

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1989

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SENATE BILL 506

Short Title: Prekindergarten Pilot Program.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Richardson; Conder, Hunt of Durham, Hunt of Moore, Marvin, Tally, and Ward.

Referred to: Education.

March 20, 1989

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH SIXTEEN PILOT CENTERS FOR PREKINDERGARTEN
3 CHILDREN TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE STATE BOARD OF
4 EDUCATION.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 Section 1. Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by
7 adding a new section to read:

8 **"§ 115C-81.2. Prekindergarten Pilot Program.**

9 (a) The State Board of Education shall develop 16 pilot centers to serve three-
10 and four-year old children. For purposes of this section, a three-year old is defined as a
11 child who reaches his fourth birthday on or before October 16 of the year he is to be
12 enrolled in the program. These pilot centers are established to explore feasible methods
13 for providing access to publicly funded preschool/child care programs to meet the
14 existing needs of North Carolina's three- and four-year old children. The pilot centers
15 shall be operated for two years, beginning July 1, 1989, and may be continued,
16 expanded, or abolished thereafter in the discretion of the General Assembly after it
17 hears reports on the pilot program from the State Board of Education.

18 The funds appropriated to implement this section, after administrative funds have
19 been deducted, shall be allocated to local boards of education for the purpose of funding
20 16 centers to be operated by the recipient boards, on the basis of proposals made to the
21 State Board of Education. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the State Board
22 of Education give favorable consideration to proposals that use the pilot centers as one
23 component of a system-wide prekindergarten program. Other components of this

1 system shall include Head Start Programs, federal funds that may be used in such
2 programs, agreements with private providers, and other available resources. Recipient
3 boards are authorized and empowered to contract with private providers for the
4 implementation and operation of the pilot centers.

5 The State Board of Education shall adopt rules necessary for the effective
6 implementation and operation of the pilot centers, including rules governing the
7 treatment and placement of handicapped children in the pilot programs. The
8 development and implementation of all rules adopted pursuant to this section shall be
9 exempt from the provisions of G.S. 150B so long as these centers continue to be pilot
10 centers.

11 (b) Prekindergarten Pilot Program; Requirements. Requirements of pilot centers
12 operated under the Department of Public Instruction include:

13 (1) A child population composed of three- and four-year olds selected at
14 random and including a minimum of fifty percent (50%)
15 disadvantaged children, as defined by Chapter 1 of the federal
16 Education Consolidation and Improvement Act. If random selection
17 of the total available population fails to produce fifty percent (50%)
18 disadvantaged, this portion of the requirement may be waived with the
19 approval of the State Board of Education.

20 (2) The staff/child ratio shall be one adult to eight children with a
21 maximum group size of 16 children. In order to accommodate the
22 needs of the extended day model, the typical staffing pattern will be
23 one lead teacher and two teacher assistants. Pilot centers shall serve
24 preschool handicapped children in a manner consistent with the
25 'Procedures Governing Programs for Exceptional Children' and the
26 provisions of P.L. 99-457, the 'Education of the Handicapped Act
27 Amendments of 1986.' Pilot programs may not exclude preschool
28 handicapped children solely on the basis of their handicapping
29 condition. If deemed appropriate under the current procedures for
30 diagnosis and placement, a handicapped child may be placed in a pilot
31 program. The presence of a handicapped child in a group may be
32 justification for an additional staff member.

33 (3) The program year for each pilot center will be 12 months and the
34 typical center day will be 11 hours. The operational calendar and the
35 specific hours of operation are to be set by the individual center, with
36 the approval of the Department of Public Instruction. As a budgetary
37 matter, the State Board of Education may adjust or revise calendars as
38 necessary to ensure equity among centers.

39 (4) A five-member team from each pilot center shall participate in training
40 designed to provide a prekindergarten add-on certificate for teachers
41 who hold a K-4 certification and to provide an acceptable credential
42 for persons who majored in Child Development, home economics,
43 special education or related areas and hold at least a bachelor's degree.

1 (5) Pilot centers shall demonstrate planned efforts to establish a strong
2 community base through the use of existing Childcare Resource and
3 Referral agencies and which may also include a preschool advisory
4 council, referral assistance to children and families, and partnerships
5 with major employers in the community.

6 (6) The Department of Public Instruction shall determine procedures for
7 issuing requests for proposals and for establishing grant amounts
8 consistent with standard procedures of the department.

9 (7) The Department of Public Instruction shall provide continuing
10 technical assistance and staff development to ensure maintenance of
11 center standards and to assist with the development of a community
12 support system.

13 (8) Pilot centers shall meet standards as determined by the Department of
14 Public Instruction.

15 (c) Prekindergarten Pilot Program; Evaluation; Reporting Requirements. The
16 State Board of Education shall provide for a formative and summative evaluation of the
17 pilot centers. The State Board of Education is authorized and directed to develop
18 guidelines for the operation of these centers to ensure that programs remain
19 developmentally appropriate and that they meet all relevant standards.

20 The State Board of Education shall make reports to the General Assembly and to the
21 public when the Board deems such reports to be appropriate."

22 Sec. 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
23 Public Education the sum of one million nine hundred ninety-nine thousand eighty-six
24 dollars (\$1,999,086) for the 1989-90 fiscal year and the sum of three million nine
25 hundred twenty-two thousand five hundred fifty-eight dollars (\$3,922,558) for the 1990-
26 91 fiscal year, for operating prekindergarten pilot centers as established by this act.

27 Sec. 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 1989.