

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the City Council Committee on Education to hold hearings on Early Child Care Providers and Best Practices issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

WHEREAS, Extensive research and literature indicate that quality pre-kindergarten programs provide short-term and lasting benefits to children, families and schools by nurturing the growing minds of our youngest citizens during critical years of their development; and

WHEREAS, Quality pre-kindergarten programs consistently provide a safe, well-equipped classroom staffed by trained teachers, a challenging, proven, play-based curriculum, careful attention to the whole child (academic, physical, social and emotional needs), parental engagement and a transition plan to kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia and Mayor's Office of Education prioritized the expansion of quality pre-kindergarten programs in Philadelphia. Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney stated, "To meaningfully change the academic outcomes of our schools, the single most important investment we can make is in quality pre-k"; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor's proposal for the expansion of quality pre-kindergarten programming cited the need for such expansion, noting that the City of Philadelphia was home to more than 32,000 three and four year olds eligible for state or federally funded quality programs based on their family's income. At the time of the proposal, less than 16,000 high-quality, publically-funded seats were available in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has invested significant time, energy and resources to support the creation of 2,000 pre-kindergarten seats across 88 pre-K programs across the City of Philadelphia by January 2017. These providers participated in multiple rounds of vetting, including in person site visits and application overview by panels of respected early childhood professionals; and

WHEREAS, All child care providers in the State of Pennsylvania are encouraged to participate in the Keystone STARS system, established by the Pennsylvania Departments Human Services and Education, Office of Child Development & Early Learning, which provide Standards, Training and Professional Development, Assistance, Resources and Support to child care providers; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia, the Mayor's Office of Education and others provide technical assistance to support child care providers in meeting established regulations and adopting best practices; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Does hereby authorize the joint City Council Committee on Education to hold hearings on early child care and best practices issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.