12 funding formulas are best** option to provide consistent and adequate support
 - States with mixed-delivery based on K-12 have set **guidelines to promote equitable distribution** of funds
- **Pay for Success** is a newer approach to funding early childhood education

Access and dosage

- **Mixed opinions** among interviewees regarding **universal vs. targeted preK**
- Interviewees suggested **increasing the number of preK hours** offered
- Research indicates **all children benefit from preK**, but low- and middle-income children benefit the most
- There is an **unclear relationship** between weekly hours of preK and child outcomes
- Research shows **increased short-term gains** for children attending 2 years of preK, compared to those attending for only 1 year

Quality

- Interviewees expressed concern over variation in teacher qualifications across settings
- Interviewees recommended simplification of STARS and accessible professional development opportunities
- Instructional supports and other aspects of process quality are most important for supporting children's school readiness
- Research has found no or a limited relationship between educators' level of education and child outcomes

Administration

- Many interviewees supported moving administration to **one agency**, while others suggested a **new stand-alone agency**, and others preferred **joint agency oversight**
- Recommendation to **centralize preK contracting and payments** at the state level
- Some suggested **shifting responsibility** for delivery and oversight to **regional level**
- Research **does not identify** a single **best practice or model** for administering preK
- There are **benefits to consolidating** early childhood initiatives at the state level



THANK YOU

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