

1 Sec. X. PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE;

2 REPORT

3 (a) Creation. There is created the Prekindergarten Education Study
4 Committee to examine and make recommendations regarding Vermont’s
5 prekindergarten education system for the purpose of ensuring that every three-
6 and four-year-old has access to high-quality, publicly funded prekindergarten
7 education on a full-school-day, full-school-year basis.

8 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
9 members:

10 (1) the Secretary of Education or designee, who shall serve as chair;

11 (2) the Secretary of Human Services or designee;

12 (3) the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals’ Association or
13 designee;

14 (4) the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents Association
15 or designee;

16 (5) the Executive Director of the Vermont School Board Association or
17 designee;

18 (6) the Executive Director of the Vermont National Education
19 Association or designee;

20 (7) the Chair of the Vermont Council of Special Education
21 Administrators or designee;

1 (8) the Executive Director of the Vermont Curriculum Leaders
2 Association or designee;

3 (9) a representative of a prequalified private provider as defined in 16
4 V.S.A. § 829, operating a licensed center-based child care and preschool
5 program, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

6 (10) a representative of a prequalified private provider as defined in 16
7 V.S.A. § 829, operating a regulated family child care home, appointed by the
8 Committee on Committees;

9 (11) the Head Start Collaboration Office Director or designee;

10 (12) the Executive Officer of Let’s Grow Kids or designee; and

11 (13) a family representative with a prekindergarten-age child, appointed
12 by the Building Bright Futures Council.

13 (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall examine the delivery of
14 prekindergarten education in Vermont and make recommendations for
15 expanding equitable access for all three- and four-year-old children to a full-
16 school-day, full-school-year program in a manner that achieves the best
17 outcomes for children, either through the current mixed-delivery system or
18 through the public school system only. The Committee shall also examine and
19 make recommendations on the changes necessary to provide prekindergarten
20 education to all three- and four-year-old children through the public school
21 system only, including a timeline and transition plan for such changes. In

1 conducting its analysis, the Committee shall address the following topics and
2 questions, which may yield distinct recommendations for three- and four-year
3 old children:

4 (1) Outcomes and quality.

5 (A) What are the academic outcomes for children who have received
6 universal prekindergarten education as compared to those who have not
7 received universal prekindergarten education? In studying this issue, the
8 Committee shall account for social and economic disparities to the extent data
9 is available.

10 (B) What are the academic outcomes for children who have received
11 universal prekindergarten education from prequalified private providers as
12 compared to outcomes for children who received universal prekindergarten
13 education from public school–based programs? In studying this issue, the
14 Committee shall account for social and economic disparities to the extent data
15 is available.

16 (C) What are the benchmarks for “high quality” in prekindergarten
17 education?

18 (D) How should best practices be implemented and measured across
19 various prekindergarten education settings in the current mixed-delivery
20 system?

21 (2) Capacity and demand.

1 (A) In the current mixed-delivery system, what impact does the
2 program type, hours, or location have on demand for prekindergarten
3 education programming?

4 (B) Is further data needed to understand demand for prekindergarten
5 education programing and if so, what is that data?

6 (C) How many children, by age, does the current mixed-delivery
7 system have the capacity to serve? In studying this issue, the Committee shall
8 consider the number of children on waitlists and the number of vacancies in
9 programs.

10 (D) What are the workforce constraints in expanding prekindergarten
11 education to a full-school-day, full-school-year program for three- and four-
12 year-old children, including:

13 (i) the gap between the total number of licensed teachers currently
14 working and the number needed for expansion;

15 (ii) the gap between the total prekindergarten education
16 workforce, including paraeducators, and the number needed for expansion; and

17 (iii) the educational and training costs associated with training and
18 retaining the workforce necessary for expansion?

19 (E) Are families currently able to enroll in their desired program
20 type? What capacity would need to be built to allow families to enroll in their
21 desired program type?

1 (3) Special education.

2 (A) How many three- and four-year-old children are currently on
3 individual education plans receiving services in public and private settings?

4 (B) Are three- and four-year-old children on individual education
5 plans receiving the full range of services that they are entitled to?

6 (C) Does the availability or cost of special education services vary
7 between private and public prequalified providers?

8 (4) Public school expansion.

9 (A) What infrastructure changes are necessary to expand
10 prekindergarten education to a full-school-day, full-school-year program
11 within the public school system only, including:

12 (i) What indoor and outdoor facility updates would be required to
13 ensure developmentally appropriate settings for three- and four-year-old
14 children and what is a realistic time frame for such changes to be operational?

15 (ii) How would required facility updates for prekindergarten
16 education expansion relate to existing infrastructure needs?

17 (B) How would the current prekindergarten education mixed-delivery
18 system transition to a full-school-day, full-school-year program within the
19 public school system?

20 (C) What capacity needs to be built for developmentally appropriate
21 afterschool and out-of-school-time care?

1 (D) Are changes needed to existing health and safety standards for
2 public schools to accommodate three- and four-year-old children?

3 (5) Funding and costs.

4 (A) What are the costs associated with expanding the current mixed-
5 delivery system to a full-school-day, full-school-year mixed-delivery system?

6 (B) What are the costs associated with expanding the current mixed-
7 delivery system to a full-school-day, full-school-year program within the
8 public school system only?

9 (C) What is the most fiscally strategic way to sustain and expand
10 universal prekindergarten education to a full-school-day, full-school-year
11 program for three- and four-year-old children?

12 (D) What is the financial and business impact on regulated private
13 child care providers if the prekindergarten system transitions to public schools
14 only?

15 (E) What, if any, changes need to be made to pupil weights for
16 prekindergarten students?

17 (F) What, if any, changes need to be made to tuition rates for private
18 prekindergarten programs?

19 (6) Oversight.

20 (A) What additional Agency of Education personnel or resources
21 would be needed to oversee an expansion of the current prekindergarten

1 education system under either a mixed-delivery model or a public school
2 system only model?

3 (B) What additional Agency of Human Services personnel or
4 resources would be needed to oversee an expansion of the current mixed-
5 delivery model?

6 (d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical,
7 fiscal, and legal assistance of the Agencies of Education and of Human
8 Services.

9 (e) Report. On or before November 15, 2023, the Committee shall submit
10 a written report to the House Committees on Education and on Human
11 Services and the Senate Committees on Education and on Health and Welfare
12 with its findings and recommendations based on the analysis conducted
13 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. The report shall include draft
14 legislative language to support the Committee’s recommendations.

15 (f) Meetings.

16 (1) The Secretary of Education or designee shall call the first meeting of
17 the Committee to occur on or before July 15, 2023.

18 (2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

19 (3) The Committee shall cease to exist on November 16, 2023.

20 (g) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Committee who
21 are not employees of the State of Vermont and who are not otherwise

1 compensated or reimbursed for their attendance shall be entitled to per diem
2 compensation and reimbursement expenses pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for
3 not more than 10 meetings per year. These payments shall be made from
4 monies appropriated to the Agency of Education.

5 (h) Appropriation. The sum of \$1.00 is appropriated to the Agency of
6 Education from the General Fund in fiscal year 2024 for per diem
7 compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Committee.