

Legislative Analysis



KINDERGARTEN ENTRY AGE

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House Bill 4513 (Substitute H-4)

House Bill 4514 (Substitute H-3)

Sponsor: Rep. Ray A. Franz

Committee: Education

Complete to 4-23-11

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4513 & 4514 AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE 4-18-11

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 so that a child would have to be five years of age by September 1, rather than December 1 (as now). The requirement would be phased in over three years, starting in the 2013-14 school year.

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 House Bill 4513, a child could enroll in kindergarten if he or she were at least five years old on November 1 of the 2013-14 school year, on October 1 of the 2014-15 school year, and on the September 1 immediately preceding enrollment for the 2015-16 school year.

The bill would, however, permit the parent or guardian of a child who is under 5 years old on the required date but who will be at least 5 years old by December 1 of the school year to enroll their student. To do so, the parent or guardian must notify the school district by June 1 immediately prior to the school year of the intention to enroll the child in kindergarten for the upcoming school year. The district could make a recommendation that the child is not ready to enroll in kindergarten due to the child's age, but the parent or guardian would still have the choice to enroll the child. This waiver from the age requirement would only apply in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years.

The bill would also delete an outdated provision permitting children who turn five years of age before March 1 of a school year to enroll in a kindergarten program in a district with semi-annual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

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.

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 (over a three-year phase-in) for enrollment in kindergarten in the school year in which they turn five.

Based on enrollment data provided by the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), recent birthdate trends and estimates of migration patterns, an estimated 21,000 kindergartners turn five years old between September 2 and December 1 during the school year they are enrolled in kindergarten. Phasing in the age requirement over three years would essentially reduce the number of children in three cohorts, starting in 2013-14, by about 7,000 pupils.

In the 2013-14 school year, children turning 5 years of age after November 1 would be ineligible to enroll in kindergarten, affecting about 7,000 pupils. This cohort would be smaller than it otherwise would be under current law by about 7,000 pupils. In the 2014-15 school year, children turning 5 years of age after October 1 of the school year would be ineligible to enroll in kindergarten, affecting about 14,000 pupils. This cohort, however, would include about 7,000 children who turned five after November 1, 2013, but would still be about 7,000 pupils below what it otherwise would be under current law. In the 2015-16 school year, children turning five years of age after September 1 immediately prior to the school year would be ineligible for kindergarten, affecting about 21,000 pupils. This cohort, however, would include about 14,000 children who turned five after October 1, 2014, but would still be about 7,000 pupils below what it otherwise would be under current law.

Based on a weighted average foundation allowance of \$7,200, each of the three smaller cohorts would reduce state spending by about \$50.4 million. In 2013-14, with one smaller cohort, state spending would be reduced by about \$50.4 million. In 2014-15, with two smaller cohorts, state spending would be reduced by about \$100.8 million. When the bill is fully phased in, in 2015-16 with three smaller cohorts, state spending would be reduced by about \$151.2 million. The reduction in state spending would continue as each cohort tracked through the K-12 system, as shown in Table 1, through the 2027-2028 school year. Essentially, a smaller kindergarten class in one year means a smaller first grade class the following year, a smaller second grade class the next year, and so on until graduation.

However, for the 2013-14 and 2015-16 school years, the bill provides parents/guardians with the choice to enroll children turning five after the cut-off day if they notify the school district by June 1 prior to the school year. To the extent parents exercise this choice, district pupil membership counts would not fall as much, and the amount of savings realized by the state would decline as well.

Another issue that may affect kindergarten enrollment in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years is the treatment of kindergarten students for School Aid purposes. For the current school year (2011-12), the School Aid Act provides that full-time equated (FTE) membership for kindergarten pupils requires half of the number of class hours as FTE

pupils in grades 1-12. Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, required number of class hours for FTE kindergarten pupils and FTE pupils in grades 1-12 are the same (1,098 hours). It is anticipated that most districts will no longer offer half-day programs or only offer a few sections of half-day programs.¹

The move to full-day programs could prompt some parents of younger children to delay their child's entry into kindergarten, particularly in the absence of a developmental kindergarten program offered by the school district. The impact of this bill, combined with changes in full-time equivalency for kindergarten pupils under the School Aid Act, could also impose challenges on districts operating developmental kindergarten programs. For state aid membership purposes, the State School Aid Act does not distinguish between students enrolled in standard kindergarten programs and students enrolled in developmental kindergarten programs. When fully phased in starting in 2015-16, the bill provides a firm age requirement (five years of age by September 1), with no opportunity for either the parent or the school district to enroll a younger child (five years of age by December 1) in a developmental kindergarten program with the district receiving a foundation allowance for that younger child. About half of the pupils in developmental kindergarten programs turn five between September 1 and December 1.

Local Impact: House Bill 4513 would have varying impacts on school districts, 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. This loss of revenue would continue as the three smaller cohorts tracked through each grade until graduation, through the 2027-2028 school year.

The bill would also impose challenges on districts as they would have to align staff with enrollment, as the smaller cohort tracked through. School districts might, 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 enactment of this bill, combined with the changes in the treatment of kindergarten pupils for School Aid purposes, could also impact districts operating developmental kindergarten programs, as districts could no longer count younger 5 year olds in membership for state aid purposes, when the age requirement is fully phased-in.

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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.

¹ While the Executive Budget Recommendation for School Aid assumes a savings of \$50.0 million in FY 2012-13 because some districts will opt to continue half-day programs, the House School Aid budget (HB 5372) assumes that that savings will not materialize, with only a few districts continuing half-day programs.

Table 1
Impact of House Bill 4513 on Pupil Counts

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

	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	26/27	27/28
K	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
1	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
2	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
3	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
4	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
5	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
6	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
7	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
8	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
9	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
10	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
11	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
12	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
Total	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000	1,560,000

House Bill 4513 - September 1 Cut-Off Date for Kindergarten Enrollment (3-year phase-in)

	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	26/27	27/28
K	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
1	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
2	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
3	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
4	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
5	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
6	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
7	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
8	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
9	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
10	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000	120,000
11	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000	120,000
12	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	113,000	113,000	113,000
Total	1,560,000	1,553,000	1,546,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,539,000	1,546,000	1,553,000

Pupil Impact	0	(7,000)	(14,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(21,000)	(14,000)	(7,000)
Savings (Millions)	\$0	(\$50.4)	(\$100.8)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$151.2)	(\$100.8)	(\$50.4)

Notes:

- (1) Pupil counts are for illustrative purposes.
(2) Assumes no change in the foundation allowance.