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S.F. No. 3978 – Voluntary Prekindergarten Program Modifications

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Section 1. Application process; priority for high poverty schools. Directs the commissioner to divide applications for new or expanded voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) or school readiness plus (SRP) programs into five groups: (1) Minneapolis school district, (2) Saint Paul school district, (3) other metropolitan school districts, (4) greater Minnesota school districts, and (5) charter schools. (Under current law, applications from the Minneapolis and Saint Paul school districts are pooled together in the same group.) Strikes language providing for the allocation of seats that is modified and recodified in a later section. Strikes other obsolete language.

Sec. 2. Participation limit allocation. Recodifies language relating to allocation of VPK and SRP seats. Requires that, for the 2024-2025 school year, each site must be allocated the same number of seats as the site was allocated in fiscal year 2024. Directs the commissioner to allocate any remaining seats among the five groups in proportion to each group's share of the statewide kindergarten enrollment and, within each group, to individual sites in priority order.

Sec. 3. Participation limits. Makes a conforming change related to the recodification of the participation limit allocation under section 2.

Sec. 4. Direction to the commissioner of education; adjusting voluntary prekindergarten participation limits. Directs the commissioner to retroactively adjust the prekindergarten seat allocation established for fiscal year 2025 if the 2024 legislature acts to increase the statewide participation limit. (Laws 2023, article 10, section 4, subdivision 2, reserved \$50 million in fiscal year 2025 for allocation for additional prekindergarten seats. That law requires the 2024 legislature to provide direction to the commissioner on how to allocate the reserved amount.)