OLR Bill Analysis
sHB 7150

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR’S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING EDUCATION.

SUMMARY

This bill delays, by two years, the transition of the Technical Education and Career System (TECS) (formerly known as the technical high school system) into an independent state agency, separate from the State Department of Education (SDE). Under the bill, the new transition will be complete for the 2022-2023 school year.

It also makes permanent the caps on five education grants that were set to expire at the end of FY 19 (June 30, 2019). The caps come into effect when the appropriation for a particular grant does not meet the full amount necessary to fulfill the grant’s statutory design.

It also renews the education commissioner’s authority to award certain magnet school transportation grants.

EFFECTIVE DATE:  July 1, 2019, except some of the provisions regarding the delay of the TECS becoming an independent agency are effective upon passage and others are effective July 1, 2022.

§ 1 — MAGNET SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION GRANTS

The bill extends the education commissioner’s authority to award (1) Sheff magnet school transportation grants through FY 20 and each following fiscal year and (2) supplemental Sheff magnet school transportation grants through FY 19 and each following year. Regarding the supplemental grants, the bill keeps the same payment schedule as in current law: (1) 70% of the grant must be paid on or before June 30 and (2) the remainder must be paid by September 1 of the following fiscal year upon completion of a comprehensive financial review.
§§ 2-6 — GRANT CAPS

The bill makes permanent the caps on five education grants that were set to expire at the end of FY 19. The caps come into effect when the appropriation does not meet the full amount necessary for the grant. The caps apply to the following programs:

1. adult education programs (CGS § 10-71);
2. bilingual education (CGS § 10-17g);
3. school districts' special education costs for public agency-placed students under an order of temporary custody (CGS § 10-76d);
4. school districts' excess special education costs (CGS § 10-76g);
5. excess regular education costs for state-placed children educated by private residential facilities (CGS § 10-253).

§§ 7-17 — TECS DELAY AS AN INDEPENDENT AGENCY

The bill delays, by two years, the mandated steps that transition TECS into an independent agency, separate from SDE and the State Board of Education (SBE). This means the transition will be complete for the 2022-2023 school year.

Under current law, the new position of TECS executive director, the agency head who is appointed by the governor, is created beginning July 1, 2020. The bill delays this until July 1, 2022. It also delays by two years, until July 1, 2022, the (1) elimination of SBE as the system’s oversight body and (2) creation of the new TECS board to oversee the new agency. It also makes corresponding delays, from July 1, 2020 to July 1, 2022, for the new board’s and executive director’s budget-making responsibilities and conforming changes related to the elimination of SBE’s oversight and the creation of the new TECS board.

The bill extends for two additional years, from June 30, 2021 to June 30, 2023, the current TECS board’s existing authority to recommend a superintendent candidate to the education commissioner, who may
hire or reject the candidate. Similarly, under the bill, the term of office for a superintendent who is hired this way expires June 30, 2023, rather than June 30, 2021.

Further, the bill delays, from July 1, 2021, to July 1, 2023, the implementation of the new TECS board’s duty to recommend a candidate for TECS superintendent to the TECS executive director, who may hire or reject the candidate. The superintendent is in charge of the system’s educational program.

The bill also adds two additional fiscal years to the period that SBE is required to hire a consultant to assist the TECS board with the system transition plan. Under current law, the consultant requirement is through FY 20. The bill extends it to FYs 21 and 22. The bill also delays by two years, to January 1, 2022, the requirement that SBE report to the Education Committee on the transition plan, any services that could be provided more efficiently with a local or regional board of education or other agency, and any legislative recommendations necessary to implement the transition.

It also requires SDE to provide two additional years of training to TECS staff, who will perform central office and administrative functions in the new system. The training must continue until the end of FY 22, rather than end with FY 20.

The bill also makes conforming changes related to adding TECS to the statutory list of executive branch agencies and the executive director as a department head. It also makes other minor and conforming changes.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference - APP

Yea 20  Nay 15  (03/29/2019)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea  31  Nay  17  (05/02/2019)