

AN ACT concerning children.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Findings and purposes.

(a) The General Assembly finds all of the following:

(1) Research suggests that school expulsion and suspension practices are associated with negative educational, health, and developmental outcomes for children.

(2) Recent studies have shown that the expulsion of children in early care and educational settings is occurring at alarmingly high rates, particularly among certain racial and gender groups. A nationwide study on preschool expulsion found that preschoolers were expelled at more than 3 times the rate of kindergarten through twelfth grade students.

(3) Recent data from the U.S. Department of Education indicate that there are significant disparities within this trend. African American boys make up 19% of preschool enrollment but 45% of preschoolers suspended more than once. Other research shows that while Hispanic and African American boys combined represent 46% of all boys in preschool, these children represent 55% of preschool boys suspended. Boys make up 79% of preschoolers suspended once

and 82% of preschoolers suspended multiple times. African American girls also represent 54% of female children receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions, but only 20% of female preschool enrollment overall.

(4) A study completed in 2005 analyzing expulsion rates among states indicated that while this State reported the sixth-lowest expulsion rate of the 40 states surveyed, pre-kindergartners were expelled at a rate 3 times that of their older peers. A study conducted in 2002 in Chicago showed a high rate of expulsion, particularly in infant-toddler programs, with over 40% of child care programs asking a child to leave because of social-emotional and behavioral problems, with the most challenging behaviors being biting, hitting, and aggressive behavior.

(5) This State has recently improved expulsion and suspension practices in grades kindergarten through 12 via Public Act 99-456, and the federal government has imposed new expulsion and suspension policy requirements on some federally funded early childhood programs. These protections are important, but inconsistent and incomplete, as they do not cover all children in Illinois early learning programs.

(6) Access to infant and early childhood mental health consultants and positive behavior intervention and support have been shown to reduce or prevent expulsion and

suspension in early care and education programs. Early childhood professionals also need training, technical assistance, and professional development support to ensure they are able to respond to the social-emotional needs of young children and to ensure successful student participation in programs.

(7) Nationally and in this State, insufficient data collection hinders the ability to gauge the prevalence of expulsion or suspension of children from a range of early learning programs prior to formal school entry.

(b) The purposes of this Act are to:

(1) ensure that the goals of any disciplinary action by State-funded or State-licensed early childhood programs shall always include the well-being of all children, including those experiencing difficulties as well as others in the classroom, and prohibit the behavior-related removal of young children from early care and education settings without prior documentation, intervention, and planned transitions;

(2) ensure that early childhood professionals have the resources needed to support children's social and emotional health and to address challenging behaviors; and

(3) develop systems to track expulsion and suspension.

Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Sections 2-3.71, 2-3.71a, and 10-22.6 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.71) (from Ch. 122, par. 2-3.71)

Sec. 2-3.71. Grants for preschool educational programs.

(a) Preschool program.

(1) The State Board of Education shall implement and administer a grant program under the provisions of this subsection which shall consist of grants to public school districts and other eligible entities, as defined by the State Board of Education, to conduct voluntary preschool educational programs for children ages 3 to 5 which include a parent education component. A public school district which receives grants under this subsection may subcontract with other entities that are eligible to conduct a preschool educational program. These grants must be used to supplement, not supplant, funds received from any other source.

(2) (Blank).

(3) Any teacher of preschool children in the program authorized by this subsection shall hold an early childhood teaching certificate.

(4) (Blank).

(4.5) The State Board of Education shall provide the primary source of funding through appropriations for the program. Such funds shall be distributed to achieve a goal of "Preschool for All Children" for the benefit of all children whose families choose to participate in the

program. Based on available appropriations, newly funded programs shall be selected through a process giving first priority to qualified programs serving primarily at-risk children and second priority to qualified programs serving primarily children with a family income of less than 4 times the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2). For purposes of this paragraph (4.5), at-risk children are those who because of their home and community environment are subject to such language, cultural, economic and like disadvantages to cause them to have been determined as a result of screening procedures to be at risk of academic failure. Such screening procedures shall be based on criteria established by the State Board of Education.

Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph (4.5), grantees under the program must enter into a memorandum of understanding with the appropriate local Head Start agency. This memorandum must be entered into no later than 3 months after the award of a grantee's grant under the program, except that, in the case of the 2009-2010 program year, the memorandum must be entered into no later than the deadline set by the State Board of Education for applications to participate in the program in fiscal year 2011, and must address collaboration between the grantee's program and the local Head Start agency on certain issues,

which shall include without limitation the following:

(A) educational activities, curricular objectives, and instruction;

(B) public information dissemination and access to programs for families contacting programs;

(C) service areas;

(D) selection priorities for eligible children to be served by programs;

(E) maximizing the impact of federal and State funding to benefit young children;

(F) staff training, including opportunities for joint staff training;

(G) technical assistance;

(H) communication and parent outreach for smooth transitions to kindergarten;

(I) provision and use of facilities, transportation, and other program elements;

(J) facilitating each program's fulfillment of its statutory and regulatory requirements;

(K) improving local planning and collaboration; and

(L) providing comprehensive services for the neediest Illinois children and families.

If the appropriate local Head Start agency is unable or unwilling to enter into a memorandum of understanding as required under this paragraph (4.5), the memorandum of

understanding requirement shall not apply and the grantee under the program must notify the State Board of Education in writing of the Head Start agency's inability or unwillingness. The State Board of Education shall compile all such written notices and make them available to the public.

(5) The State Board of Education shall develop and provide evaluation tools, including tests, that school districts and other eligible entities may use to evaluate children for school readiness prior to age 5. The State Board of Education shall require school districts and other eligible entities to obtain consent from the parents or guardians of children before any evaluations are conducted. The State Board of Education shall encourage local school districts and other eligible entities to evaluate the population of preschool children in their communities and provide preschool programs, pursuant to this subsection, where appropriate.

(6) The State Board of Education shall report to the General Assembly by November 1, 2018 ~~2010~~ and every 2 ~~3~~ years thereafter on the results and progress of students who were enrolled in preschool educational programs, including an assessment of which programs have been most successful in promoting academic excellence and alleviating academic failure. The State Board of Education shall assess the academic progress of all students who have

been enrolled in preschool educational programs.

On or before November 1 of each fiscal year in which the General Assembly provides funding for new programs under paragraph (4.5) of this Section, the State Board of Education shall report to the General Assembly on what percentage of new funding was provided to programs serving primarily at-risk children, what percentage of new funding was provided to programs serving primarily children with a family income of less than 4 times the federal poverty level, and what percentage of new funding was provided to other programs.

(7) Due to evidence that expulsion practices in the preschool years are linked to poor child outcomes and are employed inconsistently across racial and gender groups, early childhood programs receiving State funds under this subsection (a) shall prohibit expulsions. Planned transitions to settings that are able to better meet a child's needs are not considered expulsion under this paragraph (7).

(A) When persistent and serious challenging behaviors emerge, the early childhood program shall document steps taken to ensure that the child can participate safely in the program; including observations of initial and ongoing challenging behaviors, strategies for remediation and intervention plans to address the behaviors, and communication with

the parent or legal guardian, including participation of the parent or legal guardian in planning and decision-making.

(B) The early childhood program shall, with parental or legal guardian consent as required, utilize a range of community resources, if available and deemed necessary, including, but not limited to, developmental screenings, referrals to programs and services administered by a local educational agency or early intervention agency under Parts B and C of the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act, and consultation with infant and early childhood mental health consultants and the child's health care provider. The program shall document attempts to engage these resources, including parent or legal guardian participation and consent attempted and obtained. Communication with the parent or legal guardian shall take place in a culturally and linguistically competent manner.

(C) If there is documented evidence that all available interventions and supports recommended by a qualified professional have been exhausted and the program determines in its professional judgment that transitioning a child to another program is necessary for the well-being of the child or his or her peers and staff, with parent or legal guardian permission, both

the current and pending programs shall create a transition plan designed to ensure continuity of services and the comprehensive development of the child. Communication with families shall occur in a culturally and linguistically competent manner.

(D) Nothing in this paragraph (7) shall preclude a parent's or legal guardian's right to voluntarily withdraw his or her child from an early childhood program. Early childhood programs shall request and keep on file, when received, a written statement from the parent or legal guardian stating the reason for his or her decision to withdraw his or her child.

(E) In the case of the determination of a serious safety threat to a child or others or in the case of behaviors listed in subsection (d) of Section 10-22.6 of this Code, the temporary removal of a child from attendance in group settings may be used. Temporary removal of a child from attendance in a group setting shall trigger the process detailed in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of this paragraph (7), with the child placed back in a group setting as quickly as possible.

(F) Early childhood programs may utilize and the State Board of Education, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Children and Family Services shall recommend training, technical support, and professional development resources to improve the

ability of teachers, administrators, program directors, and other staff to promote social-emotional development and behavioral health, to address challenging behaviors, and to understand trauma and trauma-informed care, cultural competence, family engagement with diverse populations, the impact of implicit bias on adult behavior, and the use of reflective practice techniques. Support shall include the availability of resources to contract with infant and early childhood mental health consultants.

(G) Beginning on July 1, 2018, early childhood programs shall annually report to the State Board of Education, and, beginning in fiscal year 2020, the State Board of Education shall make available on a biennial basis, in an existing report, all of the following data for children from birth to age 5 who are served by the program:

(i) Total number served over the course of the program year and the total number of children who left the program during the program year.

(ii) Number of planned transitions to another program due to children's behavior, by children's race, gender, disability, language, class/group size, teacher-child ratio, and length of program day.

(iii) Number of temporary removals of a child

from attendance in group settings due to a serious safety threat under subparagraph (E) of this paragraph (7), by children's race, gender, disability, language, class/group size, teacher-child ratio, and length of program day.

(iv) Hours of infant and early childhood mental health consultant contact with program leaders, staff, and families over the program year.

(H) Changes to services for children with an individualized education program or individual family service plan shall be construed in a manner consistent with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and the Department of Children and Family Services, shall adopt rules to administer this paragraph (7).

(b) (Blank).

(Source: P.A. 95-724, eff. 6-30-08; 96-119, eff. 8-4-09; 96-944, eff. 6-25-10; 96-948, eff. 6-25-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.71a) (from Ch. 122, par. 2-3.71a)

Sec. 2-3.71a. Grants for early childhood parental training programs. The State Board of Education shall implement and administer a grant program consisting of grants to public

school districts and other eligible entities, as defined by the State Board of Education, to conduct early childhood parental training programs for the parents of children in the period of life from birth to kindergarten. A public school district that receives grants under this Section may contract with other eligible entities to conduct an early childhood parental training program. These grants must be used to supplement, not supplant, funds received from any other source. A school board or other eligible entity shall employ appropriately qualified personnel for its early childhood parental training program, including but not limited to certified teachers, counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers.

(a) As used in this Section, "parental training" means and includes instruction in the following:

(1) Child growth and development, including prenatal development.

(2) Childbirth and child care.

(3) Family structure, function and management.

(4) Prenatal and postnatal care for mothers and infants.

(5) Prevention of child abuse.

(6) The physical, mental, emotional, social, economic and psychological aspects of interpersonal and family relationships.

(7) Parenting skill development.

The programs shall include activities that require

substantial participation and interaction between parent and child.

(b) The Board shall annually award funds through a grant approval process established by the State Board of Education, providing that an annual appropriation is made for this purpose from State, federal or private funds. Nothing in this Section shall preclude school districts from applying for or accepting private funds to establish and implement programs.

(c) The State Board of Education shall assist those districts and other eligible entities offering early childhood parental training programs, upon request, in developing instructional materials, training teachers and staff, and establishing appropriate time allotments for each of the areas included in such instruction.

(d) School districts and other eligible entities may offer early childhood parental training courses during that period of the day which is not part of the regular school day. Residents of the community may enroll in such courses. The school board or other eligible entity may establish fees and collect such charges as may be necessary for attendance at such courses in an amount not to exceed the per capita cost of the operation thereof, except that the board or other eligible entity may waive all or part of such charges if it determines that the parent is indigent or that the educational needs of the parent require his or her attendance at such courses.

(e) Parents who participate in early childhood parental

training programs under this Section may be eligible for reasonable reimbursement of any incidental transportation and child care expenses from the school district receiving funds pursuant to this Section.

(f) Districts and other eligible entities receiving grants pursuant to this Section shall coordinate programs created under this Section with other preschool educational programs, including "at-risk" preschool programs, special and vocational education, and related services provided by other governmental agencies and not-for-profit agencies.

(g) The State Board of Education shall report to the General Assembly by July 1, 1991, on the results of the programs funded pursuant to this Section and whether a need continues for such programs.

(h) After July 1, 2006, any parental training services funded pursuant to this Section on the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 94th General Assembly shall continue to be funded pursuant to this Section, subject to appropriation and the meeting of program standards. Any additional parental training services must be funded, subject to appropriation, through preschool education grants pursuant to subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of Section 2-3.71 of this Code for families with children ages 3 to 5 and through prevention initiative grants pursuant to subsection (b) of Section 2-3.89 of this Code for expecting families and those with children from birth to 3 years of age.

(i) Early childhood programs under this Section are subject to the requirements under paragraph (7) of subsection (a) of Section 2-3.71 of this Code.

(Source: P.A. 94-506, eff. 8-8-05.)

(105 ILCS 5/10-22.6) (from Ch. 122, par. 10-22.6)

Sec. 10-22.6. Suspension or expulsion of pupils; school searches.

(a) To expel pupils guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct, including gross disobedience or misconduct perpetuated by electronic means, pursuant to subsection (b-20) of this Section, and no action shall lie against them for such expulsion. Expulsion shall take place only after the parents have been requested to appear at a meeting of the board, or with a hearing officer appointed by it, to discuss their child's behavior. Such request shall be made by registered or certified mail and shall state the time, place and purpose of the meeting. The board, or a hearing officer appointed by it, at such meeting shall state the reasons for dismissal and the date on which the expulsion is to become effective. If a hearing officer is appointed by the board he shall report to the board a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting and the board may take such action thereon as it finds appropriate. If the board acts to expel a pupil, the written expulsion decision shall detail the specific reasons why removing the pupil from the learning environment is in the best

interest of the school. The expulsion decision shall also include a rationale as to the specific duration of the expulsion. An expelled pupil may be immediately transferred to an alternative program in the manner provided in Article 13A or 13B of this Code. A pupil must not be denied transfer because of the expulsion, except in cases in which such transfer is deemed to cause a threat to the safety of students or staff in the alternative program.

(b) To suspend or by policy to authorize the superintendent of the district or the principal, assistant principal, or dean of students of any school to suspend pupils guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct, or to suspend pupils guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct on the school bus from riding the school bus, pursuant to subsections (b-15) and (b-20) of this Section, and no action shall lie against them for such suspension. The board may by policy authorize the superintendent of the district or the principal, assistant principal, or dean of students of any school to suspend pupils guilty of such acts for a period not to exceed 10 school days. If a pupil is suspended due to gross disobedience or misconduct on a school bus, the board may suspend the pupil in excess of 10 school days for safety reasons.

Any suspension shall be reported immediately to the parents or guardian of a pupil along with a full statement of the reasons for such suspension and a notice of their right to a review. The school board must be given a summary of the

notice, including the reason for the suspension and the suspension length. Upon request of the parents or guardian the school board or a hearing officer appointed by it shall review such action of the superintendent or principal, assistant principal, or dean of students. At such review the parents or guardian of the pupil may appear and discuss the suspension with the board or its hearing officer. If a hearing officer is appointed by the board he shall report to the board a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting. After its hearing or upon receipt of the written report of its hearing officer, the board may take such action as it finds appropriate. If a student is suspended pursuant to this subsection (b), the board shall, in the written suspension decision, detail the specific act of gross disobedience or misconduct resulting in the decision to suspend. The suspension decision shall also include a rationale as to the specific duration of the suspension. A pupil who is suspended in excess of 20 school days may be immediately transferred to an alternative program in the manner provided in Article 13A or 13B of this Code. A pupil must not be denied transfer because of the suspension, except in cases in which such transfer is deemed to cause a threat to the safety of students or staff in the alternative program.

(b-5) Among the many possible disciplinary interventions and consequences available to school officials, school exclusions, such as out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, are the most serious. School officials shall limit the number

and duration of expulsions and suspensions to the greatest extent practicable, and it is recommended that they use them only for legitimate educational purposes. To ensure that students are not excluded from school unnecessarily, it is recommended that school officials consider forms of non-exclusionary discipline prior to using out-of-school suspensions or expulsions.

(b-10) Unless otherwise required by federal law or this Code, school boards may not institute zero-tolerance policies by which school administrators are required to suspend or expel students for particular behaviors.

(b-15) Out-of-school suspensions of 3 days or less may be used only if the student's continuing presence in school would pose a threat to school safety or a disruption to other students' learning opportunities. For purposes of this subsection (b-15), "threat to school safety or a disruption to other students' learning opportunities" shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by the school board or its designee. School officials shall make all reasonable efforts to resolve such threats, address such disruptions, and minimize the length of suspensions to the greatest extent practicable.

(b-20) Unless otherwise required by this Code, out-of-school suspensions of longer than 3 days, expulsions, and disciplinary removals to alternative schools may be used only if other appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted and the

student's continuing presence in school would either (i) pose a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community or (ii) substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school. For purposes of this subsection (b-20), "threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community" and "substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school" shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by school officials. For purposes of this subsection (b-20), the determination of whether "appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted" shall be made by school officials. School officials shall make all reasonable efforts to resolve such threats, address such disruptions, and minimize the length of student exclusions to the greatest extent practicable. Within the suspension decision described in subsection (b) of this Section or the expulsion decision described in subsection (a) of this Section, it shall be documented whether other interventions were attempted or whether it was determined that there were no other appropriate and available interventions.

(b-25) Students who are suspended out-of-school for longer than 4 school days shall be provided appropriate and available support services during the period of their suspension. For purposes of this subsection (b-25), "appropriate and available support services" shall be determined by school authorities. Within the suspension decision described in subsection (b) of

this Section, it shall be documented whether such services are to be provided or whether it was determined that there are no such appropriate and available services.

A school district may refer students who are expelled to appropriate and available support services.

A school district shall create a policy to facilitate the re-engagement of students who are suspended out-of-school, expelled, or returning from an alternative school setting.

(b-30) A school district shall create a policy by which suspended pupils, including those pupils suspended from the school bus who do not have alternate transportation to school, shall have the opportunity to make up work for equivalent academic credit. It shall be the responsibility of a pupil's parent or guardian to notify school officials that a pupil suspended from the school bus does not have alternate transportation to school.

(c) The Department of Human Services shall be invited to send a representative to consult with the board at such meeting whenever there is evidence that mental illness may be the cause for expulsion or suspension.

(c-5) School districts shall make reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to teachers, administrators, school board members, school resource officers, and staff on the adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, and

developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates.

(d) The board may expel a student for a definite period of time not to exceed 2 calendar years, as determined on a case by case basis. A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year:

(1) A firearm. For the purposes of this Section, "firearm" means any gun, rifle, shotgun, weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act, or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 2012. The expulsion period under this subdivision (1) may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

(2) A knife, brass knuckles or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including "look alike" of any firearm as defined in subdivision (1) of this subsection (d). The expulsion requirement under this subdivision (2) may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

Expulsion or suspension shall be construed in a manner consistent with the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. A student who is subject to suspension or expulsion as provided in this Section may be eligible for a transfer to an alternative school program in accordance with Article 13A of the School Code.

(d-5) The board may suspend or by regulation authorize the superintendent of the district or the principal, assistant principal, or dean of students of any school to suspend a student for a period not to exceed 10 school days or may expel a student for a definite period of time not to exceed 2 calendar years, as determined on a case by case basis, if (i) that student has been determined to have made an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel, (ii) the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and (iii) the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.

(e) To maintain order and security in the schools, school authorities may inspect and search places and areas such as lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and

equipment owned or controlled by the school, as well as personal effects left in those places and areas by students, without notice to or the consent of the student, and without a search warrant. As a matter of public policy, the General Assembly finds that students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places and areas or in their personal effects left in these places and areas. School authorities may request the assistance of law enforcement officials for the purpose of conducting inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs. If a search conducted in accordance with this Section produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law, local ordinance, or the school's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. School authorities may also turn over such evidence to law enforcement authorities.

(f) Suspension or expulsion may include suspension or expulsion from school and all school activities and a prohibition from being present on school grounds.

(g) A school district may adopt a policy providing that if a student is suspended or expelled for any reason from any public or private school in this or any other state, the student must complete the entire term of the suspension or

expulsion in an alternative school program under Article 13A of this Code or an alternative learning opportunities program under Article 13B of this Code before being admitted into the school district if there is no threat to the safety of students or staff in the alternative program.

(h) School officials shall not advise or encourage students to drop out voluntarily due to behavioral or academic difficulties.

(i) A student may not be issued a monetary fine or fee as a disciplinary consequence, though this shall not preclude requiring a student to provide restitution for lost, stolen, or damaged property.

(j) Subsections (a) through (i) of this Section shall apply to elementary and secondary schools, charter schools, special charter districts, and school districts organized under Article 34 of this Code.

(k) The expulsion of children enrolled in programs funded under Section 1C-2 of this Code is subject to the requirements under paragraph (7) of subsection (a) of Section 2-3.71 of this Code.

(Source: P.A. 99-456, eff. 9-15-16.)

Section 10. The Child Care Act of 1969 is amended by adding Section 5.10 as follows:

(225 ILCS 10/5.10 new)

Sec. 5.10. Child care limitation on expulsions. Consistent with the purposes of this amendatory Act of the 100th General Assembly and the requirements therein under paragraph (7) of subsection (a) of Section 2-3.71 of the School Code, the Department, in consultation with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and the State Board of Education, shall adopt rules prohibiting the use of expulsion due to a child's persistent and serious challenging behaviors in licensed day care centers, day care homes, and group day care homes. The rulemaking shall address, at a minimum, requirements for licensees to establish intervention and transition policies, notify parents of policies, document intervention steps, and collect and report data on children transitioning out of the program.