

Prekindergarten Education Implementation Committee



Results from initial survey of members

September 2023

Initial Survey of Committee Members

Survey via Microsoft Forms in July and August 2023

Completed by 12 (of 14) committee members (86%)

Not completed by co-chairs

What excites you?

Having high quality education services for our children in VT

The opportunity to strengthen UPK in Vermont in a data-driven way.

Advocating for the best possible outcomes for Vermont's children

I'm excited to think about how we increase the number of hours of education pre-K-aged children in Vermont receive, while not destroying the child care businesses. I'll be curious to see how this impacts the needs of those children and their families for afterschool and summer care.

That families like mine will have hope and opportunity in the current flawed underserved system.

I am excited to participate in this very important work to give more children and parents opportunities to get into Preschool... I am glad to know that there will be at least two parents.

Quality instruction (and care) for all children; meeting the needs of a diverse population

I am very excited that we are embracing the importance of early childhood education, and making it a priority.

The opportunity to expand access to UPK for 3s and 4s in a mixed delivery model; improve the ability monitor the existing system; and use data to drive decision-making.

what excites me is that I will be working with other committee members/all stack holders to implement improve the pr-k education

I'm glad to have been asked to be on this group and I am excited to learn more about what legislators are thinking about programs for our three- and four-year olds.

Conversation and moving towards more equity in provision of funding.

What excites you?

Themes:

- What's best for children
- Ensuring quality
- Attention to equity
- Expanding access (including hours)
- Data-driven
- Collaboration

What concerns you? – Page 1

Not having a HQ Teacher or Provider on site all day for children to benefit from. Limited funding for preschool education. Would like to ensure this group has a focus on what is the best interest if children.

Bifurcation of our system; a move away from our current mixed-delivery model.

Not having PreK staff who hold credentials that are shown to affect positive outcomes; limited financial resources as a state; competing priorities that detract from the focus on young children; inequity for children with special needs

Vermont invested a lot of funds and time into supports for the child care sector, and took an important step forward to keep reaching for universal afterschool. These two are inherently connected, and both can thrive on a mixed delivery model. I'm concerned that we'll tear down more than we'll build up.

I wish it were happening now since mine are 3&4 now!

From my recent experience, I know it can be very hard to find a place in preschool. Also, the cost is very high and can be difficult unless both parents have relatively high paying jobs I believe. So any way to help with that will be important.

Funding, availability of qualified staff (including teachers, support staff, and special educators), developing regulations, logistics

What concerns you? – Page 2

I want to be sure that we stay focused on what's developmentally appropriate for our Prekindergarten learners. I also want to be sure that we continue to take into consideration the diverse needs and challenges across the state while working on an implementation plan.

- 1) Removing access to UPK for 3s when Vermont is ranked number 2 in the country for access to UPK for 3s.
- 2) We don't have all the data we need to inform the path forward.

I am concerned about the lack of affordable pr-k centers /teachers. Limited support for childcare centers from the state/government

I have had concerns about the bill and most of them were about not getting g clear answers about how it would affect educators and the families of children currently in Act 166. Then we were told there would be a study to look at the situation and we have heard that many times. I am hoping to learn more about the intentions behind the bill and share thoughts of folks who have been in this field for many years .

That the law may unintentionally limit family choice, limit partnerships between ECE community programs and SUs, and that we've removed 3s from the equation.

What concerns you?

Themes:

- Won't be focused on best interest of young children
- Impacts on 3yos
- Moving away from mixed delivery model
- Limited financial resources
- Credentials, availability of PreK educators
- Inequity for children with special needs
- Impacts on child care programs/system, especially current UPK partners and afterschool needs
- Implementation concerns

What do you think are the highest priority issues to discuss?

Access to high quality preschool education by a provider that is licensed in early child development. Need full time preschool offerings full year with the most cost effect delivery model possible.

Funding; Partnerships

Equitable access to full-time (aligns w/ kindergarten school day, school year), high-quality (ie: NIEER benchmarks) PreK education through the most cost-effective delivery model possible.

How we support the child care organizations and businesses, while increasing education for preschool children.

Staffing, location, inclusion and accessibility.

Preschool availability, helping schools to retain their teachers and expand to meet needs, lowering tuition while maintaining necessary funding for the schools.

Funding, availability of qualified staff, regulations, logistics for

all types of communities

What are the barriers to this implementation and how to address them.

1 - Plan for capturing data needed 2- Reviewing existing data and national best practice to inform the path forward to support aligned vision of UPK 3 - How to expand access in the current mixed delivery model 4-How to develop and implement a strategic plan for expanding access under the new law"

shortages and/Licensing of teachers

Well, for myself it would be the families of three- and four-year olds who want to keep their children in programs they have been in since infancy (many times), and to ensure those parents are able to receive tuition assistance without having to send their young child into the school setting.

How to move towards greater equity while not limiting access due to options presented.

What are high priority to discuss?

Themes:

- Access + Equity
- Funding for system
- Staffing - qualifications, availability
- Family needs, choices, costs
- Implementation/logistics

Advice and other thoughts

Big picture:

- Keep best interest of children at center
- Use research and data

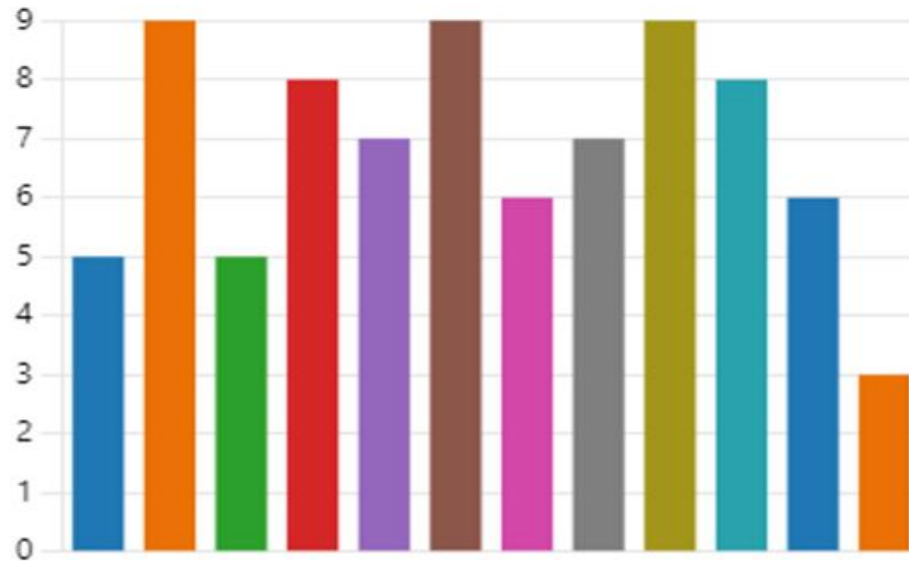
Tactical:

- Need to know more about what group is tasked with
- Need to ensure committee members representing larger group have time to confer with their stakeholders
- Need to acknowledge that there are places where we don't and won't agree
- Need to understand what UPK model is now
- Support for sub-committee model
- Need to follow Open Meeting laws

7. If we organize the work groups by the considerations and elements listed in Act 76, which would you be most interested in and able to contribute to? (List from Section 2.c and Sections 2a and 2b.) Please choose as many as you would like.

[More Details](#)

- (1) the needs of both the State a... 5
- (2) the minimum number of hou... 9
- (3) whether there are areas of th... 5
- (4) benchmarks and best practic... 8
- (5) measures to ensure capacity ... 7
- (6) special education services for ... 9
- (7) any necessary infrastructure ... 6
- (8) costs associated with expand... 7
- (9) recommendations for the ov... 9
- transitioning children who are t... 8
- Prekindergarten Model Contract... 6
- Prekindergarten Pupil Weight re... 3



Proposed Workgroups

Systems-level considerations

- (1) the needs of both the State and local education agencies;
- (9) recommendations for the oversight of the prekindergarten system;
- (3) whether there are areas of the State where prekindergarten education can be more effectively and conveniently furnished in an adjacent state due to geographic considerations;

Capacity and funding

- (2) the minimum number of hours that shall constitute a full school day for both prekindergarten and kindergarten;
- (5) measures to ensure capacity is available to meet the demand for prekindergarten education;
- (7) any necessary infrastructure changes to expand prekindergarten;
- (8) costs associated with expanding prekindergarten, including fiscally strategic options to sustain an expansion of prekindergarten;
- * Prekindergarten Pupil Weight report (due 12/1/23)

Program Quality

- (4) benchmarks and best practices to ensure high-quality prekindergarten education;
- (6) special education services for children participating in prekindergarten in both public and private settings;
- * transitioning children who are three years of age from the 10-hour prekindergarten benefit to child care and early education