Publicly Funded PK
Orange East Supervisory Union
March 24, 2021

Background, 2014

Act 166: An Act Pertaining to Publicly Funded Prekindergarten Education

- Is an entitlement
- Is portable within the State of Vermont
- 10 hours per week for 35 weeks of the school year
- Is jointly administered by the Agency of Education and the Agency of Human Services.
  - AOE assures educational fidelity and legal adherence to state and federal education laws. It uses the lens of the continuum from early childhood through high school.
  - The Child Development Division of the Department of Children and Families (AHS) uses a health, wellness and safety lens.
Agency of Education Responsibility

- Monitors educational quality standards
- Monitors educational licenses
- Monitors program compliance with the state and federal education laws and regulations
- Monitors program compliance with Act 166 regulations

Agency of Human Services Child Development Div. Responsibility

- Monitor program operating licenses
- Monitor quality rating standards
- Monitor program compliance with the state and federal health and safety laws and regulations
- Rewriting operational licensing regulations (Fall 2020) to address issues identified since joint administration of the law, including duplication of public school PK/ CDD requirements
PK Program Responsibility

- Provide 10 hours per week/ 35 weeks per school year of education
- Identify a licensed teacher who oversees implementation of curriculum that aligns with Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS covers through Grade 3)
- Operate legally under Child Development Division licensing rules
- Maintain attendance, program costs, and assessments
- Maintain a high score through the quality rating system “Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS)”
- Assess children twice a year using a state approved tool: Teaching Strategies Gold is a curriculum based formative assessment of 10 academic and developmental areas

School Responsibility

- Contract annually with a private PK program if family requests
- Pay state determined tuition to the private PK partner ($3,445 in FY21)
- Implement an enrollment process that meets state and federal guidelines
- Assure parents/ guardians know how to enroll a child for tuition
- “Count” the enrolled child in its census/ADM
- Maintain records of enrollment and district costs
System Development, 2015

- Group* and individual* meetings with principals, boards, private programs and families set the goals of the system:
  - **Outreach & Communication**: Tax payers need to know local funds pay for this law. Programs need to understand the shift to public education.
  - **Access**: Assure families know how to access programs and tuition.
  - **Capacity**: Assure enough spaces for children in the right locations.
  - **Quality**: Private programs and public schools should be of equal quality.

* Group conversation brings out creativity and allows people to build on one another’s ideas; individual conversation brings up honest opinions.

Access & Capacity
Enrollment as part of total population

![Graph showing enrollment data over years](image-url)
Quality

All programs (public and private) meet minimum licensing standards for center based programs through Child Development Division

AND

Have at least 4 out of 5 STARS in Child Development Division quality rating system, which are standards above the minimum licensing standards

AND


OPTIONAL (for OESU affiliated sites)

Early MTSS (social-emotional focused MTSS) assessment and coaching, 138 evidence based practices that promote social-emotional growth and development.

4 PK programs implement Early MTSS with fidelity (3 private, 1 public)
System Survey 5 Years Later, 2020

- 75% of parents know how to enroll a child for tuition
- 75% know that local funds pay the tuition
- 88% of respondents know that PK children “count” in ADM
- 62% know what the requirements are to be a public PK
- 90% know who to call with questions about PK
- 72% of estimated PK child population attends a program
- 75% know how to find PK programs
- 25% of people can’t get access to preferred program (on a wait list)
- 20% don’t have access in their community or preferred community

System Survey 5 Years Later, 2020

- Outreach and Communication
  - Most families know how to enroll for tuition
  - All programs understand that PK is considered public education
  - Specific tuition lines in local budgets informs communities of the financial obligation
- Access & Capacity
  - Stable access in most communities
  - Missing access in preferred location (e.g., WRVS families don’t have local access)
- Quality
  - 44% of programs implement EMTSS with fidelity
  - 77% of programs have some training in EMTSS
OUUSD Elementary Schools

Bradford
- Public Program
  - Enrolls 15
  - 3 mornings per week
- Other Private Partners
  - Students attend 4 other programs, two are EMTSS fidelity sites

Newbury
- Private Program on site
  - Enrolls 15
  - Open full days, all week
  - EMTSS fidelity site
- Other Private Partners
  - Students attend 2 other programs, one is an EMTSS fidelity site

Access & Capacity: OUUSD Elementary Schools

PK Enrollment as Percentage of Estimated PK Population

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Act 66 Public PK

Access & Capacity: OUUSD Elementary Schools