

Chapter 779

(Senate Bill 581)

AN ACT concerning

**Workgroup to Study the Implementation of Universal Access to
Prekindergarten for 4-Year-Olds**

FOR the purpose of establishing the Workgroup to Study the Implementation of Universal Access to Prekindergarten for 4-Year-Olds; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Workgroup; prohibiting a member of the Workgroup from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Workgroup to study and make recommendations regarding certain matters; requiring the Workgroup to report its findings and recommendations to a certain Commission on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; making this Act an emergency measure; and generally relating to the Workgroup to Study the Implementation of Universal Access to Prekindergarten for 4-Year-Olds.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That:

(a) There is a Workgroup to Study the Implementation of Universal Access to Prekindergarten for 4-Year-Olds.

(b) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, the composition of the Workgroup shall be determined by the State Department of Education.

(2) The State Department of Education shall include in the Workgroup:

(i) one member of the Senate of Maryland, selected by the President of the Senate;

(ii) one member of the House of Delegates, selected by the Speaker of the House; and

(iii) at least the following representatives ~~in the Workgroup~~:

~~(i)~~ 1. two representatives from a jurisdiction in the State with more than 100,000 students:

~~A.~~ one individual who is an early education educator; and

~~B.~~ one individual who is an elementary administrator;

- (ii) 2. two representatives from a jurisdiction in the State with less than 100,000 students:
- ~~1.~~ A. one individual who is an early education educator; and
 - ~~2.~~ B. one individual who is an elementary administrator;
- (iii) 3. one representative from a Head Start program;
- (iv) 4. one representative from a private prekindergarten provider;
- (v) 5. one representative from the Maryland Parent Teacher Association; ~~and~~
- (vi) 6. one representative from ~~the Maryland Family Network~~ an early childhood advocacy organization; and
7. one representative from an organization that advocates for children with special needs.

(c) The State Department of Education shall designate a chair of the Workgroup.

(d) The State Department of Education shall provide staff for the Workgroup.

(e) A member of the Workgroup:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Workgroup; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Workgroup shall:

(1) estimate the number and proportion of eligible children who are 4 years old currently being served by publicly funded prekindergarten programs using the free and reduced-price meal eligibility data for kindergarten through second grade as a proxy; and

(2) make recommendations regarding an implementation plan based on Augenblick, Palaich and Associates' January 2016 "A Comprehensive Analysis of Prekindergarten in Maryland" report submitted in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2014 to make quality, full-day prekindergarten universally available to children who are 4 years old, including:

(i) a mixed delivery system of public and private providers meeting the high quality requirement;

- (ii) a sliding income scale for family contribution;
- (iii) capacity of existing high quality providers and credentialed staff;
- (iv) a plan to increase capacity of high quality providers and staff;
- (v) the impact on school space;
- (vi) the impact by jurisdiction;
- (vii) the potential for school systems to partner with private providers or Head Start centers to increase capacity; and
- (viii) any options to merge various funding streams for prekindergarten to provide a seamless and diverse experience for families.

(g) On or before September 1, 2017, the Workgroup shall report its findings and recommendations to the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act ~~shall take effect June 1, 2017~~ is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is enacted. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year ~~and, at the end of May 31, 2018,~~ from the date it is enacted and, at the end of the 1-year period, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Enacted under Article II, § 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution, May 27, 2017.