



***Substitute House Bill No. 5450***

***Public Act No. 18-123***

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE STAFF QUALIFICATIONS  
REQUIREMENT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS.***

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

Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the 2018 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2018*):

(b) (1) The office shall be the lead agency for school readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u, school readiness program providers eligible for funding from the office shall include local and regional boards of education, regional educational service centers, family resource centers and providers of child care centers, as defined in section 19a-77, Head Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that meet such standards established by the commissioner. The office shall establish standards for school readiness programs. The standards may include, but need not be limited to, guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including preliteracy development, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff qualifications and training, transition to school and administration. The office shall develop age-appropriate developmental skills and goals for children attending such programs. The commissioner, in consultation with the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, the

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Commissioners of Education and Social Services and other appropriate entities, shall develop a professional development program for the staff of school readiness programs.

(2) For purposes of this section:

(A) Prior to July 1, [2018] 2020, "staff qualifications" means there is in each classroom an individual who has at least the following: (i) A childhood development associate credential or an equivalent credential issued by an organization approved by the commissioner and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from an institution of higher education (I) accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (II) regionally accredited; (ii) an associate degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from such an institution; (iii) a four-year degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from such an institution; (iv) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or special education; (v) an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited; or (vi) a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited;

(B) From July 1, [2018] 2020, until June 30, [2021] 2023, "staff qualifications" means that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces

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associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program, (i) at least fifty per cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children (I) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education, (II) have been issued an early childhood teacher credential, pursuant to section 10-520b, (III) hold at least a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, or (IV) satisfy the requirements of subdivision (3), (4) or (5) of this subsection, and (ii) such remaining individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children hold an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited; and

(C) On and after July 1, [2021] 2023, "staff qualifications" means that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program, one hundred per cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children (i) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education, (ii) have been issued an early childhood teacher credential, pursuant to subdivision (2) of section 10-520b, (iii) hold at least a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, or (iv) satisfy the requirements of subdivision (3), (4) or (5) of this subsection.

(3) Any individual with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development or a bachelor's degree and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, who, on or before June 30, 2015, is employed by an early childhood education program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and

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preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program shall be considered to meet the staff qualifications required under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection. No such early childhood education program shall terminate any such individual from employment for purposes of meeting the staff qualification requirements set forth in subparagraph (B) or (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(4) Any individual with an associate degree or bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development or an associate degree or a bachelor's degree and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, other than an associate degree or a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education, may submit documentation concerning such degree for review and assessment by the office as to whether such degree has a sufficient concentration in early childhood education so as to satisfy the requirements set forth in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(5) Any individual with an associate degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from an institution of higher education (A) accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (B) regionally accredited, who has been employed in the same early childhood education program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program since 1995 shall be considered to meet the staff qualifications required under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection until June 30, 2025. On and after July 1, 2025, such individual shall hold a

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childhood development associate credential or an equivalent credential, described in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (2) of this subsection, or otherwise meet the staff qualifications required under subparagraph (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection. Any such individual who terminates his or her employment with such early childhood education program on or before June 30, 2025, and accepts a position at another early childhood education program accepting state funds for spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program shall submit documentation of such individual's progress toward meeting the staff qualification requirements set forth in subparagraph (B) or (C) of subdivision (2) of this subsection in a manner determined by the office.

Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) The Office of Early Childhood shall, within available appropriations, conduct an analysis of the staff qualifications requirement prescribed in subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this act. Such analysis shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) a review of the goals of the requirement that those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children hold at least a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education, and an assessment of the results of evaluations of the effectiveness of a bachelor's degree requirement at achieving such goals, (2) an examination of the effectiveness of the state's implementation process for bringing early childhood education programs into compliance with the staff qualifications requirement, (3) an assessment of the effect of the staff qualifications requirement on the field of early childhood education, including its effects on educators, program providers, children, parents and families, (4) a cost-benefit analysis of the staff qualifications requirement with respect to the state, early childhood education program providers and educators and children and families, and (5) a consideration of alternative approaches to achieving (A) the bachelor's degree requirement of the staff qualifications requirement, or (B) the

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goals of the bachelor's degree requirement. In conducting such analysis, the office shall seek public input and feedback from early childhood education program providers, early childhood educators and parents. Not later than January 1, 2020, the office shall submit such analysis and any recommendations for legislation 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. As used in this section, "early childhood education program" means a program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program.

Approved June 7, 2018