

Questions Asked Regarding Senate Bill 453

I. Should public school programs be required to meet the KDHE standards for child care staff to child ratio?

- A. No, the Kansas State Department of Education has not established class sizes for public schools. The cost would be prohibitive to do so.
1. Local boards of education are charged with the responsibility of providing appropriate educational programs for the children they serve. Staffing decisions should rest with the local board.
 2. Current enrollment in 19 preschool programs operated in the Emporia Public Schools is 311.
 - a. Class sizes range from 13 to 20.
 - b. Pupil/staff ratio in these programs is not higher than 1:10
 3. Recent national research found that a pupil/teacher ratio of 1:17 creates an optimal learning environment.
- B. K.A.R. 28-4-428 establishes minimum staff/child ratios for child care providers.
1. Children ages 3 to school age = 1:12
 2. Kindergarten children = 1:14
 3. School age children = 1:16
- C. What body of research determined the staff/child ratios established by KDHE?

II. Should all public school preschool teachers be required to be endorsed in early childhood?

- A. The Kansas State Department of Education has established strict standards for teacher certification or licensure of instructional support staff. The KSDE requirements should continue to be met by all public school programs.
- B. Teacher qualifications required by the Kansas State Department of Education are higher than those set by KDHE child care regulations.
1. A minimum of 124 college credit hours resulting in a four year degree in approved liberal arts, teaching content, and pedagogy from an accredited institution.
- C. KDHE education/training standards for child care are:
1. Child care provider = at least 18 years of age; high school diploma or GED for those programs enrolling fewer than 13 children.
 2. Child care provider = units enrolling up to 24 children shall have observed 5 sessions in a licensed child care center; one year of working in a licensed center; or 7-9 academic credit hours of equivalent training in child development and 3 months experience in a licensed center; or a child development associate credential.
 3. Child care provider = units enrolling more than 24 children shall have 12 credit hours or equivalent in child development and 6 months experience in a licensed center.

III. Should school districts be required to have an on-site program director/administrator?

- A. The Kansas State Department of Education has not established a requirement for public schools to have an on-site administrator in each school.
1. Local boards of education should determine their staffing needs.
 2. There are over 160 public schools in Kansas that operate without a full time administrator.
 3. There are over 29 school districts in Kansas that operate without a full time superintendent, a position that is required in statute.
 4. There are many more public school administrators who are assigned to supervise more than one school.
 5. KSDE has established that school administrators must meet state standards through a graduate level program of study which results in administrative endorsement. Endorsement as a principal usually results in a Master's Degree.
- B. KDHE standards for facilities licensed for more than 100 children require a program director and an assistant program director.
1. KDHE standards may be met by an individual with an A.B. degree in a related academic discipline and 12 hours of academic study or equivalent training in early childhood and 1 year experience as a program director.

IV. Are public schools asking for an exemption from KDHE day care regulations for children under the age of 3?

- A. No.