



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 329

February Session, 2008

* SB00329PRIED_030708 *

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE
CONCERNING THE BEST PROGRAM.**

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

1 Section 1. Subdivision (1) of subsection (l) of section 10-145b of the
2 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
3 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2008*):

4 (l) (1) For certified employees of local and regional boards of
5 education, except as provided in this subdivision, each professional
6 educator certificate shall be valid for five years and continued every
7 five years thereafter upon the successful completion of professional
8 development activities which shall consist of not less than ninety hours
9 of continuing education, as determined by the local or regional board
10 of education in accordance with this section, or documented
11 completion of a national board certification assessment in the
12 appropriate endorsement area, during each successive five-year
13 period. (A) Such continuing education completed by certified
14 employees with an early childhood nursery through grade three or an
15 elementary endorsement who hold a position requiring such an
16 endorsement shall include at least fifteen hours of training in the
17 teaching of reading and reading readiness and assessment of reading
18 performance, including methods of teaching language skills necessary
19 for reading, reading comprehension skills, phonics and the structure of

20 the English language during each five-year period. (B) Such continuing
21 education requirement completed by certified employees with
22 elementary, middle grades or secondary academic endorsements who
23 hold a position requiring such an endorsement shall include at least
24 fifteen hours of training in the use of computers in the classroom
25 during each five-year period unless such employees are able to
26 demonstrate technology competency, in a manner determined by their
27 local or regional board of education, based on state-wide standards for
28 teacher competency in the use of technology for instructional purposes
29 adopted pursuant to section 4d-85. (C) Such continuing education
30 completed by (i) the superintendent of schools, and (ii) employees
31 employed in positions requiring an intermediate administrator or
32 supervisory certificate, or the equivalent thereof, and whose
33 administrative or supervisory duties equal at least fifty per cent of
34 their assigned time, shall include at least fifteen hours of training in the
35 evaluation of teachers pursuant to section 10-151b and training in new
36 teacher induction for a number of hours to be determined by the
37 Commissioner of Education during each five-year period. (D) In the
38 case of certified employees with a bilingual education endorsement
39 who hold positions requiring such an endorsement (i) in an elementary
40 school and who do not hold an endorsement in elementary education,
41 such continuing education taken on or after July 1, 1999, shall only
42 count toward the ninety-hour requirement if it is in language arts,
43 reading and mathematics, and (ii) in a middle or secondary school and
44 who do not hold an endorsement in the subject area they teach, such
45 continuing education taken on or after July 1, 1999, shall only count
46 toward the ninety-hour requirement if it is in such subject area or
47 areas. During each five-year period in which a professional educator
48 certificate is valid, a holder of such certificate who has not completed
49 the ninety hours of continuing education required pursuant to this
50 subdivision, and who has not been employed while holding such
51 certificate by a local or regional board of education for all or part of the
52 five-year period, shall, upon application, be reissued such certificate
53 for five years minus any period of time such holder was employed
54 while holding such certificate by a local or regional board of education,

55 provided there shall be only one such reissuance during each five-year
56 period in which such certificate is valid. A certified employee of a local
57 or regional board of education who is a member of the General
58 Assembly and who has not completed the ninety hours of continuing
59 education required pursuant to this subdivision for continuation of a
60 certificate, upon application, shall be reissued a professional educator
61 certificate for a period of time equal to six months for each year the
62 employee served in the General Assembly during the previous five
63 years. Continuing education hours completed during the previous five
64 years shall be applied toward such ninety-hour requirement which
65 shall be completed during the reissuance period in order for such
66 employee to be eligible to have a certificate continued. The cost of the
67 professional development activities required under this subsection for
68 certified employees of local or regional boards of education shall be
69 shared by the state and local or regional boards of education, except
70 for those activities identified by the State Board of Education as the
71 responsibility of the certificate holder. Each local and regional board of
72 education shall make available, annually, at no cost to its certified
73 employees not fewer than eighteen hours of professional development
74 activities for continuing education credit. Such activities may be made
75 available by a board of education directly, through a regional
76 educational service center or cooperative arrangement with another
77 board of education or through arrangements with any continuing
78 education provider approved by the State Board of Education. Local
79 and regional boards of education shall grant continuing education
80 credit for professional development activities which the certified
81 employees of the board of education are required to attend,
82 professional development activities offered in accordance with the
83 plan developed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220a, or
84 professional development activities which the board may approve for
85 any individual certified employee. Each board of education shall
86 determine the specific professional development activities to be made
87 available with the advice and assistance of the teachers employed by
88 such board, including representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit
89 for such teachers pursuant to section 10-153b. The time and location for

90 the provision of such activities shall be in accordance with either an
91 agreement between the board of education and the exclusive
92 bargaining unit pursuant to said section 10-153b or, in the absence of
93 such agreement or to the extent such agreement does not provide for
94 the time and location of all such activities, in accordance with a
95 determination by the board of education.

96 Sec. 2. Subsection (d) of section 10-145f of the general statutes is
97 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
98 *1, 2008*):

99 (d) Any person who is first issued a certificate valid after July 1,
100 1989, or who is reissued a certificate after July 1, 1989, shall, except as
101 otherwise provided in this subsection, be required to achieve a
102 satisfactory evaluation on a professional knowledge clinical
103 assessment not later than the end of the [second] third year of teaching
104 in a public school if hired prior to January first or, if hired on or after
105 January first, not later than the end of the [second] third full school
106 year of teaching following the year in which such person was hired in
107 order to retain the certificate. The commissioner (1) may waive the
108 requirement that such satisfactory evaluation on a professional
109 knowledge clinical assessment be achieved upon a determination that
110 such assessment is not valid for the person's teaching assignment, or
111 (2) upon a showing of good cause, may extend the time limit for the
112 assessment for a period of time not exceeding two years. The
113 requirement of a clinical assessment shall not apply to any such person
114 who has completed at least three years of successful teaching in a
115 public school or a nonpublic school approved by the appropriate state
116 board of education during the ten years immediately preceding the
117 date of application or who successfully taught with a provisional
118 teaching certificate during the year immediately preceding an
119 application for a provisional educator certificate as an employee of a
120 local or regional board of education or facility approved for special
121 education by the State Board of Education. [Notwithstanding the
122 provisions of this subsection, the State Board of Education may reissue
123 an initial educator certificate to a person who held such certificate and

124 did not achieve a satisfactory evaluation on a professional knowledge
125 clinical assessment provided the person submits evidence
126 demonstrating significant intervening study and experience, in
127 accordance with standards established by the State Board of
128 Education.]

129 Sec. 3. Subsection (d) of section 10-220a of the general statutes is
130 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
131 *1, 2008*):

132 (d) (1) The Department of Education may fund, within available
133 appropriations, in cooperation with one or more regional educational
134 service centers, a beginning teacher support and assessment program
135 to train Connecticut public school teachers and other qualified persons
136 approved by the Commissioner of Education and certified teachers at
137 private special education facilities approved by the commissioner and
138 at other facilities designated by the commissioner, who serve as
139 mentors or assessors for beginning teachers and who supervise, train
140 and assist or assess beginning teachers in their initial years in teaching
141 and to pay stipends to assessors. Beginning teachers shall participate in
142 a beginning teacher support and assessment program as made
143 available by the State Board of Education. School districts shall be
144 responsible for providing support to beginning teachers during at least
145 their first two years in the beginning teacher support and assessment
146 program. Such support shall include, but need not be limited to, the
147 placement of beginning teachers with trained teacher mentors. Each
148 beginning teacher shall be supported by a mentor or team of mentors.
149 The mentor or at least one member of the team of mentors shall have
150 expertise or recent experience in the same grade level as the grade
151 level in which the beginning teacher teaches if such teacher teaches
152 elementary education or in the same subject matter area that the
153 beginning teacher teaches if such teacher does not teach elementary
154 education. If it is not feasible to have a mentor or mentor team member
155 for the beginning teacher with such expertise or recent experience, the
156 mentor or at least one member of the team of mentors shall have
157 expertise or recent experience in a similar grade level as the grade level

158 in which the beginning teacher teaches if such teacher teaches
159 elementary education, or in a similar subject matter area that the
160 beginning teacher teaches if such teacher does not teach elementary
161 education.

162 (2) The assessment of each beginning teacher shall be based upon,
163 but not limited to, data obtained from observations conducted by
164 assessors using an assessment instrument. A beginning teacher shall be
165 assessed by educators with teaching experience in the same general
166 subject area as such beginning teacher.

167 (3) The Department of Education may fund, within available
168 appropriations, in cooperation with one or more regional educational
169 service centers: [(1)] (A) A cooperating teacher program to train
170 Connecticut public school teachers and certified teachers at private
171 special education facilities approved by the Commissioner of
172 Education and at other facilities designated by the commissioner, who
173 participate in the supervision, training and evaluation of student
174 teachers; [(2)] and (B) institutes to provide continuing education for
175 Connecticut public school educators, assessors and cooperating
176 teachers and teacher mentors, including institutes to provide
177 continuing education for Connecticut public school educators offered
178 in cooperation with the Connecticut Humanities Council.]; and (3) a
179 beginning teacher support and assessment program to train
180 Connecticut public school teachers and other qualified persons
181 approved by the Commissioner of Education and certified teachers at
182 such private special education and other designated facilities who
183 serve as mentors or assessors for beginning teachers and who
184 supervise, train and assist or assess beginning teachers in their initial
185 years in teaching and to pay stipends to assessors.]

186 (4) Funds available under this subsection shall be paid directly to
187 school districts for the provision of substitute teachers when
188 cooperating teachers, teacher mentors, beginning teachers and
189 assessors are released from regular classroom responsibilities and for
190 the provision of professional development activities for cooperating

191 and student teachers, teacher mentors, assessors and beginning
192 teachers.

193 (5) The cooperating teacher and beginning teacher support and
194 assessment programs shall operate in accordance with regulations
195 adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance with chapter
196 54, except in cases of placement in other countries pursuant to written
197 cooperative agreements between Connecticut institutions of higher
198 education and institutions of higher education in other countries. A
199 Connecticut institution may enter such an agreement only if the State
200 Board of Education and Board of Governors for Higher Education
201 have jointly approved the institution's teacher preparation program to
202 enter into such agreements. Student teachers shall be placed with
203 trained cooperating teachers. [Beginning teachers shall participate in a
204 beginning teacher support and assessment program as made available
205 by the board. School districts shall be responsible for providing
206 support to beginning teachers which shall include, but not be limited
207 to, the placement of beginning teachers with trained teacher mentors
208 who may be full or part-time teachers in the same or a different
209 building than the beginning teacher and provision of trained assessors
210 to conduct assessments of beginning teachers.]

211 (6) Cooperating teachers, teacher mentors and assessors may serve
212 concurrently in more than one capacity and may be assigned more
213 than one student teacher or beginning teacher in each such capacity.
214 [The assessment of each beginning teacher shall be based upon, but not
215 limited to, data obtained from observations conducted by assessors
216 using an assessment instrument. A beginning teacher shall be assessed
217 by educators with teaching experience in the same general subject area
218 as such beginning teacher.] Cooperating teachers and teacher mentors
219 who are Connecticut public school teachers and assessors who are
220 employed by school districts shall be selected by local and regional
221 boards of education. School districts may also use retired teachers and
222 administrators, teachers on leave and current and retired teaching
223 faculty of institutions of higher education as teacher mentors.
224 Cooperating teachers and teacher mentors and assessors at [such

225 private special education and other designated facilities] private
226 special education facilities approved by the Commissioner of
227 Education and at other facilities designated by the commissioner, who
228 participate in the supervision, training and evaluation of student
229 teachers, shall be selected by the authority responsible for the
230 operation of such facilities. If a board of education is unable to identify
231 a sufficient number of individuals to serve in such positions, the
232 commissioner may select qualified persons who are not employed by
233 the board of education to serve in such positions. [Such regulations]
234 Regulations adopted pursuant to this subsection shall require primary
235 consideration of teachers' classroom experience and recognized success
236 as educators. The provisions of sections 10-153a to 10-153n, inclusive,
237 shall not be applicable to the selection, placement and compensation of
238 persons participating in the cooperating teacher and beginning teacher
239 support and assessment programs pursuant to the provisions of this
240 section and to the hours and duties of such persons. The State Board of
241 Education shall protect and save harmless, in accordance with the
242 provisions of section 10-235, any cooperating teacher, teacher mentor
243 or assessor while serving in such capacity.

244 Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) The Department of Education shall
245 compare the support for beginning teachers in local and regional
246 school districts that are part of the district reference group I, as
247 determined by the department, with the support for beginning
248 teachers in other local and regional school districts to determine
249 whether disparities exist between the level of such support provided in
250 districts that are part of said district reference group I and other
251 districts. If such disparities exist, the department shall examine the
252 cause of such disparities and report, in accordance with the provisions
253 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, any recommendations to
254 address such disparities to the joint standing committee of the General
255 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education no later
256 than February 1, 2009.

257 Sec. 5. (*Effective from passage*) The Department of Education shall
258 conduct a review of possible and practical alternatives to assessing

259 beginning teachers' knowledge and application of the state's teaching
260 standards as adopted by the State Board of Education. At a minimum,
261 the review shall identify the potential costs and logistics associated
262 with transitioning to an assessment model that differs from the
263 method of assessment of beginning teachers as part of the beginning
264 teacher support and assessment program established under subsection
265 (d) of section 10-220 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.
266 The department shall report its findings, in accordance with the
267 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing
268 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
269 relating to education, no later than February 1, 2009.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	10-145b(l)(1)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	10-145f(d)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	10-220a(d)
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section

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Joint Favorable Subst. C/R

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