



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 714

January Session, 2001

Substitute House Bill No. 6876

House of Representatives, May 9, 2001

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. DYSON of the 94th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL READINESS AND EARLY READING SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAMS.

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-16o of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

3 The state shall encourage the development of a network of school
4 readiness programs pursuant to sections 10-16p to 10-16r, inclusive, 10-
5 16u and 17b-749a in order to:

6 (1) Provide open access for children to quality programs that
7 promote the health and safety of children and prepare them for formal
8 schooling;

9 (2) Provide opportunities for parents to choose among affordable
10 and accredited or approved programs;

11 (3) Encourage coordination and cooperation among programs and

12 prevent the duplication of services;

13 (4) Recognize the specific service needs and unique resources
14 available to particular municipalities and provide flexibility in the
15 implementation of programs;

16 (5) Prevent or minimize the potential for developmental delay in
17 children prior to children reaching the age of five;

18 (6) Enhance federally funded school readiness programs;

19 (7) Strengthen the family through: (A) Encouragement of parental
20 involvement in a child's development and education; and (B)
21 enhancement of a family's capacity to meet the special needs of the
22 children, including children with disabilities;

23 (8) Reduce educational costs by decreasing the need for special
24 education services for school age children and to avoid grade
25 repetition;

26 (9) Assure that children with disabilities are integrated into
27 programs available to children who are not disabled; and

28 (10) Improve the availability and quality of school readiness
29 programs and their coordination with the services of child care
30 providers.

31 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is
32 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

33 (b) The Department of Education shall be the lead agency for school
34 readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u, school
35 readiness program providers eligible for funding from the Department
36 of Education shall include local and regional boards of education,
37 regional educational service centers, family resource centers and
38 providers of child day care centers, as defined in section 19a-77, Head

39 Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that meet
40 such standards established by the Commissioner of Education. The
41 department shall establish standards for school readiness programs.
42 The standards may include, but need not be limited to, guidelines for
43 staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including pre-literacy
44 development, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff qualifications
45 and training, and administration. The department shall develop age-
46 appropriate developmental skills and goals for children attending such
47 programs. The commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioners
48 of Higher Education and Social Services and other appropriate entities,
49 shall develop a continuing education training program for the staff of
50 school readiness programs. For purposes of this section, on and after
51 July 1, 2003, "staff qualifications" means there is in each classroom an
52 individual who has at least the following: (1) A credential issued by an
53 organization approved by the Commissioner of Education and nine
54 credits or more in early childhood education or child development
55 from an institution of higher education accredited by the Board of
56 Governors of Higher Education or regionally accredited; (2) an
57 associate's degree in early childhood education or child development
58 from such an institution; or (3) a four-year degree in early childhood
59 education or child development from such an institution.

60 Sec. 3. Subsection (e) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is
61 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

62 (e) (1) Ninety-three per cent of the amount appropriated for
63 purposes of this section shall be used for the grant program pursuant
64 to subsection (c) of this section. Priority school districts and former
65 priority school districts shall receive grants based on their proportional
66 share of the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the average
67 number of enrolled kindergarten students in each priority school
68 district and in each former priority school district for the three years
69 prior to the year the grant is to be paid, by the ratio of the average
70 percentage of free and reduced price meals for all severe need schools

71 in such district to the minimum percentage requirement for severe
72 need school eligibility, provided no such school district shall receive a
73 grant that is less than the grant it received for the prior fiscal year.

74 (2) Six and five-tenths per cent of the amount appropriated for
75 purposes of this section shall be used for the competitive grant
76 program pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

77 (3) The Department of Education may retain up to five-tenths of one
78 per cent of the amount appropriated for purposes of this section for
79 coordination, program evaluation and administration.

80 (4) If a town that is eligible for a grant pursuant to subsection (c) of
81 this section does not submit, by January first, a plan which is
82 subsequently approved for the expenditure of the entire amount of
83 funds for which such town is eligible, the department may use up to
84 [ten] fifty per cent of any amounts such town has not earmarked for
85 expenditure to provide supplemental grants to other towns that are
86 eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

87 (5) If any amount appropriated for purposes of this section is not
88 expended during a fiscal year, such amount shall not lapse and shall
89 be available for expenditure for purposes of this section in the
90 succeeding fiscal year.

91 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 10-16q of the general statutes is
92 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

93 (a) Each school readiness program shall include: (1) A plan for
94 collaboration with other community programs and services, including
95 public libraries, and for coordination of resources in order to facilitate
96 full-day and year-round child care and education programs for
97 children of working parents and parents in education or training
98 programs; (2) parent involvement, parenting education and outreach;
99 (3) (A) record-keeping policies that require documentation of the name

100 and address of each child's doctor, primary care provider and health
101 insurance company and information on whether the child is
102 immunized and has had health screens pursuant to the federal Early
103 and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Services Program
104 under 42 USC 1396d, and (B) referrals for health services, including
105 referrals for appropriate immunizations and screenings; (4) a plan for
106 the incorporation of appropriate pre-literacy practices and teacher
107 training in such practices; (5) nutrition services; [(5)] (6) referrals to
108 family literacy programs that incorporate adult basic education and
109 provide for the promotion of literacy through access to public library
110 services; [(6)] (7) admission policies that promote enrollment of
111 children from different racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds and
112 from other communities; [(7)] (8) a plan of transition for participating
113 children from the school readiness program to kindergarten and
114 provide for the transfer of records from the program to the
115 kindergarten program; [(8)] (9) a plan for professional development for
116 staff, [; (9)] including, but not limited to, training (A) in pre-literacy
117 skills development, and (B) designed to assure respect for racial and
118 ethnic diversity; (10) a sliding fee scale for families participating in the
119 program pursuant to section 17b-749d; and [(10)] (11) an annual
120 evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. On and after July 1,
121 2000, school readiness programs shall use the assessment measures
122 developed pursuant to section 10-16s in conducting their annual
123 evaluations.

124 Sec. 5. Section 10-16u of the general statutes is repealed and the
125 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

126 For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002, and each fiscal year
127 thereafter, the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
128 Commissioner of Social Services, shall provide grants, within available
129 appropriations, to eligible school readiness program providers
130 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-16p, as amended by this act, to
131 provide spaces in accredited or approved school readiness programs

132 for eligible children who reside in transitional school districts pursuant
133 to section 10-263c, except for transitional school districts eligible for
134 grants pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-16p. Except as provided
135 in this section, transitional school districts shall receive grants based on
136 their proportional share of the sum of the products obtained by
137 multiplying the average number of enrolled kindergarten students in
138 each transitional school district for the three years prior to the year the
139 grant is to be paid, by the ratio of the average percentage of free and
140 reduced price meals for all severe need schools in such district to the
141 minimum percentage requirement for severe need school eligibility
142 provided no such school district shall receive a grant that is less than
143 the grant it received for the prior fiscal year. The town of Chaplin shall
144 receive a grant of not less than one hundred thousand dollars. Under
145 the program, the grant shall be provided to the town in which such
146 transitional school district is located. Eligibility shall be determined for
147 a five-year period based on a school district's designation as a
148 transitional school district in the initial year of application, except that
149 grants pursuant to this section shall not be provided for transitional
150 school districts eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of said
151 section 10-16p. Grant awards shall be made annually contingent upon
152 available funding and a satisfactory annual evaluation. The chief
153 elected official of such town and the superintendent of schools for such
154 transitional school district shall submit a plan for the expenditure of
155 grant funds and responses to the local request for proposal process to
156 the Departments of Education and Social Services. The departments
157 shall jointly review such plans and shall each approve the portion of
158 such plan within its jurisdiction for funding. The plan shall meet the
159 requirements specified in subsection (c) of said section 10-16p.

160 Sec. 6. Subsection (c) of section 17b-749c of the general statutes is
161 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

162 (c) The grants shall be used to:

163 (1) Help providers who are not accredited by the National
164 Association for the Education of Young Children to obtain such
165 accreditation;

166 (2) Help directors and administrators to obtain training;

167 [(2)] (3) Provide comprehensive services, such as enhanced access to
168 health care, a health consultant, nutrition, family support services,
169 parent education, literacy and parental involvement, and community
170 and home outreach programs; and provide information concerning
171 access when needed to a speech and language therapist;

172 [(3)] (4) Purchase educational equipment;

173 [(4)] (5) Provide scholarships for training to obtain a child
174 development associate certificate;

175 [(5)] (6) Provide training for persons who are mentor teachers, as
176 defined in federal regulations for the Head Start program, and provide
177 a family service coordinator or a family service worker as such
178 positions are defined in such federal regulations;

179 [(6)] (7) Repair fire, health and safety problems in existing facilities
180 and conduct minor remodeling to comply with the Americans with
181 Disabilities Act; train child care providers on injury and illness
182 prevention; and achieve compliance with national safety standards;

183 [(7)] (8) Create a supportive network with family day care homes;

184 [(8)] (9) Provide for educational consultation and staff development;

185 [(9)] (10) Provide for program quality assurance personnel;

186 [(10)] (11) Provide technical assistance services to enable providers
187 to develop child care facilities pursuant to sections 17b-749g, 17b-749h
188 and 17b-749i; [and] or

189 [(11)] (12) Establish a single point of entry system.

190 Sec. 7. Subsection (a) of section 17b-749k of the general statutes is
191 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

192 (a) [On and after January 1, 1998, the] The Commissioner of Social
193 Services shall, within available appropriations, [request a criminal
194 records check] require state and national criminal history records
195 checks for any person, other than a relative, providing child care
196 services to a child in the child's home who receives a child care subsidy
197 from the Department of Social Services. Such criminal history records
198 [check] checks shall be requested from the State Police Bureau of
199 Identification and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The
200 Commissioner of Social Services shall arrange for the fingerprinting of
201 such person or for the conducting of any other method of positive
202 identification required by the State Police Bureau of Identification or
203 the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The fingerprinting or other
204 positive identifying information shall be forwarded to the State Police
205 Bureau of Identification which shall conduct a state criminal history
206 records check and submit the fingerprints or other positive identifying
207 information to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a national
208 criminal history records check. The commissioner shall also [request]
209 require a check of the state child abuse registry established pursuant to
210 section 17a-101k. A fee shall be charged by the commissioner for each
211 such national criminal history records check which shall be equal to
212 the fee charged by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for performing
213 such check. The Department of Social Services shall reimburse the
214 Department of Public Safety for the actual cost for a national criminal
215 history records check.

216 Sec. 8. Section 17b-750 of the general statutes is repealed and the
217 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

218 No child care subsidy shall be paid to an unlicensed child care
219 provider if such provider has been convicted of any crime involving

220 sexual assault of a minor or serious physical injury to a minor or any
221 crime committed in any other state or jurisdiction the essential
222 elements of which are substantially the same as such crimes. If the
223 commissioner has reason to believe that a provider of child care
224 services has been so convicted, [he] the commissioner may demand
225 that such provider be subject to state and national criminal history
226 checks. [The commissioner shall request the state criminal history
227 records check for such provider] If the criminal history records checks
228 are required pursuant to this section, the commissioner shall request
229 such checks from the State Police Bureau of Identification. The
230 commissioner shall arrange for the fingerprinting of such provider
231 [and forward the fingerprints to said bureau which shall] or for the
232 conducting of any other method of positive identification required by
233 the State Police Bureau of Identification or the Federal Bureau of
234 Investigation. The fingerprints or other positive identifying
235 information shall be forwarded to the State Police Bureau of
236 Identification which shall conduct a state criminal history records
237 check and submit the fingerprints or other identifying information to
238 the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a national criminal history
239 records check. The commissioner may charge such provider a fee for
240 the national criminal history records check which shall not exceed the
241 fee charged by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for performing the
242 check. The Department of Social Services shall reimburse the
243 Department of Public Safety for the actual cost for a national criminal
244 history records check.

245 Sec. 9. The Commission on Children shall study, within available
246 appropriations, the existing services, strengths and gaps in service in
247 the early care and education system for children from birth to age
248 eight, inclusive, in order to maximize early childhood healthy
249 development and school readiness opportunities. The commission may
250 invite representatives from local and regional school readiness councils
251 and service providers to assist it in such study. The commission shall
252 examine program, policy, coordination, training and funding

253 opportunities focused on the health, safety and learning of young
254 children. The commission shall report, in accordance with section 11-
255 4a of the general statutes, on its study to the joint standing committee
256 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
257 education by January 1, 2003.

258 Sec. 10. Section 10-221l of the general statutes is repealed and the
259 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

260 The Department of Education shall develop, within available
261 appropriations, a State-Wide Early Reading Success Institute for
262 educators based on the review completed by the Early Reading Success
263 Panel pursuant to section 10-221j and the assessments conducted
264 pursuant to section 10-221k. The institute shall commence operation in
265 the 2000-2001 school year. The institute shall use training curriculum
266 that incorporates comprehensive instruction in reading as determined
267 by the Early Reading Success Panel pursuant to section 10-221j, to
268 include, but not be limited to: (1) Instructional strategies that can be
269 adapted for each student's needs; (2) early screening and ongoing
270 assessment to determine which individual students need additional
271 instruction; (3) teaching of oral language competencies, including
272 phonological awareness, vocabulary, listening comprehension and
273 grammatical skills; (4) systematic teaching of word identification skills
274 including phonics instruction and instruction in phonemic awareness;
275 and (5) teaching of comprehension competencies, including the use of
276 context to infer meaning.

277 Sec. 11. Section 10-221m of the general statutes is repealed and the
278 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

279 (a) On or before July 1, 2001, each local or regional board of
280 education for a priority school district pursuant to section 10-266p
281 shall develop and implement a three-year in-service reading
282 instruction training plan for the professional development of the
283 district's school librarians, elementary school principals and not less

284 than seventy per cent of its teachers in grades kindergarten to three,
285 inclusive, provided spaces are available at the State-Wide Early
286 Reading Success Institute for such training. [The]

287 (b) On or before October 1, 2001, each local or regional board of
288 education for a priority school district shall revise the plan developed
289 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section and implement such revised
290 plan. The revised plan shall provide for a five-year school-based in-
291 service reading instruction training program for the professional
292 development of each elementary school's librarian, principal, reading
293 specialist, special education teachers, speech and language specialists
294 and classroom teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive. Such
295 plan shall [be consistent with the model for instruction] utilize the
296 training developed by the State-Wide Early Reading Success Institute
297 pursuant to section 10-221l, as amended by this act. The local or
298 regional board of education may use funds received by the school
299 district pursuant to section 10-265f for teacher training based on the
300 plan.

301 Sec. 12. The Department of Education shall take the actions outlined
302 in this section relating to reading instruction and teacher training: (1)
303 Oversee the development of the curricula for the Early Reading
304 Success Institute pursuant to section 10-221l of the general statutes, as
305 amended by this act, and establish necessary qualifications for persons
306 providing teacher training; (2) develop recommendations to align the
307 standards for reading competencies required under subsection (b) of
308 section 10-221i of the general statutes, with the Early Reading Success
309 Panel's research pursuant to section 10-221j of the general statutes; (3)
310 delineate the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain certification as
311 an elementary education teacher and as a reading specialist; and (4)
312 examine the curriculum module designs and implementation of
313 teacher training based on the report of the Early Reading Success
314 Panel. The Commissioner of Education shall report, in accordance with
315 section 11-4a of the general statutes, on such actions to the joint

316 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
317 matters relating to education by February 1, 2002.

318 Sec. 13. (NEW) The Department of Education shall contract, within
319 available appropriations, for an independent evaluation of the early
320 reading success teacher training and curriculum modules as delineated
321 in sections 10-221j to 10-221m, inclusive, of the general statutes, as
322 amended by this act.

323 Sec. 14. Section 10-265f of the general statutes is repealed and the
324 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

325 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall establish, within available
326 appropriations, an early reading success grant program to assist local
327 and regional boards of education for priority school districts and
328 school districts in which priority elementary schools are located in: (1)
329 Establishing full-day kindergarten programs; (2) reducing class size in
330 grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, to not more than eighteen
331 students; and (3) establishing intensive early intervention reading
332 programs, including after-school and summer programs, for students
333 identified as being at risk of failing to learn to read by the end of first
334 grade and students in grades one to three, inclusive, who are reading
335 below grade level. Eligibility for grants pursuant to this section shall be
336 determined for a five-year period based on a school district's
337 designation as a priority school district or as a school district in which
338 a priority elementary school is located for the initial year of
339 application. In order to receive a grant, an eligible board of education
340 shall submit a plan for the expenditure of grant funds, in accordance
341 with this section, to the Department of Education, at such time and in
342 such manner as the commissioner prescribes. An eligible school district
343 may receive a grant for one or more purposes pursuant to subdivisions
344 (1) to (3), inclusive, of this subsection, provided at least fifty per cent of
345 any grant funds received by such school district are used for programs
346 pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection. If the commissioner

347 determines the school district is addressing the issue of early reading
348 intervention sufficiently, the commissioner may allow the school
349 district to set aside a smaller percentage of the funds received pursuant
350 to this section for such programs.

351 (b) (1) In the case of proposals for full-day kindergarten programs,
352 the plan shall include: (A) Information on the number of full-day
353 kindergarten classes that will be offered initially and the number of
354 children to be enrolled in such classes; (B) how the board anticipates
355 expanding the number of full-day kindergarten programs in future
356 school years; (C) the number of additional teachers needed and any
357 additional equipment needed for purposes of such programs; (D) a
358 description of any proposed school building project that is related to
359 the need for additional space for full-day kindergarten programs,
360 including an analysis of the different options available to meet such
361 need, such as relocatable classrooms, the division of existing
362 classrooms, an addition to a building or new construction; (E)
363 information on the curriculum for the full-day kindergarten program
364 pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection; (F) information on
365 coordination between the full-day kindergarten program and school
366 readiness programs for the purpose of providing (i) information
367 concerning transition from preschool to kindergarten, including the
368 child's preschool records, and (ii) before and after school child care for
369 children attending the full-day kindergarten program; and (G) any
370 additional information the commissioner deems relevant.

371 (2) A full-day kindergarten program that receives funding pursuant
372 to this subsection shall: (A) Include language development and
373 appropriate reading readiness experiences; (B) provide for the
374 assessment of a student's progress; (C) include a professional
375 development component in the teaching of reading and reading
376 readiness and assessment of reading competency for kindergarten
377 teachers; [and] (D) provide for parental involvement; and (E) refer
378 eligible children who do not have health insurance to the HUSKY

379 program.

380 (c) (1) In the case of proposals for the reduction of class size in
381 grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, to not more than eighteen
382 students the plan shall include: (A) A time frame for achieving such
383 reduction in class size; (B) information on the class size in such grades
384 at each school at the time of application for the grant and the number
385 of classes to be reduced in size with grant funds; (C) the number of
386 additional teachers needed and any additional equipment needed; (D)
387 a description of any proposed school building project related to the
388 need for additional space for smaller classes, including an analysis of
389 the different options available to meet such need such as relocatable
390 classrooms, the division of existing classrooms, an addition to a
391 building or new construction; (E) an estimate of the costs associated
392 with implementation of the plan; and (F) any additional information
393 the commissioner deems relevant.

394 (2) If a school district accepts funds pursuant to this subsection,
395 such school district shall limit the class size of classes in which core
396 curriculum is taught in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, in
397 accordance with its plan to eighteen or less students, provided
398 students who enroll after October first in any school year are not
399 included for purposes of such count.

400 (d) In the case of proposals for intensive early intervention reading
401 programs including after-school and summer programs, the plan shall:
402 (1) [Provide] Incorporate the competencies required for early reading
403 success, critical indicators for teacher intervention and the components
404 of a high quality early reading success curriculum in accordance with
405 the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel delineated in section
406 10-2211, as amended by this act; (2) provide for a period of time each
407 day of individualized or small group instruction for each student; [(2)]
408 (3) provide for monitoring of students and follow-up in subsequent
409 grades, documentation of continuous classroom observation of

410 student's reading behaviors and establishment of performance
411 indicators aligned with the state-wide mastery examinations under
412 chapter 163c, the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel pursuant
413 to section 10-221j and other methodologies for assessing reading
414 competencies established by the department pursuant to section 10-
415 221i; [(3)] (4) include a professional development component for
416 teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, that emphasizes the
417 teaching of reading and reading readiness and assessment of reading
418 competency based on the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel
419 pursuant to section 10-221j; [(4)] (5) provide for parental involvement
420 and ensure that parents have access to information on strategies that
421 may be used at home to improve prereading or reading skills; [(5)] (6)
422 provide for data collection and program evaluation; and [(6)] (7) any
423 additional information the commissioner deems relevant.

424 (e) (1) The pilot programs established pursuant to section 10-265j
425 shall be funded from the amount appropriated for purposes of this
426 section. The department shall use ninety per cent of the remaining
427 funds appropriated for purposes of this section for grants to priority
428 school districts. Priority school districts shall receive grants based on
429 their proportional share of the sum of the products obtained by
430 multiplying the number of enrolled kindergarten students in each
431 priority school district for the year prior to the year the grant is to be
432 paid, by the ratio of the average percentage of free and reduced price
433 meals for all severe need schools in such district to the minimum
434 percentage requirement for severe need school eligibility. (2) The
435 department shall use nine per cent of such remaining funds for
436 competitive grants to school districts in which a priority elementary
437 school is located. In awarding grants to school districts in which
438 priority elementary schools are located, the department shall consider
439 the town wealth, as defined in subdivision (26) of section 10-262f, of
440 the town in which the school district is located, or in the case of
441 regional school districts, the towns which comprise the regional school
442 district. Grants received by school districts in which priority

443 elementary schools are located shall not exceed one hundred thousand
444 dollars and shall be used for the appropriate purpose at the priority
445 elementary school. (3) The department may retain up to one per cent of
446 such remaining funds for coordination, program evaluation and
447 administration.

448 (f) No funds received pursuant to this section shall be used to
449 supplant federal, state or local funding to the local or regional boards
450 of education for programs for grades kindergarten to three, inclusive.

451 (g) Expenditure reports shall be filed with the department as
452 requested by the commissioner. School districts shall refund (1) any
453 unexpended amounts at the close of the program for which the grant is
454 awarded, and (2) any amounts not expended in accordance with the
455 approved grant application.

456 Sec. 15. Subsection (b) of section 10-265g of the general statutes is
457 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

458 (b) For each school year commencing on or after July 1, 1999, each
459 local and regional board of education for a priority school district shall
460 require the schools under its jurisdiction to evaluate the reading level
461 of students enrolled in grades one to three, inclusive, in the middle of
462 the school year and at the end of the school year. A student shall be
463 determined to be substantially deficient in reading based on measures
464 established by the State Board of Education. Each school shall provide
465 a reading program for such students that incorporates the
466 competencies required for early reading success and effective reading
467 instruction as delineated in section 10-2211, as amended by this act. If a
468 student is determined to be substantially deficient in reading based on:
469 (1) The middle of the year evaluation, the school shall notify the
470 parents or guardian of the student of such result; and (2) the end of the
471 year evaluation, the school shall develop a personal reading plan for
472 such student. The personal reading plan shall include measures to
473 improve the student's reading level, such as tutoring, a transitional

474 class, or a summer reading program as described in subsection (d) of
475 section 10-265f. Promotion of such student from grade to grade shall be
476 based on documented progress in achieving the goals of the personal
477 reading plan or demonstrated reading proficiency. If a decision is
478 made to promote a student who is substantially deficient in reading
479 from third to fourth grade, the school principal shall provide written
480 justification for such promotion to the superintendent of schools. A
481 personal reading plan that incorporates the competencies required for
482 early reading success and effective reading instruction as delineated in
483 section 10-221l, as amended by this act, shall be maintained for a
484 student who is substantially deficient in reading until the student
485 achieves a satisfactory level of proficiency.

486 Sec. 16. Section 10-265k of the general statutes is repealed and the
487 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

488 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall conduct, within available
489 appropriations, a longitudinal study that examines the educational
490 progress of children both during and following participation in early
491 reading success grant programs pursuant to section 10-265f, as
492 amended by this act.

493 (b) The Commissioner of Education shall report, in accordance with
494 section 11-4a, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
495 having cognizance of matters relating to education on the longitudinal
496 study by January 1, [2001] 2002.

497 Sec. 17. Subsection (h) of section 10-285a of the general statutes is
498 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

499 (h) Subject to the provisions of section 10-285d, if an elementary
500 school building project for a school in a priority school district or for a
501 priority school is necessary in order to offer a full-day kindergarten
502 program or to reduce class size pursuant to section 10-265f, as
503 amended by this act, the percentage determined pursuant to this

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: Cost

Affected Agencies: Department of Education

Municipal Impact: Revenue Gain

Explanation

State and Municipal Impact:

The bill sets forth a formula for the distribution of early childhood funds to transitional school districts including a minimum grant of \$100,000 to Chaplin. Based on the FY 01 - 03 budget as passed by the Appropriations Committee an additional \$1.0 million per year will be provided to transitional school districts for the purposes of this program.

The bill changes the percentage of funds to priority school districts that the Department of Education can reallocate if one district will not be utilizing the funds in a given fiscal year. By allowing an increase in reallocations there is a potential revenue gain to districts that can utilize the funds and a potential decrease in any future state lapse. The exact impact is dependent on the unknown future actions of priority school districts however based on past history there will be an increase in revenue to districts that can utilize funds and thus a decrease in future state lapses.

Additionally the bill expands the ways school readiness and day care providers can spend supplemental quality enhancement grants available from the Department of Social Services (DSS) to include:

1. helping program directors and administrators get training,
2. providing health consultants,
3. providing information on needed access to speech and language therapists,
4. training day care providers to prevent injury and illness, and
5. complying with national safety standards.

The bill doubles the increase in the usual school construction reimbursement grant from 5% to 10% for any part of an elementary school building project in a priority school or priority district to be used primarily for a full-day kindergarten program or to reduce K-3 class sizes to no more than 18 students. By law, to be eligible for the higher reimbursement, a school board must (1) include the project in its early reading success grant plan, (2) use the money for a particular full-day kindergarten or smaller class funded by the grant, and (3) show SDE that the building project is cost-efficient and the best choice for meeting the need for more space. The project must also meet all the regular school construction project requirements. No exact debt service or bonding cost can be estimated as the extent of projects eligible for such a bonus is unknown. However such costs are expected to be minimal in relation to overall school construction costs in the future.

All other sections of the bill are technical and/or have no fiscal impact.

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6876

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL READINESS AND EARLY READING SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAMS.**SUMMARY:**

This bill makes several changes in the state's school readiness and early reading programs. Among other things, it:

1. establishes an allocation formula for school readiness grants for transitional school districts that start next fiscal year;
2. increases, from 10% to 50%, the percentage of school readiness grants to priority districts that the State Department of Education (SDE) may reallocate in the middle of the year under certain circumstances;
3. expands the ways school readiness and day care providers can spend supplemental quality enhancement grants available from the Department of Social Services (DSS);
4. increases the school construction bonus, from 5% to 10%, for any part of an elementary school building project in a priority school or priority district to be used primarily for a full-day kindergarten program or to reduce K-3 class sizes to no more than 18 students;
5. requires state-funded early reading programs to incorporate the state Early Reading Success Panel's findings on comprehensive reading instruction;
6. expands professional development requirements for elementary school personnel in priority districts and requires the training to incorporate the reading panel's findings, and

7. requires full-day kindergarten programs in priority districts funded by the state early reading grant to refer eligible children without health insurance to the state's HUSKY Program, which subsidizes health coverage for low-income children; and
8. (a) requires studies of the state's early childhood day care and education systems and of teacher preparation in reading and (b) extends the reporting deadline for a study of the effects of state-funded early reading programs.

The bill also makes minor changes in laws concerning criminal background checks for certain day care providers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2001

SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM

Grants for Transitional School Districts

The bill establishes a formula for allocating annual school readiness grants for all but one of the transitional school districts. Under current law, grants to such districts are scheduled to start in FY 2001-02. The formula, which is the same one used to distribute grants to priority districts, allocates grants among the transitional districts based on each one's average kindergarten enrollment for the three years before the grant and each one's relative proportion of low-income students. Despite the formula, no district can receive less than it did the year before.

The bill exempts Chaplin from the formula and requires it to receive at least \$100,000 per year.

Priority and transitional districts are those that have the greatest educational and economic need based on various statutory criteria. The priority districts are the 14 districts with the greatest educational and economic need, and the 12 transitional districts are the next neediest group.

Mid-Year Grant Reallocations and Fund Carryover

Under current law, SDE can reallocate to other priority districts up to 10% of a priority school district's grant if the district fails to submit a plan to spend its entire grant by January 1. The bill increases the reallocation percentage to 50%.

The bill also requires any school readiness grant money left over at the end of the fiscal year to be carried over for program activities in the following year.

Quality Enhancement Grants

The bill expands the ways school readiness and day care providers can spend supplemental quality enhancement grants available from DSS to include:

1. helping program directors and administrators get training,
2. providing health consultants and information on needed access to speech and language therapists,
3. training in how to prevent injury and illness, and
4. complying with national safety standards.

Staff Professional Development

The bill requires school readiness programs to have plans for incorporating appropriate pre-literacy practices and for teacher training in those practices. It also requires each program's plans for staff professional development to include training (1) in developing children's pre-literacy skills and (2) designed to assure respect for racial and ethnic diversity.

Program Goals and Standards

The bill expands the goals of the school readiness program to include improving coordination between school readiness programs and child-care services. It also allows the SDE to include pre-literacy development as part of its curriculum content standards for school readiness programs.

Early Childhood System Assessment

The bill requires the Commission on Children, within available appropriations, to study the day care and education systems for children from birth to age eight to identify ways to maximize opportunities for healthy child development and school readiness. The study must examine programs, policies, coordination, training, and funding for young children's health, safety, and learning. The commission may invite representatives of school readiness councils and other service providers to help with the study. It must report on the study to the Education Committee by January 1, 2003.

Criminal Background Checks

The bill requires the DSS commissioner to check, rather than merely ask for a check of, any nonrelative who receives a state subsidy to provide child care in a child's home against the state child abuse registry.

It also requires the commissioner to arrange for the required fingerprinting or other identification the State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) need to perform state and national criminal checks on such nonrelatives. It expressly requires the fingerprints or other identification to be sent to the State Police Identification Bureau for a state check and requires the State Police to forward it to the FBI for a national check.

The law bars the commissioner from paying a day care subsidy to an unlicensed provider who has been convicted in Connecticut or elsewhere of sexual assault on, or serious physical injury to, a minor or any similar crime. If the commissioner believes a provider has been convicted, she may require the provider to submit to a state and national criminal records check and arrange to have the provider fingerprinted. This bill allows her also to arrange to conduct any other necessary method of identification for the check. It also expressly requires her to send the information to the State Police and the State Police to send it to the FBI.

Finally, the bill requires DSS to reimburse the Department of Public

Safety for the actual cost of the national check. The law already allows DSS to charge the day care provider a fee for the check up to a maximum of the FBI's fee for national checks (currently \$24).

EARLY READING SUCCESS PROGRAM

School Construction Bonus

The bill doubles the school construction reimbursement bonus, from an additional 5% to an additional 10%, for any part of an elementary school building project in a priority school or priority district to be used primarily for a full-day kindergarten program or to reduce K-3 class sizes to no more than 18 students. By law, to be eligible for the higher reimbursement, a school board must (1) include the project in its early reading success grant plan, (2) use the money for a particular full-day kindergarten or smaller class funded by the grant, and (3) show SDE that the building project is cost-efficient and the best choice for meeting the need for more space. The project must also meet all the regular school construction project requirements.

Early Reading Success Institute Curriculum

The bill requires the SDE's Early Reading Success Institute teacher training curriculum to incorporate the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel on comprehensive reading instruction. The institute's curriculum must cover:

1. instructional strategies adaptable to student needs;
2. early screening and ongoing assessments to determine which students need more help;
3. teaching oral language competencies, including awareness of sounds in spoken words (phonological awareness), vocabulary, listening comprehension, and grammar;
4. systematic teaching of how to identify written words, including instruction that emphasizes the correspondence between letters and spelling and word sounds (phonics) and the ability to break words

down into individual sounds and blend sounds into a spoken word (phonemic awareness); and

5. teaching reading comprehension, including how to use context to tell what a word means.

Priority District Professional Development Plans

The bill expands professional development requirements for elementary school personnel in priority districts.

Under current law, by July 1, 2001, priority school districts must develop and implement three-year plans to train school librarians, elementary school principals, and at least 70% of their K-3 teachers in how to teach reading. By October 1, 2001, this bill requires the districts to revise their plans to provide for school-based, in-service training in reading instruction over five years for all of the following elementary school personnel: librarians, principals, reading specialists, special education teachers, speech and language specialists, and K-3 classroom teachers. The training must be that developed by the state reading panel.

Requirements for SDE

The bill requires SDE to:

1. oversee curriculum development for the Early Reading Success Institute,
2. establish qualifications for teacher training providers,
3. recommend how to align the State Board of Education's reading competency standards for grades 1 through 3 with the reading panel's research,
4. specify the knowledge and skills a person needs to be certified as an elementary education teacher or as a reading specialist, and
5. examine curriculum module designs and teacher training implementation based on the reading panel's report.

The commissioner must report on these actions to the Education Committee by February 1, 2002.

The commissioner must also, within available appropriations, hire a contractor to evaluate teacher training in reading and the curriculum modules formulated by the reading panel and used in the institute.

Intensive Early Reading Programs in Priority Districts

The bill requires priority district proposals for intensive early reading programs funded by the state grant to incorporate the following findings of the reading panel:

1. skills required for early reading success,
2. critical indicators for teacher intervention, and
3. the components of a high-quality early reading curriculum.

District proposals must align performance indicators and teacher training with the reading panel's findings.

The bill also requires reading programs for students in grades 1 to 3 who are substantially deficient in reading and mandatory reading programs for students promoted to the 4th grade despite being substantially deficient in reading to incorporate the reading panel's findings.

Full-Day Kindergarten Programs in Priority Districts

The bill requires priority districts seeking funding for full-day kindergarten programs under the early reading success grant program to include in their plans information on how the kindergarten and school readiness programs will be coordinated to provide information on a child's transition from preschool to kindergarten, including information on preschool records. Plans must already include information on coordinating before- and after-school care for children in the kindergarten programs.

The bill also requires the kindergarten programs to refer eligible children without health insurance to the state's HUSKY Program, which subsidizes health coverage for low-income children.

Longitudinal Study of Early Reading Success Programs

The bill delays by one year, from January 1, 2001 to January 1, 2002, the education commissioner's report to the Education Committee on a longitudinal study of the educational progress of children during and after their participation in early reading programs funded by early reading success grants.

Teacher Education Program Study

The bill requires the education and higher education commissioners to study colleges' and universities' teacher education programs that have coursework in reading instruction. The commissioners must evaluate how the programs are implementing the reading panel's report and report the results of the study and any recommended revisions in teacher preparation programs to the Education Committee by January 1, 2002.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference
Yea 32 Nay 0

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 51 Nay 0