



Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 285 (Substitute S-3 as reported by the Committee of the Whole)

Sponsor: Senator Dayna Polehanki

Committee: Education

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to require school districts and public school academies to provide kindergarten and to require children in the State to enroll in kindergarten at the age of five beginning in the 2025-2026 school year; however, a parent or legal guardian of a child could delay the enrollment of a five-year old for one school year if the parent or guardian notified the applicable public school in writing.

MCL 380.1147 & 380.1561

BRIEF RATIONALE

According to testimony before the Senate Committee on Education, kindergarten contributes to student success. Reportedly, children who attend kindergarten grow used to the routine and expectations of school faster than their peers who missed kindergarten. Additionally, kindergarteners begin learning foundational skills, including math, literacy, and social skills, at an earlier age than their peers, which may contribute to future academic success.¹ As such, it has been suggested that children be required to attend kindergarten.

Legislative Analyst: Abby Schneider

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have a negative fiscal impact on the State and no net fiscal impact on school districts. If all five-year-olds were required to be enrolled in kindergarten, districts would see an increase in students, increasing costs. Those costs should be offset by the increased funding those districts would receive through the foundation allowance and other per-pupil categorical spending.

The increased cost to the State would depend on how many additional kindergarten pupils attended districts and public school academies because of the new requirement. It is unknown exactly how many five-year-olds attend kindergarten at nonpublic schools or are home-schooled, but it is estimated that 95% are either attending district kindergarten or are exempted under the current statute. Using first-grade pupil counts as a proxy for entering kindergarten counts, requiring kindergarten for all five-year-olds could increase statewide pupil count by approximately 4,500 pupils. At the Fiscal Year 2023-24 target foundation allowance of \$9,608, this would be a cost increase of approximately \$43.3 million per year, or a foundation allowance increase of 0.4%.

Date Completed: 4-15-24

Fiscal Analyst: Ryan Bergan
Cory Savino, PhD

¹ Wood, Sarah, "Where is Kindergarten Mandatory?", *U.S. News*, December 2, 2022.