



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 641**

February Session, 2022

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1

*Senate, April 26, 2022*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through SEN. OSTEN of the 19th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## **AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDHOOD MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SCHOOLS.**

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than January 1,  
2 2023, and annually thereafter, the Commissioner of Education shall,  
3 within available appropriations, develop and distribute a survey to each  
4 local and regional board of education concerning the employment of  
5 school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors and  
6 school nurses by such local or regional board of education. Such survey  
7 shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) the total number of (A)  
8 school social workers employed by each local or regional board of  
9 education, (B) school psychologists employed by each local or regional  
10 board of education, (C) school counselors employed by each local and  
11 regional board of education, and (D) school nurses employed by each  
12 local and regional board of education; (2) the number of (A) school social  
13 workers assigned to each school under the jurisdiction of the local or  
14 regional board of education, including whether any such school social

15 worker is assigned solely to that school or whether such school social  
16 worker is assigned to multiple schools, (B) school psychologists  
17 assigned to each school under the jurisdiction of the local or regional  
18 board of education, including whether any such school psychologist is  
19 assigned solely to that school or whether such school psychologist is  
20 assigned to multiple schools, (C) school counselors assigned to each  
21 school under the jurisdiction of the local or regional board of education,  
22 including whether any such school counselor is assigned solely to that  
23 school or whether such school counselor is assigned to multiple schools,  
24 and (D) school nurses assigned to each school under the jurisdiction of  
25 the local or regional board of education, including whether any such  
26 school nurse is assigned solely to that school or whether such school  
27 nurse is assigned to multiple schools; (3) the geographic area covered by  
28 (A) any such school social worker who provides services to more than  
29 one local or regional board of education, (B) any such school  
30 psychologist who provides services to more than one local or regional  
31 board of education, (C) any such school counselor who provides  
32 services to more than one local or regional board of education, and (D)  
33 any such school nurse who provides services to more than one local or  
34 regional board of education; and (4) an estimate of the annual number  
35 of students who have received direct services from each individual (A)  
36 school social worker employed by a local or regional board of education  
37 during the five-year period preceding completion of the survey, (B)  
38 school psychologist employed by a local or regional board of education  
39 during the five-year period preceding completion of the survey, (C)  
40 school counselor employed by a local or regional board of education  
41 during the five-year period preceding completion of the survey, and (D)  
42 school nurse employed by a local or regional board of education during  
43 the five-year period preceding completion of the survey.

44 (b) For the school year commencing July 1, 2022, and each school year  
45 thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall annually  
46 complete the survey developed and distributed pursuant to subsection  
47 (a) of this section to the commissioner, and submit such completed  
48 survey to the commissioner, at such time and in such manner as the  
49 commissioner prescribes.

50 (c) Following the receipt of a completed survey from a local or  
51 regional board of education, the commissioner shall annually calculate  
52 (1) a student-to-school social worker ratio for (A) such board of  
53 education, and (B) each school under the jurisdiction of such board of  
54 education, (2) a student-to-school psychologist ratio for (A) such board  
55 of education, and (B) each school under the jurisdiction of such board of  
56 education, (3) a student-to-school counselor ratio for (A) such board of  
57 education, and (B) each school under the jurisdiction of such board of  
58 education, and (4) a student-to-school nurse ratio for (A) such board of  
59 education, and (B) each school under the jurisdiction of such board of  
60 education.

61 (d) Not later than January 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the  
62 commissioner shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions  
63 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the results of the survey  
64 completed under this section and the student-to-school social worker  
65 ratios, student-to-school psychologist ratios, student-to-school  
66 counselor ratios and student-to-school nurse ratios calculated pursuant  
67 to subsection (c) of this section, to the joint standing committees of the  
68 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education  
69 and children.

70 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) (a) For the fiscal years ending  
71 June 30, 2023, to June 30, 2025, inclusive, the Department of Education  
72 shall administer a grant program to provide grants to local and regional  
73 boards of education for the purpose of hiring and retaining additional  
74 school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors and  
75 school nurses. For purposes of this section, "school social worker" means  
76 a person who holds a professional educator certificate issued by the  
77 State Board of Education pursuant to section 10-145b of the general  
78 statutes, with a school social worker endorsement.

79 (b) Applications for grants pursuant to subsection (a) of this section  
80 shall be filed with the Commissioner of Education at such time and in  
81 such manner as the commissioner prescribes. As part of the application,  
82 an applicant shall submit a (1) plan for the expenditure of grant funds,

83 and (2) copy of the completed survey described in section 1 of this act.  
84 Such plan shall include, but need not be limited to, the number of  
85 additional school social workers, school psychologists, school  
86 counselors or school nurses to be hired, the number of school social  
87 workers, school psychologists, school counselors or school nurses being  
88 retained who were previously hired with the assistance of grant funds  
89 awarded under this section, whether such school social workers, school  
90 psychologists, school counselors or school nurses will be conducting  
91 assessments of students or providing services to students based on the  
92 results of assessments, and the type of services that will be provided by  
93 such school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors and  
94 school nurses.

95 (c) In determining whether to award an applicant a grant under this  
96 section, the commissioner shall give priority to those school districts (1)  
97 with large student-to-school social worker ratios, student-to-school  
98 psychologist ratios, student-to-school counselor ratios, or student-to-  
99 school nurse ratios, or (2) that have a high volume of student utilization  
100 of mental health services.

101 (d) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, the commissioner may  
102 award a grant to an applicant and shall determine the amount of the  
103 grant award based on the plan submitted by such applicant pursuant to  
104 subsection (b) of this section. The commissioner shall pay a grant to each  
105 grant recipient in each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 2023, to June  
106 30, 2025, inclusive, as follows: (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023,  
107 the amount of the grant shall be as determined by the commissioner  
108 under this subsection; (2) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, the  
109 amount of the grant shall be the same amount as the grant awarded for  
110 the prior fiscal year; and (3) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, the  
111 amount of the grant shall be seventy per cent of the amount of the grant  
112 awarded for the prior fiscal year.

113 (e) Grant recipients shall file annual expenditure reports with the  
114 department at such time and in such manner as the commissioner  
115 prescribes. Grant recipients shall refund to the department (1) any

116 unexpended amounts at the close of the fiscal year in which the grant  
117 was awarded, and (2) any amounts not expended in accordance with  
118 the plan for which such grant application was approved.

119 (f) (1) The department shall annually track and calculate the  
120 utilization rate of the grant program for each grant recipient. Such  
121 utilization rate shall be calculated using metrics that include, but need  
122 not be limited to, the number of students served and the hours of service  
123 provided using grant funds awarded under the program.

124 (2) The department shall annually calculate the return on investment  
125 for the grant program using the expenditure reports filed pursuant to  
126 subsection (e) of this section and the utilization rates calculated  
127 pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

128 (g) For purposes of carrying out the provisions of this section, the  
129 Department of Education may accept funds from private sources or any  
130 state agency, gifts, grants and donations, including, but not limited to,  
131 in-kind donations.

132 (h) (1) Not later than January 1, 2024, and each January first thereafter  
133 until and including January 1, 2026, the commissioner shall submit a  
134 report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general  
135 statutes, on the utilization rate for each grant recipient and the return on  
136 investment for the grant program, calculated pursuant to subsection (f)  
137 of this section, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly  
138 having cognizance of matters relating to education and children.

139 (2) Not later than January 1, 2026, the Commissioner of Education  
140 shall develop recommendations concerning (A) whether such grant  
141 program should be extended and funded for the fiscal year ending June  
142 30, 2026, and each fiscal year thereafter, and (B) the amount of the grant  
143 award under the program. The commissioner shall submit such  
144 recommendations, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of  
145 the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General  
146 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education and  
147 children.

148       Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) (a) The State Board of Education,  
149 upon the request of a local or regional board of education or a regional  
150 educational service center, may issue a human services permit to any  
151 applicant with specialized training, experience or expertise in social  
152 work, human services, psychology or sociology. Such permit shall  
153 authorize a person to be employed by a local or regional board of  
154 education or a regional educational service center and to provide, in  
155 accordance with such person's scope of practice or within such person's  
156 area of expertise or specialty, mental health and human services to  
157 students. Such applicant shall (1) hold a bachelor's degree in social  
158 work, human services, psychology, sociology or other equivalent  
159 subject area from an institution of higher education accredited by the  
160 Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or  
161 regionally accredited, and (2) have a minimum of four years of work  
162 experience in such subject areas, or one year of work experience and two  
163 years of specialized schooling in such subject areas.

164       (b) Each such human services permit shall be valid for three years  
165 and may be renewed by the Commissioner of Education for good cause  
166 upon the request of the superintendent of schools for the district  
167 employing such person or the regional educational service center  
168 employing such person.

169       Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) Not later than July 1, 2023, the  
170 Department of Education, in collaboration with the governing authority  
171 for intramural and interscholastic athletics, shall develop a mental  
172 health plan for student athletes to raise awareness of mental health  
173 resources available to student athletes. Such plan shall be made  
174 available to local and regional boards of education and implemented in  
175 accordance with the provisions of section 5 of this act. Such plan shall  
176 include, but need not be limited to, provisions relating to (1) access to  
177 the mental health services team for the school district, (2) screening and  
178 recognizing appropriate referrals for student athletes, (3)  
179 communication among members of the mental health services team, (4)  
180 the management of medications of student athletes, (5) crisis  
181 intervention services, (6) the mitigation of risk to student athletes, and

182 (7) transition care for those student athletes leaving intramural or  
183 interscholastic athletics by means of graduation, dismissal or  
184 suspension. The department shall make such plan available on its  
185 Internet web site and provide technical assistance to local and regional  
186 boards of education in the implementation of the plan.

187 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) For the school year commencing  
188 July 1, 2023, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional  
189 board of education shall implement the mental health plan for student  
190 athletes, developed pursuant to section 4 of this act, for the school  
191 district.

192 Sec. 6. Section 10-212a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
193 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

194 (a) (1) A school nurse or, in the absence of such nurse, any other nurse  
195 licensed pursuant to the provisions of chapter 378, including a nurse  
196 employed by, or providing services under the direction of a local or  
197 regional board of education at, a school-based health clinic, who shall  
198 administer medical preparations only to students enrolled in such  
199 school-based health clinic in the absence of a school nurse, the principal,  
200 any teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational  
201 therapist employed by a school district, or coach of intramural and  
202 interscholastic athletics of a school may administer, subject to the  
203 provisions of subdivision (2) of this subsection, medicinal preparations,  
204 including such controlled drugs as the Commissioner of Consumer  
205 Protection may, by regulation, designate, to any student at such school  
206 pursuant to the written order of a physician licensed to practice  
207 medicine, or a dentist licensed to practice dental medicine in this or  
208 another state, or an optometrist licensed to practice optometry in this  
209 state under chapter 380, or an advanced practice registered nurse  
210 licensed to prescribe in accordance with section 20-94a, or a physician  
211 assistant licensed to prescribe in accordance with section 20-12d, and the  
212 written authorization of a parent or guardian of such child. The  
213 administration of medicinal preparations by a nurse licensed pursuant  
214 to the provisions of chapter 378, a principal, teacher, licensed athletic

215 trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by a  
216 school district, or coach shall be under the general supervision of a  
217 school nurse. No such school nurse or other nurse, principal, teacher,  
218 licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist  
219 employed by a school district, coach or school paraprofessional  
220 administering medication pursuant to this section shall be liable to such  
221 student or a parent or guardian of such student for civil damages for  
222 any personal injuries that result from acts or omissions of such school  
223 nurse or other nurse, principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer,  
224 licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by a school  
225 district, coach or school paraprofessional administering medication  
226 pursuant to this section in administering such preparations that may  
227 constitute ordinary negligence. This immunity does not apply to acts or  
228 omissions constituting gross, wilful or wanton negligence.

229 (2) Each local and regional board of education that allows a school  
230 nurse or, in the absence of such nurse, any other nurse licensed pursuant  
231 to the provisions of chapter 378, including a nurse employed by, or  
232 providing services under the direction of a local or regional board of  
233 education at, a school-based health clinic, who shall administer medical  
234 preparations only to students enrolled in such school-based health clinic  
235 in the absence of a school nurse, the principal, any teacher, licensed  
236 athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by  
237 a school district, coach of intramural and interscholastic athletics or  
238 school paraprofessional of a school to administer medicine or that  
239 allows a student to possess, self-administer or possess and self-  
240 administer medicine, including medicine administered through the use  
241 of an asthmatic inhaler or an automatic prefilled cartridge injector or  
242 similar automatic injectable equipment, shall adopt written policies and  
243 procedures, in accordance with this section and the regulations adopted  
244 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, that shall be approved by the  
245 school medical advisor, if any, or other qualified licensed physician.  
246 Once so approved, such administration of medication shall be in  
247 accordance with such policies and procedures.

248 (3) A director of a school readiness program as defined in section 10-



249 16p, as amended by this act, or a before or after school program exempt  
250 from licensure by the Department of Public Health pursuant to  
251 subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 19a-77, or the director's  
252 designee, may administer medications to a child enrolled in such a  
253 program in accordance with regulations adopted by the State Board of  
254 Education in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54. No  
255 individual administering medications pursuant to this subdivision shall  
256 be liable to such child or a parent or guardian of such child for civil  
257 damages for any personal injuries that result from acts or omissions of  
258 such individual in administering such medications which may  
259 constitute ordinary negligence. This immunity shall not apply to acts or  
260 omissions constituting gross, wilful or wanton negligence.

261 (b) Each school wherein any controlled drug is administered under  
262 the provisions of this section shall keep such records thereof as are  
263 required of hospitals under the provisions of subsections (f) and (h) of  
264 section 21a-254 and shall store such drug in such manner as the  
265 Commissioner of Consumer Protection shall, by regulation, require.

266 (c) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the  
267 Commissioner of Public Health, shall adopt regulations, in accordance  
268 with the provisions of chapter 54, determined to be necessary by the  
269 board to carry out the provisions of this section, including, but not  
270 limited to, regulations that (1) specify conditions under which a coach  
271 of intramural and interscholastic athletics may administer medicinal  
272 preparations, including controlled drugs specified in the regulations  
273 adopted by the commissioner, to a child participating in such intramural  
274 and interscholastic athletics, (2) specify conditions and procedures for  
275 the administration of medication by school personnel to students,  
276 including, but not limited to, (A) the conditions and procedures for the  
277 storage and administration of epinephrine by school personnel to  
278 students for the purpose of emergency first aid to students who  
279 experience allergic reactions and who do not have a prior written  
280 authorization for the administration of epinephrine, in accordance with  
281 the provisions of subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of this section, and (B)  
282 the conditions and procedures for the storage and administration of

283 opioid antagonists by school personnel to students who experience an  
284 opioid-related drug overdose and who do not have a prior written  
285 authorization for the administration of an opioid antagonist, in  
286 accordance with the provisions of subdivision (1) of subsection (g) of  
287 this section, and (3) specify conditions for the possession, self-  
288 administration or possession and self-administration of medication by  
289 students, including permitting a child diagnosed with: (A) Asthma to  
290 retain possession of an asthmatic inhaler at all times while attending  
291 school for prompt treatment of the child's asthma and to protect the  
292 child against serious harm or death provided a written authorization for  
293 self-administration of medication signed by the child's parent or  
294 guardian and an authorized prescriber is submitted to the school nurse;  
295 and (B) an allergic condition to retain possession of an automatic  
296 prefilled cartridge injector or similar automatic injectable equipment at  
297 all times, including while attending school or receiving school  
298 transportation services, for prompt treatment of the child's allergic  
299 condition and to protect the child against serious harm or death  
300 provided a written authorization for self-administration of medication  
301 signed by the child's parent or guardian and an authorized prescriber is  
302 submitted to the school nurse. The regulations shall require  
303 authorization pursuant to: (i) The written order of a physician licensed  
304 to practice medicine in this or another state, a dentist licensed to practice  
305 dental medicine in this or another state, an advanced practice registered  
306 nurse licensed under chapter 378, a physician assistant licensed under  
307 chapter 370, a podiatrist licensed under chapter 375, or an optometrist  
308 licensed under chapter 380; and (ii) the written authorization of a parent  
309 or guardian of such child.

310 (d) (1) (A) With the written authorization of a student's parent or  
311 guardian, and (B) pursuant to the written order of a qualified medical  
312 professional, a school nurse and a school medical advisor, if any, may  
313 jointly approve and provide general supervision to an identified school  
314 paraprofessional to administer medication, including, but not limited to,  
315 medication administered with a cartridge injector, to a specific student  
316 with a medically diagnosed allergic condition that may require prompt  
317 treatment in order to protect the student against serious harm or death.

318 (2) A school nurse or, in the absence of a school nurse, a qualified  
319 school employee shall maintain epinephrine in cartridge injectors for the  
320 purpose of emergency first aid to students who experience allergic  
321 reactions and do not have a prior written authorization of a parent or  
322 guardian or a prior written order of a qualified medical professional for  
323 the administration of epinephrine. A school nurse or a school principal  
324 shall select qualified school employees to administer such epinephrine  
325 under this subdivision, and there shall be at least one such qualified  
326 school employee on the grounds of the school during regular school  
327 hours in the absence of a school nurse. A school nurse or, in the absence  
328 of such school nurse, such qualified school employee may administer  
329 such epinephrine under this subdivision, provided such administration  
330 of epinephrine is in accordance with policies and procedures adopted  
331 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. Such administration of  
332 epinephrine by a qualified school employee shall be limited to situations  
333 when the school nurse is absent or unavailable. No qualified school  
334 employee shall administer such epinephrine under this subdivision  
335 unless such qualified school employee annually completes the training  
336 program described in section 10-212g. The parent or guardian of a  
337 student may submit, in writing, to the school nurse and school medical  
338 advisor, if any, that epinephrine shall not be administered to such  
339 student under this subdivision.

340 (3) In the case of a student with a medically diagnosed life-  
341 threatening allergic condition, (A) with the written authorization of  
342 such student's parent or guardian, and (B) pursuant to the written order  
343 of a qualified medical professional, such student may possess, self-  
344 administer or possess and self-administer medication, including, but  
345 not limited to, medication administered with a cartridge injector, to  
346 protect such student against serious harm or death.

347 (4) For purposes of this subsection, (A) "cartridge injector" means an  
348 automatic prefilled cartridge injector or similar automatic injectable  
349 equipment used to deliver epinephrine in a standard dose for  
350 emergency first aid response to allergic reactions, (B) "qualified school  
351 employee" means a principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed

352 physical or occupational therapist employed by a school district, coach  
353 or school paraprofessional, and (C) "qualified medical professional"  
354 means (i) a physician licensed under chapter 370, (ii) an optometrist  
355 licensed to practice optometry under chapter 380, (iii) an advanced  
356 practice registered nurse licensed to prescribe in accordance with  
357 section 20-94a, or (iv) a physician assistant licensed to prescribe in  
358 accordance with section 20-12d.

359 (e) (1) With the written authorization of a student's parent or  
360 guardian, and (2) pursuant to a written order of the student's physician  
361 licensed under chapter 370 or the student's advanced practice registered  
362 nurse licensed under chapter 378, a school nurse or a school principal  
363 shall select, and a school nurse shall provide general supervision to, a  
364 qualified school employee to administer medication with injectable  
365 equipment used to administer glucagon to a student with diabetes that  
366 may require prompt treatment in order to protect the student against  
367 serious harm or death. Such authorization shall be limited to situations  
368 when the school nurse is absent or unavailable. No qualified school  
369 employee shall administer medication under this subsection unless (A)  
370 such qualified school employee annually completes any training  
371 required by the school nurse and school medical advisor, if any, in the  
372 administration of medication with injectable equipment used to  
373 administer glucagon, (B) the school nurse and school medical advisor,  
374 if any, have attested, in writing, that such qualified school employee has  
375 completed such training, and (C) such qualified school employee  
376 voluntarily agrees to serve as a qualified school employee. For purposes  
377 of this subsection, "injectable equipment used to administer glucagon"  
378 means an injector or injectable equipment used to deliver glucagon in  
379 an appropriate dose for emergency first aid response to diabetes. For  
380 purposes of this subsection, "qualified school employee" means a  
381 principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or  
382 occupational therapist employed by a school district, coach or school  
383 paraprofessional.

384 (f) (1) (A) With the written authorization of a student's parent or  
385 guardian, and (B) pursuant to the written order of a physician licensed

386 under chapter 370 or an advanced practice registered nurse licensed  
387 under chapter 378, a school nurse and a school medical advisor, if any,  
388 shall select, and a school nurse shall provide general supervision to, a  
389 qualified school employee to administer antiepileptic medication,  
390 including by rectal syringe, to a specific student with a medically  
391 diagnosed epileptic condition that requires prompt treatment in  
392 accordance with the student's individual seizure action plan. Such  
393 authorization shall be limited to situations when the school nurse is  
394 absent or unavailable. No qualified school employee shall administer  
395 medication under this subsection unless (i) such qualified school  
396 employee annually completes the training program described in  
397 subdivision (2) of this subsection, (ii) the school nurse and school  
398 medical advisor, if any, have attested, in writing, that such qualified  
399 school employee has completed such training, (iii) such qualified school  
400 employee receives monthly reviews by the school nurse to confirm such  
401 qualified school employee's competency to administer antiepileptic  
402 medication under this subsection, and (iv) such qualified school  
403 employee voluntarily agrees to serve as a qualified school employee. For  
404 purposes of this subsection, "qualified school employee" means a  
405 principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or  
406 occupational therapist employed by a school district, coach or school  
407 paraprofessional.

408 (2) The Department of Education, in consultation with the School  
409 Nurse Advisory Council, established pursuant to section 10-212f, and  
410 the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut, shall develop an  
411 antiepileptic medication administrating training program. Such training  
412 program shall include instruction in (A) an overview of childhood  
413 epilepsy and types of seizure disorders, (B) interpretation of individual  
414 student's emergency seizure action plan and recognition of individual  
415 student's seizure activity, (C) emergency management procedures for  
416 seizure activity, including administration techniques for emergency  
417 seizure medication, (D) when to activate emergency medical services  
418 and postseizure procedures and follow-up, (E) reporting procedures  
419 after a student has required such delegated emergency seizure  
420 medication, and (F) any other relevant issues or topics related to

421 emergency interventions for students who experience seizures.

422 (g) (1) A school nurse or, in the absence of a school nurse, a qualified  
423 school employee may maintain opioid antagonists for the purpose of  
424 emergency first aid to students who experience an opioid-related drug  
425 overdose and do not have a prior written authorization of a parent or  
426 guardian or a prior written order of a qualified medical professional for  
427 the administration of such opioid antagonist. A school nurse or a school  
428 principal shall select qualified school employees to administer such  
429 opioid antagonist under this subdivision, and there shall be at least one  
430 such qualified school employee on the grounds of the school during  
431 regular school hours in the absence of a school nurse. A school nurse or,  
432 in the absence of such school nurse, such qualified school employee may  
433 administer such opioid antagonist under this subdivision, provided  
434 such administration of the opioid antagonist is in accordance with  
435 policies and procedures adopted pursuant to subsection (a) of this  
436 section. Such administration of an opioid antagonist by a qualified  
437 school employee shall be limited to situations when the school nurse is  
438 absent or unavailable. No school nurse or qualified school employee  
439 shall administer such opioid antagonist under this subdivision unless  
440 such school nurse or qualified school employee completes a training  
441 program in the distribution and administration of an opioid antagonist  
442 developed by the Department of Education, Department of Public  
443 Health and the Department of Consumer Protection, or under an  
444 agreement entered into pursuant to section 21a-286, as amended by this  
445 act. The parent or guardian of a student may submit a request, in  
446 writing, to the school nurse and school medical advisor, if any, that an  
447 opioid antagonist shall not be administered to such student under this  
448 subdivision.

449 (2) Not later than October 1, 2022, the Department of Education, in  
450 consultation with the Departments of Consumer Protection and Public  
451 Health, shall develop guidelines for use by local and regional boards of  
452 education on the storage and administration of opioid antagonists in  
453 schools in accordance with the provisions of this subsection.

454       (3) For purposes of this subsection, (A) "opioid antagonist" means  
455 naloxone hydrochloride or any other similarly acting and equally safe  
456 drug approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration for the  
457 treatment of a drug overdose, (B) "qualified school employee" means a  
458 principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or  
459 occupational therapist employed by a school district, coach or school  
460 paraprofessional, and (C) "qualified medical professional" means (i) a  
461 physician licensed under chapter 370, (ii) an optometrist licensed to  
462 practice optometry under chapter 380, (iii) an advanced practice  
463 registered nurse licensed to prescribe in accordance with section 20-94a,  
464 or (iv) a physician assistant licensed to prescribe in accordance with  
465 section 20-12d.

466       Sec. 7. Section 21a-286 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
467 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2022*):

468       (a) For purposes of this section:

469       (1) "Opioid antagonist" shall have the meaning set forth in section  
470 17a-714a.

471       (2) "Prescribing practitioner" shall have the meaning set forth in  
472 section 20-14c.

473       (3) "Pharmacist" shall have the meaning set forth in section 20-609a.

474       (b) A prescribing practitioner or a pharmacist certified to prescribe  
475 naloxone pursuant to section 20-633c may enter into an agreement with  
476 a law enforcement agency, emergency medical service provider,  
477 government agency, [or] community health organization or local or  
478 regional board of education related to the distribution and  
479 administration of an opioid antagonist for the reversal of an opioid  
480 overdose. The prescribing practitioner or pharmacist shall provide  
481 training to persons who will distribute or administer the opioid  
482 antagonist pursuant to the terms of the agreement. Persons other than  
483 the prescribing practitioner or pharmacist shall receive training in the  
484 distribution or administration of opioid antagonists prior to distributing

485 or administering an opioid antagonist. The agreement shall address the  
486 storage, handling, labeling, recalls and recordkeeping of opioid  
487 antagonists by the law enforcement agency, emergency medical service  
488 provider, government agency, [or] community health organization or  
489 local or regional board of education which is party to the agreement.

490 (c) A prescribing practitioner or pharmacist who enters into an  
491 agreement pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall not be liable  
492 for damages in a civil action or subject to administrative or criminal  
493 prosecution for the administration or dispensing of an opioid antagonist  
494 by such law enforcement agency, emergency medical service provider,  
495 government agency, [or] community health organization or local or  
496 regional board of education.

497 (d) The Commissioner of Consumer Protection may adopt  
498 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to  
499 implement the provisions of this section.

500 Sec. 8. (*Effective July 1, 2022*) For the school year ending July 1, 2022,  
501 the Department of Consumer Protection, in collaboration with the  
502 Department of Education, shall provide information to local and  
503 regional boards of education regarding where such boards can acquire  
504 opioid antagonists, as defined in section 10-212a of the general statutes,  
505 as amended by this act, including the name and contact information of  
506 any manufacturer of opioid antagonists that is providing such opioid  
507 antagonists at no cost to school districts.

508 Sec. 9. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) (a) There is established a minority  
509 teacher candidate scholarship program administered by the  
510 Department of Education, in consultation with the Office of Higher  
511 Education. The program shall provide an annual scholarship to  
512 minority students who (1) graduated from a public high school in a  
513 priority school district, as described in section 10-266p of the general  
514 statutes, and (2) are enrolled in a teacher preparation program at any  
515 four-year institution of higher education. Maximum grants shall not  
516 exceed twenty thousand dollars per year. The department shall ensure  
517 that at least fifty per cent of the scholarship recipients are men.



518 (b) Not later than January 1, 2023, the department shall develop a  
519 policy concerning the administration of the scholarship. Such policy  
520 shall include, but need not be limited to, provisions regarding (1) any  
521 additional eligibility criteria, (2) payment and distribution of the  
522 scholarships, and (3) the notification of students in high school in  
523 priority school districts of the scholarship program.

524 (c) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2024, and each fiscal year  
525 thereafter, the department shall award scholarships in accordance with  
526 the provisions of this section and the guidelines developed pursuant to  
527 section (b) of this section.

528 (d) The Department of Education may accept gifts, grants and  
529 donations, from any source, public or private, for the minority teacher  
530 candidate scholarship program.

531 Sec. 10. (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section:

532 (1) "Ableism" means the bias, prejudice or discrimination, intentional  
533 or unintentional, against people with physical, psychiatric or  
534 intellectual disabilities; and

535 (2) "Social-emotional learning" has the same meaning as provided in  
536 section 10-222v of the general statutes.

537 (b) There is established a task force to combat ableism. The task force  
538 shall identify (1) current efforts to educate all students on disability and  
539 combat ableism in the public school curriculum and classrooms, and (2)  
540 opportunities to expand such efforts and integrate them into social-  
541 emotional learning.

542 (c) The task force shall consist of the following members:

543 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
544 one of whom is an educator employed by a local or regional board of  
545 education and one of whom is a leader in social-emotional learning who  
546 works with children;

547 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of  
548 whom works as a special education teacher and one of whom is a  
549 member of the social and emotional learning and school climate  
550 advisory collaborative established pursuant to section 10-222q of the  
551 general statutes;

552 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
553 Representatives, who is a school administrator employed by a local or  
554 regional board of education;

555 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who is a  
556 chairperson of a local or regional board of education;

557 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
558 Representatives, who is a director or employee of a private nonprofit  
559 organization in the state that provides services or programs for children  
560 with disabilities;

561 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who is a  
562 director or employee of a private nonprofit organization in the state that  
563 provides disability-related services or programs for children;

564 (7) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

565 (8) The Commissioner of Early Childhood, or the commissioner's  
566 designee;

567 (9) The Commissioner of Children and Families, or the  
568 commissioner's designee;

569 (10) The Chief Court Administrator, or the Chief Court  
570 Administrator's designee; and

571 (11) The director of Special Education Equity for Kids of Connecticut,  
572 or the director's designee.

573 (d) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),  
574 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (c) of this section may be a member of  
575 the General Assembly.

576 (e) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later  
577 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall  
578 be filled by the appointing authority.

579 (f) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro  
580 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from  
581 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule  
582 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty  
583 days after the effective date of this section.

584 (g) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
585 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children  
586 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

587 (h) Not later than January 1, 2023, the task force shall submit a report  
588 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of  
589 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children  
590 and education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
591 general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it  
592 submits such report or January 1, 2023, whichever is later.

593 Sec. 11. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to  
594 study the governance structure and internal procedures of the  
595 Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference. Such study shall  
596 include, but need not be limited to, an examination of the leadership  
597 structure of the conference and how leadership positions are filled, and  
598 how the conference receives and resolves complaints filed by members  
599 of the conference and individuals.

600 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

601 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
602 who has expertise in coaching;

603 (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who  
604 has expertise in sports management;

605 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of

606 Representatives, who is a coach for a member of the Connecticut  
607 Interscholastic Athletic Conference;

608 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who is an  
609 athletic director for a school district that is a member of the Connecticut  
610 Interscholastic Athletic Conference;

611 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
612 Representatives, who is an administrator at a school that is a member of  
613 the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference;

614 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who is a  
615 parent of a student athlete for a school that is a member of the  
616 Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference; and

617 (7) The director of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic  
618 Conference, or the director's designee.

619 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),  
620 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member  
621 of the General Assembly.

622 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later  
623 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall  
624 be filled by the appointing authority.

625 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro  
626 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from  
627 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule  
628 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty  
629 days after the effective date of this section.

630 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
631 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education  
632 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

633 (g) Not later than January 1, 2023, the task force shall submit a report,  
634 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,

635 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of  
636 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
637 education. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such  
638 report or January 1, 2023, whichever is later.

639 Sec. 12. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) (a) As used in this section:

640 (1) "School readiness program" has the same meaning as provided in  
641 section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this act; and

642 (2) "Competitive municipality" means, for the fiscal year ending June  
643 30, 2024, a municipality that is among the lowest fifty municipalities  
644 when ranked by wealth, as determined by the Commissioner of Early  
645 Childhood, and for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, a municipality  
646 that is among the lowest one hundred municipalities when ranked by  
647 wealth, as determined by the commissioner.

648 (b) For the fiscal year ending July 1, 2023, and each fiscal year  
649 thereafter, the Commissioner of Early Childhood shall coordinate with  
650 local and regional school readiness councils to conduct needs  
651 assessments for infant, toddler and preschool spaces in school readiness  
652 programs throughout the state. The commissioner shall use the results  
653 of such needs assessments to increase or adjust the number of infant,  
654 toddler and preschool spaces in school readiness programs to meet the  
655 need or demand of each community and to provide grants under section  
656 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this act, in accordance  
657 with subsections (c) to (e), inclusive, of this section.

658 (c) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, the commissioner shall  
659 increase or adjust the number of infant, toddler and preschool spaces, in  
660 accordance with the needs assessments conducted pursuant to  
661 subsection (b) of this section, in priority school districts, as described in  
662 section 10-266p of the general statutes. The commissioner shall provide  
663 grants under section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this  
664 act, to accomplish such increase or adjustment in such spaces.

665 (d) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2025, and June 30, 2026, the

666 commissioner shall increase or adjust the number of infant, toddler and  
667 preschool spaces, in accordance with the needs assessments conducted  
668 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, in competitive municipalities.  
669 The commissioner shall provide grants under section 10-16p of the  
670 general statutes, as amended by this act, to accomplish such increase or  
671 adjustment in such spaces.

672 (e) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, and each fiscal year  
673 thereafter, the commissioner shall increase or adjust the number of  
674 infant, toddler and preschool spaces, in accordance with the needs  
675 assessments conducted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, for  
676 each community throughout the state. The commissioner shall provide  
677 grants under section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this  
678 act, to accomplish such increase or adjustment in such spaces.

679 Sec. 13. Subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 10-16q of the  
680 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
681 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2022*):

682 (b) (1) [For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, the per child cost of  
683 the Office of Early Childhood school readiness program offered by a  
684 school readiness provider shall not exceed eight thousand nine hundred  
685 twenty-seven dollars.] For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2021] 2023,  
686 and each fiscal year thereafter, the per child cost of the Office of Early  
687 Childhood school readiness program offered by a school readiness  
688 provider shall not exceed [nine thousand twenty-seven dollars] (A)  
689 sixteen thousand dollars for each child three years of age or under who  
690 is in infant or toddler care and not in a preschool program, and (B)  
691 fourteen thousand five hundred dollars for each child three years of age  
692 or older who is in a preschool program.

693 Sec. 14. Section 10-16p of the 2022 supplement to the general statutes  
694 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
695 *1, 2022*):

696 (a) As used in sections 10-16o to 10-16r, inclusive, as amended by this  
697 act, 10-16u, 17b-749a and 17b-749c:

698 (1) "School readiness program" means a [nonsectarian] program that  
699 (A) meets the standards set by the Office of Early Childhood pursuant  
700 to subsection (b) of this section and the requirements of section 10-16q,  
701 as amended by this act, and (B) provides a developmentally appropriate  
702 learning experience of not less than four hundred fifty hours and one  
703 hundred eighty days for eligible children, except as provided in  
704 subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

705 (2) "Eligible children" means children three and four years of age and  
706 children five years of age who are not eligible to enroll in school  
707 pursuant to section 10-15c, or who are eligible to enroll in school and  
708 will attend a school readiness program pursuant to section 10-16t;

709 (3) "Priority school" means a school in which forty per cent or more  
710 of the lunches served are served to students who are eligible for free or  
711 reduced price lunches pursuant to federal law and regulations,  
712 excluding such a school located in a priority school district pursuant to  
713 section 10-266p or in a former priority school district receiving a grant  
714 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and, on and after July 1, 2001,  
715 excluding such a school in a transitional school district receiving a grant  
716 pursuant to section 10-16u;

717 (4) "Severe need school" means a school in a priority school district  
718 pursuant to section 10-266p or in a former priority school district in  
719 which forty per cent or more of the lunches served are served to students  
720 who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches;

721 (5) "Accredited" means accredited by the National Association for the  
722 Education of Young Children, National Association for Family Child  
723 Care, a Head Start on-site program review instrument or a successor  
724 instrument pursuant to federal regulations, or otherwise meeting such  
725 criteria as may be established by the commissioner, unless the context  
726 otherwise requires;

727 (6) "Year-round" means fifty weeks per year, except as provided in  
728 subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

729 (7) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Early Childhood;

730 (8) "Office" means the Office of Early Childhood;

731 (9) "Seeking accreditation" means a school readiness program seeking  
732 accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young  
733 Children, National Association for Family Child Care or a Head Start  
734 on-site program review instrument or successor instrument pursuant to  
735 federal regulations, or attempting to meet criteria as may be established  
736 by the commissioner; and

737 (10) "Concentration in early childhood education" means a program  
738 of study in early childhood education, including, but not limited to,  
739 early childhood education, child study, child development or human  
740 growth and development.

741 (b) (1) The office shall be the lead agency for school readiness. For  
742 purposes of this section and section 10-16u, school readiness program  
743 providers eligible for funding from the office shall include local and  
744 regional boards of education, regional educational service centers,  
745 family resource centers and providers of child care centers, group child  
746 care homes and family child care homes, as described in section 19a-77,  
747 as amended by this act, Head Start programs, preschool programs and  
748 other programs that meet any standards established by the  
749 commissioner. The office shall establish standards for school readiness  
750 programs. The standards may include, but need not be limited to,  
751 guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including  
752 preliteracy development, lesson plans, parental involvement, staff  
753 qualifications and training, transition to school and administration. The  
754 office shall develop age-appropriate developmental skills and goals for  
755 children attending such programs. The commissioner, in consultation  
756 with the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities,  
757 the Commissioners of Education and Social Services and other  
758 appropriate entities, shall develop a professional development program  
759 for the staff of school readiness programs.

760 (2) For purposes of this section:



761 (A) Prior to July 1, 2022, "staff qualifications" means that for each  
762 early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant,  
763 toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care  
764 program or school readiness program, there is in each classroom an  
765 individual who has at least the following: (i) A childhood development  
766 associate credential or an equivalent credential issued by an  
767 organization approved by the commissioner and twelve credits or more  
768 in early childhood education or child development, as determined by  
769 the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and  
770 Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from an  
771 institution of higher education (I) accredited by the Board of Regents for  
772 Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (II) regionally  
773 accredited; (ii) an associate degree with twelve credits or more in early  
774 childhood education or child development, as determined by the  
775 commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and  
776 Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from such an  
777 institution; (iii) a four-year degree with twelve credits or more in early  
778 childhood education or child development, as determined by the  
779 commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and  
780 Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from such an  
781 institution; (iv) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an  
782 endorsement in early childhood education or special education; (v) an  
783 associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education from  
784 an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited; or (vi) a  
785 bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education  
786 from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited;

787 (B) From July 1, 2022, until June 30, 2025, "staff qualifications" means  
788 that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds  
789 for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's  
790 child care program or school readiness program, (i) at least fifty per cent  
791 of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of  
792 children (I) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an  
793 endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special  
794 education, (II) have been issued an early childhood teacher credential,  
795 pursuant to section 10-520b, (III) hold at least an associate degree with a

796 concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher  
797 education that is regionally accredited, or (IV) satisfy the requirements  
798 of subdivision (3), (4) or (5) of this subsection, and (ii) such remaining  
799 individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children  
800 hold a childhood development associate credential or an equivalent  
801 credential issued by an organization approved by the commissioner and  
802 twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child  
803 development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of  
804 the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with  
805 the commissioner, from an institution of higher education (I) accredited  
806 by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher  
807 Education, and (II) regionally accredited;

808 (C) From July 1, 2025, until June 30, 2029, "staff qualifications" means  
809 that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds  
810 for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's  
811 child care program or school readiness program, (i) at least fifty per cent  
812 of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of  
813 children (I) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an  
814 endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special  
815 education, (II) have been issued an early childhood teacher credential,  
816 pursuant to subdivision (2) of section 10-520b, (III) hold at least a  
817 bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education  
818 from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, or  
819 (IV) satisfy the requirements of subdivision (3), (4) or (5) of this  
820 subsection, and (ii) such remaining individuals with the primary  
821 responsibility for a classroom of children (I) hold an associate degree  
822 with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of  
823 higher education that is regionally accredited, or (II) have been issued  
824 an early childhood teacher credential, pursuant to subdivision (1) of  
825 section 10-520b; and

826 (D) On and after July 1, 2029, "staff qualifications" means that for each  
827 early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant,  
828 toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care  
829 program or school readiness program, one hundred per cent of those

830 individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children  
831 (i) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in  
832 early childhood education or early childhood special education, (ii) have  
833 been issued an early childhood teacher credential, pursuant to  
834 subdivision (2) of section 10-520b, (iii) hold at least a bachelor's degree  
835 with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of  
836 higher education that is regionally accredited, or (iv) satisfy the  
837 requirements of subdivision (3), (4) or (5) of this subsection.

838 (3) Any individual with a bachelor's degree in early childhood  
839 education or child development or a bachelor's degree and twelve  
840 credits or more in early childhood education or child development,  
841 who, on or before June 30, 2015, is employed by an early childhood  
842 education program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and  
843 preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or  
844 school readiness program shall be considered to meet the staff  
845 qualifications required under subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of  
846 subdivision (2) of this subsection. No such early childhood education  
847 program shall terminate any such individual from employment for  
848 purposes of meeting the staff qualification requirements set forth in  
849 subparagraph (B), (C) or (D) of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

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

861 (5) Any individual with an associate degree with twelve credits or  
862 more in early childhood education or child development, as determined

863 by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges  
864 and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from an  
865 institution of higher education (A) accredited by the Board of Regents  
866 for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (B) regionally  
867 accredited, who has been employed in the same early childhood  
868 education program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and  
869 preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or  
870 school readiness program since 1995 shall be considered to meet the staff  
871 qualifications required under subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of  
872 subdivision (2) of this subsection until June 30, 2025. On and after July  
873 1, 2025, such individual shall hold a childhood development associate  
874 credential or an equivalent credential, described in subparagraph (A) of  
875 subdivision (2) of this subsection, or otherwise meet the staff  
876 qualifications required under subparagraphs (C) and (D) of subdivision  
877 (2) of this subsection. Any such individual who terminates his or her  
878 employment with such early childhood education program on or before  
879 June 30, 2025, and accepts a position at another early childhood  
880 education program accepting state funds for spaces associated with  
881 such program's child care program or school readiness program shall  
882 submit documentation of such individual's progress toward meeting  
883 the staff qualification requirements set forth in subparagraph (B) to (D),  
884 inclusive, of subdivision (2) of this subsection in a manner determined  
885 by the office.

886 (c) The commissioner shall establish a grant program to provide  
887 spaces in accredited school readiness programs located in priority  
888 school districts, as described in section 10-266p, or in former priority  
889 school districts for eligible children. The state, acting by and in the  
890 discretion of the Commissioner of Early Childhood, in consultation with  
891 a town or regional school readiness council, may enter into a contract  
892 with a municipality, local or regional board of education, regional  
893 educational service center, family resource center, provider of a child  
894 care center, group child care home or family child care home, as  
895 described in section 19a-77, as amended by this act, Head Start program,  
896 preschool program or other program that meets such standards  
897 established by the commissioner, to provide, within available

898 appropriations, state financial assistance. Eligibility shall be determined  
899 for a five-year period based on an applicant's designation as a priority  
900 school district for the initial year of application, except that if a school  
901 district that receives a grant pursuant to this subsection is no longer  
902 designated as a priority school district at the end of such five-year  
903 period, such former priority school district shall continue to be eligible  
904 to receive a grant pursuant to this subsection. Grant awards shall be  
905 made annually contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory  
906 annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town and the  
907 superintendent of schools for such priority school district or former  
908 priority school district shall submit a plan for the expenditure of grant  
909 funds and responses to the local request for proposal process to the  
910 commissioner. The commissioner shall review and approve such plans.  
911 The plan shall: (1) Be developed in consultation with the local or  
912 regional school readiness council established pursuant to section 10-16r<sub>2</sub>  
913 as amended by this act; (2) be based on a needs and resource assessment;  
914 (3) provide for the issuance of requests for proposals for providers of  
915 accredited school readiness programs, provided, after the initial  
916 requests for proposals, facilities that have been approved to operate a  
917 child care program financed through the Connecticut Health and  
918 Education Facilities Authority and have received a commitment for debt  
919 service from the Department of Social Services, pursuant to section 17b-  
920 749i, on or before June 30, 2014, and on or after July 1, 2014, from the  
921 office, are exempt from the requirement for issuance of annual requests  
922 for proposals; and (4) identify the need for funding pursuant to section  
923 17b-749a in order to extend the hours and days of operation of school  
924 readiness programs in order to provide child care services for children  
925 attending such programs.

926 (d) (1) The commissioner shall establish a competitive grant program  
927 to provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs or school  
928 readiness programs seeking accreditation located in (A) an area served  
929 by a priority school or a former priority school, (B) a town ranked one  
930 to fifty when all towns are ranked in ascending order according to town  
931 wealth, as defined in subdivision (26) of section 10-262f, whose school  
932 district is not a priority school district pursuant to section 10-266p, (C) a

933 town formerly a town described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision,  
934 as provided for in subdivision (2) of this subsection, or (D) a town  
935 designated as an alliance district, as defined in section 10-262u, whose  
936 school district is not a priority school district pursuant to section 10-  
937 266p. A town in which a priority school is located, a regional school  
938 readiness council, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-16r, as  
939 amended by this act, for a region in which such a school is located or a  
940 town described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision may apply for  
941 such a grant in an amount equal to the number of spaces in an accredited  
942 school readiness program or a school readiness program seeking  
943 accreditation multiplied by the per child cost set forth in subdivision (1)  
944 of subsection (b) of section 10-16q, as amended by this act. Eligibility  
945 shall be determined for a three-year period based on an applicant's  
946 designation as having a priority school or being a town described in  
947 subparagraph (B) of this subdivision for the initial year of application.  
948 The state, acting by and in the discretion of the Commissioner of Early  
949 Childhood, in consultation with a town or regional school readiness  
950 council, may enter into a contract with a municipality, local or regional  
951 board of education, regional educational service center, family resource  
952 center, provider of a child care center, group child care home or family  
953 child care home, as described in section 19a-77, as amended by this act,  
954 Head Start program, preschool program or other program that meets  
955 such standards established by the commissioner, to provide, within  
956 available appropriations, state financial assistance. The chief elected  
957 official of such town and the superintendent of schools of the school  
958 district or the regional school readiness council shall submit a plan, as  
959 described in subsection (c) of this section, for the expenditure of such  
960 grant funds to the commissioner. In awarding grants pursuant to this  
961 subsection, the commissioner shall give preference to applications  
962 submitted by regional school readiness councils and may, within  
963 available appropriations, provide a grant to such town or regional  
964 school readiness council that increases the number of spaces for eligible  
965 children who reside in an area or town described in subparagraphs (A)  
966 to (D), inclusive, of this subdivision, in an accredited school readiness  
967 program or a school readiness program seeking accreditation.

968 (2) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (C) of this subdivision,  
969 commencing with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, if a town received  
970 a grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection and is no longer  
971 eligible to receive such a grant, the town may receive a phase-out grant  
972 for each of the three fiscal years following the fiscal year such town  
973 received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

974 (B) The amount of such phase-out grants shall be determined as  
975 follows: (i) For the first fiscal year following the fiscal year such town  
976 received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in  
977 an amount that does not exceed seventy-five per cent of the grant  
978 amount such town received for the town or school's final year of  
979 eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection; (ii) for the  
980 second fiscal year following the fiscal year such town received its final  
981 grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that  
982 does not exceed fifty per cent of the grant amount such town received  
983 for the town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to subdivision  
984 (1) of this subsection; and (iii) for the third fiscal year following the fiscal  
985 year such town received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of  
986 this subsection, in an amount that does not exceed twenty-five per cent  
987 of the grant amount such town received for the town's or school's final  
988 year of eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

989 (C) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, and each fiscal year  
990 thereafter, any town that received a grant pursuant to subparagraph (B)  
991 of subdivision (1) of this subsection for the fiscal year ending June 30,  
992 2010, shall continue to receive a grant under this subsection even if the  
993 town no longer meets the criteria for such grant pursuant to  
994 subparagraph (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

995 (e) (1) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of this  
996 section are not expended, the commissioner may deposit such  
997 unexpended funds in the account established under section 10-16aa and  
998 use such unexpended funds in accordance with the provisions of section  
999 10-16aa.

1000 (2) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, and each fiscal year

1001 thereafter, if funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of  
1002 this section are not expended, an amount up to one million dollars of  
1003 such unexpended funds may be available for the provision of  
1004 scholarships and professional development for early childhood care and  
1005 education program providers, and individual staff members employed  
1006 in such programs, provided such programs accept state funds for infant,  
1007 toddler and preschool slots. Such unexpended funds may be available  
1008 for use in accordance with the provisions of this [subparagraph]  
1009 subdivision for the subsequent fiscal year. The commissioner may use  
1010 such unexpended funds on and after July 1, 2015, to support early  
1011 childhood education programs accepting state funds in satisfying the  
1012 staff qualifications requirements of subparagraphs (B) and (C) of  
1013 subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section. The commissioner shall  
1014 use any such funds to provide assistance to individual staff members,  
1015 giving priority to those staff members (A) attending an institution of  
1016 higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher  
1017 Education or the Office of Higher Education, and approved by the  
1018 Office of Early Childhood, and regionally accredited, at a maximum of  
1019 ten thousand dollars per staff member per year for the cost of higher  
1020 education courses leading to a bachelor's degree or, not later than  
1021 December 31, 2015, an associate degree, as such degrees are described  
1022 in said subparagraphs (B) and (C), or (B) receiving noncredit  
1023 competency-based training approved by the office, at a maximum of one  
1024 thousand dollars per staff member per year, provided such staff  
1025 members have applied for all available federal and state scholarships  
1026 and grants, and such assistance does not exceed such staff members'  
1027 financial need. Individual staff members shall apply for such  
1028 unexpended funds in a manner determined by the commissioner. The  
1029 commissioner shall determine how such unexpended funds shall be  
1030 distributed.

1031 (3) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of this  
1032 section are not expended pursuant to subsection (c) of this section,  
1033 deposited pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, or used  
1034 pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection, the commissioner may  
1035 use such unexpended funds to support local school readiness programs.



1036 The commissioner may use such funds for purposes including, but not  
1037 limited to, (A) assisting local school readiness programs in meeting and  
1038 maintaining accreditation requirements, (B) providing training in  
1039 implementing the preschool assessment and curriculum frameworks,  
1040 including training to enhance literacy teaching skills, (C) developing a  
1041 state-wide preschool curriculum, (D) developing student assessments  
1042 for students in grades kindergarten to two, inclusive, (E) developing  
1043 and implementing best practices for parents in supporting preschool  
1044 and kindergarten student learning, (F) developing and implementing  
1045 strategies for children to successfully transition to preschool and from  
1046 preschool to kindergarten, including through parental engagement and  
1047 whole-family supports that may be utilized through the two-  
1048 generational initiative, established pursuant to section 17b-112*l*, or  
1049 through other available resources, (G) providing for professional  
1050 development, including assisting in career ladder advancement, for  
1051 school readiness staff, (H) providing supplemental grants to other  
1052 towns that are eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this  
1053 section, and (I) developing a plan to provide spaces in an accredited  
1054 school readiness program or a school readiness program seeking  
1055 accreditation to all eligible children who reside in an area or town  
1056 described in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of  
1057 subsection (d) of this section.

1058 (f) Any school readiness program that receives funds pursuant to this  
1059 section or section 10-16u shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color,  
1060 national origin, gender, religion or disability. For purposes of this  
1061 section, a nonsectarian program means any public or private school  
1062 readiness program that is not violative of the Establishment Clause of  
1063 the Constitution of the State of Connecticut or the Establishment Clause  
1064 of the Constitution of the United States of America.

1065 (g) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no funds received by  
1066 a town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-16u  
1067 shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding received by such  
1068 town for early childhood education, provided a town may use an  
1069 amount determined in accordance with this subsection for coordination,

1070 program evaluation and administration. Such amount shall be at least  
1071 five per cent of the total grant allocation, but not more than seventy-five  
1072 thousand dollars and shall be determined by the commissioner based  
1073 on the school readiness grant award allocated to the town pursuant to  
1074 subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-16u and the number of  
1075 operating sites for coordination, program evaluation and  
1076 administration. Such amount shall be increased by an amount equal to  
1077 local funding provided for early childhood education coordination,  
1078 program evaluation and administration, not to exceed twenty-five  
1079 thousand dollars. Each town that receives a grant pursuant to  
1080 subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-16u shall designate a  
1081 person to be responsible for such coordination, program evaluation and  
1082 administration and to act as a liaison between the town and the  
1083 commissioner. Each school readiness program that receives funds  
1084 pursuant to this section or section 10-16u shall provide information to  
1085 the commissioner or the school readiness council, as requested, that is  
1086 necessary for purposes of any school readiness program evaluation.

1087 (h) Any town receiving a grant pursuant to this section may use such  
1088 grant, with the approval of the commissioner, to prepare a facility or  
1089 staff for operating a school readiness program and shall be adjusted  
1090 based on the number of days of operation of a school readiness program  
1091 if a shorter term of operation is approved by the commissioner.

1092 (i) A town may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible  
1093 children who reside in such town at an accredited school readiness  
1094 program located in another town. A regional school readiness council  
1095 may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible children who reside  
1096 in the region covered by the council at an accredited school readiness  
1097 program located outside such region.

1098 (j) Children enrolled in school readiness programs funded pursuant  
1099 to this section shall not be counted (1) as resident students for purposes  
1100 of subdivision (22) of section 10-262f, or (2) in the determination of  
1101 average daily membership pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (a)  
1102 of section 10-261.

1103 (k) (1) Up to two per cent of the amount of the appropriation for this  
1104 section may be allocated to the competitive grant program pursuant to  
1105 subsection (d) of this section. The determination of the amount of such  
1106 allocation shall be made on or before August first.

1107 (2) Up to two per cent of the amount of the appropriation for this  
1108 section may be used by the commissioner in a manner consistent with  
1109 the provisions of section 10-509.

1110 [(l) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, and each fiscal year  
1111 thereafter, any school readiness program that (1) is licensed by the  
1112 Office of Early Childhood pursuant to chapter 368a, (2) provides full-  
1113 day and year-round child care and education programs for children,  
1114 and (3) receives funds pursuant to this section or section 10-16u, shall  
1115 use any amount of the per child cost as described in subdivision (1) of  
1116 subsection (b) of section 10-16q that is over the amount of eight  
1117 thousand nine hundred twenty-seven dollars, exclusively to increase  
1118 the salaries of those individuals with direct responsibility for teaching  
1119 or caring for children in a classroom at such school readiness program.]

1120 Sec. 15. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) (a) As used in this section and  
1121 section 16 of this act:

1122 (1) "Compensation schedule" means the early childhood educator  
1123 compensation schedule developed by the Office of Early Childhood  
1124 pursuant to section 10-531 of the general statutes, as amended by this  
1125 act;

1126 (2) "Early childhood care and education program" means a child care  
1127 services provider, early childhood education program or license-exempt  
1128 early childhood provider;

1129 (3) "Child care services provider" means a child care center or a group  
1130 child care home, as those terms are described in section 19a-77 of the  
1131 general statutes, as amended by this act;

1132 (4) "Early childhood education program" means a private preschool  
1133 program, a school readiness program or program pursuant to section 8-

1134 210 of the general statutes, as amended by this act;

1135 (5) "School readiness program" has the same meaning as provided in  
1136 section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this act;

1137 (6) "License-exempt early childhood provider" means any child care  
1138 services provider or school readiness program that accepts state funds  
1139 for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program  
1140 that is not required to be licensed pursuant to subsection (b) of section  
1141 19a-77 of the general statutes, and is located in a public school building  
1142 but is not administered by a public school system;

1143 (7) "Employee" means a person who is employed by an early  
1144 childhood care and education program and meets the eligibility criteria  
1145 described in the compensation schedule and policy developed by the  
1146 Office of Early Childhood pursuant to subsection (e) of this section;

1147 (8) "Base salary" means the annual salary that an employee was paid  
1148 on December 31, 2021, or, if the position was vacant on December 31,  
1149 2021, the starting annual salary for such position on said date;

1150 (9) "Benefits amount" means seven thousand five hundred dollars;

1151 (10) "Individual employee salary enhancement amount" means, for  
1152 any fiscal year, the sum of (A) the difference between (i) the salary  
1153 prescribed in the compensation schedule for an employee, and (ii) the  
1154 amount of such employee's base salary, and (B) the benefits amount;

1155 (11) "Salary enhancement amount" means the sum of the total  
1156 individual employee salary enhancement amounts for all employees of  
1157 an early childhood care and education program for the fiscal year; and

1158 (12) "Family child care home" has the same meaning as provided in  
1159 section 19a-77 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

1160 (b) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, and each fiscal year  
1161 thereafter, the Office of Early Childhood shall administer the early  
1162 childhood care and education salary enhancement grant program. The

1163 office shall annually pay to each early childhood care and education  
1164 program a salary enhancement grant in the amount of such program's  
1165 salary enhancement amount. Such programs shall distribute such grant  
1166 funds to its employees in accordance with the policy developed by the  
1167 Commissioner of Early Childhood pursuant to subsection (e) of this  
1168 section.

1169 (c) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, and each fiscal year  
1170 thereafter, the office shall annually pay to each family child care home  
1171 a salary enhancement grant as follows: (1) Twenty thousand dollars for  
1172 each licensee of a family child care home, (2) six thousand dollars for  
1173 each full-time assistant or substitute staff member approved by the  
1174 Commissioner of Early Childhood pursuant to section 19a-87b of the  
1175 general statutes, and (3) three thousand dollars for each part-time  
1176 assistant or substitute staff member approved by the commissioner  
1177 pursuant to section 19a-87b of the general statutes, and employed by the  
1178 family child care home. The licensee shall distribute such grant funds in  
1179 accordance with the policy developed by the commissioner pursuant to  
1180 subsection (e) of this section.

1181 (d) Each early childhood care and education program shall register,  
1182 at such time and in such manner as prescribed by the commissioner,  
1183 with the Office of Early Childhood to receive a grant under the program.  
1184 Upon registration, such program shall provide any information  
1185 required by the office, in accordance with the policy developed by the  
1186 commissioner pursuant to subsection (e) of this section.

1187 (e) Not later than October 1, 2022, the commissioner shall develop a  
1188 policy for the administration of the early childhood care and education  
1189 salary enhancement grant program. The policy shall include, but need  
1190 not be limited to, eligibility criteria for the program, the registration  
1191 process for the program, the distribution requirements of the grant and  
1192 any other requirements the commissioner deems necessary.

1193 Sec. 16. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) On and after July 1, 2022, each  
1194 employee of an early childhood care and education program shall be  
1195 paid an annual salary as prescribed in the compensation schedule

1196 developed pursuant to section 10-531 of the general statutes, as  
1197 amended by this act, except if an employee's salary is greater than the  
1198 amount prescribed in such compensation schedule then such employee  
1199 shall be paid such greater amount.

1200 Sec. 17. Section 10-531 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1201 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2022*):

1202 (a) As used in this section:

1203 (1) "Early childhood education program" means any child care or  
1204 school readiness program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and  
1205 preschool spaces associated with such program;

1206 (2) "Employee" means any person who is employed by an early  
1207 childhood care and education program and meets the [applicable staff  
1208 qualifications requirement, as defined in section 10-16p] eligibility  
1209 criteria described in the compensation schedule and policy developed  
1210 by the Office of Early Childhood pursuant to subsection (e) of section 1  
1211 of this act;

1212 (3) "Compensation" means the salary, wages, benefits and other  
1213 forms of valuable consideration earned by and provided to an employee  
1214 in remuneration for services rendered; [and]

1215 (4) "Compensation schedule" means a list or lists specifying a series  
1216 of compensation steps and ranges; [.]

1217 (5) "Early childhood care and education program" means a child care  
1218 services provider or an early childhood education program;

1219 (6) "Child care services provider" means a child care center or a group  
1220 child care home, as those terms are described in section 19a-77, as  
1221 amended by this act;

1222 (7) "Early childhood education program" means a private preschool  
1223 program, a school readiness program or program pursuant to section 8-  
1224 210, as amended by this act; and

1225       (8) "School readiness program" has the same meaning as provided in  
1226       section 10-16p, as amended by this act.

1227       (b) The Office of Early Childhood shall establish, after notice and  
1228       opportunity for public comment, a proposed early childhood educator  
1229       compensation schedule for employees of early childhood education  
1230       programs.

1231       (c) (1) The office shall consider the following factors in developing the  
1232       proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule: (A) Level  
1233       of education, (B) training in early childhood education or child  
1234       development, (C) relevant employment experience, including the  
1235       number of years an individual has been employed in an early childhood  
1236       education program, (D) compensation levels for certified teachers  
1237       employed in a preschool program operated by a local or regional board  
1238       of education or regional educational service center, and (E) cost of living  
1239       in the state.

1240       (2) In developing the proposed early childhood educator  
1241       compensation schedule, the office may (A) consider the findings and  
1242       recommendations provided in "A Plan to Assist Early Education State  
1243       Funded Providers to Degree Attainment and Increased Compensation"  
1244       created by the office, pursuant to section 4 of public act 15-134, to create  
1245       a standardized salary scale and incentive package for early childhood  
1246       educators, (B) utilize state and federal funding, and (C) examine existing  
1247       programs that address early childhood educator compensation and staff  
1248       retention through financial incentives, such as bonuses for degree or  
1249       course completion.

1250       (3) The office shall establish a recommended minimum salary for  
1251       employees as part of the proposed early childhood educator  
1252       compensation schedule.

1253       (d) Not later than January 1, 2021, the office shall submit the proposed  
1254       early childhood educator compensation schedule and a report to the  
1255       joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance  
1256       of matters relating to education and appropriations and the budgets of

1257 state agencies, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a. Such  
1258 report shall include: (1) Any recommendations for legislation relating to  
1259 state-wide implementation of the proposed early childhood educator  
1260 compensation schedule, (2) an estimate of the cost of implementing the  
1261 proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule state-wide,  
1262 (3) an analysis of the effect of the state-wide implementation of the  
1263 proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule on the  
1264 number of available preschool seats, and (4) an explanation of how the  
1265 proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule will be  
1266 included in any quality rating and improvement system developed by  
1267 the office, pursuant to subdivision (15) of subsection (b) of section 10-  
1268 500.

1269 (e) Not later than January 1, 2023, the office shall amend the  
1270 compensation schedule to include employees of early childhood care  
1271 and education programs.

1272 Sec. 18. (*Effective July 1, 2022*) The sum of sixty thousand dollars is  
1273 appropriated to the Department of Education from the General Fund,  
1274 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, for the purpose of hiring a full-  
1275 time employee to administer the grant program to provide grants to  
1276 local and regional boards of education for the purpose of hiring and  
1277 retaining additional school social workers and school psychologists  
1278 described in section 2 of this act.

1279 Sec. 19. (*Effective July 1, 2022*) The sum of thirty thousand dollars is  
1280 appropriated to the Department of Education from the General Fund,  
1281 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, for the purpose of hiring a full-  
1282 time employee to administer the minority teacher candidate scholarship  
1283 program established pursuant to section 9 of this act.

1284 Sec. 20. (*Effective from passage*) The sum of five hundred ninety  
1285 thousand dollars of the amount appropriated in section 21 of this act to  
1286 the Department of Public Health for school-based health clinics, for the  
1287 fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, shall be made available for a grant to  
1288 each of the thirty-six recommended sites for expanded mental health  
1289 services contained in the final report of the School-Based Health Center



1290 Expansion Working Group, established pursuant to section 16 of public  
1291 act 21-35.

1292 Sec. 21. (*Effective from passage*) The sum of twenty-one million two  
1293 hundred forty thousand dollars is appropriated to the Department of  
1294 Public Health from the General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30,  
1295 2022, for the purpose of expanding services of existing school-based  
1296 health centers to include mental health services in accordance with the  
1297 provisions of section 20 of this act.

1298 Sec. 22. (*Effective from passage*) The sum of thirteen million dollars is  
1299 allocated, in accordance with the provisions of special act 21-1, from the  
1300 federal funds designated for the state pursuant to the provisions of  
1301 section 602 of Subtitle M of Title IX of the American Rescue Plan Act of  
1302 2021, P.L. 117-2, as amended from time to time, to the Department of  
1303 Education, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, for support to the  
1304 existing fifteen districts participating in the Learner Engagement and  
1305 Attendance Program (LEAP) and expanding participation in the LEAP  
1306 program to include five additional high-need districts.

1307 Sec. 23. (*Effective from passage*) The sum of thirteen million dollars is  
1308 allocated, in accordance with the provisions of special act 21-1, from the  
1309 federal funds designated for the state pursuant to the provisions of  
1310 section 602 of Subtitle M of Title IX of the American Rescue Plan Act of  
1311 2021, P.L. 117-2, as amended from time to time, to the Department of  
1312 Education, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, for support to the  
1313 existing twenty districts participating in the Learner Engagement and  
1314 Attendance Program (LEAP).

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	10-212a

Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	21a-286
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 10	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 11	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 13	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	10-16q(b)(1)
Sec. 14	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	10-16p
Sec. 15	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 16	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 17	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	10-531
Sec. 18	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 19	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	New section
Sec. 20	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 21	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 22	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 23	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**ED**      *Joint Favorable Subst. C/R*

APP

**APP**      *Joint Favorable*

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*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.*

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## **OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** SEE BELOW

**Municipal Impact:** SEE BELOW

### **Explanation**

#### **State Department of Education**

The bill results in significant costs to the State Department of Education (SDE) associated with developing a survey to distribute to each local and regional board of education concerning the employment of various behavioral health practitioners and school nurses, and the creation of a grant program for local and regional boards of education, associated with hiring and retention of these workers. SDE does not currently have the staff available to complete the requirements contained within the bill and does not have funding to provide grants. It is anticipated that the cost to the state would be significant, over \$1 million.

The bill additionally requires local and regional boards of education to implement mental health plans for student athletes, which are jointly developed with SDE. This could result in a state mandate and corresponding cost to local and regional boards of education associated with providing additional mental health services to student athletes. The scope of the cost would vary depending on the size of the district, the number of student athletes and the services contained within the mental health plans.

The bill authorizes a school nurse, or in the absence of a school nurse, a qualified school employee, to maintain opioid antagonists to

administer emergency first aid to a student who is experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose. The bill requires a school nurse or principal to select multiple qualified school employees to administer an opioid antagonist, and at least one such employee must be on school grounds during regular school hours when the school nurse is not there. This could result in additional costs to local and regional school districts if a school must pay an employee to stay additional hours outside of their normally scheduled hours, to cover the requirements of the bill. The cost to a district would be dependent on the number of hours a school nurse is away during normal school hours and those hours are outside the normal schedule of the qualified employees. The bill allows local and regional school districts to maintain opioid antagonists, this could result in an additional cost associate with purchasing emergency kits, which are estimated to cost \$22 - \$60 per kit. If a district were to purchase 100 kits, the cost would range from \$2,220 to \$6,000.

Additionally, the bill establishes a minority teacher candidate scholarship program. This will result in an additional cost to the state as SDE does not have funding available. The scope of the cost would be dependent upon the number of scholarships awarded and the amount per award.

### **Office of Early Childhood**

The bill results in significant costs to the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) associated with: (1) expanding infant and toddler and PreK seats over time, starting with School Readiness programs in FY 23, and based on needs assessments, (2) increasing infant and toddler and Prek rates for those programs, (3) expanding the definition of School Readiness to include sectarian child care providers who would otherwise qualify, and (4) implementing the early childhood care and education salary enhancement grant program. OEC must establish program administration and eligibility requirements by 10/1/22 and distribute funding in FY 23, which is related to the early childhood education compensation schedule.

For context, increasing rates for existing School Readiness and child

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day care seats would cost approximately \$64.8 million and the salary enhancement program is anticipated to impact up to approximately 21,000 employees. The bill's actual costs to the state and associated impacts to towns is dependent on the child care needs assessments and related distribution of seats at increased rates for applicable programs, and the implementation of the compensation schedule. OEC would require additional staffing costs of at least \$164,000 annually (with associated fringe of \$66,500) to administer the salary enhancement grant program.

**Appropriations**

SDE	General Fund	60,000	To support a full-time SDE position to administer the grant program to provide grants to local and regional boards of education for the purpose of hiring and retaining additional school social workers and school psychologists.
SDE	General Fund	30,000	To support a full-time employee to administer the minority teacher candidate scholarship program.
DPH	General Fund	590,000	To provide grants to each of the 36 recommended sites for expanded mental health services contained in the final report of the School-Based Health Center Expansion Working Group, established pursuant to section 16 of public 1291 act 21-35.
DPH	General Fund	21,240,000	To expand services of existing school-based health centers to include mental health services in accordance with the provisions.

SDE	ARPA	13,000,000	To support the existing 15 districts participating in the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) and expand participation in the LEAP program to include five additional high-need districts.
SDE	ARPA	13,000,000	To support the existing 20 districts participating in the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP).

sHB 5037, the revised FY 23 budget bill, as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee, is under the spending cap by \$4.6 million in FY 23. The appropriations contained in the bill would result in the budget being over the spending cap by \$17.3 million in FY 23.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

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## OLR Bill Analysis

### sSB 1

## **AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDHOOD MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SCHOOLS.**

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*Eliminates the requirement that school readiness programs be nonreligious; requires OEC to conduct a needs assessment for infant, toddler, and preschool spaces in school readiness programs statewide; requires the commissioner to award school readiness grants to fund these additional spaces beginning in FY 24*

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#### § 15 — EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE SALARY ENHANCEMENT GRANT

*Requires OEC to administer an annual salary enhancement grant to eligible employees of family child care homes and early childhood care and education programs beginning in FY 23*

#### §§ 16 & 17 — EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPENSATION SCHEDULE AND SALARIES

*Requires OEC to amend its proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule to include more employee categories; requires each early childhood care and education program employee to be paid an annual salary as prescribed in the OEC-developed compensation schedule beginning in FY 23*

### BACKGROUND

### COMMENTS

#### §§ 20 & 21 – SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER GRANTS

*Appropriates \$21.24 million in FY 22 to DPH to expand school-based health centers' services to include mental health services and requires \$590,000 of the appropriation to be used for grants in FY 23 to expand mental health services in 36 specified school-based health centers*

#### §§ 22 & 23 – LEARNER ENGAGEMENT AND ATTENDANCE PROGRAM (LEAP) FUNDS



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*Allocates \$13 million each year for FYs 23 and 24 from state ARPA funds for the 15 school districts participating in the LEAP program and expands the program to five more high-needs districts*

## **§ 1 – SURVEY ON SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, COUNSELORS, AND NURSES**

*Requires SDE to develop and distribute a survey that school districts must annually complete on the number of school social workers, psychologists, counselors, and nurses they employ; requires the education commissioner to calculate the student-to-worker ratio for each of the four types of professionals and report the survey results and the ratios to the Education and Children's committees*

This bill requires the State Department of Education (SDE), by January 1, 2023, and within available appropriations, to develop and distribute a survey to local school boards to determine how many school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors and school nurses they employ. The survey must also include information on (1) the number of each of these four types of professionals employed and assigned to each school in a district, including whether any of them are assigned to more than one; (2) if they are assigned to more than one school, the geographic area they cover; (3) an annual estimate of the number of students receiving direct services from each of the four types of professionals during the five-year period before the survey is completed.

Annually beginning with the 2022-23 school year, the bill requires each school district to complete the SDE survey and submit the completed survey to the education commissioner when and how she requires.

Existing law requires school districts to compile information included in the annual strategic school profile for each district and each school within the district. While the law does not specifically require districts to compile detailed staffing information, it does require them to compile measures of “school resources” and the “equitable allocation of resources among schools.” In practice, the report includes staffing information by district and school including (1) “counselors, social workers, and school psychologists” as a group and (2) school nurses.

**Ratios**

Following the receipt of a completed school district survey, the bill requires the education commissioner to annually calculate the student-to-worker ratio for each of the four types of professionals listed above for each school and each district.

**Report**

Annually beginning by January 1, 2023, the commissioner must submit a report on the results of the survey and the student-to-worker ratios for each of the four types of professionals included in the survey, to the Education and Children's committees.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**§ 2 & 18 – NEW GRANT FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, COUNSELORS, AND NURSES**

*Requires SDE to administer grants for FYs 23 to 25, for school districts to hire and retain more school social workers, psychologists, counselors, and nurses; requires SDE to calculate the return on investment for the grants and make recommendations on the program's renewal beyond FY 25; appropriates \$60,000 for FY 23 for SDE to hire a program administrator*

The bill requires SDE to administer a program, for FYs 23 to 25, to provide grants to school districts to hire and retain more school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors and nurses. Under the bill, a school social worker is a person who holds a professional educator certificate with a school social worker endorsement. (Presumably, the school psychologists, school counselors and school nurses must also hold the respective education certificates and endorsements for those positions.)

**Applications**

The bill requires grant applications to be filed with the education commissioner when and she decides. As part of the application, an applicant must submit a (1) grant fund expenditure plan and (2) copy of the completed survey required by the bill.

The plan must include, at a minimum:

1. the number of additional school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, or school nurses to be hired;
2. the number of each of the four types of professionals being retained who were previously hired with the assistance of these grant funds; and
3. whether each of the four types of professionals will conduct student assessments or provide services to students based on assessment results, and the type of those services.

In determining whether to award a grant to an applicant, the bill requires the commissioner to give priority to those school districts (1) with large student-to-worker ratios for any of the four types of professionals listed above or (2) that have many students using mental health services.

### ***Grant Awards***

Under the bill, for FY 23, the commissioner may award a grant to an applicant and must determine the grant amount based on the applicant's submitted plan.

The bill requires the commissioner to administer grant amounts in each of the program's three fiscal years as follows:

1. for FY 23, the commissioner determines the amount of the grant under the bill;
2. for FY 24, the grant amount must be the same as that awarded in the prior fiscal year; and
3. for FY 25, the grant amount must be 70% of the amount of the grant awarded for the prior fiscal year.

### ***Expenditure Reports and Refunding Unexpended Amounts***

The bill requires grant recipients to file annual expenditure reports with SDE when and how the commissioner prescribes and they must refund to SDE (1) any unexpended amounts at the close of the fiscal year

in which the grant was awarded and (2) any amounts not expended as required under the approved grant application plan.

### ***Utilization Rate and Return on Investment***

The bill requires SDE to annually track and calculate the utilization rate of the grant for each recipient. The utilization rate is calculated using metrics that include, at a minimum, the number of students served, and the hours of service provided, using program grant funds.

SDE must also annually calculate the return on investment for the grant program using the required filed expenditure reports and the utilization rates calculated under the bill. (Presumably, it is up to SDE how to weigh the expenditure reports and utilization rates when determining the return on investment.)

### ***Reporting***

By January 1 of 2024, 2025, and 2026, the commissioner must submit a report to the Children's and Education committees on the utilization rate for each grant recipient and the return on investment for the grant program.

### ***Recommendations Whether to Renew***

By January 1, 2026, the bill requires the education commissioner to develop recommendations on (1) extending and funding the grant program in FY 26 and each fiscal year after that and (2) the program's grant award amounts. The commissioner must submit the recommendations to the Children's and Education committees.

### ***Donations***

Under the bill, SDE may accept funds from private sources or any state agency, gifts, grants, and donations, including but not limited to, in-kind donations in order to carry out the grant.

### ***Appropriation (§ 18)***

The bill appropriates \$60,000 to SDE for FY 23 to hire a full-time administrator to run the school social workers and school psychologists grant program it creates (see § 2).

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EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

### **§ 3 – HUMAN SERVICES PERMIT**

*Authorizes SBE to issue human services permits to qualified applicants with specialized training, experience, or expertise in social work, human services, psychology, or sociology.*

The bill authorizes the State Board of Education (SBE) to issue, at the request of a school district or regional educational service center (RESC), a human services permit to qualified applicants with specialized training, experience, or expertise in social work, human services, psychology, or sociology. The permit authorizes the applicant to work for a school district or RESC and provide students with mental health and human services, in accordance with the applicant's scope of practice or area of expertise or specialty.

Under the bill, a qualifying applicant must (1) hold a bachelor's degree in social work, human services, psychology, sociology, or other equivalent subject area from a state or regionally accredited higher education institution and (2) have at least four years of work experience in those subject areas, or one year of work experience and two years of specialized schooling in them.

Each human services permit is valid for three years and the commissioner can renew it for good cause upon the request of the RESC or superintendent of the school district employing the person (presumably, the renewal is for three more years).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

### **§§ 4 & 5 – MENTAL HEALTH PLAN FOR STUDENT ATHLETES**

*Requires SDE to establish, and boards of education to implement, a mental health plan for student athletes to raise awareness about available resources*

By July 1, 2023, the bill requires SDE to make a mental health plan for student athletes in collaboration with the intramural and interscholastic athletics governing authority. (A local or regional board of education governs its own intramural athletics. The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletics Conference (CIAC), a private nonprofit organization, governs high school interscholastic athletics for all public schools and certain

private schools.)

Under the bill, the plan must be made available to local and regional boards of education to raise awareness about available mental health resources for student athletes, and all boards of education must implement it beginning in the 2023-24 school year. SDE must also post the plan on its website and provide technical assistance to school districts implementing the plan.

At a minimum, the bill requires the plan to address:

1. access to the school district's mental health services team,
2. screening and recognizing appropriate referrals for student athletes,
3. communication among mental health services team members,
4. student athlete medication management,
5. crisis intervention services,
6. mitigation of student athletes' risk, and
7. transition care for student athletes leaving athletics due to graduation, dismissal, or suspension.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Related Bill***

SB 2, favorably voted by the Children's Committee, has the same provisions creating a mental health plan for student athletes and requiring school districts to implement the plan.

## **§§ 6-8 – OPIOID ANTAGONISTS IN SCHOOLS**

*Generally (1) allows school nurses and qualified school employees to maintain and administer opioid antagonists to students who do not have prior written authorization to receive the medication; (2) requires SDE to develop related guidelines by October 1, 2022; (3) authorizes certain prescribers and pharmacists to enter into agreements with school*

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*boards on the distribution and administration of opioid antagonists; and (4) requires DCP to provide school boards with information on how to acquire opioid antagonists from manufacturers*

### **School Nurse and Qualified Employee Authorization (§ 6)**

The bill authorizes a school nurse, or in the absence of a school nurse, a qualified school employee, to maintain opioid antagonists to administer emergency first aid to a student who is experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose, but who does not have prior written authorization from a parent or guardian or prior order from a qualified medical professional to receive this medication.

Under the bill, a school nurse or principal must select qualified school employees to administer an opioid antagonist and at least one of them must be on school grounds during regular school hours when the school nurse is not. A qualified school employee may administer an opioid antagonist when the school nurse is absent or unavailable. A school nurse or qualified school employee administering an opioid antagonist must do so in accordance with the school board's policies and procedures the bill requires it to adopt.

Under the bill, a "qualified school employee" is a principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, coach, school paraprofessional, or licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by a school district.

The bill prohibits a school nurse or qualified school employee from administering an opioid antagonist unless they complete training in its distribution and administration (1) under a local agreement with a prescriber or pharmacist (see below) or (2) in a training offered by the departments of consumer protection (DCP), education (SDE), and public health (DPH).

The bill also prohibits schools from administering opioid antagonists to a student under these provisions if the student's parent or guardian has stated in writing that he or she does not consent to it. A parent or guardian may submit this request to the school nurse or school medical advisor, if any.

### **Guidelines (§ 6)**

The bill requires SDE to develop guidelines for local and regional school boards on storing and administering opioid antagonists in schools. They must do this by October 1, 2022, and in consultation with DCP and DPH.

### ***Opioid Antagonist Distribution Agreements (§ 7)***

The bill authorizes prescribers or pharmacists certified to prescribe an opioid antagonist to enter into an agreement with local or regional school boards on the distribution and administration of opioid antagonists. Existing law already allows prescribers and pharmacists to make these agreements with law enforcement agencies, emergency medical service providers, government agencies, and community health organizations.

As under existing law, the bill requires the agreement to address the school boards' opioid antagonist storage, handling, labeling, recalls, and record keeping. The prescriber or pharmacist must train the people who will distribute or administer opioid antagonists under the agreement. Additionally, people who will distribute or administer opioid antagonists must be trained first.

### ***Information on Opioid Antagonist Acquisition (§ 8)***

For the 2021-2022 school year, the bill requires DCP, in collaboration with SDE, to provide information to local and regional school boards on where boards can acquire opioid antagonists. The information must include the name and contact information of any opioid antagonist manufacturers that provide the medication at no cost to school districts.

### ***Definitions (§ 6)***

By law and under the bill, an "opioid antagonist" is naloxone hydrochloride (e.g., Narcan) or any other similarly acting and equally safe drug that the Food and Drug Administration has approved for treating a drug overdose (see CGS § 17a-714a). A "qualified medical professional" is a state-licensed physician, optometrist, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant.

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EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provisions (1) allowing



school boards to enter into local agreements with a prescriber or pharmacist and (2) requiring DCP to provide information to local school boards on acquiring opioid antagonists take effect July 1, 2022.

### **§§ 9 & 19 – MINORITY TEACHER CANDIDATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

*Requires SDE to administer a new minority teacher candidate scholarship program; authorizes grants of up to \$20,000 a year for high school graduates of priority school districts who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program at any four-year institution of higher education; appropriates \$30,000 for a staff person to administer the program*

The bill requires SDE to administer a new minority teacher candidate scholarship program in consultation with the Office of Higher Education. (The bill does not define “minority;” presumably, it means racial and ethnic minorities.)

Under the bill, the program must provide an annual scholarship to minority students who (1) graduated from a public high school in a priority school district and (2) are enrolled in a teacher preparation program at any four-year higher education institution. Maximum grants cannot exceed \$20,000 per year and SDE must ensure that men receive at least 50% of the scholarships.

By law, a priority school district is a district that receives additional state grants based on a formula that considers high populations or concentrations of students (1) on temporary family assistance and (2) performing poorly on statewide mastery exams (CGS § 10-266p). There are currently 15 priority school districts.

Under the bill, SDE must develop a policy for administering the scholarships by January 1, 2023. The policy must address (1) any additional eligibility criteria, (2) scholarship payment and distribution, and (3) notifying high school students in priority school districts of the scholarship program.

Beginning with FY 24, the bill requires SDE to annually award scholarships according to SDE’s policy and the bill’s requirements.

The bill also allows SDE to accept public or private gifts, grants, and

donations for the scholarship program.

**Appropriation for Scholarship Program Staff (§ 19)**

The bill appropriates \$30,000 to SDE from the General Fund for FY 23 to hire a full-time minority teacher candidate scholarship program administrator.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

**§ 10 – TASK FORCE TO COMBAT ABLEISM**

*Establishes a 13-member task force to combat ableism and requires it to submit its findings and recommendations to the Children’s and Education committees by January 1, 2023*

The bill establishes a 13-member task force to combat ableism that must identify (1) current efforts to educate all students on disability and combat ableism in classrooms and in the public school curriculum and (2) opportunities to expand these efforts and integrate them into social-emotional learning. Under the bill “ableism” means intentional or unintentional bias, prejudice, or discrimination, against people with physical, psychiatric, or intellectual disabilities.

The task force must submit its findings and recommendations to the Children’s and Education committees by January 1, 2023. The task force terminates on this date or the date it submits the report, whichever is later.

**Membership**

Under the bill, task force members include the education, early childhood, and children and families commissioners; chief court administrator, and Special Education Equity for Kids of Connecticut director, or their designees.

It also includes 8 appointed members as listed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Task Force to Combat Ableism Appointed Members**

Appointing Authority	Member Organization or Other Qualifier
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(number of appointments)	
House speaker (two)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>educator employed by a local or regional board of education</li> <li>a leader in social-emotional learning who works with children</li> </ul>
Senate president (two)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a special education teacher</li> <li>a member of the social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative</li> </ul>
House majority leader (one)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>school administrator employed by a board of education</li> </ul>
Senate majority leader (one)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local or regional board of education chairperson</li> </ul>
House minority leader (one)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>director or employee of a private nonprofit service or program provider for children with disabilities</li> </ul>
Senate minority leader (one)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>director or employee of a private nonprofit organization that provides disability-related services or programs for children</li> </ul>

Under the bill, appointing authorities must make initial appointments by July 31, 2022, and fill any vacancies. Appointed members may be legislators.

The bill requires the House speaker and Senate president to select the task force chairpersons from among its members. The chairpersons must schedule the first task force meeting by August 29, 2022.

Under the bill, the Children’s Committee administrative staff serve in this capacity for the task force.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

## § 11 – CIAC TASK FORCE

*Establishes a seven-member task force to study the governance structure and internal procedures of CIAC and requires it to submit its findings and recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2023*

The bill establishes a seven-member task force to study CIAC's governance structure and internal procedures, including (1) CIAC's leadership structure and how leadership positions are filled and (2) how the organization receives and resolves complaints filed by CIAC members and individuals.

CIAC is a private, nonprofit organization that regulates high school athletics (almost all Connecticut public and parochial high schools are dues-paying members). CIAC members elect the organization's governing board members.

### **Membership**

Under the bill, task force members include the CIAC director, or his designee, and six appointed members listed in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: CIAC Task Force Appointed Members**

<b>Appointing Authority</b>	<b>Member Organization or Other Qualifier</b>
House speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• person with experience in coaching (presumably, at the interscholastic level)</li> </ul>
Senate president	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• person with expertise in sports management</li> </ul>
House majority leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coach for a CIAC member school</li> </ul>
Senate majority leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• athletic director for a CIAC member school</li> </ul>
House minority leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• administrator at a CIAC member school</li> </ul>
Senate minority leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• parent of a student athlete at a CIAC member school</li> </ul>

Under the bill, appointing authorities must make initial appointments within 30 days of the bill's passage and fill any vacancies. Appointed task force members may be legislators.

### **Leadership and Meetings**

The bill requires the House speaker and Senate president to select the task force chairpersons from among its members. The chairpersons must schedule the first task force meeting within 60 days of the bill's passage.

Under the bill, Education Committee administrative staff serve as the task force administrative staff.

### **Report**

The bill requires the task force to submit its report to the Education Committee by January 1, 2023. The task force terminates on this date, or the date it submits the report, whichever is later.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

### **§§ 12 & 14 —SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM EXPANSION**

*Eliminates the requirement that school readiness programs be nonreligious; requires OEC to conduct a needs assessment for infant, toddler, and preschool spaces in school readiness programs statewide; requires the commissioner to award school readiness grants to fund these additional spaces beginning in FY 24*

Under current law, a school readiness program is a nonreligious, state-funded education program that provides a developmentally appropriate learning experience for children between ages three and five who are too young to enroll in kindergarten (CGS § 10-16p). The bill eliminates the requirement that school readiness programs be nonreligious.

Beginning in FY 23, the bill requires the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) commissioner to coordinate with local and regional school readiness councils to conduct needs assessments for infant, toddler, and preschool spaces in Connecticut school readiness programs. The commissioner must use the assessment's results to (1) increase or adjust the number of these spaces to meet each community's need or demand and (2) provide grants for these space adjustments. Existing law, unchanged by the bill, limits school readiness program enrollment to children aged three to five (see COMMENT).

By law, OEC awards school readiness funds using two different methods: a school readiness grant program and a competitive grant program. School readiness program grants are awarded to priority and former priority school districts. Competitive grants are awarded to (1) areas served by a priority or former priority school, (2) the 50 poorest or formerly poorest towns whose school district is not a priority district,

and (3) towns that are alliance districts (CGS § 10-16p(c)-(d)). Priority school districts are those (1) whose students earned low standardized test scores, (2) that have high poverty levels, or (3) that are in one of the eight most populated towns (CGS § 10-266p).

The bill requires the OEC commissioner to provide school readiness grants under the following timeline to increase infant, toddler, and preschool spaces in school readiness programs based upon needs assessment results:

1. in FY 24, the commissioner must provide grants to programs in priority school districts;
2. in FYs 25-26, the commissioner must provide grants to programs in competitive municipalities, defined for FY 25 as the 100 poorest municipalities (but undefined for FY 26, see COMMENT); and
3. in FY 27 and after that, the commissioner must provide grants to programs in each community in the state.

(The bill does not specify which of the two types of school readiness grants OEC must award for this purpose.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

### **§ 13 — SCHOOL READINESS COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM**

*Increases the per child cost cap used to calculate certain school readiness program grants beginning in FY 23*

Beginning in FY 23, the bill increases the per child cost cap used to calculate school readiness program grants for OEC's school readiness competitive grant program. Specifically, it raises the cap on the per child cost of a program for enrolled children ages three to five by \$5,473, increasing the maximum cost from \$9,027 per enrolled student to \$14,500. It also creates a new per child cost cap for children ages three or younger who are in infant or toddler care and not in a preschool program, setting the per child cost for that age group at \$16,000.

This increase affects the calculation of OEC's competitive school readiness grant. By law, the grant amount for an applicant town is calculated by multiplying the per child cost by the number of spaces in the school readiness program. Therefore, a program that provides services at a cost above the current per child cap will receive a grant for enrolled students ages three to five years old that is up to \$5,473 larger per child under the bill. (School readiness programs currently do not serve infants and toddlers ages two and younger (see COMMENT).)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

#### **§ 14 — EXCESS SCHOOL READINESS GRANT FUNDS**

*Allows OEC to use appropriated, unexpended school readiness funds to provide scholarships for early childhood care and education program providers and their staff; eliminates licensed school readiness programs' authority to use unspent school readiness grant funds that exceed the per child school readiness cost to increase classroom teacher or caregiver salaries*

The bill makes two changes to how the OEC commissioner and licensed school readiness programs may spend excess school readiness grant funds. The bill also makes several technical and conforming changes.

##### ***Provider and Staff Scholarships***

Current law allows the OEC commissioner to use up to \$1 million of any appropriated, unexpended school readiness grant funds in the following fiscal year to provide, among other things, professional development for early childhood care and education program providers and their staff, so long as their programs accept state funds for infant, toddler, and preschool spaces. The bill expands this use of funds to include scholarships for these providers and their staff members.

Existing law, unchanged by the bill, requires the commissioner to use the funds to assist individual staff members with the cost of higher educational courses leading to a bachelor's degree. She may give up to \$10,000 per staff member per year for this purpose.

##### ***Staff Salary Increases***

Current law requires licensed school readiness programs to use

unspent school readiness grant funds that exceed the per child school readiness cost for FY 20 (i.e., \$8,927) to increase salaries for individuals who directly teach or care for children in a school readiness classroom. The bill eliminates this requirement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

## **§ 15 — EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE SALARY ENHANCEMENT GRANT**

*Requires OEC to administer an annual salary enhancement grant to eligible employees of family child care homes and early childhood care and education programs beginning in FY 23*

Beginning in FY 23, the bill requires OEC to administer the early childhood care and education salary enhancement grant program. OEC must annually pay a salary enhancement grant to each family child care home and early childhood care and education program, which in turn must distribute the funds to their eligible employees consistent with OEC policy. Under the bill, early childhood care and education programs are the following:

1. child care centers;
2. group child care homes;
3. private preschool programs;
4. school readiness programs;
5. state funded child care centers for disadvantaged children; and
6. any state-funded, unlicensed child care services provider or school readiness program with infant, toddler, and preschool spaces located in a public school building but not part of the public school system.

The bill requires the OEC commissioner to develop a grant program policy by October 1, 2022, before distributing grant funds to these entities. The policy must address at least the following: eligibility criteria, registration process, grant distribution requirements, and any



other requirements the commissioner finds necessary.

### ***Grants to Family Child Care Homes***

Under the bill, OEC must annually pay each family child care home a salary enhancement grant in the following amount for each of the following employees: \$20,000 for each licensee; \$6,000 for each OEC-approved full-time assistant or substitute staff member; and \$3,000 for each part-time OEC-approved assistant or substitute staff member.

Each licensee must distribute the grant funds consistent with the OEC-developed policy.

### ***Grants to Early Childhood Care and Education Programs***

The bill requires each early childhood care and education program to register with OEC to receive a grant under the program, providing any information required by the office consistent with the program policy. The commissioner determines when and how the programs must register.

Under the bill, OEC must give each of these programs a grant that equals its respective salary enhancement amount. Each program's salary enhancement amount is calculated using the following formula:

1. finding the difference between each individual employee's (a) prescribed salary under the OEC's early childhood compensation schedule (see §§ 16 & 17 below) and (b) actual salary paid on December 31, 2021, or the annual starting salary for the position on that date if it was vacant;
2. adding \$7,500 to that number for each employee; and
3. adding together the above sums for each individual employee in the program for the fiscal year.

The bill requires these programs to distribute the grant funds to their employees consistent with the policy that OEC develops for the grant's administration.

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EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

## **§§ 16 & 17 — EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPENSATION SCHEDULE AND SALARIES**

*Requires OEC to amend its proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule to include more employee categories; requires each early childhood care and education program employee to be paid an annual salary as prescribed in the OEC-developed compensation schedule beginning in FY 23*

Existing law required OEC to develop a proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule for employees of early childhood education programs and submit it, along with cost estimates, implementation recommendations, and other analyses to the Appropriations and Education committees by January 1, 2021. Specifically, the compensation schedule must be a list or series of lists specifying a series of compensation steps and ranges for the salary, wages, benefits, and other forms of valuable consideration provided to employees for their work.

### ***Compensation Schedule Amendment (§ 17)***

The bill requires OEC to amend the compensation schedule to include employees of “early childhood care and education programs” by January 1, 2023.

Under the bill, these employees include people who meet the following criteria:

1. work for a (a) child care center, group child care home, or school readiness program that does not accept state funds; (b) child care or school readiness program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler, and preschool spaces; (c) private preschool program; or (d) state-funded child care center for disadvantaged children and
2. satisfy the eligibility criteria described in OEC’s (a) compensation schedule, rather than the staff qualifications requirements established by law as current law requires for the January 2021 schedule, and (b) policies for the early childhood care and education salary enhancement program (see COMMENT).

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**Salaries to Match Compensation Schedule (§ 16)**

Beginning July 1, 2022, the bill requires each early childhood care and education program employee to be paid an annual salary as prescribed in the OEC-developed compensation schedule. By law, OEC must establish a recommended minimum salary for employees as part of the proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule. If, however, an employee's salary is greater than the amount prescribed in the schedule, then the employee must be paid the greater amount.

Because this requirement takes effect in 2022, salaries must reflect the 2021 compensation schedule, not the new 2023 schedule required by this bill (see § 17; see COMMENT).

**Early Childhood Education Program Definition (§ 17)**

The bill also defines the term "early childhood education program" a second time. Under current law, the term refers to any child care or school readiness program with state-funded infant, toddler, and preschool spaces. The bill adds a second, separate definition, defining the term to mean a private preschool program, a private school readiness program, or a state-funded child care center for disadvantaged children. (Presumably, the term captures both definitions, which do not conflict.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

**BACKGROUND*****Related Bills***

HB 5465 (File 462), reported favorably by the Education Committee, contains the following similar provisions:

1. requires school readiness councils to conduct a needs assessment for infant and toddler spaces and allows unused school readiness space to be converted to these spaces (§ 12);
2. increases the per child cost cap used to calculate school readiness grants beginning in FY 23, but by \$1,000 rather than \$5,473 as under the bill (§ 5);

3. allows OEC to use unexpended school readiness funds for scholarships for early childhood care and education program providers and their staff (§ 6);
4. requires OEC to administer an annual salary enhancement grant to eligible employees of family child care homes and early childhood care and education programs beginning in FY 23 (§ 1); and
5. requires OEC to amend its proposed early childhood educator compensation schedule to include more employee categories and requires employees to be paid an annual salary as prescribed in the schedule beginning in FY 23 (§§ 2 & 3).

SB 2 (File 276), reported favorably by the Committee on Children, contains the following similar provisions:

1. requires school readiness councils to conduct a needs assessment for infant and toddler spaces and allows unused school readiness space to be converted to these spaces (§ 20) and
2. increases the per child cost cap used to calculate school readiness grants beginning in FY 23 by the same amount as the bill: \$5,473 (§ 1).

## COMMENTS

### ***Missing Conforming Changes***

In § 12, the bill requires the OEC commissioner to adjust the number of infant, toddler, and preschool spaces in school readiness programs. In § 13, the bill establishes a \$16,000 cap on the per-child cost for infants and toddlers who are not in preschool to calculate the competitive school readiness grant. Existing law, however, limits school readiness program enrollment to children aged three to five. This requirement remains unchanged by the bill, excluding enrollment of infants and toddlers (i.e., children aged two and younger). Additionally, under the bill, it is unclear whether a three-year-old enrolled in a school readiness program is considered enrolled in (1) preschool and subject to the lower

grant amount or (2) in an infant and toddler program, not in preschool, and therefore subject to the higher grant amount.

### ***Incomplete Information***

In § 12, the bill defines “competitive municipalities” for FYs 24 and 25. However, it does not provide a definition for FY 26. Therefore, it is unclear which municipalities are eligible to receive a school readiness grant from OEC for infant, toddler, and preschool spaces in FY 26.

### ***Conflict***

In § 17, the bill references the early childhood care and education salary enhancement program in §1 of the bill, but § 1 does not mention this program.

### ***Conflict***

In § 16, the bill requires each early childhood care and education program employee to be paid an annual salary as prescribed in the OEC-developed compensation schedule beginning July 1, 2022. However, because this requirement takes effect in 2022, salaries must reflect the 2021 compensation schedule, not the new 2023 schedule required by this bill. The 2021 schedule, therefore, does not contain a prescribed minimum salary for the following employees that the bill contemplates (1) child-care centers, group child care homes, and school readiness programs that do not receive state funding and (2) private preschool programs.

## **§§ 20 & 21 – SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER GRANTS**

*Appropriates \$21.24 million in FY 22 to DPH to expand school-based health centers' services to include mental health services and requires \$590,000 of the appropriation to be used for grants in FY 23 to expand mental health services in 36 specified school-based health centers*

The bill makes a \$21.24 million appropriation in FY 22 to DPH to expand existing school-based health centers' services to include mental health services. (It is unclear how funds will be appropriated if the bill takes affect after FY 22 and whether a FY 22 appropriation can be used in FY 23.) It also requires the department to make available \$590,000 of this appropriation for grants in FY 23 to expand mental health services

in the 36 sites recommended in the School-Based Health Center Expansion Working Group’s final report.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**§§ 22 & 23 – LEARNER ENGAGEMENT AND ATTENDANCE PROGRAM (LEAP) FUNDS**

*Allocates \$13 million each year for FYs 23 and 24 from state ARPA funds for the 15 school districts participating in the LEAP program and expands the program to five more high-needs districts*

The bill allocates \$13 million each year for FYs 23 and 24 from federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 funds designated for the state to SDE to support school districts participating in the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP). For FY 23 the funds support LEAP in 15 existing school districts and expands participation to an additional five high-need districts. In FY 24, the funds support LEAP in all 20 districts.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference - APP  
Yea 33 Nay 6 (03/25/2022)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable  
Yea 40 Nay 9 (04/07/2022)