

HOUSE BILL 2201

By Alexander

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 49 and Title 49, relative to pre-kindergarten programs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 4-49-104(e), is amended by deleting subdivision (1) and substituting instead the following:

(1) Eighty percent (80%) of the privilege tax collected under this section must be distributed by the council to the state treasurer for deposit into an account administered by the department of education to provide supplemental funding to local education agencies operating a voluntary pre-kindergarten program approved under § 49-6-105.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

49-6-109.

(a) The department of education shall develop and implement a grant program to provide supplemental funding to LEAs operating a voluntary pre-kindergarten program approved by the department under § 49-6-105. In order to qualify for a grant, an LEA operating a voluntary pre-kindergarten program approved under § 49-6-105 must:

(1) Submit a grant application for a pre-kindergarten program determined by the department to be high quality based on program management, continued or sustained improvement in the performance of children who participate in the program, the strength of the instruction or curriculum offered by the program, and other measures of performance required by the department; and

(2) Submit a grant application that demonstrates the LEA's need for one (1) or more pre-kindergarten classrooms based on the LEA's eligible student population, the number of students assigned to a waiting list for the program, and the ability of the LEA to staff additional pre-kindergarten classrooms.

(b) The department is encouraged to prioritize the awarding of grants to LEAs operating a voluntary pre-kindergarten program that is located in a county designated as a distressed rural county under § 67-6-104(b)(3)(B), or located in a county designated as a distressed or at-risk county by the Appalachian Regional Commission.

(c) An LEA shall not use funding received under this section to satisfy the LEA's match requirement for other state funds appropriated to the LEA for purposes of funding the LEA's voluntary pre-kindergarten program under § 49-6-107. Grant funds received by an LEA pursuant to this section must supplement, not supplant, any other existing federal, state, or local funds or resources for the LEA's pre-kindergarten program.

SECTION 3. This act is not an appropriation of funds, and funds shall not be obligated or expended pursuant to this act unless the funds are specifically appropriated by the general appropriations act.

SECTION 4. Section 1 of this act takes effect July 1, 2021, the public welfare requiring it. All other sections of this act take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it, and apply to grants awarded for the 2022-2023 school year and each school year thereafter.