§4501. Duty of school units

In accordance with the policy expressed in section 2, every school administrative unit shall raise annually sufficient funds to maintain or support elementary and secondary schools to provide free education for its resident students at all grade levels. These schools shall meet the requirements of basic school approval. To the extent the State provides adequate start-up funding, a school administrative unit may offer an opportunity for every child 4 years of age residing in the school administrative unit to attend a public preschool program, or a program affiliated with the school administrative unit, meeting the requirements of basic school approval. It is the goal of the State to establish an equitable, mixed-delivery public preschool system that provides universal access for preschool-aged children and their families in accordance with the following timeline: 60% by the 2024-2025 school year; 80% by the 2025-2026 school year; and 100% by the 2026-2027 school year. [PL 2023, c. 477, §2 (AMD).]

1. Assessment. The commissioner shall adopt rules that strongly encourage the use of a uniform common statewide assessment program for kindergarten, which may be used by school administrative units in addition to other quality assessments school administrative units determine to be necessary beginning with the 2016-2017 school year. The uniform common statewide assessment must be designed to measure student comprehension of academic content and mastery of related skills and cover such areas as physical health and motor development; social and emotional development; learning styles; language and literacy; and general cognition. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.
[PL 2013, c. 581, §4 (NEW).]

2. Grant funds. Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, in accordance with this section, the department, if funds are available, shall award grants pursuant to section 4271 to each qualified school administrative unit equal to the school administrative unit's allowable costs to implement the approved plan to develop and operate a new or expanded public preschool program. Grant funds must be used to fund the allowable costs of the implementation plan not otherwise subsidized by the State.
[PL 2013, c. 581, §4 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1983, c. 859, §§A20,A25 (NEW). PL 1985, c. 142, §1 (AMD). PL 1985, c. 797, §31 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 141, §6 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 581, §4 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 343, Pt. UUUU, §1 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 477, §2 (AMD).

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