



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 619

January Session, 2015

Senate Bill No. 1097

Senate, April 13, 2015

The Committee on Education reported through SEN. SLOSSBERG of the 14th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FUNDING FOR EDUCATION.

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10-65 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
3 *1, 2015*):

4 (a) Each local or regional school district operating an agricultural
5 science and technology education center approved by the State Board
6 of Education for program, educational need, location and area to be
7 served shall be eligible for the following grants: (1) In accordance with
8 the provisions of chapter 173, through progress payments in
9 accordance with the provisions of section 10-287i, (A) for projects for
10 which an application was filed prior to July 1, 2011, ninety-five per
11 cent, and (B) for projects for which an application was filed on or after
12 July 1, 2011, eighty per cent of the net eligible costs of constructing,
13 acquiring, renovating and equipping approved facilities to be used for
14 such agricultural science and technology education center, for the
15 expansion or improvement of existing facilities or for the replacement

16 or improvement of equipment therein, and (2) subject to the provisions
17 of section 10-65b and within available appropriations, in an amount
18 equal to three thousand two hundred dollars per student for every
19 secondary school student who was enrolled in such center on October
20 first of the previous year.

21 Sec. 2. Subsection (g) of section 10-65 of the general statutes is
22 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
23 *1, 2015*):

24 (g) Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 10-51 and 10-222, for
25 the fiscal year ending June 30, [2015] 2016, any amount received by a
26 local or regional board of education pursuant to subdivision (2) of
27 subsection (a) of this section that exceeds the amount appropriated for
28 education by the municipality or the amount in the budget approved
29 by such regional board of education for purposes of said subdivision
30 (2) of subsection (a) of this section, shall be available for use by such
31 local or regional board of education, provided such excess amount is
32 spent in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of
33 subsection (a) of this section.

34 Sec. 3. Subsection (f) of section 10-266aa of the general statutes is
35 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
36 *1, 2015*):

37 (f) The Department of Education shall provide grants to regional
38 educational service centers or local or regional boards of education for
39 the reasonable cost of transportation for students participating in the
40 program. For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2003] 2015, and each fiscal
41 year thereafter, the department shall provide such grants within
42 available appropriations, provided the state-wide average of such
43 grants does not exceed an amount equal to three thousand two
44 hundred fifty dollars for each student transported, except that the
45 Commissioner of Education may grant to regional educational service
46 centers or local or regional boards of education additional sums from
47 funds remaining in the appropriation for such transportation services
48 if needed to offset transportation costs that exceed such maximum

49 amount. The regional educational service centers shall provide
50 reasonable transportation services to high school students who wish to
51 participate in supervised extracurricular activities. For purposes of this
52 section, the number of students transported shall be determined on
53 September first of each fiscal year.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-65(a)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-65(g)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-266aa(f)

ED *Joint Favorable*

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 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Potential Savings	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 16 \$	FY 17 \$
Regional Educational Service Centers	Potential Revenue Loss	See Below	See Below
Various Local and Regional School Districts	Potential Revenue Gain/Loss	See Below	See Below

Explanation

The bill specifies that Vocational Agriculture grant eligibility is subject to available appropriations. This results in a potential savings to the state and a corresponding potential revenue loss to local and regional school districts, as the State Department of Education (SDE) will not be able to award additional dollars to eligible districts, outside of the appropriation. The FY 15 appropriation for the Vocational Agriculture grant was approximately \$11 million.

The bill also expands eligibility for the supplemental Open Choice program transportation grant, allowing local or regional boards of education to receive funding. This could result in a revenue gain to various local and regional school districts who would qualify for a supplemental grant and a potential corresponding revenue loss to Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) who could have

otherwise wholly received the supplemental grants. In FY 14 SDE awarded approximately \$4.6 million in supplemental transportation funding to RESCs.

The bill makes other procedural and technical changes that are 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.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 1097*****AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FUNDING FOR EDUCATION.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill makes various changes to state grants for agricultural science and technology education centers (“agriscience centers”) and the statewide interdistrict public school attendance program (“Open Choice”).

Under current law, a local or regional school district that operates an agriscience center is eligible for a \$3,200 per pupil grant for each student enrolled as of October 1 in the previous school year. Under the bill, this grant eligibility is subject to available appropriations. Additionally, for FY 16, as was the case for the previous fiscal year, the bill allows a board of education that operates an agriscience center to spend this grant even if it exceeds the total amount the municipality budgeted for education. By law, the additional funds cannot be used to supplant local funding.

The bill also expands eligibility for supplemental Open Choice program transportation grants. By law, the State Department of Education must provide Open Choice transportation grants to local or regional boards of education or regional education service centers (RESCs), within available appropriations, in amounts up to \$3,250 per pupil. Current law allows the education commissioner to distribute supplemental grants only to RESCs, if needed, to offset Open Choice transportation costs that exceed the per pupil grant. Under the bill, local or regional boards of education are also eligible for these supplemental transportation grants.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2015

BACKGROUND***Agriscience Centers***

Agriscience centers are part of the state's public school choice program. They serve a region of multiple local school districts. The centers are embedded within existing comprehensive high schools, serving students in grades nine through 12 in full- and shared-time programs that include instruction in agricultural science and technology education, including vocational aquaculture and marine-related employment courses in addition to the standard high school curriculum (CGS §§ 10-64 to 10-66).

Open Choice Program and Transportation

The Open Choice interdistrict attendance program aims to (1) improve academic achievement; (2) reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation; and (3) provide a choice of educational programs for public school students.

By law, SDE must provide grants to local or regional boards of education and RESCs for the reasonable cost of transporting students participating in the Open Choice program. RESCs must provide reasonable transportation services to high school students participating in supervised extracurricular activities (CGS § 10-266aa).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 33 Nay 0 (03/25/2015)