



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 598

January Session, 2015

Substitute House Bill No. 7020

House of Representatives, April 13, 2015

The Committee on Education reported through REP. FLEISCHMANN of the 18th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS AND INITIATIVES.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2015*) The Department of
2 Education shall administer the kindergarten assessment tool,
3 developed by the Office of Early Childhood pursuant to subdivision
4 (7) of subsection (b) of section 10-500 of the general statutes, as
5 amended by this act, to each child enrolled in kindergarten for the
6 purpose of measuring a child's level of preparedness for kindergarten.
7 Such kindergarten assessment tool shall not be used as an
8 accountability measurement tool for an early childhood education
9 program.

10 Sec. 2. Subdivision (7) of subsection (b) of section 10-500 of the
11 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
12 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

13 (7) Developing [and implementing] a state-wide developmentally
14 appropriate kindergarten assessment tool [that measures a child's level
15 of preparedness for kindergarten, but shall not be used as a
16 measurement tool for program accountability] to be administered by
17 the Department of Education in accordance with the provisions of
18 section 1 of this act;

19 Sec. 3. Subsection (c) of section 10-10a of the general statutes is
20 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
21 *1, 2015*):

22 (c) The state-wide public school information system shall:

23 (1) Track and report data relating to student, teacher and school and
24 district performance growth and make such information available to
25 local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating
26 educational performance and growth of teachers and students enrolled
27 in public schools in the state. Such information shall be collected or
28 calculated based on information received from local and regional
29 boards of education and other relevant sources. Such information shall
30 include, but not be limited to:

31 (A) In addition to performance on state-wide mastery examinations
32 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, data relating to students shall
33 include, but not be limited to, (i) the primary language spoken at the
34 home of a student, (ii) student transcripts, (iii) student attendance and
35 student mobility, (iv) reliable, valid assessments of a student's
36 readiness to enter public school at the kindergarten level, such as data
37 collected from the kindergarten assessment tool, administered
38 pursuant to section 1 of this act, and (v) data collected [, if any,] from
39 the preschool experience survey, described in section 10-515, as
40 amended by this act;

41 (B) Data relating to teachers shall include, but not be limited to, (i)
42 teacher credentials, such as master's degrees, teacher preparation
43 programs completed and certification levels and endorsement areas,
44 (ii) teacher assessments, such as whether a teacher is deemed highly

45 qualified pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110, or
46 deemed to meet such other designations as may be established by
47 federal law or regulations for the purposes of tracking the equitable
48 distribution of instructional staff, (iii) the presence of substitute
49 teachers in a teacher's classroom, (iv) class size, (v) numbers relating to
50 absenteeism in a teacher's classroom, and (vi) the presence of a
51 teacher's aide. The department shall assign a unique teacher identifier
52 to each teacher prior to collecting such data in the public school
53 information system;

54 (C) Data relating to schools and districts shall include, but not be
55 limited to, (i) school population, (ii) annual student graduation rates,
56 (iii) annual teacher retention rates, (iv) school disciplinary records,
57 such as data relating to suspensions, expulsions and other disciplinary
58 actions, (v) the percentage of students whose primary language is not
59 English, (vi) the number of and professional credentials of support
60 personnel, and (vii) information relating to instructional technology,
61 such as access to computers.

62 (2) Collect data relating to student enrollment in and graduation
63 from institutions of higher education for any student who had been
64 assigned a unique student identifier pursuant to subsection (b) of this
65 section, provided such data is available.

66 (3) Develop means for access to and data sharing with the data
67 systems of public institutions of higher education in the state.

68 Sec. 4. Subsection (g) of section 10-10a of the general statutes is
69 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
70 *1, 2015*):

71 (g) Local and regional boards of education and preschool programs
72 which receive state or federal funding shall participate, in a manner
73 prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, in the state-wide public
74 school information system described in subsection (b) of this section.
75 Participation for purposes of this subsection shall include, but not be
76 limited to, reporting on (1) student experiences in preschool by

77 program type and by numbers of months in each such program, and
78 (2) the readiness of students entering kindergarten using data collected
79 from the kindergarten assessment tool, administered pursuant to
80 section 1 of this act, and student progress in kindergarten. Such
81 reporting shall be done by October 1, 2007, and annually thereafter.

82 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2015*) (a) As used in this section,
83 "bachelor's degree program in early childhood education or child
84 development" means a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early
85 childhood education, including, but not limited to, a bachelor's degree
86 in early childhood education, child study, child development or
87 human growth and development.

88 (b) On and after July 1, 2015, the Office of Early Childhood shall,
89 during a review and assessment pursuant to subdivision (4) of
90 subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by
91 this act, collect data relating to bachelor's degree programs in early
92 childhood education or childhood development that have not been
93 approved by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office
94 of Higher Education and the Office of Early Childhood from
95 institutions of higher education that are regionally accredited. The
96 office shall, at least quarterly, use such data to conduct a trend analysis
97 of such bachelor's degree programs for the purpose of determining (1)
98 whether such bachelor's degree programs align with the teacher
99 preparation standards of the National Association for the Education of
100 Young Children, and (2) which courses and concentrations offered as
101 part of such bachelor's degree programs align with such teacher
102 preparation standards.

103 (c) During a review and assessment pursuant to subdivision (4) of
104 subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by
105 this act, the office shall consult the results of the trend analysis
106 conducted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section for the purpose of
107 determining whether the degree of an individual with a bachelor's
108 degree in early childhood education or child development or a
109 bachelor's degree and twelve credits or more in early childhood

110 education or child development, other than those bachelor's degrees
111 specified in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of subsection
112 (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this act, has
113 a sufficient concentration in early childhood education so as to satisfy
114 the requirements set forth in said subparagraphs (B) and (C).

115 (d) The office shall make the results of the trend analysis conducted
116 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section available on its Internet web
117 site.

118 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2015*) For the school year commencing
119 July 1, 2017, and each school year thereafter, (1) the local or regional
120 board of education or regional educational service center operating an
121 interdistrict magnet school offering a preschool program, or (2) the
122 governing council of a state or local charter school offering a preschool
123 program shall obtain accreditation for such preschool program from
124 the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

125 Sec. 7. Section 10-502 of the general statutes is repealed and the
126 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

127 The Office of Early Childhood shall collaborate with and provide
128 funding to local and regional early childhood councils [in] for the
129 implementation of early care and education and child development
130 programs at the local level. Such early childhood councils shall: (1)
131 Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for an early childhood
132 system for the community served by such early childhood council, (2)
133 develop policy and program planning, (3) encourage community
134 participation by emphasizing substantial parental involvement, (4)
135 collect, analyze and evaluate data with a focus on program and service
136 outcomes, (5) allocate resources, and (6) perform any other functions
137 that will assist in the provision of early childhood programs and
138 services. Such early childhood councils may enter into memoranda of
139 agreement with the local or regional school readiness council,
140 described in section 10-16r, of the town or region served by such early
141 childhood council to perform the duties and functions of a school
142 readiness council, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-16r,

143 or if no such local or regional school readiness council exists for the
144 town or region of such early childhood council, perform the duties and
145 functions of a school readiness council, in accordance with the
146 provisions of section 10-16r.

147 Sec. 8. (*Effective from passage*) The Office of Early Childhood shall
148 develop a plan to assist early childhood education program providers
149 that accept state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces
150 associated with such program's child care program or school readiness
151 program in the implementation of the staff qualifications requirements
152 under subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as
153 amended by this act. The plan shall include, but need not be limited to,
154 a means of (1) assisting staff members of such program in obtaining a
155 bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education,
156 (2) increasing the salaries of or providing incentives to staff members
157 of such program who hold a bachelor's degree or otherwise meet such
158 staff qualifications requirements, and (3) retaining staff members of
159 such program who hold a bachelor's degree or otherwise meet such
160 staff qualifications requirements. Not later than January 1, 2016, the
161 office shall submit the plan and any recommendations to the joint
162 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
163 matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of
164 section 11-4a of the general statutes.

165 Sec. 9. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2015*) Not later than July first,
166 annually, the Office of Early Childhood shall submit a report regarding
167 the status of school readiness program providers' compliance with the
168 staff qualifications requirement, described in subsection (b) of section
169 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this act, to the joint
170 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
171 matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of
172 section 11-4a of the general statutes.

173 Sec. 10. Subsection (c) of section 10-506 of the general statutes is
174 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
175 *passage*):

176 (c) A preschool program created or expanded under this section
177 shall (1) contain a classroom with an individual who holds
178 professional certification pursuant to [section 10-145b] chapter 166
179 with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood
180 special education and is an employee of the board of education
181 providing a preschool program under this section, (2) maintain a
182 classroom size and teacher-child ratio that is in compliance with
183 standards established by the National Association for the Education of
184 Young Children, (3) obtain accreditation, as described in section 10-
185 16p, as amended by this act, not later than three years after the creation
186 or expansion of the preschool program, and (4) be located in a public
187 school or in a space maintained by an early care and education and
188 child development program provider, pursuant to an agreement
189 between a board of education and such early care and education and
190 child development program provider.

191 Sec. 11. Section 10-515 of the general statutes is repealed and the
192 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

193 On or before March 1, 2015, the Commissioner of Early Childhood,
194 in consultation with the Department of Education, shall develop a
195 preschool experience survey that [may] shall be included in
196 kindergarten registration materials provided by local and regional
197 boards of education to parents or guardians of children enrolling in
198 kindergarten pursuant to section 10-184. The board shall use such
199 survey to collect information regarding (1) whether the child enrolling
200 in kindergarten has participated in a preschool program, and (2) (A) if
201 such child has participated in a preschool program, the nature, length
202 and setting of such preschool program, or (B) if the child has not
203 participated in a preschool program, the reasons why such child did
204 not participate in a preschool program, including, but not limited to,
205 financial difficulty, lack of transportation, parental choice regarding
206 enrollment, limitations related to the hours of operation of available
207 preschool programs and any other barriers to participation in a
208 preschool program. A local or regional board of education shall not
209 require any parent or guardian of such child to complete such survey

210 as a condition of such child's enrollment in kindergarten.

211 Sec. 12. Subsection (a) of section 10-501 of the general statutes is
212 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
213 *1, 2015*):

214 (a) The Office of Early Childhood shall develop and implement an
215 early childhood information system. Such early childhood information
216 system shall facilitate and encourage the sharing of data between and
217 among early childhood service providers by tracking (1) the health,
218 safety and school readiness of all young children receiving early care
219 and education services from (A) any local or regional board of
220 education, including children enrolled in a preschool program under
221 the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program, pursuant to
222 section 10-506, as amended by this act, (B) school readiness program,
223 as defined in section 10-16p, as amended by this act, or (C) any
224 program receiving public funding, in a manner similar to the system
225 described in section 10-10a, as amended by this act, (2) the
226 characteristics of the existing and potential workforce serving such
227 children, (3) the characteristics of such programs serving such children,
228 and (4) data collected [, if any,] from the preschool experience survey,
229 described in section 10-515, as amended by this act.

230 Sec. 13. Subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is
231 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
232 *passage*):

233 (b) (1) The office shall be the lead agency for school readiness. For
234 purposes of this section and section 10-16u, school readiness program
235 providers eligible for funding from the office shall include local and
236 regional boards of education, regional educational service centers,
237 family resource centers and providers of child day care centers, as
238 defined in section 19a-77, Head Start programs, preschool programs
239 and other programs that meet such standards established by the
240 commissioner. The office shall establish standards for school readiness
241 programs. The standards may include, but need not be limited to,
242 guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including

243 preliteracy development, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff
244 qualifications and training, transition to school and administration.
245 The office shall develop age-appropriate developmental skills and
246 goals for children attending such programs. The commissioner, in
247 consultation with the president of the Board of Regents for Higher
248 Education, the Commissioners of Education and Social Services and
249 other appropriate entities, shall develop a professional development
250 program for the staff of school readiness programs.

251 (2) For purposes of this section:

252 (A) Prior to July 1, 2015, "staff qualifications" means there is in each
253 classroom an individual who has at least the following: (i) A childhood
254 development associate credential or an equivalent credential issued by
255 an organization approved by the commissioner and twelve credits or
256 more in early childhood education or child development, as
257 determined by the commissioner or the president of the Board of
258 Regents for Higher Education, after consultation with the
259 commissioner, from an institution of higher education (I) accredited by
260 the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher
261 Education, and (II) regionally accredited; (ii) an associate's degree with
262 twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child
263 development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of
264 the Board of Regents for Higher Education, after consultation with the
265 commissioner, from such an institution; (iii) a four-year degree with
266 twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child
267 development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of
268 the Board of Regents for Higher Education, after consultation with the
269 commissioner, from such an institution; or (iv) certification pursuant to
270 section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or
271 special education;

272 (B) From July 1, 2015, until June 30, 2020, "staff qualifications" means
273 that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds
274 for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such
275 program's child day care program or school readiness program, (i) at

276 least fifty per cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility
277 for a classroom of children hold (I) certification pursuant to section 10-
278 145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early
279 childhood special education, or (II) a bachelor's degree with a
280 concentration in early childhood education, including, but not limited
281 to, a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, child study, child
282 development or human growth and development, from an institution
283 of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher
284 Education or Office of Higher Education, and regionally accredited,
285 provided such bachelor's degree program is approved by the Board of
286 Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education and
287 the Office of Early Childhood, and (ii) such remaining individuals with
288 the primary responsibility for a classroom of children hold an associate
289 degree with a concentration in early childhood education, including,
290 but not limited to, an associate's degree in early childhood education,
291 child study, child development or human growth and development,
292 from an institution of higher education (I) accredited by the Board of
293 Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (II)
294 regionally accredited, provided such associate degree program is
295 approved by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office
296 of Higher Education and the Office of Early Childhood; and

297 (C) On and after July 1, 2020, "staff qualifications" means that for
298 each early childhood education program accepting state funds for
299 infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's
300 child day care program or school readiness program, one hundred per
301 cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a
302 classroom of children hold (i) certification pursuant to section 10-145b
303 with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood
304 special education, or (ii) a bachelor's degree with a concentration in
305 early childhood education, including, but not limited to, a bachelor's
306 degree in early childhood education, child study, child development or
307 human growth and development, from an institution of higher
308 education (I) accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education
309 or the Office of Higher Education, and (II) regionally accredited,
310 provided such bachelor's degree program is approved by the Board of

311 Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education and
312 the Office of Early Childhood.

313 (3) Any individual with a bachelor's degree in early childhood
314 education or child development or a bachelor's degree and twelve
315 credits or more in early childhood education or child development,
316 who, on or before June 30, 2015, is employed by an early childhood
317 education program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and
318 preschool spaces associated with such program's child day care
319 program or school readiness program shall be considered to meet the
320 staff qualifications required under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of
321 subdivision (2) of this subsection. No such early childhood education
322 program shall terminate any such individual from employment for
323 purposes of meeting the staff qualification requirements set forth in
324 subparagraph (B) or (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

325 (4) Any individual with a bachelor's degree in early childhood
326 education or child development or a bachelor's degree and twelve
327 credits or more in early childhood education or child development,
328 other than those bachelor's degrees specified in subparagraphs (B) and
329 (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection, may submit documentation
330 concerning such degree for review and assessment by the office as to
331 whether such degree has a sufficient concentration in early childhood
332 education so as to satisfy the requirements set forth in said
333 subparagraphs (B) and (C).

334 (5) Any individual with an associate's degree with twelve credits or
335 more in early childhood education or child development, as
336 determined by the commissioner or the president of the Board of
337 Regents for Higher Education, after consultation with the
338 commissioner, from an institution of higher education (A) accredited
339 by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher
340 Education, and (B) regionally accredited, who has been employed in
341 the same early childhood education program that accepts state funds
342 for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such
343 program's child day care program or school readiness program since

344 1995 shall be considered to meet the staff qualifications required under
 345 subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection until
 346 June 30, 2025. On and after July 1, 2025, such individual shall hold a
 347 childhood development associate credential or an equivalent
 348 credential, described in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (2) of this
 349 subsection, or otherwise meet the staff qualifications required under
 350 subparagraph (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection. Any such
 351 individual who terminates his or her employment with such early
 352 childhood education program on or before June 30, 2025, and accepts a
 353 position at another early childhood education program accepting state
 354 funds for spaces associated with such program's child day care
 355 program or school readiness program shall submit documentation of
 356 such individual's progress toward meeting the staff qualification
 357 requirements set forth in subparagraph (B) or (C) of subdivision (2) of
 358 this subsection in a manner determined by the office.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-500(b)(7)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-10a(c)
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-10a(g)
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-502
Sec. 8	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	New section
Sec. 10	<i>from passage</i>	10-506(c)
Sec. 11	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-515
Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-501(a)
Sec. 13	<i>from passage</i>	10-16p(b)

ED *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 16 \$	FY 17 \$
Early Childhood, Off.	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below
Education, Dept.	GF - Cost	Approximately 314,000	304,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 16 \$	FY 17 \$
Local and Regional School Districts	STATE MANDATE - Cost	See Below	See Below

Explanation

Sections 1 and 2 of the bill require the State Department of Education (SDE), to administer the kindergarten assessment tool to each child enrolled in kindergarten. It is anticipated that this will result in a cost to SDE as well as local and regional boards of education.

Costs include: (1) \$8 per student, annually, for the cost of the test. There are approximately 38,000 kindergartners in Connecticut, for an annual cost of \$304,000, to SDE for purchasing the tests. The remaining costs would be incurred by local and regional boards of education: (2) Startup technology costs of \$300-500 per kindergarten teacher for at least one computer tablet in each kindergarten class. There are 1,900 kindergarten teachers in Connecticut, for an approximate cost of \$760,000 (statewide), for startup technology. (3) One additional professional development day for training for approximately 1,900 kindergarten teachers, which results in a cost for substitute

teachers, which averages \$90 per day, for a statewide total of approximately \$171,000. (4) Substitute teacher costs for administering the assessment to each child. It is anticipated that each assessment lasts approximately 45 minutes, so an estimated three days of assessment time would be required, for a statewide total of \$513,000.

Sections 3 and 4 require SDE's public school information system (PSIS) to collect data from the kindergarten assessment tool to gain reliable, valid assessments of student readiness to enter public school kindergarten; this is anticipated to result in a one-time cost of less than \$10,000 to SDE for programming and technology upgrades.

Section 5 requires the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to collect data for a trend analysis of regionally accredited bachelor's degree programs in early childhood education or child development, which is not anticipated to result in a cost as OEC currently has the staff available to do so.

Section 6 requires local or regional boards of education and regional education service centers that operate preschool magnet programs, as well as state or local charter school governing councils offering a preschool program, to obtain National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) program accreditation beginning in the 2017-18 school year. This could result in a potential cost to local and regional boards of education and regional education service centers that are not currently certified. The cost would vary by program, and by school. For example, preschool programs serving 60 children or fewer would incur costs of \$1,570 for initial accreditation and \$550 for renewal annually thereafter. For programs serving from 61 students up to 120, initial accreditation would cost \$1,945 and \$650 for annual renewal.

Section 7 could result in a cost to the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) associated with requiring OEC to provide funding to local and regional early childhood councils for the implementation of early care and education and child development programs. OEC currently supports local early childhood councils via grants to Discovery

communities to develop, refine and implement their local plans for early childhood. Grants totaled approximately \$600,000 in FY 14, with an average grant award of \$20,200. To the extent that this language results in the agency providing assistance 1) to an increased number of councils and/or 2) for different purposes than they currently do, OEC will incur additional costs.

Sections 8 and 9 expand the responsibilities of OEC, which is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact as they have the staff available to do so.

Section 10 specifies that any preschool program created or expanded using Smart Start grants must have a classroom staffed with a teacher who holds professional certification, rather than any type of teaching certificate. This is a not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact.

Section 11 requires local and regional boards of education to include OEC's preschool experience survey in kindergarten registration material; this could result in a cost of less than \$1,000 per district associated with printing and disseminating the survey.

Section 12 makes various technical changes, which do not result in a fiscal impact.

Section 13 grandfathers certain school readiness staff into heightened staff qualifications until June 30, 2025, which is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation, except for the startup technology costs, which are one-time in nature.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 7020*****AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS AND INITIATIVES.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill makes a number of changes in various early childhood education statutes. It requires:

1. the State Department of Education (SDE), rather than the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), to administer the kindergarten assessment tool to each child enrolled in kindergarten (see BACKGROUND) (§§ 1-2);
2. SDE's public school information system (PSIS) (see BACKGROUND) to collect data from the kindergarten assessment tool to gain reliable, valid assessments of student readiness to enter public school kindergarten (§§ 3-4);
3. OEC to (a) collect data for a trend analysis of regionally accredited bachelor's degree programs in early childhood education or child development, (b) post analysis results online, and (c) consult analysis results when reviewing individuals' bachelor's degrees that lack state or regional accreditation or approval for sufficient early childhood education concentration (§ 5);
4. local or regional boards of education and regional education service centers that operate preschool magnet programs, as well as state or local charter school governing councils offering a preschool program, to obtain National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) program accreditation beginning in the 2017-18 school year (§ 6);

5. OEC to provide funding to local and regional early childhood councils (see BACKGROUND) for local implementation of early care and education and child development programs (§ 7);
6. OEC to develop a plan to help early childhood education program providers implement heightened staff qualifications already required by law (see BACKGROUND) and report on the plan to the Education Committee by January 1, 2016 (§ 8);
7. OEC to report to the Education Committee on the status of school readiness program providers' compliance with the heightened staff qualification requirement by July 1 annually (§ 9);
8. any preschool program created or expanded using Smart Start grants to have a classroom staffed with a teacher who holds professional certification, rather than any type of teaching certificate (§ 10);
9. local and regional boards of education to include OEC's preschool experience survey (see BACKGROUND) in kindergarten registration material (§ 11); and
10. grandfathering of certain school readiness staff into heightened staff qualifications until June 30, 2025 (§ 13).

It also makes various technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2015, except the provisions on (1) the OEC plan to help early childhood program providers meet new staff qualifications, (2) Smart Start programs, and (3) grandfathering school readiness staff into new staff qualifications are effective upon passage.

§ 5 – TREND ANALYSIS

Beginning July 1, 2015, the bill requires OEC to collect data on early childhood education or child development bachelor's degree programs from regionally accredited higher education institutions that have not been approved by the (1) Board of Regents for Higher Education

(BOR) or (2) Office of Higher Education (OHE) and OEC.

Under the bill, OEC must use the collected data at least quarterly to conduct a trend analysis on (1) whether such degree programs align with NAEYC teacher preparation standards and (2) which courses and concentrations offered as part of these degree programs align with NAEYC teacher preparation standards. OEC must consult the results of the analysis when reviewing individuals' bachelor's degrees that lack state or regional accreditation or approval for sufficient early childhood education concentration

§§ 8-9 & 13 – HEIGHTENED SCHOOL READINESS STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Staff Qualification Assistance Plan

The bill requires OEC to develop a plan to help early childhood education program providers implement heightened staff qualifications required by existing law. The plan must include a means to:

1. help school readiness program staff members obtain a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education,
2. increase the salaries of or provide incentives for staff who already hold a bachelor's degree or otherwise meet the heightened qualifications, and
3. retain such staff who already hold a bachelor's degree or otherwise meet the heightened qualifications.

Grandfathering

Under the bill, school readiness staff members are grandfathered into heightened staff qualification fulfillment until June 30, 2025 if they have:

1. an associate degree with 12 or more credits in early childhood education or child development from a higher education

institution that is accredited by BOR or OHE and regionally accredited and

2. been employed by the same school readiness program since 1995.

Beginning July 1, 2025, such staff members must hold a childhood development associate credential or an equivalent credential or otherwise meet the heightened qualification requirements in existing law (either a teaching certificate with an early childhood education or early childhood special education endorsement or a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education). If such a staff member terminates his or her employment with the program on or before June 30, 2025 and accepts a position at another program, he or she must submit documentation showing progress towards meeting the heightened requirements.

BACKGROUND

Kindergarten Assessment Tool

The kindergarten assessment tool measures a child's kindergarten preparedness level. It must not be used as an accountability measurement tool for an early childhood education program (CGS § 10-500).

PSIS

PSIS is a statewide, standardized electronic data collection and reporting system that tracks and reports data relating to student, teacher, school, and district performance growth. It makes this data available to local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating educational performance and growth of teachers and students enrolled in Connecticut public schools (CGS § 10-10a).

Early Childhood Councils

Local and regional early childhood councils are responsible for developing early childhood policy and program planning, encouraging parental involvement, and allocating resources, among

other functions (CGS § 10-502).

Heightened School Readiness Staff Qualifications

Existing law raises the school readiness staff qualifications in two phases. Beginning July 1, 2015, each school readiness program must have at least 50% of classroom staff hold either a (1) teaching certificate with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education or (2) bachelor’s degree with an early childhood education concentration accredited by the state or regionally accredited with state approval. The remaining 50% of such staff must hold an associate degree in early childhood education, child study, child development, or human growth and development accredited by the state or regionally accredited with state approval (CGS § 10-16p(b)(2)(B)).

Beginning July 1, 2020, each school readiness program must have 100% of classroom staff meet the above requirements.

Preschool Experience Survey

This survey allows boards of education to collect information about:

1. whether the child enrolling in kindergarten has participated in a preschool program and
2. either the (a) nature, length, and setting of the preschool program in which the child participated or (b) reasons why the child did not participate in a program, including financial difficulty, lack of transportation, parental choice, limited hours of operation, or any other barriers (CGS § 10-515).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 0 (03/25/2015)