



General Assembly

January Session, 2007

Raised Bill No. 1409

LCO No. 5389

05389_____ED_

Referred to Committee on Education

Introduced by:

(ED)

**AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONALIZATION OF EDUCATION TO
REDUCE RACIAL, ETHNIC AND ECONOMIC ISOLATION.**

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

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) (1) The General Assembly finds
2 that the Constitution of the state of Connecticut requires the state to
3 provide all Connecticut public school students with a substantially
4 equal educational opportunity; allocate state support for education so
5 as to offset the significant disparities in towns' financial abilities to
6 finance local education; and remedy educational inequalities by
7 reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation in Connecticut schools.
8 Despite thirty years of state effort in pursuit of these goals, substantial
9 funding inequities and segregation persist in the state's public schools.
10 Therefore, the General Assembly finds that it would serve the public
11 interest to transform the legal connection between towns and school
12 districts embodied in section 10-240 of the general statutes and to
13 consolidate the state's school districts into six regional districts
14 commencing with the 2012-2013 school year.

15 (2) The goals of the consolidation are to (A) meet the state's
16 constitutional mandate to provide equal educational opportunities for

17 all public school students, (B) more equitably distribute the state's
18 financial and educational resources, (C) reduce racial, ethnic and
19 economic isolation in Connecticut's schools and thereby improve
20 educational achievement for all students, (D) achieve economies of
21 scale in educational expenditures by reducing duplication and
22 administrative overhead in the public school system, and (E) improve
23 public school experiences for students and parents by providing them
24 with a wider choice of educational programs and activities.

25 (b) There is established a commission to develop a plan to
26 consolidate the state's school districts into six regional school districts
27 that match the regional educational service center regions. The plan
28 shall include recommendations concerning:

29 (1) How the proposed regional districts will implement the
30 educational interests of the state as defined by section 10-4a of the
31 general statutes;

32 (2) District governance, including the composition of regional
33 boards of education, methods of electing or appointing such boards,
34 and the role of existing local and regional boards of education;

35 (3) Student attendance zones within the districts, together with
36 transportation issues and costs;

37 (4) Capital contributions of the participating towns and the
38 disposition and use of existing school land, facilities and other school
39 property in the member districts;

40 (5) Educational programs and curriculum within each district;

41 (6) How to consolidate collective bargaining agreements with
42 existing school districts and resolve differences in salary schedules,
43 benefits and district personnel policies;

44 (7) Allocation of personnel within each region, including the roles of
45 such personnel;

46 (8) Disposition of existing school district contracts for services,
47 including food service and school transportation contracts;

48 (9) Effects of regionalization on special education identifications,
49 placements and services;

50 (10) Consolidation of district budgets and the effect of
51 reorganization on state and federal grants;

52 (11) Whether regionalization should be phased in by grade levels
53 and over what time period; and

54 (12) Legislative changes needed to implement the regionalization
55 proposal.

56 (c) The commission shall consist of the following members:

57 (1) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

58 (2) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the
59 secretary's designee;

60 (3) Three appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives
61 who shall be representatives of each of the three regional educational
62 service centers known as Education Connection, Capitol Region
63 Education Council and EASTCONN;

64 (4) Three appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate who
65 shall be representatives of each of the three regional educational
66 service centers known as LEARN, ACES and Cooperative Educational
67 Services;

68 (5) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of
69 Representatives, one of whom shall be a representative of the
70 Connecticut Association of Boards of Education and one of whom shall
71 be a representative of the Connecticut Association of Public School
72 Superintendents;

73 (6) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of
74 whom shall be a representative of the Connecticut Conference of
75 Municipalities and one of whom shall be a representative of the
76 Council of Small Towns;

77 (7) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
78 Representatives who shall be a representative of the Connecticut
79 Education Association;

80 (8) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate who shall be
81 a representative of the Connecticut Federation of School
82 Administrators; and

83 (9) One member appointed by the Governor who shall be a
84 representative of the Connecticut Federation of Educational and
85 Professional Employees.

86 (d) Any member of the commission appointed under subdivision (1)
87 or (2) of subsection (c) of this section may be a member of the General
88 Assembly.

89 (e) All appointments of commission members shall be made not
90 later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any
91 vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

92 (f) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president
93 pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the
94 commission, from among the members of the commission. Such
95 chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the commission, which
96 shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this
97 section.

98 (g) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
99 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education
100 shall serve as administrative staff of the commission.

101 (h) (1) Not later than January 1, 2009, the commission shall submit a

102 report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing
103 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
104 relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-
105 4a of the general statutes.

106 (2) Prior to July 1, 2009, the commission shall conduct at least one
107 public hearing on the plan in each of the six consolidated districts
108 proposed under the plan. The commission shall terminate on July 1,
109 2009.

110 (i) Not later than February 19, 2010, the joint standing committee of
111 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
112 education shall determine whether to draft any of the provisions
113 recommended under subdivision (12) of subsection (b) of this section.
114 Any such provisions shall have an effective date of July 1, 2012.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To establish a commission to consider consolidation of school districts.

[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.]