

Legislative Analysis



KINDERGARTEN ENTRY AGE

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House Bill 4513-4514

Sponsor: Rep. Ray Franz

Committee: Appropriations

Complete to 10-12-11

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4513-4514 AS INTRODUCED 4-12-11

House Bill 4513 - Revised School Code

House Bill 4513 would amend the Revised School Code (MCL 380.114), to move up the minimum age requirement for a child enrolling in kindergarten to require the child to be five years of age by September 1, rather than December 1.

Under current law, in school districts that provide kindergarten, a child may enroll in kindergarten if the child is at least 5 years old on December 1 of the school year of enrollment. Under HB 4513, a child could enroll in kindergarten if he or she were at least five years old on the September 1 immediately preceding enrollment.¹

The bill would, however, permit the parent or guardian of a child who was not at least 5 years old on September 1 but will be at least 5 years old by December 1 to submit a request for a waiver allowing the child to enroll in the school year prior to the school year in which the child would otherwise be eligible to enroll (i.e. the school year in which the child would be five years old on September 1). Essentially, if the waiver were approved the child could enroll in kindergarten for the school year in which the child turns five years old.

To obtain a waiver, the parent or guardian of the child would have to submit a waiver request to the school principal prior to May 1 before the school year the child intends to enroll in kindergarten. Upon receiving a waiver request, the principal would have to form a committee consisting of a school administrator and two teachers to evaluate the child's readiness for kindergarten. The evaluation would include a skills assessment and an interview with the child and the child's parent or guardian. The committee would have to notify the parent of the decision to grant or deny the waiver request by July 1.

The bill would also delete an outdated provision permitting children who turn five years of age before March 1 of a school year to enroll in a kindergarten program in a district with semi-annual promotions.

¹ According to the Education Commission of the States, 32 states (including Puerto Rico) have a requirement that a child turn 5 years old before September 1 in order to be eligible to enroll in kindergarten. (Of those states, several have a cut of dates of sometime in August.). Additionally, 6 states have a cut-off date sometime between September 2 and September 30. See, http://www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/Kindergarten/KDB_intro_SF.asp.

House Bill 4514 – State School Aid Act

House Bill 4514 would amend the State School Aid Act (MCL 388.1606), by amending the definition of "membership". Under the act, to be counted in membership, a pupil must be five years old by December 1. The bill, instead, specifies that the pupil must meet the minimum age requirement established in the Revised School Code.²

FISCAL IMPACT:

State Impact: The bill would likely lower enrollment and pupil membership counts for school districts by making five year olds born between September 2 and December 1 ineligible for enrollment in kindergarten in the school year in which they turn five. For state aid membership purposes, the State School Aid Act does not distinguish between students enrolled in standard kindergarten programs and students enrolled in alternative kindergarten programs, such as Young Fives or developmental kindergarten.

Based on data provided by the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), recent birthdate trends and estimates on migration patterns, an estimated 21,000 kindergartners will turn five years old between September 2 and December 1 during the 2012-2013 school year.³ Assuming the bills would be in place for the 2012-2013 school year, by pushing back kindergarten enrollment for these students onto the 2013-2014 school year, the bills would reduce FY 2012-13 School Aid Fund expenditures by approximately \$154 million.⁴ That annual savings would continue as that smaller cohort tracked through each grade until graduation, as shown in Table 1.

There are two issues that would generally serve to reduce the amount of any potential savings. First, as provided in HB 4513, districts would be permitted to grant a waiver to students born between September 2 and December 1, subject to the result of an evaluation. It isn't known how many waivers would be granted, although a 2009 survey of kindergarten teachers by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) estimated that 65% of kindergarten students were ready to learn the curriculum when they enter kindergarten.⁵ If waivers were granted to 65% of the impacted students, the resulting annual savings from HB 4513 would drop to approximately \$54.0 million. Districts that offer developmental kindergarten programs would be able to enroll students in those programs under a waiver. If a district offers an alternative kindergarten program,

² A conflict substitute will need to be drafted eventually in order to incorporate amendments made to Section 6 in 2011 PA 63 (HB 4325), the FY 2011-12 School Aid appropriations act.

³ As introduced the bill would apply beginning with the 2011-2012 school year. Presumably, if enacted, it would have a later starting date.

⁴ Assuming district per pupil foundation allowances do not change from FY 2011-12. The weighted average foundation allowance is approximately \$7,200 based on FY 2012-13 pupil estimates.

⁵ Early Childhood Investment Corporation, *Michigan Kindergarten Teacher Opinion Survey*, August 2009, http://greatstartforkids.org/sites/default/files/file/Key%20Findings_K%20survey%20narrative_FINAL_2009_08_12.pdf.

such as two-year sequence, this younger group of five year olds would enroll under a waiver.

The second issue pertains to the treatment of kindergarten students for School Aid purposes. For the current (2011-2012) year, the School Aid Act provides that full-time equated (FTE) memberships for pupils in kindergarten require half the number of class hours as FTE pupils in grades 1-12. However, beginning in the 2012-13 school year the required number of class hours for FTE kindergarten pupils and FTE pupils in grades 1-12 are the same.⁶ This change is likely going to impact whether school districts offer full-day or half-day programs, which will impact kindergarten enrollment.

Local Impact: House Bill 4513 would have varying impacts on school districts in FY 2012-13, ultimately depending on the number of pupils whose entry into kindergarten is delayed. The total revenue loss to school districts would be the amount of savings, noted above, realized by the state. On average, each pupil equates to a foundation allowance of \$7,200. This loss of revenue would continue as this smaller cohort of students tracked through each grade until graduation.

The bill would also impose challenges on districts as they would have to align staff with enrollment, as the smaller cohort tracked through.⁷ School districts could, for instance, have to re-assign staff within buildings or between buildings to account for a smaller cohort moving through each grade level. As a class tracks through, it may only require three classes, for example, for a grade when it otherwise would have required four. In other instances, a school district may not be able to reduce the number of classes, given constraints on class size, so it would have to absorb the loss of students (and the resulting loss of revenue) without an offsetting reduction in faculty expenses.

The bill would also impose additional requirements on school districts to process waiver applications and conduct assessments of students. Costs incurred by the districts could include the cost of staff time, supplemental pay for participating staff, and assessment and evaluation materials. Any additional costs would be lessened to the extent that districts already conduct assessments of entering kindergarten students, although kindergarten registration requirements vary from district to district. Districts may have to adjust their kindergarten registration times to meet the requirements set out in the bill.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

⁶ See Sec. 4(r) of the School Aid Act, MCL 388.1604(r). The minimum required number of hours (1,098) is established in Sec. 101 of the School Aid Act, MCL 388.1701.

⁷ Fall 2010 count day, 19.4% of kindergarten students were born between September 2 and December 1. Of the nearly 119,000 FTE kindergarten pupils, over 23,000 were enrolled in kindergarten or developmental kindergarten.

Table 1
Impact of House Bill 4513 on Pupil Counts

Current Law - December 1 Cut-Off Date for Kindergarten Enrollment

	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
K	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
1	114,677	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
2	111,058	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
3	110,526	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
4	112,840	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
5	113,842	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
6	113,360	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
7	114,654	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
8	114,363	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
9	125,692	125,692	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
10	126,360	126,360	125,692	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
11	116,288	116,288	126,360	125,692	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969	118,969
12	115,281	115,281	116,288	126,360	125,692	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	118,969	118,969
Total	1,507,910	1,507,910	1,511,598	1,514,278	1,506,887	1,500,164	1,504,770	1,509,085	1,514,693	1,519,820	1,525,948	1,534,391	1,542,302	1,546,594	1,546,594

House Bill 4513 - September 1 Cut-Off Date for Kindergarten Enrollment

	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
K	118,969	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
1	114,677	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
2	111,058	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
3	110,526	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
4	112,840	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
5	113,842	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
6	113,360	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
7	114,654	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
8	114,363	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
9	125,692	125,692	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969	118,969
10	126,360	126,360	125,692	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969	118,969
11	116,288	116,288	126,360	125,692	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969	118,969
12	115,281	115,281	116,288	126,360	125,692	114,363	114,654	113,360	113,842	112,840	110,526	111,058	114,677	97,569	118,969
Total	1,507,910	1,486,510	1,490,198	1,492,878	1,485,487	1,478,764	1,483,370	1,487,685	1,493,293	1,498,420	1,504,548	1,512,991	1,520,902	1,525,194	1,546,594

Impact	0	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	(21,400)	0
x \$7,200															
Per Pupil	\$0	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	(\$154,080,000)	\$0

- Notes:**
- (1) Assumes no changes to foundation allowance
 - (2) Assumes no changes to pupil counts
 - (3) Pupil counts for FY 2011-12 are actually Fall 2010 full-time equivalent (FTE) counts.
 - (4) The drop in kindergarten students for FY2012-13 reflects the number of Fall 2010 kindergarten students born between 9/2 and 12/1, adjusted for birth rates and net migration estimates. For the first year (FY2012-13), nearly 20% of kindergarten students are removed from pupil count. The FY2012-13 kindergarten class would generally include children who turn 5 between December 2, 2012 and September 1, 2013, a 9-month period.
 - (5) Each subsequent entering kindergarten class bounces back to a normal size and would generally include children who turn 5 between September 2nd and following September 1st, a 12-month period.