

Measures Affecting Voluntary Prekindergarten:

Impact of 2015 Legislation on VPK Enrollment

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)
Early Learning Impact Conference
July 31, 2015

Conference Report

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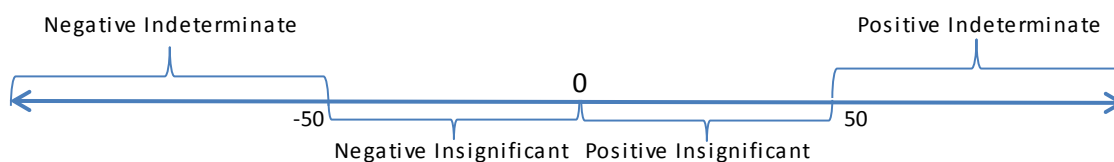
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Introduction

Two bills enacted during the 2015 Special Legislative Session contain provisions that may impact full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment for the Voluntary Prekindergarten program. All impacts are the cumulative effects. Cumulative effects means that the estimate for each fiscal year can be applied directly against the adopted forecast. The table below illustrates what is meant by fiscal year cumulative impacts, where FY references to prior years are inclusive of modifications to that specific cohort which reflect the natural passage of time.

Fiscal Year (FY) Cumulative Impacts				
	FY 1	FY 2	FY 3	FY 4
FTE Impact	FY 1 Annual Impact	FY 1 Annual Impact + FY 2 Annual Impact	FY 1 Annual Impact + FY 2 Annual Impact + FY 3 Annual Impact	FY 1 Annual Impact + FY 2 Annual Impact + FY 3 Annual Impact + FY 4 Annual Impact

Effects without specific numerical estimates are described as follows:



Wording	Meaning
Indeterminate (+/-)	The impact cannot be estimated as to level and direction, but the level is expected to be larger than or equal to +50 FTE or -50 FTE.
Positive Indeterminate	The impact cannot be estimated, but the level is expected to be positive and larger than or equal to +50 FTE.
Negative Indeterminate	The impact cannot be estimated, but the level is expected to be negative and larger than or equal to -50 FTE.
0 / Positive Indeterminate	The impact may be zero or it may be positive indeterminate.
0 / Negative Indeterminate	The impact may be zero or it may be negative indeterminate.
Insignificant (+/-)	The impact cannot be estimated as to direction, but the level is expected to be smaller than +50 FTE or -50 FTE.
Positive Insignificant	The impact is expected to be positive and the level is expected to be smaller than +50 FTE.
Negative Insignificant	The impact is expected to be negative and the level is expected to be smaller than -50 FTE.
0 / Positive Insignificant	The impact may be zero or it may be positive insignificant.
0 / Negative Insignificant	The impact may be zero or it may be negative insignificant.

Summary Table of Cumulative Impact for FTE

FTE Impact					
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Personal Learning Scholarships	0 / Negative Insignificant	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Detailed Bill Discussion

Personal Learning Scholarships

SB 2500-A, Enrolled, General Appropriations Act

SB 2502-A, Enrolled, Implementing the General Appropriations Act

Bill section covered:

SB 2500-A, Section 2, Line 105

SB 2502-A, Section 5, Lines 464-566 and Lines 624-647

Effective Date:

July 1, 2015

1) Statement of current law and change:

a) Current Law:

Section 1002.385, F.S. addresses the Florida Personal Learning Scholarships Accounts (PLSA) Program.

Prior to July 1, 2015 these scholarship accounts were available to children eligible to enroll in kindergarten through Grade 12 public school, who have a disability (autism, down syndrome, intellectual disability, Prader-Willi syndrome, spina bifida, Williams syndrome, or a high risk kindergarten child) or have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). (Section 1002.385 (3), F.S. Program Eligibility)

b) Change:

Section 2 of SB 2500-A appropriates \$53,398,058 for Personal Learning Scholarship Account scholarship awards, an increase over the amount appropriated for FY 2014-15.

Overall, Section 5 of SB 2502-A amends the statute to include eligible 3 and 4 year olds and revises the definition of autism to “autism spectrum disorder, spectrum disorder, as defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association.” Additionally, the section adds muscular dystrophy to the list of eligible disabilities.

Four year olds cannot be simultaneously enrolled in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program in order to receive the scholarship. Scholarship accounts must be used to meet the individual education needs of an eligible student and may also be applicable towards tuition and fees for eligible part-time tutoring services.

Scholarship recipient priority is given first to eligible student renewals then to a wait list based on the order of approved completed applications. Parents must provide a filed public school withdrawal form, a letter of admission or enrollment in an eligible private

school, appropriate documentation of a notice to establish and maintain a home education program or a copy of the student's annual educational evaluation, or a formal notification from a private school that has withdrawn the student from another educational scholarship program.

2) Methodology:

a) Description of Data and Sources (Listing of sources):

In consultation with Step Up for Students Scholarship Funding Organization and the Department of Education, data are too limited at this time to be included in this analysis.

b) Assumptions (Key decisions by the analyst regarding unknowns):

i) The average scholarship amount will be \$10,000 resulting in more than 5,000 scholarships for 2015-16.

ii) The Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFOs) will continue to process and submit eligible applications until the amount of funds provided for this program in the General Appropriations Act are committed.

3) Analysis (Summary of major steps in producing the estimate):

There are currently two SFOs that are eligible to establish personal learning scholarship accounts for eligible students, Step Up for Students and AAA Scholarships. Step Up for Students establishes the majority of accounts, accounting for 95% of accounts in 2014-15.

For the 2015-16 school year Step Up for Students has awarded 35 out of 2,559 scholarships (1.4%) to four year olds as of July 24, 2015. Additionally for four year old applications in 2015-16, two have been denied and 81 are still pending. These data provide an approximation for the attractiveness of PLSA's to four year olds, but these data do not reveal whether or not the child has forgone the VPK or VPK SIS (Specialized Instructional Services) programs in favor of the PLSA. Some four year olds may be participating in the PLSA without making a conscious choice against the VPK program. In addition, there is currently no restriction prohibiting a student enrolled in VPK or VPK SIS program to switch from this program to a PLSA if an award becomes available; thus, taking advantage of both programs in the same year.

4) Cumulative FTE and CO FTE Enrollment Impacts:

The conclusion is that while there are 2015-16 Personal Learning Scholarship Accounts being awarded to four year olds and slots are still available, the magnitude of the negative impact on VPK cannot be determined. The impact will only affect FY 2015-16 since this is an implementing bill. The negative impact is based on the recent opportunity for four year olds to obtain a Personal Learning Scholarship Account. However, a "0" impact is also feasible because a student could be enrolled in VPK and obtain a PLSA in the same year after terminating the VPK program some point before for the end of the year. Under this circumstance, the student would be counted in both VPK and the PLSA meaning that there

is no negative FTE impact on VPK. This impact could also be “0” if all 4-year olds PLSA recipients never intended to participate in VPK.

	Cumulative Fiscal Year Impacts				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
FTE	0 / Negative Insignificant	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Notes

Cumulative Weighted FTE impacts may be included for selected bills or groups of bills. The pre-Conference report will have the Proposed Impact. The final document will have the Adopted Impact.