

1. Please Provide Your Name and Agency Affiliation

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Agency/Organization Affiliation

Recommendations

The following pages seek recommendations for the following portions of the Early Childhood Education Act plan as required by Act 3:

- Definition of Kindergarten Readiness
- Standards
- Assessment & Accountability System
- Program Regulations
- Implementation

There is space to make additional recommendations at the end of the survey.

Definition of Kindergarten Readiness

Act 3 requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to establish a definition of kindergarten readiness aligned with state content standards for elementary and secondary schools

2. After reviewing the proposal for implementation of the Early Childhood Education Act, as it relates to the definition of kindergarten readiness, which portion(s) of the plan do you support?

DDC RESPONSE:

No Comments

3. Which portion(s) of the plan would you change?

DDC RESPONSE:

No Comments

Standards

Act 3 requires BESE to establish performance targets for children under the age of three and academic standards for kindergarten readiness for three-and four-year old children to be used in publicly-funded early childhood education programs.

4. After reviewing the proposal for implementation of the Early Childhood Education Act, as it relates to standards for children, which portion(s) of the plan do you support?

DDC RESPONSE:

The Council supports criteria that include children with disabilities.

5. Which portion(s) of the plan would you change?

DDC RESPONSE:

The plan should ensure that assessment tools and processes include the use of modified alternate assessment methods, techniques, and instruments that fully capture the performance of children with significant disabilities.

Assessment and Accountability System

Act 3 requires BESE to create a uniform assessment and accountability system for publicly funded early childhood education programs that includes a letter grade indicative of student performance.

6. After reviewing the proposal for implementation of the Early Childhood Education Act, as it relates to the assessment and accountability system, which portion(s) of the plan do you support?

DDC RESPONSE:

The Council supports use of program assessment measures. However, these program assessment measures should consider factors related to inclusion of children with disabilities.

7. Which portion(s) of the plan would you change?

DDC RESPONSE:

- The Accountability System where programs are graded should include more than just student performance. It is recommended that the Accountability System include program factors that demonstrate the success of a program with accepting, including and accommodating students with disabilities. Factors such as specialized training for staff, acceptance of all children, planning for children with special needs, and integration of children with special needs with their peers should be included in the process. A plan that is too heavily weighted with child assessment data may create an unintentional disincentive for early childhood programs to serve children with disabilities. Child care centers, particularly small businesses, which choose to do the right thing by accepting children with significant disabilities will be unfairly burdened by a system using student performance scores exclusively. Families of children with disabilities will lose child care and this will create a number of unfavorable economic and social outcomes.
- In the area of student performance, performance of children with disabilities must be included in the accountability system such that:
 - Child Care Centers are not penalized for including children with disabilities;
 - Assessment of student progress extends beyond standardized measures and enables recognition of student progress through the use of alternate assessment methods, techniques and/or instruments that reflect progress monitoring of students with significant disabilities.

Program Regulations

Act 3 requires that BESE coordinate with the Department of Children and Family Services and the Department of Health and Hospitals to align the standards for the licensing of child care facilities, including the requirements for participation in the Louisiana Quality Start Child Care Rating System, with the standards established for early childhood education programs.

8. After reviewing the proposal for implementation of the Early Childhood Education Act, as it relates to program regulations, which portion(s) of the plan do you support?

DDC RESPONSE:

No Comments

9. Which portion(s) of the plan would you change?

DDC RESPONSE:

Exclusively using outcome-based rating systems for waiving licensing standards creates disincentives for providers to include children with disabilities. The criteria for allowing waivers of licensing standards should take into account the degree of inclusion of children with disabilities.

Implementation

Act 3 requires BESE to establish a timeline for the creation and implementation of the early childhood care and education network that shall be fully implemented by the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.

10. After reviewing the proposal for implementation of the Early Childhood Education Act, as it relates to the proposed implementation process, which portion(s) of the plan do you support?

DDC RESPONSE:

No Comments

11. Which portion(s) of the plan would you change?

DDC RESPONSE:

Children with disabilities must specifically be included in the Early Childhood Redesign Plan on the “front end” planning phase, avoiding a retrofitting during the implementation phase.

Consideration of the fiscal/economic implications of the results if children are further unable to access preschool/child care services/supports.

The plan should have a statement that affirms the goal to support children with disabilities having access to early childhood programs and enables their parents to remain in the workforce.

Stakeholders with knowledge and expertise of working with children with disabilities in child care, parents and caregivers of children with disabilities, professionals with expertise in early childhood development, and other appropriate individuals should be included in every phase of the planning process.

Other Recommendations

Please provide any additional recommendations for portions of the plan, not covered by the previous questions

DDC RESPONSE

No additional recommendations provided by the Council for #12 - #16.

Acknowledgements: Responses to this survey were done with input from and collaboration with multiple stakeholders with expertise in early childhood education.

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