



General Assembly

Amendment

February Session, 2014

LCO No. 5192

SB0002505192HDO

Offered by:

REP. SHARKEY, 88th Dist.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ, 30th Dist.

REP. FLEISCHMANN, 18th Dist.

To: Subst. Senate Bill No. 25

File No. 417

Cal. No. 479

(As Amended by Senate Amendment Schedule "A")

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD."

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the
2 following in lieu thereof:

3 "Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2014*) (a) For the fiscal years
4 ending June 30, 2015, to June 30, 2024, inclusive, the Office of Early
5 Childhood, in consultation with the Department of Education, shall
6 design and administer the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant
7 program to reimburse local and regional boards of education for
8 capital and operating expenses related to establishing or expanding a
9 preschool program under the jurisdiction of the board of education for
10 the town. A local or regional board of education may submit an
11 application to the office, in accordance with the provisions of
12 subsection (b) of this section, and may receive (1) a grant for capital
13 expenses in an amount not to exceed seventy-five thousand dollars per

14 classroom for costs related to the renovation of an existing public
15 school to accommodate the establishment or expansion of a preschool
16 program, and (2) an annual grant for operating expenses (A) in an
17 amount not to exceed five thousand dollars per child served by such
18 grant, or (B) in an amount not to exceed seventy-five thousand dollars
19 for each preschool classroom, provided no town shall receive a total
20 annual grant for operating expenses greater than three hundred
21 thousand dollars. Each local or regional board of education that
22 establishes or expands a preschool program under this section shall be
23 eligible to receive an annual grant for operating expenses for a period
24 of five years, provided such preschool program meets standards
25 established by the Commissioner of Early Childhood. Such local or
26 regional board of education may submit an application for renewal of
27 such grant to the office.

28 (b) On and after July 1, 2014, local and regional boards of education,
29 individually or cooperatively, pursuant to section 10-158a of the
30 general statutes, may apply, at such time and in such manner as the
31 commissioner prescribes, to the office for a capital grant and an
32 operating grant for the purposes described in subsection (a) of this
33 section. To be eligible to receive such grants under this section, an
34 applicant board of education shall (1) demonstrate that it has a need
35 for establishing or expanding a preschool program using information
36 requested by the commissioner on a form prescribed by the
37 commissioner, such as data collected from the preschool experience
38 survey, described in section 583 of substitute house bill 5562 of the
39 current session, as amended by House Amendment Schedule "A", (2)
40 submit a plan for the expenditure of grant funds received under this
41 section that outlines how such board of education will use such funds
42 to establish or expand a preschool program, including, but not limited
43 to, the amount that such board will contribute to the operation of such
44 preschool program and how such board of education will provide
45 access to preschool for children who would not otherwise be able to
46 enroll in a preschool program, and (3) submit a letter of support for
47 establishing or expanding a preschool program by the local or regional

48 school readiness council, described in section 10-16r of the general
49 statutes, if any, for the school district. The commissioner shall give
50 priority to boards of education (A) that demonstrate the greatest need
51 for the establishment or expansion of a preschool program, and (B)
52 whose plan allocates at least sixty per cent of the spaces in such
53 preschool program to children who are members of families that are at
54 or below seventy-five per cent of the state median income, or fifty per
55 cent of the spaces in such preschool program to children who are
56 eligible for free and reduced price lunches. The commissioner, in
57 reviewing applications submitted under this subsection, shall also take
58 into consideration (i) whether an applicant board of education (I)
59 currently offers a full-day kindergarten program, (II) will be
60 cooperating and coordinating with other governmental and
61 community programs to provide services during periods when the
62 preschool program is not in session, or (III) will collaborate with other
63 boards of education, as part of a cooperative arrangement pursuant to
64 section 10-158a of the general statutes, to offer a regional preschool
65 program, and (ii) current community capacity for preschool programs
66 and current opportunities for preschool for children in the community.

67 (c) A preschool program created or expanded under this section
68 shall (1) contain a classroom with an individual who holds certification
69 pursuant to section 10-145b of the general statutes with an
70 endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special
71 education and is an employee of the board of education providing a
72 preschool program under this section, (2) maintain a classroom size
73 and teacher-child ratio that is in compliance with standards
74 established by the National Association for the Education of Young
75 Children, (3) obtain accreditation, as described in section 10-16p of the
76 general statutes, not later than three years after the creation or
77 expansion of the preschool program, and (4) be located in a public
78 school or in a space maintained by an early care and education and
79 child development program provider, pursuant to an agreement
80 between a board of education and such early care and education and
81 child development program provider.

82 (d) Each local or regional board of education receiving a grant under
83 this section shall submit an annual report, on a form and in a manner
84 prescribed by the commissioner, to the Office of Early Childhood
85 regarding the status and operation of the preschool program.

86 (e) A local or regional board of education receiving grant funds
87 under this section may implement a sliding fee scale for the cost of
88 services provided to children enrolled in such preschool program.

89 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 504 of substitute house bill 5562 of
90 the current session, as amended by House Amendment Schedule "A",
91 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*
92 *from passage*):

93 (a) The Office of Early Childhood shall develop and implement an
94 early childhood information system. Such early childhood information
95 system shall facilitate and encourage the sharing of data between and
96 among early childhood service providers by tracking (1) the health,
97 safety and school readiness of all young children receiving early care
98 and education services from (A) any local or regional board of
99 education, including children enrolled in a preschool program under
100 the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program, pursuant to
101 section 1 of this act, (B) school readiness program, as defined in section
102 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or (C) any
103 program receiving public funding, in a manner similar to the system
104 described in section 10-10a of the general statutes, (2) the
105 characteristics of the existing and potential workforce serving such
106 children, (3) the characteristics of such programs serving such children,
107 and (4) data collected, if any, from the preschool experience survey,
108 described in section 583 of substitute house bill 5562 of the current
109 session, as amended by House Amendment Schedule "A".

110 Sec. 3. Section 581 of substitute house bill 5562 of the current
111 session, as amended by House Amendment Schedule "A", is repealed
112 and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

113 The Commissioner of Early Childhood shall develop a plan to

114 provide (1) spaces to all eligible children, as defined in section 582 of
 115 substitute house bill 5562 of the current session, as amended by House
 116 Amendment Schedule "A", in an accredited school readiness program,
 117 as defined in section 582 of substitute house bill 5562 of the current
 118 session, as amended by House Amendment Schedule "A", or a school
 119 readiness program seeking accreditation, as defined in section 582 of
 120 substitute house bill 5562 of the current session, as amended by House
 121 Amendment Schedule "A", and (2) access to a preschool program
 122 established or expanded under the Connecticut Smart Start
 123 competitive grant program, described in section 1 of this act. The
 124 commissioner shall submit such plan to the Governor on or before
 125 January 1, 2015."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	HB 5562 (current session), Sec. 504(a)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	HB 5562 (current session), Sec. 581