



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

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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

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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

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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