



Senate Bill No. 964

Public Act No. 15-143

AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS' RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD STATUTES.

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

Section 1. Subsection (c) of section 10-357b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(c) The State Education Resource Center shall be subject to (1) rules, regulations and restrictions on purchasing, procurement, personal service agreements and the disposition of assets generally applicable to Connecticut state agencies, including those contained in titles 4, 4a and 4b [] and section 4e-19, and (2) audit by the Auditors of Public Accounts under section 2-90.

Sec. 2. Subparagraph (C) of subdivision (3) of subsection (c) of section 10-264l of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(C) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, and each fiscal year thereafter, each interdistrict magnet school operated by a regional educational service center that began operations for the school year commencing July 1, 2001, and that for the school year commencing

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July 1, 2008, enrolled at least fifty-five per cent, but no more than eighty per cent of the school's students from a single town shall receive a per pupil grant [(1)] (i) for each enrolled student who is a resident of the district that enrolls at least fifty-five per cent, but no more than eighty per cent of the school's students, up to an amount equal to the total number of such enrolled students as of October 1, 2013, using the data of record, in the amount of eight thousand one hundred eighty dollars, [(2)] (ii) for each enrolled student who is a resident of the district that enrolls at least fifty-five per cent, but not more than eighty per cent of the school's students, in an amount greater than the total number of such enrolled students as of October 1, 2013, using the data of record, in the amount of three thousand dollars, [(3)] (iii) for each enrolled student who is not a resident of the district that enrolls at least fifty-five per cent, but no more than eighty per cent of the school's students, up to an amount equal to the total number of such enrolled students as of October 1, 2013, using the data of record, in the amount of eight thousand one hundred eighty dollars, and [(4)] (iv) for each enrolled student who is not a resident of the district that enrolls at least fifty-five per cent, but not more than eighty per cent of the school's students, in an amount greater than the total number of such enrolled students as of October 1, 2013, using the data of record, in the amount of seven thousand eighty-five dollars.

Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 10-222p of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) The Department of Education shall make available on the department's Internet web site (1) each safe school climate plan that has been approved by the department, (2) a list of the school districts that have an approved safe school climate plan, and (3) a list of the school districts whose safe school climate [plan has] plans have been rejected and [is] that are in the process of resubmitting [its] their safe

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school climate [plan] plans for approval by the department.

Sec. 4. Subsection (b) of section 10-16r of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) The local school readiness council shall: (1) Make recommendations to the chief elected official and the superintendent of schools on issues relating to school readiness, including any applications for grants pursuant to sections 10-16p, 10-16u, 17b-749a and 17b-749c; (2) foster partnerships among providers of school readiness programs; (3) submit biennial reports to the [Department of Education] Office of Early Childhood on the number and location of school readiness spaces and estimates of the number of children not being served by school readiness programs and the estimated cost of providing spaces to all eligible children, as described in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of subsection (d) of section 10-16p, in an accredited school readiness program or a school readiness program seeking accreditation; (4) cooperate with the [department] office in any program evaluation; [and, on and after July 1, 2000, use measures developed pursuant to section 10-16s for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of school readiness programs;] (5) identify existing and prospective resources and services available to children and families; (6) facilitate the coordination of the delivery of services to children and families, including (A) referral procedures, and (B) before and after-school child care for children attending kindergarten programs; (7) exchange information with other councils, the community and organizations serving the needs of children and families; (8) make recommendations to school officials concerning transition from school readiness programs to kindergarten; and (9) encourage public participation.

Sec. 5. Subsection (c) of section 19a-80 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*

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passage):

(c) The commissioner, within available appropriations, shall require each prospective employee of a child day care center or group day care home in a position requiring the provision of care to a child to submit to state and national criminal history records checks. The criminal history records checks required pursuant to this subsection shall be conducted in accordance with section 29-17a. The commissioner shall also request a check of the state child abuse registry established pursuant to section 17a-101k. [Pursuant to the interagency agreement provided for in section 10-16s, the] The Department of Social Services may agree to transfer funds appropriated for criminal history records checks to the Office of Early Childhood. The [commissioner] Commissioner of Early Childhood shall notify each licensee of the provisions of this subsection.

Sec. 6. Subdivision (11) of subsection (g) of section 17a-28 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(11) The Office of Early Childhood for the purpose of (A) determining the suitability of a person to care for children in a facility licensed pursuant to section 19a-77, 19a-80, as amended by this act, or 19a-87b; (B) determining the suitability of such person for licensure; (C) an investigation conducted pursuant to section 19a-80f; (D) notifying the [Department of Public Health] office when the Department of Children and Families places an individual licensed or certified by the [Department of Public Health] office on the child abuse and neglect registry pursuant to section 17a-101k; or (E) notifying the [Department of Public Health] office when the Department of Children and Families possesses information regarding [a Department of Public Health] an office regulatory violation committed by an individual licensed or certified by the [Department of Public Health] office;

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Sec. 7. Section 17b-751b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) The [executive director of the Office] Commissioner of Early Childhood shall establish the structure for a state-wide system for a Nurturing Families Network, which demonstrates the benefits of preventive services by significantly reducing the abuse and neglect of infants and by enhancing parent-child relationships through hospital-based assessment with home outreach follow-up on infants and their families within families identified as high risk.

(b) The [executive director of the Office of Early Childhood] commissioner shall: (1) Develop the comprehensive risk assessment to be used by the Nurturing Families Network's providers; (2) develop the training program, standards, and protocols for the pilot programs; and (3) develop, issue and evaluate requests for proposals to procure the services required by this section. In evaluating the proposals, the [executive director] commissioner shall take into consideration the most effective and consistent service delivery system allowing for the continuation of current public and private programs.

(c) The [executive director of the Office of Early Childhood] commissioner shall establish a data system to enable the programs to document the following information in a standard manner: (1) The level of screening and assessment; (2) profiles of risk and family demographics; (3) the incidence of child abuse and neglect; (4) rates of child development; and (5) any other information the commissioner deems appropriate.

(d) The [executive director] commissioner shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, on the establishment, implementation and progress of the Nurturing Families Network, on January first and July first, of each year.

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Sec. 8. Subsection (c) of section 17b-749 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(c) The commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish eligibility and program standards including, but not limited to: (1) A priority intake and eligibility system with preference given to serving (A) recipients of temporary family assistance who are employed or engaged in employment activities under the Department of Social Services' "Jobs First" program, (B) working families whose temporary family assistance was discontinued not more than five years prior to the date of application for the child care subsidy program, (C) teen parents, (D) low-income working families, (E) adoptive families of children who were adopted from the Department of Children and Families and who are granted a waiver of income standards under subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section, (F) working families who are at risk of welfare dependency, and (G) any household with a child or children participating in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership federal grant program for a period of up to twelve months based on Early Head Start eligibility criteria; (2) health and safety standards for child care providers not required to be licensed; (3) a reimbursement system for child care services which account for differences in the age of the child, number of children in the family, the geographic region and type of care provided by licensed and unlicensed caregivers, the cost and type of services provided by licensed and unlicensed caregivers, successful completion of fifteen hours of annual in-service training or credentialing of child care directors and administrators, and program accreditation; (4) supplemental payment for special needs of the child and extended nontraditional hours; (5) an annual rate review process for providers which assures that reimbursement rates are maintained at levels which permit equal access to a variety of child care settings; (6) a sliding reimbursement scale for participating families; (7) an

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administrative appeals process; (8) an administrative hearing process to adjudicate cases of alleged fraud and abuse and to impose sanctions and recover overpayments; (9) an extended period of program and payment eligibility when a parent who is receiving a child care subsidy experiences a temporary interruption in employment or other approved activity; and (10) a waiting list for the child care subsidy program that reflects the priority and eligibility system set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, which is reviewed periodically, with the inclusion of this information in the annual report required to be issued annually by the office to the Governor and the General Assembly in accordance with section 17b-733. Such action will include, but not be limited to, family income, age of child, region of state and length of time on such waiting list.

Sec. 9. Subsection (b) of section 17a-101 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) The following persons shall be mandated reporters: (1) Any physician or surgeon licensed under the provisions of chapter 370, (2) any resident physician or intern in any hospital in this state, whether or not so licensed, (3) any registered nurse, (4) any licensed practical nurse, (5) any medical examiner, (6) any dentist, (7) any dental hygienist, (8) any psychologist, (9) any school employee, as defined in section 53a-65, (10) social worker, (11) any person who holds or is issued a coaching permit by the State Board of Education, is a coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics and is eighteen years of age or older, (12) any individual who is employed as a coach or director of youth athletics and is eighteen years of age or older, (13) any individual who is employed as a coach or director of a private youth sports organization, league or team and is eighteen years of age or older, (14) any paid administrator, faculty, staff, athletic director, athletic coach or athletic trainer employed by a public or private

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institution of higher education who is eighteen years of age or older, excluding student employees, (15) any police officer, (16) any juvenile or adult probation officer, (17) any juvenile or adult parole officer, (18) any member of the clergy, (19) any pharmacist, (20) any physical therapist, (21) any optometrist, (22) any chiropractor, (23) any podiatrist, (24) any mental health professional, (25) any physician assistant, (26) any person who is a licensed or certified emergency medical services provider, (27) any person who is a licensed or certified alcohol and drug counselor, (28) any person who is a licensed marital and family therapist, (29) any person who is a sexual assault counselor or a domestic violence counselor, as defined in section 52-146k, (30) any person who is a licensed professional counselor, (31) any person who is a licensed foster parent, (32) any person paid to care for a child in any public or private facility, child day care center, group day care home or family day care home licensed by the state, (33) any employee of the Department of Children and Families, (34) any employee of the Department of Public Health, ~~(35)~~ any employee of the Office of Early Childhood who is responsible for the licensing of child day care centers, group day care homes, family day care homes or youth camps, ~~[(35)]~~ ~~(36)~~ any paid youth camp director or assistant director, ~~[(36)]~~ ~~(37)~~ the Child Advocate and any employee of the Office of the Child Advocate, and ~~[(37)]~~ ~~(38)~~ any family relations counselor, family relations counselor trainee or family services supervisor employed by the Judicial Department.

Sec. 10. Subsection (b) of section 17a-22dd of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) The Office of Early Childhood, [as established in section 1 of substitute house bill 6359 of the January 2013, regular session,] in collaboration with the Departments of Children and Families, Education and Public Health, to the extent that private funding is

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available, shall design and implement a public information and education campaign on children's mental, emotional and behavioral health issues. Such campaign shall provide:

(1) Information on access to support and intervention programs providing mental, emotional and behavioral health care services to children;

(2) A list of emotional landmarks and the typical ages at which such landmarks are attained;

(3) Information on the importance of a relationship with and connection to an adult in the early years of childhood;

(4) Strategies that parents and families can employ to improve their child's mental, emotional and behavioral health, including executive functioning and self-regulation;

(5) Information to parents regarding methods to address and cope with mental, emotional and behavioral health stressors at various ages of a child's development and at various stages of a parent's work and family life;

(6) Information on existing public and private reimbursement for services rendered; and

(7) Strategies to address the stigma associated with mental illness.

Sec. 11. Section 17a-22cc of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

The Office of Early Childhood, [as established in section 1 of substitute house bill 6359 of the January 2013, regular session,] in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families, shall provide, to the extent that private, federal or philanthropic funding is available, professional development training to pediatricians and child

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care providers to help prevent and identify mental, emotional and behavioral health issues in children by utilizing the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Competencies, or a similar model, with a focus on maternal depression and its impact on child development.

Sec. 12. Subsection (a) of section 10-500 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) There is established an Office of Early Childhood. The office shall be under the direction of the Commissioner of Early Childhood, whose appointment shall be made by the Governor. Such appointment shall be in accordance with the provisions of sections 4-5 to 4-8, inclusive. The commissioner shall be responsible for implementing the policies and directives of the office. The commissioner shall have the authority to designate any employee as his or her agent to exercise all or part of the authority, powers and duties of the commissioner in his or her absence. Said office shall be within the Department of Education for administrative purposes only.

Sec. 13. Subsection (a) of section 10-501 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) The Office of Early Childhood shall develop and implement an early childhood information system. Such early childhood information system shall facilitate and encourage the sharing of data between and among early childhood service providers by tracking (1) the health, safety and school readiness of all young children receiving early care and education services from (A) any local or regional board of education, including children enrolled in a preschool program under the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program, pursuant to section 10-506, (B) any school readiness program, as defined in section 10-16p, or (C) any program receiving public funding, in a manner

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similar to the system described in section 10-10a, (2) the characteristics of the existing and potential workforce serving such children, (3) the characteristics of such programs serving such children, and (4) data collected, if any, from the preschool experience survey, described in section 10-515.

Approved June 30, 2015