



AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

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2 section 10 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is repealed and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 issued by the Council for Professional Recognition, or an American
42 Montessori Instructor for children aged three to six years, issued by the
43 American Montessori Association, or otherwise meeting such criteria
44 as may be established by the Commissioner of Education, in
45 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 in a full day, full year school readiness
84 classroom shall be in the classroom for at least seventy-five per cent of
85 the daily hours that the center is in operation. Credentialed staff in a
86 part day, part year school readiness classroom shall be in the
87 classroom for all of the daily hours that the center is in operation.

88 Sec. 4. Section 10-16q of the general statutes, as amended by section
89 14 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is repealed and the
90 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2002*):

91 (a) Each school readiness program shall include: (1) A plan for
92 collaboration with other community programs and services, including
93 public libraries, and for coordination of resources in order to facilitate
94 full-day and year-round child care and education programs for
95 children of working parents and parents in education or training
96 programs; (2) parent involvement, parenting education and outreach;
97 (3) (A) record-keeping policies that require documentation of the name
98 and address of each child's doctor, primary care provider and health
99 insurance company and information on whether the child is
100 immunized and has had health screens pursuant to the federal Early
101 and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Services Program
102 under 42 USC 1396d, and (B) referrals for health services, including
103 referrals for appropriate immunizations and screenings; (4) a plan for
104 the incorporation of appropriate preliteracy practices and teacher
105 training in such practices based on the review completed by the Early
106 Reading Success Panel pursuant to section 10-221j; (5) nutrition
107 services; (6) referrals to family literacy programs that incorporate adult
108 basic education and provide for the promotion of literacy through
109 access to public library services; (7) admission policies that promote
110 enrollment of children from different racial, ethnic and economic
111 backgrounds and from other communities; (8) a plan of transition for
112 participating children from the school readiness program to
113 kindergarten and provide for the transfer of records from the program
114 to the kindergarten program; (9) a plan for professional development

115 for staff, including, but not limited to, training (A) in preliteracy skills
116 development, and (B) designed to assure respect for racial and ethnic
117 diversity; (10) a sliding fee scale for families participating in the
118 program pursuant to section 17b-749d; and (11) an annual evaluation
119 of the effectiveness of the program. On and after July 1, 2000, school
120 readiness programs shall use the assessment measures developed
121 pursuant to section 10-16s in conducting their annual evaluations.

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

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

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

135 (e) The Department of Education may apply for federal dollars to
136 create, in collaboration with appropriate New England nonprofit and
137 public agencies, a New England center for teacher training in literacy.
138 The center will train new and continuing teachers, preschool through
139 elementary school, in instruction methods consistent with research
140 based reading instruction.

141 Sec. 5. Subsection (a) of section 10-16r of the general statutes, as
142 amended by section 14 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is
143 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
144 *1, 2002*):

145 (a) A town seeking to apply for a grant pursuant to subsection (c) of

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

164 Sec. 6. Section 10-221l of the general statutes, as amended by section
165 17 of public act 01-1 of the June special session, is repealed and the
166 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2002*):

167 The Department of Education shall develop, within available
168 appropriations, a State-Wide Early Reading Success Institute for
169 educators based on the review completed by the Early Reading Success
170 Panel pursuant to section 10-221j and the assessments conducted
171 pursuant to section 10-221k. The institute shall commence operation in
172 the 2000-2001 school year. The institute shall use training curriculum
173 that incorporates comprehensive instruction in reading as determined
174 by the Early Reading Success Panel pursuant to section 10-221j, to
175 include, but not be limited to: (1) Instructional strategies that can be
176 adapted for each student's needs; (2) early screening and ongoing
177 assessment to determine which individual students need additional
178 instruction; (3) teaching of oral language competencies, including
179 phonological awareness, vocabulary, listening comprehension and

180 grammatical skills; (4) systematic teaching of word identification skills
 181 including phonics instruction and instruction in phonemic awareness;
 182 [and] (5) teaching of comprehension competencies, including the use of
 183 context to infer meaning; (6) instruction in the use of screening,
 184 diagnostic and classroom-based instructional reading assessments that
 185 identify students who may be at risk for reading failure or who are
 186 having difficulty reading; and (7) preparing teachers to identify
 187 specific reading barriers facing their students.

188 Sec. 7. (*Effective from passage*) On or before October 1, 2002, the
 189 presidents of institutions of higher education that provide teacher
 190 education programs, or their designees, shall summarize and report to
 191 the Commissioners of Education and Higher Education on the changes
 192 made in the curricula of each such program to implement the
 193 recommendations set forth in the report of the Early Reading Success
 194 Panel pursuant to section 10-221j of the general statutes. On or before
 195 February 1, 2003, said commissioners shall report, in accordance with
 196 the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint
 197 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
 198 matters relating to education on such curricula changes.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2002</i>
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2002</i>
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2002</i>
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2002</i>
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2002</i>
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2002</i>
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>

ED *Joint Favorable Subst.*

PH *Joint Favorable*

GAE *Joint Favorable*