



House of Representatives

File No. 621

General Assembly

February Session, 2002

(Reprint of File No. 361)

Substitute House Bill No. 5496
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedules "A", "B" and "D"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 4, 2002

AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND TEACHERS' RETIREMENT.

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-16o of the general statutes, as amended by
2 section 10 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is repealed and
3 the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2002*):

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

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

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

12 (3) Encourage coordination and cooperation among programs and
13 prevent the duplication of services;

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

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

19 (6) Enhance federally funded school readiness programs, including,
20 but not limited to, early reading first, Head Start, child care, early
21 education for children with disabilities and any other preschool
22 program funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary
23 Education Act of 1965;

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

28 (8) Reduce educational costs by decreasing the need for special
29 education services for school age children and to avoid grade
30 repetition;

31 (9) Assure that children with disabilities are integrated into
32 programs available to children who are not disabled and that school
33 readiness programs are appropriately reimbursed for children eligible
34 for special education and related services; and

35 (10) Improve the availability and quality of school readiness
36 programs and their coordination with the services of child care
37 providers.

38 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is
39 amended by adding subdivision (10) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2002*):

40 (NEW) (10) "Credential" means a Child Development Associate
41 credential issued by the Council for Professional Recognition, or an
42 American Montessori Instructor credential for children aged three to
43 six years, issued by the American Montessori Association, or otherwise

44 meeting such criteria as may be established by the Commissioner of
45 Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social Services.

46 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as
47 amended by section 48 of public act 01-173 and section 11 of public act
48 01-1 of the June special session, is repealed and the following is
49 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2002*):

50 (b) (1) The Department of Education shall be the lead agency for
51 school readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u,
52 school readiness program providers eligible for funding from the
53 Department of Education shall include local and regional boards of
54 education, regional educational service centers, family resource centers
55 and providers of child day care centers, as defined in section 19a-77,
56 Head Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that
57 meet such standards established by the Commissioner of Education.
58 The department shall establish standards for school readiness
59 programs. The standards may include, but need not be limited to,
60 guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including
61 preliteracy development based on scientifically based reading
62 research, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff qualifications and
63 training, transition to school and administration. The department shall
64 develop age-appropriate developmental skills and goals for children
65 attending such programs. The commissioner, in consultation with the
66 Commissioners of Higher Education, [and] Social Services and Public
67 Health and other appropriate entities, shall develop a continuing
68 education training program for the staff of school readiness programs.
69 For purposes of this section, on and after July 1, 2003, "staff
70 qualifications" means there is in each classroom an individual who has
71 at least the following: [(1)] (A) A credential issued by an organization
72 approved by the Commissioner of Education and [nine] six credits or
73 more, and on and after July 1, 2005, twelve credits or more, in early
74 childhood education or child development from an institution of
75 higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher
76 Education or regionally accredited; [(2)] (B) an associate's or four-year
77 degree in early childhood education or child development from such

78 an institution; [or (3) a] (C) an associate's or four-year degree with six
79 credits or more, and on and after July 1, 2005, twelve credits or more,
80 in early childhood education or child development from such an
81 institution; or (D) certification pursuant to section 10-145 with an
82 endorsement in early childhood education or special education.

83 (2) Credentialed staff shall be in classrooms from nine o'clock a.m.
84 to five o'clock p.m. at each full-time program. Not later than January 1,
85 2003, trained staff shall be present in the absence of credentialed staff
86 during full-time program hours earlier than nine o'clock a.m. and later
87 than five o'clock p.m. For purposes of this subsection, "trained staff"
88 means an individual who has completed a minimum of fifteen hours
89 training per year which meets criteria established by the local school
90 readiness council and approved by the Commissioner of Education.

91 Sec. 4. Section 10-16q of the general statutes, as amended by section
92 14 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is repealed and the
93 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2002*):

94 (a) Each school readiness program shall include: (1) A plan for
95 collaboration with other community programs and services, including
96 public libraries, and for coordination of resources in order to facilitate
97 full-day and year-round child care and education programs for
98 children of working parents and parents in education or training
99 programs; (2) parent involvement, parenting education and outreach;
100 (3) (A) record-keeping policies that require documentation of the name
101 and address of each child's doctor, primary care provider and health
102 insurance company and information on whether the child is
103 immunized and has had health screens pursuant to the federal Early
104 and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Services Program
105 under 42 USC 1396d, and (B) referrals for health services, including
106 referrals for appropriate immunizations and screenings; (4) a plan for
107 the incorporation of appropriate preliteracy practices and teacher
108 training in such practices based on the report completed by the Early
109 Reading Success Panel established pursuant to section 10-221j; (5)
110 nutrition services; (6) referrals to family literacy programs that

111 incorporate adult basic education and provide for the promotion of
112 literacy through access to public library services; (7) admission policies
113 that promote enrollment of children from different racial, ethnic and
114 economic backgrounds and from other communities; (8) a plan of
115 transition for participating children from the school readiness program
116 to kindergarten and provide for the transfer of records from the
117 program to the kindergarten program; (9) a plan for professional
118 development for staff, including, but not limited to, training (A) in
119 preliteracy skills development, and (B) designed to assure respect for
120 racial and ethnic diversity; (10) a sliding fee scale for families
121 participating in the program pursuant to section 17b-749d; and (11) an
122 annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. On and after
123 July 1, 2000, school readiness programs shall use the assessment
124 measures developed pursuant to section 10-16s in conducting their
125 annual evaluations.

126 (b) The per child cost of the Department of Education school
127 readiness component of the program offered by a school readiness
128 provider shall not exceed the foundation, as defined in subdivision (9)
129 of section 10-262f, as amended. A school readiness provider may
130 provide child day care services and the cost of such child day care
131 services shall not be subject to such per child cost limitation.

132 (c) A local or regional board of education may implement a sliding
133 fee scale for the cost of services provided to children enrolled in a
134 school readiness program.

135 (d) A school readiness program or a group of school readiness
136 programs may apply for a federal early reading first competitive grant
137 in accordance with provisions set forth in the No Child Left Behind
138 Act, P.L. 107-110.

139 (e) The Department of Education may apply for federal dollars to
140 create, in collaboration with appropriate New England nonprofit and
141 public agencies, a New England center for teacher training in literacy.
142 The center will train new and continuing teachers, preschool through

143 elementary school, in instruction methods consistent with research
144 based reading instruction.

145 Sec. 5. Subsection (a) of section 10-16r of the general statutes, as
146 amended by section 14 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is
147 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
148 *1, 2002*):

149 (a) A town seeking to apply for a grant pursuant to subsection (c) of
150 section 10-16p, as amended by this act, or section 10-16u shall convene
151 a local school readiness council or shall establish a regional school
152 readiness council pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. Any other
153 town may convene such a council. The chief elected official of the town
154 or, in the case of a regional school district, the chief elected officials of
155 the towns in the school district and the superintendent of schools for
156 the school district shall jointly appoint and convene such council. Each
157 school readiness council shall be composed of: (1) The chief elected
158 official, or the official's designee; (2) the superintendent of schools, or a
159 management level staff person as the superintendent's designee; (3)
160 parents; (4) representatives from local programs such as Head Start,
161 family resource centers, nonprofit and for-profit child day care centers,
162 group day care homes, prekindergarten and nursery schools, and
163 family day care home providers; and (5) other representatives from the
164 community who provide services to children or the community
165 including, but not limited to, librarians, child health experts and
166 business leaders. The chief elected official shall designate the
167 chairperson of the school readiness council.

168 Sec. 6. (*Effective from passage*) On or before October 1, 2002, the
169 presidents of institutions of higher education that provide teacher
170 education programs, or their designees, shall summarize and report to
171 the Commissioners of Education and Higher Education on the changes
172 made in the curricula of each such program to implement the
173 recommendations set forth in the report of the Early Reading Success
174 Panel pursuant to section 10-221j of the general statutes. On or before
175 February 1, 2003, said commissioners shall report, in accordance with

176 the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint
177 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
178 matters relating to education on such curricula changes.

179 Sec. 7. Subsection (g) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as
180 amended by section 13 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is
181 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
182 *passage*):

183 (g) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no funds received by
184 a town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
185 16u shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding received by
186 such town for early childhood education, provided (1) a town may use
187 the greater of (A) twenty-five thousand dollars, or (B) up to five per
188 cent but no more than fifty thousand dollars of the amount [received]
189 allocated pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
190 16u for coordination, program evaluation and administration, and (2)
191 if a town provides twenty-five thousand dollars in local funding for
192 early childhood education coordination, program evaluation and
193 administration, such town may use up to ten per cent but no more
194 than seventy-five thousand dollars of such amount for coordination,
195 program evaluation and administration. Each town that receives a
196 grant pursuant to said subsection (c) or (d) or section 10-16u shall
197 designate a person to be responsible for such coordination, program
198 evaluation and administration and to act as a liaison between the town
199 and the Departments of Education and Social Services. Each school
200 readiness program that receives funds pursuant to this section or
201 section 10-16u shall provide information to the department or the
202 school readiness council, as requested, that is necessary for purposes of
203 any school readiness program evaluation.

204 Sec. 8. Subsection (e) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as
205 amended by section 12 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is
206 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
207 *1, 2002*):

208 (e) (1) Ninety-three per cent of the amount appropriated for
209 purposes of this section shall be used for the grant program pursuant
210 to subsection (c) of this section. Priority school districts and former
211 priority school districts shall receive grants based on their proportional
212 share of the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the average
213 number of enrolled kindergarten students in each priority school
214 district and in each former priority school district for the three years
215 prior to the year the grant is to be paid, by the ratio of the average
216 percentage of free and reduced price meals for all severe need schools
217 in such district to the minimum percentage requirement for severe
218 need school eligibility, provided no such school district shall receive a
219 grant that is less than the grant it received for the prior fiscal year or a
220 grant that is less than one hundred fifty thousand dollars.

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

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

227 (4) If a town that is eligible for a grant pursuant to subsection (c) of
228 this section does not submit, by January first, a plan which is
229 subsequently approved for the expenditure of the entire amount of
230 funds for which such town is eligible, the department may use [up to
231 fifty per cent of] any amounts such town has not earmarked for
232 expenditure to (1) provide supplemental grants to other towns that are
233 eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, or (2)
234 enhance the system of professional development for pre-school
235 educators in programs receiving funds pursuant to this section.

236 Sec. 9. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2002*) The Department of Education
237 shall oversee the 21st century community learning centers, as provided
238 for in the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110.

239 Sec. 10. Subsection (e) of section 10-265f of the general statutes, as

240 amended by section 21 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is
241 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
242 *1, 2002*):

243 (e) (1) The pilot programs established pursuant to section 10-265j, as
244 amended, shall be funded from the amount appropriated for purposes
245 of this section. The department shall use ninety per cent of the
246 remaining funds appropriated for purposes of this section for grants to
247 priority school districts. Priority school districts shall receive grants
248 based on their proportional share of the sum of the products obtained
249 by multiplying the number of enrolled kindergarten students in each
250 priority school district for the year prior to the year the grant is to be
251 paid, by the ratio of the average percentage of free and reduced price
252 meals for all severe need schools in such district to the minimum
253 percentage requirement for severe need school eligibility. (2) The
254 department shall use nine per cent of such remaining funds for
255 competitive grants to school districts in which a priority elementary
256 school is located. In awarding grants to school districts in which
257 priority elementary schools are located, the department shall consider
258 the town wealth, as defined in subdivision (26) of section 10-262f, of
259 the town in which the school district is located, or in the case of
260 regional school districts, the towns which comprise the regional school
261 district. Grants received by school districts in which priority
262 elementary schools are located shall not exceed one hundred thousand
263 dollars and shall be used for the appropriate purpose at the priority
264 elementary school. (3) The department may retain up to one per cent of
265 such remaining funds for coordination, program evaluation and
266 administration. (4) The district shall use grant funds to provide
267 professional training for teachers and principals in reading instruction
268 required pursuant to subsection (d) of this section, as amended, at
269 reading institutes approved by the Commissioner of Education in an
270 amount sufficient to implement its approved program.

271 Sec. 11. Section 10-183v of the general statutes is repealed and the
272 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2002*):

273 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, a former
274 teacher receiving retirement benefits from the system may not be
275 employed in a teaching position receiving compensation paid out of
276 public money appropriated for school purposes except that such
277 former teacher may be employed temporarily in such a position and
278 receive no more than forty-five per cent of the [entry-level salary]
279 maximum salary level for the assigned [subject area for such
280 compensation.] position. Any former teacher who receives in excess of
281 such amount shall reimburse the board for the amount of such excess.
282 Temporary employment means employment for less than a school
283 year. Notice of such employment shall be sent [monthly] semi-
284 annually on January thirty-first and June thirtieth to the board by the
285 employing officials and by the retired teacher at the end of each
286 assignment.

287 (b) [A] Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this
288 section, a former teacher receiving retirement benefits from the system
289 may with prior approval of the Teachers' Retirement Board be
290 reemployed by a local board of education [or by any constituent unit of
291 the state system of higher education if such employment is authorized
292 by the Teachers' Retirement Board upon certification to such board
293 that such reemployment is in the best interests of the local or regional
294 school system. Such certification shall be made by the local or regional
295 board of education, if the employer is to be a local or regional board of
296 education, or the Board of Governors of Higher Education, if the
297 employer is to be a constituent unit of the state system of higher
298 education] in a position designated by the Commissioner of Education
299 as a subject shortage area for the school year in which the former
300 teacher is being reemployed or in such other positions as may be
301 deemed necessary by the commissioner. Local or regional boards of
302 education reemploying teachers to teach in a reading shortage area
303 shall give preference to such teachers when providing professional
304 training for teachers in reading instruction through a State-Wide
305 Reading Success Institute developed pursuant to section 10-2211, as
306 amended. Reemployment with any one board of education may be for

307 up to one full school year but may, with prior approval by the
308 Commissioner of Education and the Teachers' Retirement Board, be
309 extended for an additional school year. A local school district shall
310 submit a request for approval in writing to the Teachers' Retirement
311 Board prior to the reemployment of such former teacher and prior to
312 extending such reemployment for an additional school year. Such
313 requests for approval shall include a statement indicating the type of
314 assignment to be performed, the anticipated date of rehire and the
315 expected duration of the assignment.

316 (c) The [employment] reemployment of a former teacher under
317 subsection (b) of this section shall not be considered as service
318 qualifying for continuing contract status under section 10-151 and the
319 salary of such teacher shall be fixed at an amount at least equal to that
320 paid other teachers in the same school system with similar training
321 and experience for the same type of service. Upon approval by the
322 board of such reemployment, such former teacher shall be eligible for
323 the same health insurance benefits provided to active teachers
324 employed by such school system. No benefits shall be paid in under
325 section 10-183t while such former teacher is employed by such system.

326 (d) No person shall be entitled to survivor's benefits under
327 subsection (f) of section 10-183f as a result of reemployment under this
328 section.

329 [(e) Retirement benefits to a former teacher reemployed under
330 subsection (b) of this section shall terminate on the first day of the
331 month of such reemployment. Retirement benefits shall resume on the
332 first day of the month after reemployment ceases.]

333 [(f)] (e) The same option plan of retirement benefits in effect prior to
334 reemployment shall continue for a reemployed teacher during
335 reemployment. [and upon subsequent retirement.]

336 [(g) Any former teacher reemployed under subsection (b) of this
337 section may elect upon completion of not less than six months
338 continuous service to make contributions to the system from such date.

339 The employer of such electing reemployed teacher shall thereafter treat
340 such teacher with respect to the system in the same manner as any
341 other member of the system except that such employer shall deduct
342 only six-sevenths of the amount that would be deducted from the
343 salaries of other members.

344 (h) Any reemployed teacher electing to make contributions to the
345 system under subsection (g) of this section may also elect to obtain
346 retirement credit for service during the period from the beginning of
347 reemployment to the date of such election by contributing to the
348 system within six months of the date on which such teacher makes
349 such election under said subsection (g), six per cent of the salary paid
350 such teacher during such period together with credited interest from
351 the time such salary was paid until such contribution is made to the
352 system.

353 (i) Upon the subsequent retirement of an electing reemployed
354 teacher, the retirement benefits payable to such retired teacher shall be
355 increased by triple the amount that would be payable based solely
356 upon contributions of such teacher made during the period of
357 reemployment plus credited interest thereon.]

358 (f) The provisions of this section in effect on June 30, 2002, revision
359 of 1958, revised to January 1, 2001, shall be applicable to any
360 reemployed teacher making contributions under this section to the
361 Teachers' Retirement System on June 30, 2002.

362 Sec. 12. Subsection (a) of section 10-183f of the general statutes is
363 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
364 *1, 2004*):

365 (a) A member is eligible to receive a normal retirement benefit who
366 (1) has attained age sixty and has accumulated twenty years of
367 credited service in the public schools of Connecticut, or (2) has attained
368 any age, has accumulated at least twenty-five years of credited service
369 in the public schools of Connecticut, and has accumulated (A) on or
370 before June 30, 2004, thirty-five years of credited service, [at least

371 twenty-five years of which are service in the public schools of
372 Connecticut] (B) as of July 1, 2004, to June 30, 2006, inclusive, thirty-
373 four years of credited service, (C) as of July 1, 2006, to June 30, 2008,
374 inclusive, thirty-three years of credited service, or (D) on and after July
375 1, 2008, thirty-two years of credited service.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	July 1, 2002
Sec. 2	July 1, 2002
Sec. 3	July 1, 2002
Sec. 4	July 1, 2002
Sec. 5	July 1, 2002
Sec. 6	from passage
Sec. 7	from passage
Sec. 8	July 1, 2002
Sec. 9	July 1, 2002
Sec. 10	July 1, 2002
Sec. 11	July 1, 2002
Sec. 12	July 1, 2004

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:

Fund-Type	Agency Affected	FY 05 \$
GF - Cost	Teachers' Retirement Board	\$10.0 million

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Effect	Municipalities	FY 03 \$	FY 04 \$
Savings	Local and Regional School Districts	-	Indeterminate
See Below	Priority School Districts	See Below	See Below

Explanation

This bill reduces the number of years of service for a normal retirement gradually from 35 to 32 years in FY 2008-09, effective July 1, 2004. This results in benefit increases to those members who under the amendment will be able to retire with an unreduced benefit before 35 years of service. The associated benefit enhancements result in an increase to the unfunded liability of the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and increase the state's annual contribution to the TRS.

The following cost information was provided by the system's actuary: In FY 2004-05, the increase to the unfunded liability due to this provision is estimated at approximately \$90.0 million and the increase in the state contribution is approximately \$10.0 million (.35% of projected member payroll) . By the time the 32 years is in effect in FY 2008-09, the unfunded liability will have increased to approximately \$104.0 million and the increase in the state's contribution will be approximately \$14.0 million (.35% of projected member payroll).

Since lowering the years of service is expected to increase the number of retirees, there would also be increased costs to the state funded retired teachers' health insurance accounts and the TRB Health Insurance Fund. Based upon the current subsidy, an additional 1,000 members would increase the total annual cost by \$1.3 million.

To the extent that lowering the years of service for a normal retirement increases the number of retirees, municipalities will experience additional savings that cannot be determined at this time. Since municipalities bear none of the costs associated with TRS, they experience all of the savings associated with the salary differential (approx. \$32,000) between a retiring teacher and a beginning teacher.

This bill also provides that Priority School Districts must utilize a portion of the Early Reading Success funds for training teachers and principals in reading instruction at reading institutes approved by the Commissioner of Education. Funds used for this purpose must be sufficient to implement the Department of Education's approved program.

The bill also formalizes the current practice of the Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) with regards to reimbursing the TRB if re-employed retirees earn in excess of the 45% allowable level. The amendment also permits retirees to earn over the 45% level if employed in a designated shortage area. Since the re-employed retired teachers no longer have the option of accruing service credit in the Teachers' Retirement System, there is minimal state savings associated with this change.

The bill specifies that re-employed retired teachers in designated shortage areas are to be eligible for the same health insurance benefits provided to active teachers. Currently, such re-employed retired teachers' receive health insurance coverage or a subsidy through the TRB. This change will result in a savings to the TRB health insurance accounts that is expected to be minimal based upon the small number of current re-employed retired teachers. Conversely, the minimal

savings municipalities now experience if they choose to hire retired teachers whose health insurance benefits are provided by the TRB will be eliminated under the bill.

Additionally there may be a local impact as districts could hire retired teachers at a salary level over and above the level they currently can. The fiscal impact however is dependent upon the eventual local action which cannot be determined.

House "A" added language concerning the usage of Early Reading Success funding by Priority School Districts and the re-employment of retired teachers and had the impact as explained above.

House "B" reduced the number of years needed for normal retirement for public school teachers and had the impact described above.

House "D" was technical and had no fiscal impact.

OLR Amended Bill Analysis

sHB 5496 (as amended by House "A," "B," and "D")*

AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**SUMMARY:**

This bill:

1. starting July 1, 2004, gradually reduces, from 35 to 32, the number of years a public school teacher must work to retire with the most favorable retirement benefit formula under the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS),
2. liberalizes earning limits for retired teachers who return to the classroom temporarily, and
3. allows retired teachers to earn more than the limit while continuing to collect retirement benefits for up to two years if they are reemployed in shortage areas or other necessary positions identified by the education commissioner.

The bill (1) incorporates additional program goals in the school readiness program, (2) specifies program standards, (3) expands the current range of acceptable educational credentials for school readiness professionals, and (4) specifies when credentialed staff must be present in the classroom. It allows school readiness programs and the State Department of Education (SDE) to apply for federal funds to enhance school readiness quality and opportunities. It also allows SDE to reallocate more unearmarked school readiness grants and to use them for professional development as well as supplemental grants to priority districts.

The bill requires districts that receive state Early Reading Success grants to use at least 5% of the funds to provide professional training for teachers and principals in reading instruction at reading institutes the education commissioner approves. It requires the state's teacher education programs to explore ways to incorporate the Early Reading Success Panel's recommendations into their curricula and requires SDE to oversee 21st Century Community Learning Centers in accordance

with the federal "No Child Left Behind Act" (P.L. 107-110).

*House Amendment "A" strikes, and makes several changes, to the original bill. It

1. increases the hours that credentialed staff in a full-time school readiness program must be in the classroom from at least 75% of the time to continuously from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
2. requires trained staff to be present at all other times,
3. requires the staff to be trained according to protocols the local school readiness council develops and the education commissioner approves, and
4. eliminates requirements regarding the presence of credentialed staff in part-time programs,
5. deletes a requirement that the Early Reading Success Institute train teachers in (a) using reading assessments to identify students who may have difficulty reading and (b) identifying specific reading problems students may face,
6. adds provisions concerning school readiness grants and 21st Century Community Learning Centers,
7. requires districts to use at least 5% of their Early Reading Success grants to train teachers and principals in reading instruction at reading institutes the commissioner approves,
8. liberalizes earning limits for retired teachers who return to the classroom temporarily,
9. allows retired teachers to earn more than the limit while continuing to collect retirement benefits in specified circumstances, and
10. makes a technical change.

*House Amendment "B" adds the retirement service reduction provision.

*House Amendment "D" makes a technical change.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2002, except for the sections requiring reports on implementing the Early Reading Success Panel's findings, which take effect upon passage, and the retirement service reduction provision, which takes effect July 1, 2004.

TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Credited Service Requirement

Starting July 1, 2004, the bill reduces the number of years a public school teacher must work to retire with the most favorable benefit formula (“normal retirement”) before reaching age 60. Under current law, a teacher must have at least 35 years of service to be eligible for normal retirement, regardless of age. Between July 1, 2004 and July 1, 2008, the amendment gradually reduces that minimum from 35 to 32 years as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1: YEARS OF SERVICE REQUIRED FOR NORMAL RETIREMENT AT ANY AGE

Retirement Date	Years of Service Required
Until June 30, 2004	35
July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2006	34
July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2008	33
July 1, 2008 and thereafter	32

The TRS normal retirement benefit formula is $2\% \times \text{Years of Service} \times \text{Average Salary}$ (the average of the teacher’s three highest-paid years). Table 2 below shows the annual benefits payable under current law and under the fully phased-in bill to a 57-year-old teacher with a final average salary (FAS) of \$60,000.

TABLE 2: TRS BENEFITS AT AGE 57 AND \$60,000 FAS

YEARS OF SERVICE	CURRENT LAW		THE BILL	
	Benefit	% of FAS	Benefit	% of FAS
35	\$42,000	70	\$42,000	70
34 (as of 7/1/04)	39,576	66	40,800	68
33 (as of 7/1/06)	37,224	62	39,600	66
32 (as of 7/1/08)	34,944	58	38,400	64

Temporary Reemployment

The bill allows a retired teacher receiving TRS benefits to earn more from temporary work in a Connecticut public school without jeopardizing his monthly TRS benefit. Under current law, a retired teacher may earn up to 45% of the entry-level salary for a teacher assigned to the same subject area. The bill allows the teacher to earn up to 45% of the maximum for the position. It conforms the law to practice by specifying that any teacher who earns more than the limit must repay the excess to the Teachers’ Retirement Board (TRB). The bill also reduces the reporting requirements for employing officials by

requiring them to send notice of the teacher's employment to TRB twice a year, on the last day of January and June, instead of every month.

Reemployment in Shortage or Necessary Positions

The bill allows a local board of education, with TRB's prior approval, to reemploy a retired teacher for a full school year, and allows him to earn more than the 45% limit while continuing to receive his TRS benefits, in a position the education commissioner designates as subject shortage area for that year or in any other position the commissioner considers necessary. It also allows the school board, with prior approval from the TRB and the education commissioner, to extend the reemployment for a second year. To obtain the approvals, the local school board must submit a written request to TRB that includes the retired teacher's assignment, its anticipated duration, and the teacher's expected rehire date.

Once TRB approves the retired teacher's reemployment, the bill requires the local board to offer him the same health insurance benefits the school system provides for its active teachers. As long as the teacher works for the system, the bill bars him from receiving benefits under the state's health plan for retired teachers or state-subsidized benefits under the health plan maintained by his last employing board of education.

Current law allows retired teachers to be reemployed by a local board of education or a higher education constituent unit if TRB authorizes it after the local school board or the Board of Governors of Higher Education certifies that reemployment is in the school system's or unit's best interests.

The bill eliminates provisions:

1. requiring TRB to terminate retirement benefits on the first day of the month after a teacher is reemployed;
2. giving reemployed teachers an option, after six months' continuous reemployment, to begin making contributions to TRS again;
3. requiring the teacher to contribute, and his employer to deduct, 6% of his salary (rather than 7% as for other TRS members) during his reemployment;
4. requiring the teacher, upon his subsequent retirement, to receive an

- additional annuity equal to three times the amount of the benefit derived from his reemployment contributions, plus interest; and
5. allowing retired teachers to be reemployed at constituent units of higher education under these provisions.

It grandfathers reemployed teachers who are making contributions under the current law as of June 30, 2002 (the day before the new provisions become effective), allowing them to continue to do so under the current law's reemployment provisions listed above.

Training for Reemployed Teachers

The bill requires local school boards to give retired teachers who are reemployed to teach in reading shortage areas preference for professional training in reading instruction through the Reading Success Institute. The institute provides training for educators based on the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel.

SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

Current law requires the state to encourage the development of a school readiness program network in order to meet school readiness goals. The bill specifies several federally funded school readiness programs for the network to enhance, including Early Reading First, Head Start, childcare, early education for children with disabilities, and any other preschool qualifying for Title 1 federal funding. Current law also identifies a goal of integrating disabled children into programs with other children. The bill requires the network to ensure that school readiness programs are appropriately reimbursed for providing special education and related services to eligible children.

SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM STANDARDS

The bill specifies that SDE's school readiness program standards may include (1) pre-literacy development based on scientifically based reading research and (2) transition to school. It includes the public health commissioner, along with the higher education and social services commissioners, in the group of people with whom the education commissioner must consult when developing a continuing education training program for school readiness staff.

Staff Credentials

Current law requires, by July 1, 2003, a person in each school readiness classroom with at least (1) a credential issued by an organization the education commissioner approves and nine or more credits from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or child development, (2) an associate's degree in early childhood education or child development, or (3) a four-year degree in early childhood education or child development. The bill instead requires, by the same date, a person in each classroom with at least (1) a credential issued by an organization the commissioner approves and six credits or more, and on and after July 1, 2005, 12 credits or more, from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or child development; (2) an associate's or four-year degree in early childhood education or child development from an accredited college or university; (3) an associate's or four-year degree in any field, as long as he earned six credits or more, and on and after July 1, 2005, 12 credits or more, in early childhood education or child development from an accredited college or university; or (4) a Connecticut teaching certificate with an early childhood or special education endorsement.

The bill defines "credential" to mean (1) a Child Development Associate credential issued by the Council for Professional Recognition, (2) an American Montessori Instructor credential for children three to six years old issued by the American Montessori Association, or (3) any other credential meeting criteria the education commissioner, in consultation with the social services commissioner, establishes.

For full-time programs, the bill requires qualified credentialed staff to be in the classroom from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. By January 1, 2003, it requires trained staff to be present at all other times when the credentialed staff is absent. It defines "trained staff" as a person who has completed at least 15 hours of training each year that meets the local school readiness council's criteria and that the commissioner approves.

PRE-LITERACY PRACTICES AND TEACHER TRAINING

Current law requires school readiness programs to include plans incorporating appropriate pre-literacy practices and teacher training. The bill specifies that these practices must be based on the Early Reading Success Panel's report of research on how reading is learned

and the knowledge and skills teachers need to teach reading effectively.

The bill also allows a school readiness program or group of programs to apply for a federal Early Reading First competitive grant under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110). It allows SDE to apply for federal money to collaborate with other New England nonprofit and public agencies in creating a New England center for training teachers in literacy. It specifies that the center train new and existing preschool and elementary school teachers in instruction methods consistent with research-based reading instruction.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

The bill identifies community representatives providing services to children or the community who may serve on local and regional school readiness councils to include librarians, child health experts, and business leaders.

CURRICULAR IMPLEMENTATION

By October 1, 2002, the bill requires the presidents of colleges and universities providing teacher education programs or their designees to summarize and report to the education and higher education commissioners on incorporating the Early Reading Success Panel's recommendations into their curricula. By February 1, 2003, the bill requires the commissioners to report on these curricular changes to the Education Committee.

SCHOOL READINESS GRANTS

Administrative Costs

The bill allows towns to use the greater of (1) \$25,000 or (2) up to 5% but no more than \$50,000 of all school readiness grant amounts allocated to them for coordination, program evaluation, and administration. Current law limits the latter option to 5% but no more than \$50,000 of the school readiness grant a town actually receives.

Grant Reallocations

The bill allows SDE to reallocate all, rather than only 50%, of any

grants that priority districts fail to earmark by January 1. It also allows SDE to use the reallocated funds for enhancing professional development for educators working in state-funded school readiness programs. Under current law, SDE may only reallocate the amounts for supplemental grants to other priority districts.

EARLY READING SUCCESS GRANTS

The bill requires districts that receive state Early Reading Success grants to use at least 5% of their grant to provide professional training for teachers and principals in reading instruction at reading institutes the commissioner approves.

BACKGROUND

21st Century Learning Centers

Congress established the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CLC) program in 1998. Under the program, the U.S. Education Department gives grants to public schools and school districts to keep schools open longer. A CLC is an entity within a public school that (1) provides educational, recreational, health, and social service programs for residents of the local community regardless of age and (2) the local school district operates in collaboration with local government agencies; businesses; vocational education programs; colleges; and cultural, recreational, and other community and human service agencies and groups. The program seeks to provide expanded learning opportunities for children in a safe, drug-free, and supervised environment.

Subject Shortage Areas

The education commissioner has identified the following subjects in the following grades as shortage areas for the current school year:

- Music, PreK-12
- Bilingual education, PreK-12
- Special education, 1-12
- Mathematics, 7-12
- Technology education, PreK-12
- Spanish, 7-12
- Library media specialist, Pre-K-12

- Remedial reading, 1-12
- Speech and language pathologist, no grades.

Legislative History

On April 12, the House referred the bill to the Public Health Committee, which reported it favorably with no changes on April 17. On April 18, the House referred it to the Government Administration and Elections Committee, which reported it favorably with no changes on April 19.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 31 Nay 0

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Report
Yea 24 Nay 0

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Report
Yea 16 Nay 0