



General Assembly

January Session, 2001

***Raised Bill No. 6663***

LCO No. 3388

Referred to Committee on Program Review and Investigations

Introduced by:  
(PRI)

***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS  
COMMITTEE RELATIVE TO THE FUNDING OF EDUCATIONAL  
SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE BLIND OR VISUALLY  
IMPAIRED.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (a) The Board of Education and Services for the  
2 Blind may enter into contractual agreements with local and regional  
3 school districts to provide, for a fee, the services of teachers of the  
4 visually impaired and other education professionals employed by said  
5 board for children who are blind or visually impaired.

6 (b) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall establish  
7 a schedule of fees for each school year for the provision of educational  
8 services to children who are blind or visually impaired. Such fees shall  
9 be adequate to cover the costs of providing such services.

10 (c) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall establish  
11 and distribute to local and regional school districts written guidelines  
12 concerning its policies and procedures for the provision of services and  
13 the establishment of fees.

14       Sec. 2. (NEW) The vision education services account for the Board of  
15 Education and Services for the Blind shall be established as a separate  
16 account within the General Fund for the purpose of aiding children  
17 who are blind or visually impaired by providing educational services  
18 to such children. Any money received by said board from local or  
19 regional school districts shall be deposited in the General Fund and  
20 credited to the account. Payments shall be made from the account for  
21 expenses relative to the provision of educational services to children  
22 who are blind or visually impaired. Bills contracted by the Board of  
23 Education and Services for the Blind for the purposes specified in this  
24 section shall be paid by order of the Comptroller against the account in  
25 the manner provided by law for the payment of all claims against the  
26 state. At the end of each fiscal year, any surplus as of June thirtieth  
27 determined by including cash less accounts payable over the sum of  
28 three hundred thousand dollars shall revert to the General Fund of the  
29 state.

30       Sec. 3. (NEW) (a) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, and for  
31 each fiscal year thereafter, the Board of Education and Services for the  
32 Blind shall provide vision education grants to assist local and regional  
33 school districts in the provision of specialized educational services and  
34 materials to children who are blind or visually impaired and require  
35 special education. Said grant program shall be funded in an amount  
36 equal to six thousand four hundred dollars for each child who resides  
37 within the state and is blind or visually impaired and who requires  
38 special education. Each local or regional school district shall be eligible  
39 for a grant in an amount equal to two thousand dollars for each child  
40 within the school district who is blind or visually impaired and  
41 requires special education.

42       (b) In addition to the grants provided to local and regional school  
43 districts under subsection (a) of this section, the Board of Education  
44 and Services for the Blind shall provide competitive grants to such  
45 school districts. To be eligible for a competitive grant, a local or  
46 regional school district shall submit an application annually to the

47 Board of Education and Services for the Blind at such time and in such  
48 manner as said board prescribes. Such competitive grant funds shall be  
49 used first by the school district to provide specialized instructional  
50 materials, including Braille and large print books and adaptive  
51 equipment and technology necessary for accessing educational  
52 programs that are required by eligible students who are blind or  
53 visually impaired. If there are any remaining funds, they shall be used  
54 to provide supplemental funding, on a proportional basis, to local and  
55 regional school districts for any expenses associated with consultation  
56 and instructional services provided by teachers of the visually  
57 impaired and other services related to the provision of the expanded  
58 core curriculum to blind or visually impaired students including, but  
59 not limited to, orientation and mobility training and independent  
60 living skills.

61 (c) Within sixty days after the close of the school year, each local or  
62 regional school district which receives a grant under this section shall  
63 file with the Board of Education and Services for the Blind a financial  
64 statement of expenditures in such form as said board prescribes. If the  
65 Board of Education and Services for the Blind finds that any local or  
66 regional school district uses a grant under this section for purposes  
67 other than those which are in conformity with the purposes of this  
68 section, said board may require repayment of such grant to the state.

69 (d) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind, in  
70 consultation with the Department of Education, shall adopt  
71 regulations in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the  
72 general statutes that specify requirements and a formula for the  
73 distribution of competitive grant funds and the types of expenses  
74 eligible for the expenditure of grant funds under this section.

75 Sec. 4. Section 10-295 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
76 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

77 [(a) All residents of this state, regardless of age, who, because of  
78 blindness or impaired vision, require special educational programs, on

79 the signed recommendation of the director of the Board of Education  
80 and Services for the Blind, shall be entitled to receive such instruction  
81 and for such length of time as is deemed expedient by said director.  
82 The director shall annually submit to the board the list of names of  
83 persons so recommended. Upon the petition of any parent or guardian  
84 of a blind educable child or a child with impaired vision, a local board  
85 of education may provide such instruction within the town or it may  
86 provide for such instruction by agreement with other towns as  
87 provided in subsection (d) of section 10-76d. The expense of such  
88 instruction shall be paid by the state to an amount not exceeding six  
89 thousand four hundred dollars for each of such persons in any one  
90 state fiscal year. When the parents or guardians of any such blind  
91 person or person with impaired vision are not able to provide clothing  
92 for such person, an additional sum not to exceed one hundred dollars  
93 per year may be allowed for such expenses. Where a local or regional  
94 board of education reimburses parents or legal guardians of a blind or  
95 visually impaired child for transportation to and from a specialized  
96 residential facility serving the blind, such board shall be reimbursed by  
97 the state for such validated actual cost up to a maximum of three  
98 hundred dollars per pupil per school year. Determination of  
99 reimbursable transportation costs and payment therefor shall be the  
100 responsibility of the State Board of Education and Services for the  
101 Blind. All educational privileges prescribed in part V of chapter 164,  
102 not inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter, shall apply to the  
103 pupils covered by this subsection. The Board of Education and  
104 Services for the Blind may provide any of the educational services  
105 described in this section to a child whose vision may be greater than as  
106 defined in section 10-294a upon written referral by the local or regional  
107 board of education responsible for providing special education and  
108 related services pursuant to section 10-76d. A request from a local or  
109 regional board of education for reimbursement of such expenses to the  
110 Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall not be eligible for  
111 such reimbursement unless such request is received by the first of June  
112 for such expenses incurred during the preceding first of July through

113 the thirty-first of December and by the first of December for expenses  
114 incurred during the preceding first of January through the thirtieth of  
115 June.

116 (b) Said board may expend funds up to eleven thousand dollars per  
117 fiscal year per child for the purpose of sending children who are both  
118 blind or visually impaired and deaf, or blind or visually impaired with  
119 other severe physical handicaps, to specialized facilities within or  
120 outside the state furnishing proper facilities for education of such  
121 children; provided blind children or children with visual impairment  
122 who are mentally retarded or emotionally maladjusted who can  
123 reasonably profit by special training, facilities and services may be  
124 included in the provisions of this section. Such funds may be spent  
125 outside the state for room, board, tuition and other items necessarily  
126 relevant to the education of such children. Said board may determine if  
127 such children should be sent to such out-of-state places and may  
128 promulgate such regulations as it deems necessary to carry out the  
129 purpose and intent of this subsection. To be eligible for aid under this  
130 subsection, the child and either of such child's parents or guardian  
131 shall be bona fide residents of this state.]

132 [(c)] (a) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind may  
133 provide for the instruction of the adult blind in their homes, expending  
134 annually for this purpose such sums as the General Assembly may  
135 appropriate.

136 [(d)] (b) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind may  
137 expend up to ten thousand dollars per fiscal year per person twenty-  
138 one years of age or over who is both blind or visually impaired and  
139 deaf for the purpose of sending such person to a specialized public or  
140 private facility within the state furnishing programs from which such  
141 person can profit. Said board may determine the criteria by which a  
142 person is sent to a specialized public or private facility and may adopt  
143 regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this subsection.

144 [(e) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind may, within

145 available appropriations, purchase adaptive equipment for persons  
146 receiving services pursuant to this chapter. The cost of such purchases  
147 shall not exceed, and shall be included in, the maximum amount  
148 authorized for instructional expenses under subsection (a) of this  
149 section.]

150 Sec. 5. Section 10-296 of the general statutes is repealed.

151 Sec. 6. This act shall take effect October 1, 2001, except that sections  
152 3 to 5, inclusive, shall take effect July 1, 2004.

***Statement of Purpose:***

To implement the recommendations of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee relative to the funding of educational services for children who are blind or visually impaired.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*