



# House of Representatives

## File No. 713

General Assembly

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February Session, 2004 (Reprint of File No. 575)

House Bill No. 5690  
As Amended by House  
Amendment Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner  
May 1, 2004

### **AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL READINESS.**

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2 section 39 of public act 03-76, is repealed and the following is  
3 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2004*):

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, 10-16u and 17b-749a 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 their reaching the age of five;

19 (6) Enhance federally funded school readiness programs;

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

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

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

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

32 Sec. 2. Section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by sections  
33 15, 30 and 32 of public act 03-6 of the June 30 special session, is  
34 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
35 *1, 2004*):

36 (a) As used in sections 10-16o to 10-16r, inclusive, as amended, 10-  
37 16u, 17b-749a and 17b-749c:

38 (1) "School readiness program" means a nonsectarian program that  
39 (A) meets the standards set by the department pursuant to subsection  
40 (b) of this section and the requirements of section 10-16q, as amended  
41 by this act, and (B) provides a developmentally appropriate learning  
42 experience of not less than four hundred fifty hours and one hundred

43 eighty days for eligible children, [provided, for the fiscal years ending  
44 June 30, 1998, and June 30, 1999, the commissioner may approve  
45 programs that provide learning experiences which are for less than  
46 said hours and days] except as provided in subsection (d) of said  
47 section 10-16q;

48 (2) "Eligible children" means children three and four years of age  
49 and children five years of age who are not eligible to enroll in school  
50 pursuant to section 10-15c, or who are eligible to enroll in school and  
51 will attend a school readiness program pursuant to section 10-16t;

52 (3) "Priority school" means a school in which forty per cent or more  
53 of the lunches served are served to students who are eligible for free or  
54 reduced price lunches pursuant to federal law and regulations,  
55 excluding such a school located in a priority school district pursuant to  
56 section 10-266p, as amended, or in a former priority school district  
57 receiving a grant pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and, on and  
58 after July 1, 2001, excluding such a school in a transitional school  
59 district receiving a grant pursuant to section 10-16u, as amended;

60 (4) "Severe need school" means a school in a priority school district  
61 pursuant to section 10-266p, as amended, or in a former priority school  
62 district in which forty per cent or more of the lunches served are  
63 served to students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches;

64 (5) "Accredited" means accredited by the National Association for  
65 the Education of Young Children, a Head Start on-site program review  
66 instrument or a successor instrument pursuant to federal regulations,  
67 or otherwise meeting such criteria as may be established by the  
68 commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social  
69 Services;

70 [(6) "Approved" means meeting the criteria established by the  
71 commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social  
72 Services;]

73 [(7)] (6) "Year-round" means fifty weeks per year, except as

74 provided in subsection (d) of section 10-16q, as amended by this act;

75 ~~[(8)]~~ (7) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education; and

76 ~~[(9)]~~ (8) "Department" means the Department of Education.

77 (b) The Department of Education shall be the lead agency for school  
78 readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u, school  
79 readiness program providers eligible for funding from the Department  
80 of Education shall include local and regional boards of education,  
81 regional educational service centers, family resource centers and  
82 providers of child day care centers, as defined in section 19a-77, as  
83 amended, Head Start programs, preschool programs and other  
84 programs that meet such standards established by the Commissioner  
85 of Education. The department shall establish standards for school  
86 readiness programs. The standards may include, but need not be  
87 limited to, guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum content,  
88 including preliteracy development, lesson plans, parent involvement,  
89 staff qualifications and training, and administration. The department  
90 shall develop age-appropriate developmental skills and goals for  
91 children attending such programs. The commissioner, in consultation  
92 with the Commissioners of Higher Education and Social Services and  
93 other appropriate entities, shall develop a continuing education  
94 training program for the staff of school readiness programs. For  
95 purposes of this section, on and after July 1, 2004, "staff qualifications"  
96 means there is in each classroom an individual who has at least the  
97 following: (1) A credential issued by an organization approved by the  
98 Commissioner of Education and nine credits or more in early  
99 childhood education or child development from an institution of  
100 higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher  
101 Education or regionally accredited; (2) an associate's degree in early  
102 childhood education or child development from such an institution; or  
103 (3) a four-year degree in early childhood education or child  
104 development from such an institution.

105 (c) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the

106 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a grant program to  
107 provide spaces in accredited [or approved] school readiness programs  
108 for eligible children who reside in priority school districts pursuant to  
109 section 10-266p, as amended, or in former priority school districts as  
110 provided in this subsection. Under the program, the grant shall be  
111 provided, in accordance with this section, to the town in which such  
112 priority school district or former priority school district is located.  
113 Eligibility shall be determined for a five-year period based on an  
114 applicant's designation as a priority school district for the initial year  
115 of application, except that if a school district that receives a grant  
116 pursuant to this subsection is no longer designated as a priority school  
117 district at the end of such five-year period, such former priority school  
118 district shall continue to be eligible to receive a grant pursuant to this  
119 subsection. Grant awards shall be made annually contingent upon  
120 available funding and a satisfactory annual evaluation. The chief  
121 elected official of such town and the superintendent of schools for such  
122 priority school district or former priority school district shall submit a  
123 plan for the expenditure of grant funds and responses to the local  
124 request for proposal process to the Departments of Education and  
125 Social Services. The departments shall jointly review such plans and  
126 shall each approve the portion of such plan within its jurisdiction for  
127 funding. The plan shall: (1) Be developed in consultation with the local  
128 or regional school readiness council established pursuant to section 10-  
129 16r; (2) be based on a needs and resource assessment; (3) provide for  
130 the issuance of requests for proposals for providers of accredited [or  
131 approved] school readiness programs, provided, after the initial  
132 requests for proposals, facilities that have been approved to operate a  
133 child care program financed through the Connecticut Health and  
134 Education Facilities Authority and have received a commitment for  
135 debt service from the Department of Social Services pursuant to  
136 section 17b-749i, are exempt from the requirement for issuance of  
137 annual requests for proposals; and (4) identify the need for funding  
138 pursuant to section 17b-749a in order to extend the hours and days of  
139 operation of school readiness programs in order to provide child day  
140 care services for children attending such programs.

141 (d) (1) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the  
142 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a competitive grant  
143 program to provide spaces in accredited [or approved] school  
144 readiness programs for eligible children who reside in an area served  
145 by a priority school or a former priority school as provided for in  
146 subdivision (2) of this subsection. A town in which such a school is  
147 located or a regional school readiness council, pursuant to subsection  
148 (c) of section 10-16r, for a region in which such a school is located may  
149 apply for such a grant in an amount not to exceed one hundred seven  
150 thousand dollars per priority school. Eligibility shall be determined for  
151 a five-year period based on an applicant's designation as having a  
152 priority school for the initial year of application. Grant awards shall be  
153 made annually contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory  
154 annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town and the  
155 superintendent of schools of the school district or the regional school  
156 readiness council shall submit a plan, as described in subsection (c) of  
157 this section, for the expenditure of such grant funds to the Department  
158 of Education. In awarding grants pursuant to this subsection, the  
159 commissioner shall give preference to applications submitted by  
160 regional school readiness councils and may, within available  
161 appropriations, provide a grant in excess of one hundred seven  
162 thousand dollars to towns with two or more priority schools in such  
163 district. A town or regional school readiness council awarded a grant  
164 pursuant to this subsection shall use the funds to purchase spaces for  
165 such children from providers of accredited [or approved] school  
166 readiness programs.

167 (2) (A) Commencing with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004, if a  
168 town received a grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection for  
169 a priority school and is no longer eligible to receive such a grant for  
170 such school, the town may receive a phase-out grant for each of the  
171 three fiscal years following the fiscal year such town received its final  
172 grant for such school pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.  
173 The amount of such phase-out grants shall be determined in  
174 accordance with subparagraph (B) of this subdivision.

175 (B) (i) For the first fiscal year following the fiscal year such town  
176 received its final priority school grant for such school pursuant to  
177 subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that does not exceed  
178 seventy-five per cent of the grant amount such town received for such  
179 school for the school's final year of eligibility pursuant to subdivision  
180 (1) of this subsection. (ii) For the second fiscal year following the fiscal  
181 year such town received its final priority school grant for such school  
182 pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that does  
183 not exceed fifty per cent of the grant amount such town received for  
184 such school for the school's final year of eligibility pursuant to  
185 subdivision (1) of this subsection. (iii) For the third fiscal year  
186 following the fiscal year such town received its final priority school  
187 grant for such school pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in  
188 an amount that does not exceed twenty-five per cent of the grant  
189 amount such town received for such school for the school's final year  
190 of eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

191 (e) (1) [Ninety-three per cent of the amount appropriated for  
192 purposes of this section shall be used for the grant program pursuant  
193 to subsection (c) of this section.] Priority school districts and former  
194 priority school districts shall receive grants based on their proportional  
195 share of the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the average  
196 number of enrolled kindergarten students in each priority school  
197 district and in each former priority school district for the three years  
198 prior to the year the grant is to be paid, by the ratio of the average  
199 percentage of free and reduced price meals for all severe need schools  
200 in such district to the minimum percentage requirement for severe  
201 need school eligibility, provided no such school district shall receive a  
202 grant that is less than the grant it received for the prior fiscal year or a  
203 grant that is less than one hundred fifty thousand dollars.

204 [(2) Six and five-tenths per cent of the amount appropriated for  
205 purposes of this section shall be used for the competitive grant  
206 program pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.]

207 [(3)] (2) The Department of Education may retain up to five-tenths

208 of one per cent of the amount appropriated for purposes of this section  
209 for coordination, program evaluation and administration.

210 [(4)] (3) If a town that is eligible for a grant pursuant to subsection  
211 (c) of this section does not submit, by [January] October first, a plan  
212 which is subsequently approved for the expenditure of the entire  
213 amount of funds for which such town is eligible, the department may  
214 use up to [fifty] seventy per cent of any amounts such town has not  
215 earmarked for expenditure, to provide supplemental grants to other  
216 towns that are eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this  
217 section, and the remaining thirty per cent of any amounts such town  
218 has not earmarked for expenditure, for school readiness professional  
219 development, including, but not limited to, scholarship assistance for  
220 school readiness staff to attain early childhood education certification  
221 and staff training to enhance literacy teaching skills.

222 (f) Any school readiness program that receives funds pursuant to  
223 this section or section 10-16u, as amended, shall not discriminate on  
224 the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion or disability.  
225 For purposes of this section, a nonsectarian program means any public  
226 or private school readiness program that is not violative of the  
227 Establishment Clause of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut or  
228 the Establishment Clause of the Constitution of the United States of  
229 America.

230 (g) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no funds received by  
231 a town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-  
232 16u, as amended, shall be used to supplant federal, state or local  
233 funding received by such town for early childhood education,  
234 provided (1) a town may use the greater of (A) twenty-five thousand  
235 dollars, or (B) up to five per cent but no more than fifty thousand  
236 dollars of the amount received pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this  
237 section or section 10-16u, as amended, for coordination, program  
238 evaluation and administration, and (2) if a town provides twenty-five  
239 thousand dollars in local funding for early childhood education  
240 coordination, program evaluation and administration, such town may

241 use up to ten per cent but no more than seventy-five thousand dollars  
242 of such amount for coordination, program evaluation and  
243 administration. Each town that receives a grant pursuant to said  
244 subsection (c) or (d) or section 10-16u, as amended, shall designate a  
245 person to be responsible for such coordination, program evaluation  
246 and administration and to act as a liaison between the town and the  
247 Departments of Education and Social Services. Each school readiness  
248 program that receives funds pursuant to this section or section 10-16u,  
249 as amended, shall provide information to the department or the school  
250 readiness council, as requested, that is necessary for purposes of any  
251 school readiness program evaluation.

252 (h) For the first three years a town receives grants pursuant to this  
253 section, such grants may be used, with the approval of the  
254 commissioner, to prepare a facility or staff for operating a school  
255 readiness program and shall be adjusted based on the number of days  
256 of operation of a school readiness program if a shorter term of  
257 operation is approved by the commissioner.

258 (i) A town may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible  
259 children who reside in such town at an accredited [or approved]  
260 school readiness program located in another town. A regional school  
261 readiness council may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible  
262 children who reside in the region covered by the council at an  
263 accredited [or approved] school readiness program located outside  
264 such region.

265 (j) Children enrolled in school readiness programs funded pursuant  
266 to this section shall not be counted (1) as resident students for  
267 purposes of subdivision (22) of section 10-262f, as amended, or (2) in  
268 the determination of average daily membership pursuant to  
269 subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 10-261, as amended.

270 (k) Notwithstanding any provisions of this section, for the fiscal  
271 year ending June 30, 2003, the amount available for the competitive  
272 grant program shall be two million five hundred seventy-six thousand

273 five hundred eighty dollars and the maximum administrative amount  
274 shall not be more than one hundred ninety-eight thousand one  
275 hundred ninety-nine dollars. Notwithstanding the provisions of this  
276 section, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004, the amount available  
277 for the competitive grant program shall be two million three hundred  
278 nine thousand two hundred forty-nine dollars and the maximum  
279 administrative amount shall not be more than one hundred ninety-  
280 eight thousand one hundred ninety-nine dollars. Notwithstanding  
281 the provisions of this section, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005,  
282 the amount available for the competitive grant program shall be two  
283 million three hundred eighteen thousand three hundred forty-nine  
284 dollars and the maximum administrative amount shall not be more  
285 than one hundred ninety-eight thousand one hundred ninety-nine  
286 dollars.

287 Sec. 3. Section 10-16q of the general statutes is repealed and the  
288 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2004*):

289 (a) Each school readiness program shall include: (1) A plan for  
290 collaboration with other community programs and services, including  
291 public libraries, and for coordination of resources in order to facilitate  
292 full-day and year-round child care and education programs for  
293 children of working parents and parents in education or training  
294 programs; (2) parent involvement, parenting education and outreach;  
295 (3) (A) record-keeping policies that require documentation of the name  
296 and address of each child's doctor, primary care provider and health  
297 insurance company and information on whether the child is  
298 immunized and has had health screens pursuant to the federal Early  
299 and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Services Program  
300 under 42 USC 1396d, and (B) referrals for health services, including  
301 referrals for appropriate immunizations and screenings; (4) a plan for  
302 the incorporation of appropriate preliteracy practices and teacher  
303 training in such practices; (5) nutrition services; (6) referrals to family  
304 literacy programs that incorporate adult basic education and provide  
305 for the promotion of literacy through access to public library services;  
306 (7) admission policies that promote enrollment of children from

307 different racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds and from other  
308 communities; (8) a plan of transition for participating children from the  
309 school readiness program to kindergarten and provide for the transfer  
310 of records from the program to the kindergarten program; (9) a plan  
311 for professional development for staff, including, but not limited to,  
312 training (A) in preliteracy skills development, and (B) designed to  
313 assure respect for racial and ethnic diversity; (10) a sliding fee scale for  
314 families participating in the program pursuant to section 17b-749d;  
315 and (11) an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. On  
316 and after July 1, 2000, school readiness programs shall use the  
317 assessment measures developed pursuant to section 10-16s in  
318 conducting their annual evaluations.

319 (b) The per child cost of the Department of Education school  
320 readiness component of the program offered by a school readiness  
321 provider shall not exceed [the foundation, as defined in subdivision (9)  
322 of section 10-262f] six thousand four hundred dollars. A school  
323 readiness provider may provide child day care services and the cost of  
324 such child day care services shall not be subject to such per child cost  
325 limitation.

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

329 (d) A town or school readiness council may file a waiver application  
330 to the Department of Education on forms provided by the department  
331 for the purpose of seeking approval of a school readiness schedule that  
332 varies from the minimum hours and number of days provided for in  
333 subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 10-16p, as amended by this  
334 act, or from the definition of a year-round program pursuant to  
335 subdivision (7) of said subsection (a). The Department of Education  
336 may, in consultation with the Department of Social Services, approve  
337 any such waiver if the departments find that the proposed schedule  
338 meets the purposes set forth in the provisions of section 10-16o, as  
339 amended, concerning the development of school readiness programs

340 and maximizes available dollars to serve more children or address  
341 community needs.

342 Sec. 4. Section 10-16u of the general statutes is repealed and the  
343 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2004*):

344 For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002, and each fiscal year  
345 thereafter, the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the  
346 Commissioner of Social Services, shall provide grants, within available  
347 appropriations, to eligible school readiness program providers  
348 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-16p, as amended, to provide  
349 spaces in accredited [or approved] school readiness programs for  
350 eligible children who reside in transitional school districts pursuant to  
351 section 10-263c, except for transitional school districts eligible for  
352 grants pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-16p, as amended. Under  
353 the program, the grant shall be provided to the town in which such  
354 transitional school district is located. Eligibility shall be determined for  
355 a five-year period based on a school district's designation as a  
356 transitional school district in the initial year of application, except that  
357 grants pursuant to this section shall not be provided for transitional  
358 school districts eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of said  
359 section 10-16p, as amended. Grant awards shall be made annually  
360 contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory annual  
361 evaluation. The chief elected official of such town and the  
362 superintendent of schools for such transitional school district shall  
363 submit a plan for the expenditure of grant funds and responses to the  
364 local request for proposal process to the Departments of Education and  
365 Social Services. The departments shall jointly review such plans and  
366 shall each approve the portion of such plan within its jurisdiction for  
367 funding. The plan shall meet the requirements specified in subsection  
368 (c) of said section 10-16p, as amended.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2004</i>
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2004</i>

Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2004</i>
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2004</i>

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:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 05 \$	FY 06 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - See Below	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:**

Municipalities	Effect	FY 05 \$	FY 06 \$
Various Municipalities	See Below	See Below	See Below

**Explanation**

This bill increases the per child grant for school readiness by \$500. Since this grant is provided within available appropriations increasing the per child grant has no impact upon the amount the state provides nor on the allotment per school district.

Additionally the bill results in the elimination of the possibility of funds in the school readiness account lapsing by allowing for the re-allocation of 100% of any potential lapse rather than only 50%. The potentially lapsing funds could be allocated to eligible recipients able to utilize the funds (70%) and for professional development (30%).

House "A" eliminated the original bill and its associated fiscal impact and resulted in the fiscal impact as stated above.

**OFA Bill Analysis**

HB 5690

***AN ACT CONCERNING EXPENDITURES FOR THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.***

**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the State Department of Education to review and report on agency operations by January 1, 2005 and annually thereafter.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2004

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 51    Nay 0