



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 490

January Session, 2001

Substitute House Bill No. 5537

House of Representatives, April 26, 2001

The Committee on Education reported through REP. STAPLES of the 96th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOLS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-223b of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

3 (a) On or before [October 1, 1999] February 1, 2003, and biennially
4 thereafter, the State Board of Education shall prepare a list of
5 elementary and middle schools, by school district, that are in need of
6 improvement based on student performance and performance trends
7 on the state-wide mastery examinations pursuant to section 10-14n.
8 The Department of Education shall notify each local and regional
9 board of education of the schools in its district that are on the list and,
10 if more than one school in a school district is on the list, the
11 department shall advise the local or regional board of education on
12 which of such schools are most in need of improvement.

13 (b) On or before [January 1, 2000] April 1, 2003, and biennially

14 thereafter, each local and regional board of education that has a school
15 on the list, through its superintendent of schools, shall meet with the
16 Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee, to discuss
17 the process for improving school performance described in subsection
18 (c) of this section. The commissioner shall require the local or regional
19 board of education to undergo such process for such school, except
20 that if more than one school in the school district is on the list, the local
21 or regional board of education shall prioritize the schools on the list
22 and develop a timetable for such schools to undergo such process.
23 Such timetable and list shall be approved by the commissioner.

24 (c) The local or regional board of education shall require the school
25 to [:(1) Develop] develop an improvement plan [,] and [(2)] take the
26 steps necessary to become accredited by the New England Association
27 of Schools and Colleges. The improvement plan shall be submitted to
28 the Department of Education and the local or regional board of
29 education. [for its approval and, upon such approval,] The local or
30 regional board of education shall approve the plan before it is
31 implemented. Upon such approval, the plan shall be implemented
32 beginning the following school year. The improvement plan (1) may
33 provide for site-based management of the school, (2) shall include
34 criteria for use in measuring progress, and (3) shall be developed in
35 consultation with the school's principal, teachers and the parents of
36 students attending the school. The Department of Education shall
37 provide technical assistance to the school on the development of the
38 plan and shall provide comments on the plan to the local or regional
39 board of education prior to the board's approval of the plan. The local
40 or regional board of education shall provide assistance to the school to
41 improve its operation under the plan and to obtain accreditation. The
42 commissioner may require the local or regional board of education to
43 reallocate federal and state categorical assistance provided to the
44 school district to implement the plan.

45 (d) The local or regional board of education shall monitor progress

46 made by the school under the improvement plan. If two years after the
47 date of approval of the improvement plan, the board of education
48 finds that the school has not made sufficient progress, the board of
49 education shall develop a plan for such school that requires the board
50 to take one or more of the following actions in order to improve
51 student achievement: (1) Close and reconstitute the school, (2)
52 restructure the school in terms of the grades included or the programs
53 offered, or both, (3) provide for site-based management of the school,
54 and (4) allow students in the attendance area of the school to attend
55 other public schools in the school district. The local or regional board
56 of education may include in such plan a provision for the transfer of
57 employees in conjunction with any such action. The local or regional
58 board of education shall submit its plan to the commissioner for
59 approval and, upon such approval, shall implement the plan.

60 Sec. 2. Section 10-223c of the general statutes is repealed and the
61 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

62 (a) [For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001, the] The Commissioner
63 of Education shall provide grants, within available appropriations, to
64 local and regional boards of education that have one or more schools
65 in need of improvement on the most recent list prepared pursuant to
66 section 10-223b. Eligible boards of education shall use grant funds for
67 costs related to the implementation of improvement plans for such
68 schools, partnership programs between such schools and public
69 libraries in the school district and actions necessary for such schools to
70 become accredited by the New England Association of Schools and
71 Colleges. An eligible board of education shall submit a plan for the
72 expenditure of grant funds, in accordance with subsection (b) of this
73 section, to the Department of Education, at such time and in such
74 manner as the commissioner prescribes.

75 (b) The plan for the expenditure of grant funds shall be approved by
76 the department, after consultation with the State Librarian for

77 purposes of the partnership programs, and shall include: (1) Methods
78 and school-based programs identified pursuant to section 10-223d that
79 address the specific subject areas, by grade level, in which students
80 attending the school were most deficient on the state-wide mastery
81 examinations pursuant to section 10-14n, [and] (2) actions that are
82 necessary for the school to be accredited, and (3) partnership programs
83 with public libraries in the school district that are designed to improve
84 family literacy and parent involvement. The plan may include a
85 quality after school program.

86 (c) A quality after school program shall include: (1) Criteria for
87 student participation in the program; (2) leisure activities that facilitate
88 social and cognitive development; (3) safe indoor and outdoor
89 environments; (4) trained staff skilled in child development; (5) specific
90 strategies and interventions for children with demonstrated academic
91 weaknesses to improve academic performance and reduce social
92 promotion; (6) family involvement and an assessment of
93 transportation needs for families to utilize the program; and (7)
94 program evaluation.

95 (d) Each board of education receiving a grant pursuant to this
96 section shall set aside an amount equal to at least ten per cent of the
97 grant for partnership programs with public libraries in the school
98 district.

99 (e) The Department of Education may retain up to one per cent of
100 the amount appropriated for purposes of this section for coordination,
101 program evaluation and administration.

102 (f) No funds received pursuant to this section shall be used to
103 supplant federal, state or local funding to the local or regional board of
104 education for such schools.

105 (g) Expenditure reports shall be filed with the Department of
106 Education as requested by the commissioner. School districts shall

107 refund (1) any unexpended amounts at the close of the program for
108 which the grant was awarded, and (2) any amounts not expended in
109 accordance with the approved grant application.

110 (h) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001, the Hartford school
111 district shall not receive grants pursuant to this section but shall use a
112 portion of the supplemental aid provided in section 35 of special act
113 00-13 to implement improvement plans and partnership programs in
114 accordance with this section.

115 Sec. 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

ED *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: See Explanation Below

Affected Agencies: Department of Education

Municipal Impact: See Explanation Below

Explanation

State and Municipal Impact:

Although section 2 of the bill makes grants to “schools in need of improvement” permanent such grants are only provided within available appropriations and are not formula driven therefore making such grants permanent does not necessarily increase state costs or increase revenues to local and regional school districts. In FY 01 approximately \$237,000 was provided to each of the “schools in need of improvement”. The FY 01 - 03 budget currently before the General Assembly contains \$50,000 for each of the 28 schools or \$1.4 million from FY 01 surplus appropriations.

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5537

AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOLS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT.**SUMMARY:**

This bill delays, from October 1, 2001 to February 1, 2003, the date by which the education commissioner must issue a new list of elementary and middle schools in need of improvement. It also delays the date when superintendents of districts with schools on the new list must begin meeting with the education commissioner to discuss how to improve school performance from January 1, 2002 to April 1, 2003.

The bill requires schools to submit their improvement plans to the State Department of Education (SDE) in addition to the current requirement of submission to the local or regional board of education. It also calls for the improvement plans to include criteria for measuring progress. It instructs SDE to provide comments to the local board on the improvement plan before the board approves it.

The bill also makes permanent the grants to local and regional boards of education with one or more schools on the most recent list of schools in need of improvement. It adds a new requirement that plans for spending grant funds include actions that are necessary for the school to be accredited.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2001

BACKGROUND***Schools in Need of Improvement***

A 1999 public act requires the State Board of Education to create a list every two years of elementary and middle schools needing improvement based on their students' mastery test performance and performance trends. There are currently 28 schools on the list from six towns: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London, Waterbury, and Windham.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 29 Nay 0