

- SUBJECT:** Mandating standards and coordination for prekindergarten programs
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 6 ayes — Sadler, Dunnam, Hardcastle, Hochberg, Olivo, Smith
0 nays
3 absent — Dutton, Grusendorf, Oliveira
- WITNESSES:** For — Bill Pewitt and John Sumner, Texas Licensed Child Care Association
Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Current law does not require prekindergarten programs to comply with the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services' (DPRS) child-care licensing standards. Some programs may have limited staff or may not comply with health and safety standards.
- DIGEST:** HB 3164 would require school district prekindergarten programs to comply with applicable child-care licensing standards adopted by DPRS under the Human Resources Code. The State Board of Education would have to ensure the school district's compliance with applicable standards.
- Before initiating a new prekindergarten program, a school district would have to investigate the possibility of sharing program sites with existing child-care programs licensed by DPRS and with existing federal Head Start programs. A district would have to coordinate use of those sites to the greatest extent possible, as well as coordinating the use of those sites with existing prekindergarten programs.
- The bill would take effect September 1, 2001. A prekindergarten program established before that date would have until September 1, 2004, to comply with the applicable child-care standards.

NOTES: According to the bill's fiscal note, it would cost about \$2.7 million in general revenue-related funds in fiscal 2002-03 and a cumulative \$7.5 million through fiscal 2006 for site-compliance visits and additional staff.