

LAWS OF DELAWARE
VOLUME 84
CHAPTER 48
152nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORMERLY
HOUSE SUBSTITUTE NO. 1
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 33

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO FUNDING FOR PREKINDERGARTEN SPECIAL EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend § 1703, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 1703. Unit of pupils [Effective July 1, 2023].

(a) As used in this chapter, “unit” or “unit of pupils” means as defined in the following schedule of numbers of pupils enrolled in schools beginning in kindergarten and through grade 12; and for children prior to entry into kindergarten who are eligible for special education services as defined in Chapter 31 of this title:

- (1) ~~Preschool~~ — 12.8
- (1) Preschool Basic Special Education — 8.4
- (2) K-3 Regular Education — 16.2
- (3) ~~K-3 Basic Special Education (Basic)~~ — 8.4
- (4) (3) 4-12 Regular Education — 20
- (5) (4) 4-12 K-12 Basic Special Education (Basic) — 8.4
- (6) (5) Pre-K-12 Intensive Special Education (Intensive) — 6
- (7) (6) Pre-K-12 Complex Special Education (Complex) — 2.6

(b) All such units must be authorized by the Department of Education under rules and regulations promulgated by the Department. Partial unit funding is provided for all units based on the cash-in value of the unit. Only the last unit in any category may be a major fraction.

(c) In the case of kindergarten, “unit” or “unit of pupils” is defined as 32.4 pupils for half-day kindergarten and 16.2 pupils for full-day kindergarten.

(d) For funding purposes, the following conditions shall prevail for the calculations of the number of units for children with disabilities and all other children. The preschool basic special education unit shall be 1 unit for ~~12.8~~ 8.4 students. The regular education unit for kindergarten through third grade unit (K-3 regular education) shall be 1 unit for 16.2 students, except as noted in subsection (c) of this section above. The regular education unit for grades 4 through 12 (4-12 regular education) shall be 1 unit for 20 students. The basic special education (basic) unit for kindergarten through 12 shall be 1 unit for 8.4 students. The intensive special education (intensive) unit for preschool through grade 12 shall be 1 unit for 6 students. The complex special education (complex) unit for preschool through grade 12 shall be 1 unit for 2.6 students. Grade 12 is defined as enrollment until receipt of a regular high school diploma or the end of the school year in which the student attains the age of 22, whichever occurs first, as defined in Chapter 31 of this title.

(1) Preschool basic special education unit. — a. ~~Student~~ A student shall be counted in the preschool basic special education unit if the student is identified as eligible for special education and related services and not counted in the intensive unit or complex unit ~~described below~~ and is:

- 1. Eligible for special education and related services from birth; or
- 2. At least 3 years of age; or
- 3. Eligible as described in the ~~interagency agreement~~ Memorandum of Understanding on Early Childhood Transition with the Department of Health and Social Services; or
- 4. Not yet entered kindergarten.

b. The following provisions shall apply to the preschool basic special education unit:

- 1. Partial unit funding is provided for between 1 and ~~12.8~~ 8.4 students based on the cash-in value of the unit.

2. The cash-in value of the unit is tied to the teacher state salary schedule at the master's level plus 10 years of experience as defined in § 1305(a) of this title.

3. The units include Divisions II and III.

4. Districts must use all funds generated by preschool basic special education unit to support services for the students counted in the preschool basic special education unit. Districts are not limited to using the funds to employ teachers only. The funds may be used to hire preschool special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and speech and language pathologists, or other related services personnel as determined at the local level. The units may also be used to secure contractual services per requirements for the contractual option described in Chapter 13 of this title.

5. Districts may use tuition to pay for the local share and excess costs of special education and related services.

6. The units are considered teacher/instructional units for purposes of other unit counts.

7. A student is not required to receive a minimum number of hours in special education instruction to count in the preschool unit.

Section 2. This Act takes effect on July 1, 2023.

Approved June 22, 2023