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Bill Analysis

Legislative Service Commission

H.B. 383

123rd General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Brading, Terwilleger, Corbin, Hartnett, Taylor, Hollister, Bender, Jolivette, Logan

BILL SUMMARY

- Changes from September 30 to August 1 the date by which, with certain exceptions, children must be five or six years old in order to be admitted to kindergarten or first grade, respectively.
- Changes from September 30 to August 1 the date by which children must be at least six years of age in order to be considered for a waiver of the requirement that kindergarten must be completed before admission to first grade.
- Phases in over a two-year period the new date by which a child must be of the proper age for admission to kindergarten or first grade.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Current law generally requires that children be five years old prior to September 30 in order to be admitted to kindergarten in that year, and six years old prior to that date for admission to first grade in that year. Current law also generally requires children to successfully complete kindergarten before they can be admitted to first grade. If a child is at least six years old prior to September 30 and has not completed kindergarten, the pupil personnel services committee of the child's school district may waive the kindergarten requirement if the child demonstrates to the committee's satisfaction that the child possesses the necessary social, emotional, and cognitive skills for first grade. The bill phases in a change in the date by which the child must attain the required age for admission to school from September 30 to August 1 (sec. 3321.01). The bill's phase-in establishes the age requirement date as September 1 for the 2000-2001 school year. The August 1 date would first apply to the 2001-2002 school year (Section 3).

An exception to the age requirement for admission to kindergarten and first grade exists in current law. This exception applies to children who are at least five

or six years old by January 1 of the school year of admission and who meet "educationally accepted" standards for early admission to the applicable grade, as determined by the school district's testing program. The bill does not change this provision. (Sec. 3321.01(A).)

The bill also retains a provision in current law that, if a school district customarily admits children during the middle of a school year (that is, at the beginning of a term that begins in a month other than August or September), children may be admitted to kindergarten or first grade as long as they are five or six years old, respectively, by the first day of that term. (Sec. 3321.01(A).)

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	06-10-99	P. 827

H0383-I.123/rss