



Substitute House Bill No. 6358

Public Act No. 13-108

AN ACT UNLEASHING INNOVATION IN CONNECTICUT SCHOOLS.

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

Section 1. Subsection (f) of section 10-221a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2013*):

(f) Determination of eligible credits shall be at the discretion of the local or regional board of education, provided the primary focus of the curriculum of eligible credits corresponds directly to the subject matter of the specified course requirements. The local or regional board of education may permit a student to graduate during a period of expulsion pursuant to section 10-233d, if the board determines the student has satisfactorily completed the necessary credits pursuant to this section. The requirements of this section shall apply to any student requiring special education pursuant to section 10-76a, except when the planning and placement team for such student determines the requirement not to be appropriate. For purposes of this section, a credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of a forty-minute class period for each school day of a school year except for a credit or part of a credit toward high school graduation earned (1) at an institution accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or

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State Board of Education or regionally accredited, [; or] (2) through on-line coursework that is in accordance with a policy adopted pursuant to subsection (g) of this section, or (3) through a demonstration of mastery based on competency and performance standards, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.

Sec. 2. Subsection (e) of section 10-266aa of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2013*):

(e) Once the program is in operation in the region served by a regional educational service center pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the Department of Education shall provide an annual grant to such regional educational service center to assist school districts in its area in administering the program and to provide staff to assist students participating in the program to make the transition to a new school and to act as a liaison between the parents of such students and the new school district. Each regional educational service center shall determine which school districts in its area are located close enough to a priority school district to make participation in the program feasible in terms of student transportation pursuant to subsection (f) of this section, provided any student participating in the program prior to July 1, 1999, shall be allowed to continue to attend the same school such student attended prior to said date in the receiving district until the student completes the highest grade in such school. [Each regional educational service center shall convene, annually, a meeting of representatives of such school districts in order for such school districts to report, by March thirty-first, the number of spaces available for the following school year for out-of-district students under the program. Annually, each regional educational service center shall provide a count of such spaces to the Department of Education by April fifteenth.] Not later than April fifteenth of each school year, each regional educational service center shall report to the Department of

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Education the number of spaces available for the following school year for out-of-district students under the program. If there are more students who seek to attend school in a receiving district than there are spaces available, the regional educational service center shall assist the school district in determining attendance by the use of a lottery or lotteries designed to preserve or increase racial, ethnic and economic diversity, except that the regional educational service center shall give preference to siblings and to students who would otherwise attend a school that has lost its accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges or has been identified as in need of improvement pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110. The admission policies shall be consistent with section 10-15c and this section. No receiving district shall recruit students under the program for athletic or extracurricular purposes. Each receiving district shall allow out-of-district students it accepts to attend school in the district until they graduate from high school.

Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) The Department of Education shall conduct a study of issues relating to local partnerships for advancement of the teaching profession. Not later than June 30, 2015, the department shall submit such study and any recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to study education mandate relief for high performing school districts. Such task force shall (1) review education mandates in the general statutes and regulations of Connecticut state agencies and make recommendations regarding which mandates may be waived for high performing school districts, and (2) explore ways in which high performing school districts can work with the Department of Education to relieve other administrative education mandates on such

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school districts. Such task force may consult with the Red Tape Review and Removal Task Force established by the Governor in 2012. For purposes of this section, "high performing school district" means a school district that is (A) among the fifteen school districts with the highest absolute district performance index, as defined in section 10-262u of the general statutes, for the school year commencing July 1, 2012, (B) among the five school districts with the greatest rate of progress in district performance index during the school years commencing July 1, 2010, to July 1, 2012, inclusive, or (C) among the five school districts with the greatest decrease in the achievement gap for students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches pursuant to federal law and regulation, as measured by the district performance index for such students during the school years commencing July 1, 2010, to July 1, 2012, inclusive.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;

(2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;

(3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives;

(4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a superintendent from a high performing school district; and

(6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1), (2), (3), (4) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member of the General Assembly.

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(d) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(f) Not later than October 1, 2013, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or October 1, 2013, whichever is later.

Approved June 6, 2013