

Date of Hearing: July 7, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Patrick O'Donnell, Chair  
SB 725 (Ochoa Bogh) – As Amended June 15, 2021

**SENATE VOTE:** 39-0

**SUBJECT:** Early childhood education: parent participation preschool programs

**SUMMARY:** Establishes the Parent Participation Preschool Pilot Program, under the administration of the California Department of Education (CDE), to provide one-time grants to California State Preschool Program (CSPP) contracting agencies for the creation or expansion of parent participation preschool programs. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Establishes the Parent Participation Preschool Pilot Program, under the administration of the CDE, to provide one-time grants to CSPP contracting agencies for the creation or expansion of parent participation preschool programs.
- 2) Requires grant funds be used for costs associated with creating or expanding parent participation preschool programs, including, but not limited to, costs related to all of the following:
  - a) Teacher salaries;
  - b) Classrooms;
  - c) Curriculum; and
  - d) Learning development for children in the program.
- 3) Requires CSPP contracting agencies receiving Parent Participation Preschool Pilot Program grants to report specific data to, and in a manner specified by, the CDE, and participate in overall program evaluation.
- 4) Requires the CDE, in awarding Parent Participation Preschool Pilot Program grant funding, to do all of the following:
  - a) On or before March 31, 2022, announce and post criteria for grants on its website;
  - b) On or before the beginning of the 2022–23 school year, award grants to selected CSPP contracting agencies;
  - c) Establish standard metrics to ensure consistency in data collection;
  - d) On or before January 1, 2024, submit a report to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature on the expenditure of funds and relevant outcome data in order to evaluate the impact of the pilot program; and

- e) Spend no more than 5% of the funds appropriated for the pilot program on the costs of administering the pilot program.
- 5) Defines the following terms:
- a) “California state preschool program contracting agency” means a school district, community college district, college or university, county superintendent of schools, county, city, public agency, private nontax-exempt agency, private tax-exempt agency, or other entity operating a CSPP.
  - b) “Parent participation preschool program” means a preschool program funded by the state, in whole or in part, or a private preschool program, where there is an educational component for a parent, guardian, or family member of a child in the program and there may also be a requirement for those persons to volunteer in the classroom, to help them gain real-life skills and strategies for parenting young children and to initiate family involvement in local school communities. Those persons are not required to be an employee of the preschool and their participation is not required to count toward any fees. The educational component may focus on any of the following areas:
    - i. Positive discipline;
    - ii. Temperament and different personalities;
    - iii. Kindergarten readiness and preschool child development.
    - iv. Strategies for successful potty training;
    - v. Nutrition for preschool children;
    - vi. Creating family traditions; and
    - vii. Behavioral health awareness.
  - c) “Pilot program” means the Parent Participation Preschool Pilot Program.
- 6) States the intent of the Legislature that any state funding available for preschool programs also be available for parent participation preschool programs.
- 7) Requires that implementation of the Parent Participation Preschool Pilot Program is contingent upon an appropriation in the annual Budget Act or another statute for this purpose.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the CSPP and requires that the programs include part-day age and developmentally appropriate programs designed to facilitate the transition to kindergarten for 3- and 4-year-old children in educational development, health services, social services, nutritional services, parent education and parent participation, evaluation, and staff development (Education Code (EC) 8235).

- 2) Provides that 3- and 4-year-old children are eligible for CSPP if the family is a current CalWORKs recipient; is income eligible; or the children are recipients of Child Protective Services (CPS) (EC 8235).
- 3) Provides that 3- and 4-year-olds are eligible for wraparound child care services to supplement part-day CSPP if the family is eligible for CSPP as they are a current aid recipient, income eligible, homeless, or one whose children are recipients of CPS or have been defined as being, or at risk of being abused, neglected, or exploited (EC 8239).
- 4) Defines “wraparound childcare services” and “wraparound general childcare and development programs” as services provided for the remaining portion of the day or remainder of the year following the completion of part-day preschool services that are necessary to meet the childcare needs of eligible parents, as specified (EC 8239).
- 5) Establishes staffing ratios for subsidized center-based childcare programs serving children from 3- to 6-year-olds at a 1:8 adult-child ratio and a 1:24 teacher-child ratio (EC 8264.8).
- 6) Exempts a volunteer who is a relative, legal guardian, or foster parent of a client in the child care facility from specified criminal record clearances (Health and Safety Code 1596.871 (b)(ii)).
- 7) Establishes the federal Head Start program to promote the school readiness of low-income children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development in a learning environment that supports children’s growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, physical skills, and approaches to learning; and through the provision to low-income children and their families of health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services that are determined, based on family needs assessments, to be necessary (Sec. 635. 42 U.S.C. 9801).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- While the establishment of the pilot program would be contingent upon an appropriation, the bill could result in Proposition 98 General Fund cost pressure in the tens of millions of dollars for the state to fund it.
- Additionally, the CDE estimates one-time General Fund costs of approximately \$408,000 and 2.5 positions over a two-year period to administer the program, provide technical assistance to grantees, collect and analyze data, and develop the legislative report.

**COMMENTS:**

**Key provisions of the bill.** This bill would establish a Parent Participation Preschool Pilot Program. This proposal would require the CDE to provide one-time grants to existing CSPP contracting agencies, who may be local educational agencies (LEAs) or other community-based organizations, for the creation or expansion of parent participation preschool programs. The grant funds would be required to be used for costs associated with creating or expanding parent participation preschool programs, including teacher salaries, facilities, and curriculum. Any CSPP provider that receives a grant pursuant to this proposal would be required to report specified data to the CDE for the purpose of an evaluation of the pilot.

***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Parent participation programs across the nation have been shown to develop strong bonds between parent and children, and give parents the tools they need to be successful parents. According to the National Parent Teacher Association, ‘In the 2002 research review *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp conclude that there is a positive and convincing relationship between family involvement and student success, regardless of race/ethnicity, class, or parents’ level of education. To put it another way, when families are involved in their children’s learning both at home and at school, their children do better in school. However, these programs each year are at risk of being cut from budgets, as they are not prioritized by school district.’

SB 725 seeks to support preschool program that are specifically designed to help parents and caregivers learn how to support their child’s learning and development through the parent’s weekly participation in the classroom and educational classes. These programs help parents gain real-life skills and strategies for parenting young children. It initiates family involvement and connects parents to their local school community at the earliest stages. When parents, families and the community work together, everyone benefits.”

***California State Preschool Program.*** The CSPP is administered by the CDE through contractors and provides both part-day (at least 3 hours per day) and full-day (at least 6.5 hours per day) services to eligible 3- and 4-year-olds, including developmentally appropriate curriculum, parent education, meals and snacks, and referral to social and health services for families. CSPP can be offered in various settings, including childcare centers, family childcare network homes, or in school settings. CSPP contractors include school districts, county offices of education (COEs), and community-based providers. Approximately two-thirds of children in CSPP are served by LEAs, and the remaining one-third are served by community-based organizations. In the 2018-19 fiscal year, approximately 143,000 3- and 4-year-old children were enrolled in a CSPP. Of these, 61% attended part-day programs and 39% attended full-day programs. The CSPP is the primary source of subsidized preschool in California; however, thousands of other private for-profit and nonprofit programs serve other 3- and 4-year-olds in a variety of formats and settings.

***Head Start and parental involvement.*** Head Start is a federal program providing comprehensive developmental services for low-income children from birth to entry into elementary school. Federal grants are provided directly to local grantees, as the CDE does not administer, and the state does not provide any funding for Head Start programs. California’s Head Start program is the largest in the nation. Approximately 89,000 3- and 4-year old children were served in Head Start programs in California in 2019.

Head Start was founded both as an early education program for children, as well as an opportunity for parents to participate in the program and learn parenting skills. Head Start has a heavy emphasis on parent involvement; the corresponding Code of Federal Regulations specifies that parents must be included in all aspects of programs and requires that services be provided directly to parents in order “to enhance their parenting skills, knowledge, and understanding of the educational and developmental needs and activities of their children” (45 CFR Chapter XIII §1304.40 (e) (3)). The Head Start Performance Standards require staff to work with parents to develop family partnership agreements that identify goals, responsibilities, and timetables and strategies for achieving these goals. Further, Head Start grantees must help families access necessary services, either directly or through referrals to community resources, including

emergency or crisis assistance, such as food, housing, clothing, and transportation information, counseling, and services specific to family needs. Head Start grantees and delegate agencies are required to establish and maintain a formal structure of shared governance in the form of a policy council or committee including parents of currently enrolled children and community representatives to allow participation in program policymaking and decisions.

The impact of parent participation preschool programs on children and their parents is an area in need of additional empirical research; there are not enough available and recent relevant studies from which to inform policy. According to a 2016 article in the *Journal of Marriage Fam, Parent Involvement in Head Start and Children's Development: Indirect Effects Through Parenting*, a growing body of literature indicates that Head Start participation is associated with more positive parenting behaviors, and there is also promising new evidence to suggest that parent involvement serves as an important mechanism for building parents' social capital and, ultimately, achieving improvements in parenting. Study findings published in the *School Psychology Review* in 1999, *Positive Relationships between Parent School Involvement and Public School Inner-City Preschoolers' Development and Academic Performance*, reported a positive impact of parental involvement on the development of at-risk children attending public preschool and Head Start programs. Increased parent involvement in early education and more active types of parent involvement were associated with greater mastery of early basic school skills in all subject areas.

***Existing parent preschool programs.*** This bill is generally modeled on existing parent participation preschool programs. One example is operated by the Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD), which operates five parent participation preschool locations and offers three types of classes: 5 days a week, 4 days a week, and a Friday toddler class. According to SCUSD's website for the parent participation preschool program, "Our education is focused on child development, positive discipline and developmentally appropriate practices. Parents work in the classroom in collaboration and guidance of the teacher to help children develop a variety of skills. Parents also learn parenting techniques to use in the classroom and at home. The parent/guardian or family member works in the classroom one day per week. Age-appropriate activities are planned and developed by parents with the assistance of the teacher to help children develop skills throughout each milestone. Parents are also required to attend the parent education classes which meet outside of the preschool component, usually during the evening."

***Recommended Committee Amendments.*** *Staff recommends that the bill be amended as follows:*

- Remove "private" from definition of "parent participation preschool program". Preschool in California is offered through a diverse network of provider types. Given the wide variance between some programs, limiting the bill to a preschool program funded by the state provides necessary specificity.
- Remove intent language for future funding going to parent participation preschool programs.
- Clarify that any parent participation grants received by CSPP contractors would not affect existing or prospective CSPP contract amounts. Supporting a parent participation component in a preschool will come with costs, and if contractors receive grants for this purpose, then their contract amounts should be able to remain stable.

- Include opportunities for parent involvement beyond volunteering in the classroom. Adding additional opportunities will accommodate the varying schedules of working, low income and single parent families who may be much less likely to be available during the day to work in the classroom.
- Summarize the authorized educational components of a parent participation preschool program into fewer, less specific topics in order to allow for greater program flexibility to meet the unique needs of the parent and school community.
- Add educational components for parents as an allowable use of grant funds. This bill defines a parent participation preschool to include an educational component for the parent, which should be an authorized use of parent participation preschool grant funds.
- Add a sunset date. This bill is a pilot, and should be limited before being considered for a permanent reauthorization based on the findings of an evaluation.

***Related legislation.*** SB 50 (Limón) of this Session expands the range of types of child care and early learning services that a CSPP contracting agency may provide.

AB 123 (McCarty) of the 2019-20 Session would have established the Pre-K for All Act; expanded the eligibility for CSPP; increased the reimbursement rate for the CSPP and required a portion of the increase to be used to increase teacher pay; required CSPP lead teachers to hold a bachelor's degree by a specified date; and established a program to provide financial support to childcare workers pursuing a bachelor's degree. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 1754 (McCarty) of the 2017-18 Session would have required the state to provide all eligible low-income 4-year-old children with access to early care and education programs. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 47 (McCarty) of the 2015-16 Session would have established the Preschool for All Act of 2015 and required, on or before June 30, 2018, all eligible children who are not enrolled in transitional kindergarten to have access to the CSPP the year before they enter kindergarten, if their parents wish to enroll them and contingent upon the appropriation in the annual Budget Act for this purpose. This bill was vetoed by Governor Brown, who stated:

Last year's education omnibus trailer bill already codified the intent to make preschool and other full-day, full year early education and care opportunities available to all low-income children. The discussion on expanding state preschool - which takes into account rates paid to providers as well as access and availability for families - should be considered in the budget process, as it is every year. A bill that sets an arbitrary deadline, contingent on a sufficient appropriation, is unnecessary.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

None on file

**Opposition**

None on file

**Analysis Prepared by:** Marguerite Ries / ED. / (916) 319-2087