

AN ACT

To amend section 3321.01 of the Revised Code to permit school district boards beginning with the 2000-2001 school year to adopt the first day of August, instead of the thirtieth day of September, as the date by which a child must be five years of age to be admitted to kindergarten and six years of age to be admitted to first grade.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:

SECTION 1. That section 3321.01 of the Revised Code be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 3321.01. (A) (1) As used in this chapter, "parent," "guardian," or "other person having charge or care of a child" means either parent unless the parents are separated or divorced or their marriage has been dissolved or annulled, in which case "parent" means the parent who is the residential parent and legal custodian of the child. If the child is in the legal or permanent custody of a person or government agency, "parent" means that person or government agency. When a child is a resident of a home, as defined in section 3313.64 of the Revised Code, and the child's parent is not a resident of this state, "parent," "guardian," or "other person having charge or care of a child" means the head of the home.

A child between six and eighteen years of age is "of compulsory school age" for the purpose of sections 3321.01 to 3321.13 of the Revised Code. A child under six years of age who has been enrolled in kindergarten also shall be considered "of compulsory school age" for the purpose of sections 3321.01 to 3321.13 of the Revised Code unless at any time the child's parent or guardian, at the parent's or guardian's discretion and in consultation with the child's teacher and principal, formally withdraws the child from kindergarten. The compulsory school age of a child shall not commence until the beginning of the term of such schools, or other time in the school year fixed by the rules of the board of the district in which the child resides.

(2) No child shall be admitted to a kindergarten or a first grade of a public school in a district in which all children are admitted to kindergarten and the first grade in August or September unless the child is five or six

years of age, respectively, by the thirtieth day of September of the year of admittance, or by the first day of a term or semester other than one beginning in August or September in school districts granting admittance at the beginning of such term or semester, except that in those school districts using or obtaining educationally accepted standardized testing programs for determining entrance, as approved by the board of education of such districts, the board shall admit a child to kindergarten or the first grade who fails to meet the age requirement, provided the child meets necessary standards as determined by such standardized testing programs. If the board of education has not established a standardized testing program, the board shall designate the necessary standards and a testing program it will accept for the purpose of admitting a child to kindergarten or first grade who fails to meet the age requirement. Each child who will be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall be so tested upon the request of the child's parent.

(3) Notwithstanding divisions (A)(2) and (D) of this section, beginning with the school year that starts in 2001 and continuing thereafter the board of education of any district may adopt a resolution establishing the first day of August in lieu of the thirtieth day of September as the required date by which students must have attained the age specified in those divisions.

(B) As used in divisions (C) and (D) of this section, "successfully completed kindergarten" and "successful completion of kindergarten" mean that the child has completed the kindergarten requirements at one of the following:

- (1) A public or chartered nonpublic school;
- (2) A kindergarten class that is both of the following:
 - (a) Offered by a day-care provider licensed under Chapter 5104. of the Revised Code;
 - (b) If offered after July 1, 1991, is directly taught by a teacher who holds one of the following:
 - (i) A valid educator license issued under section 3319.22 of the Revised Code;
 - (ii) A Montessori preprimary credential or age-appropriate diploma granted by the American Montessori society or the association Montessori internationale;
 - (iii) Certification determined under division (G) of this section to be equivalent to that described in division (B)(2)(b)(ii) of this section;
 - (iv) Certification for teachers in nontax-supported schools pursuant to section 3301.071 of the Revised Code.

(C) Except as provided in division (D) of this section, no school district shall admit to the first grade any child who has not successfully completed kindergarten.

(D) Upon request of a parent, the requirement of division (C) of this section may be waived by the district's pupil personnel services committee in the case of a child who is at least six years of age by the thirtieth day of September of the year of admittance and who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the committee the possession of the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary for first grade.

The board of education of each city, local, and exempted village school district shall establish a pupil personnel services committee. The committee shall be composed of all of the following to the extent such personnel are either employed by the district or employed by the governing board of the educational service center within whose territory the district is located and the educational service center generally furnishes the services of such personnel to the district:

- (1) The director of pupil personnel services;
- (2) An elementary school counselor;
- (3) An elementary school principal;
- (4) A school psychologist;
- (5) A teacher assigned to teach first grade.

The responsibilities of the pupil personnel services committee shall be limited to the issuing of waivers allowing admittance to the first grade without the successful completion of kindergarten. The committee shall have no other authority except as specified in this section.

(E) The scheduling of times for kindergarten classes and length of the school day for kindergarten shall be determined by the board of education of a city, exempted village, or local school district.

(F) Any kindergarten class offered by a day-care provider or school described by division (B)(1) or (B)(2)(a) of this section shall be developmentally appropriate.

(G) Upon written request of a day-care provider described by division (B)(2)(a) of this section, the department of education shall determine whether certification held by a teacher employed by the provider meets the requirement of division (B)(2)(b)(iii) of this section and, if so, shall furnish the provider a statement to that effect.

Am. H. B. No. 383

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SECTION 2. That existing section 3321.01 of the Revised Code is hereby repealed.

Speaker _____ *of the House of Representatives.*

President _____ *of the Senate.*

Passed _____, 20____

Approved _____, 20____

Governor.

The section numbering of law of a general and permanent nature is complete and in conformity with the Revised Code.

Director, Legislative Service Commission.

Filed in the office of the Secretary of State at Columbus, Ohio, on the ___ day of _____, A. D. 20____.

Secretary of State.

File No. _____ Effective Date _____