



General Assembly

Amendment

February Session, 2024

LCO No. 5112



Offered by:

SEN. MCCRORY, 2nd Dist.

REP. CURREY, 11th Dist.

To: Subst. Senate Bill No. 14

File No. 547

Cal. No. 321

**"AN ACT ASSISTING SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN IMPROVING
EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES."**

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the
2 following in lieu thereof:

3 "Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10-14z of the general statutes is
4 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
5 *2024*):

6 (a) There is established an Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities
7 within the Department of Education which shall be under the
8 management of a chief. The chief shall be qualified by training and
9 experience to perform the duties of the office, including, but not limited
10 to, expertise in higher education, dyslexia and structured literacy. The
11 Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities shall (1) verify the
12 compliance of (A) educator preparation programs, as defined in section
13 10-146c, including intermediate administrator and supervisor
14 programs, and (B) applicants for an initial, provisional or professional

15 educator certificate pursuant to the provisions of chapter 166 relating to
16 scientifically-based reading research and instruction, as defined in
17 section 10-14u, structured literacy instruction and training, dyslexia
18 instruction and training, including, but not limited to, the compliance
19 verifications required pursuant to sections 10-14aa to 10-14cc, inclusive;
20 (2) review and recommend changes, as necessary, to the State Board of
21 Education's process for approval of educator preparation programs
22 related to such compliance verifications; and (3) provide guidance to
23 and consult with the department's Talent Office related to such
24 compliance verifications.

25 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 10-14gg of the 2024 supplement to the
26 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
27 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

28 (a) The Department of Education shall establish a Center for Literacy
29 Research and Reading Success within the department. The center shall
30 be responsible for (1) the implementation of the coordinated state-wide
31 reading plan for students in kindergarten to grade three, inclusive,
32 established pursuant to section 10-14v; (2) researching and developing,
33 in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood, a birth to grade
34 twelve reading success strategy to be included in the alignment of
35 reading instruction with the two-generational initiative, established
36 pursuant to section 17b-112l; (3) (A) providing direct support to schools
37 and boards of education to improve reading outcomes for students in
38 kindergarten to grade three, inclusive, and other reading initiatives, and
39 (B) supporting teachers, schools and boards of education engaged in
40 improving through coaching, leadership training, professional
41 development, parental engagement and technical assistance that is
42 consistent with the intensive reading instruction program, as described
43 in section 10-14u and aligned with evidence-based practices; (4)
44 providing independent, random reviews of how a local or regional
45 board of education is implementing (A) a comprehensive reading
46 curriculum model or program for grades kindergarten to grade three,
47 inclusive, pursuant to section 10-14hh, and (B) an approved reading
48 assessment, pursuant to section 10-14t; (5) receiving and publicly

49 reporting, not later than September 1, 2025, and biennially thereafter,
50 the comprehensive reading curriculum model or program being
51 implemented by each local and regional board of education pursuant to
52 section 10-14hh; (6) developing and maintaining an Internet web site for
53 the purpose of disseminating tools and information associated with the
54 intensive reading instruction program for student reading; and (7)
55 serving as a collaborative center for institutions of higher education and
56 making available to the faculty of teacher preparation programs [(A) the
57 science of teaching reading, (B) the intensive reading instruction
58 program, and (C) samples of available comprehensive reading
59 curriculum models or programs reviewed and approved pursuant to
60 section 10-14ii; and (8) reviewing and publicly reporting on progress
61 made by teacher preparation programs to include comprehensive
62 reading curriculum models or programs reviewed and approved
63 pursuant to section 10-14ii] (A) resources and research supporting
64 scientifically-based reading research and instruction, and (B)
65 Connecticut's K-3 Literacy Strategy, developed by the center.

66 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) Not later than July 1, 2025, the
67 Department of Education shall develop compliance measures and audit
68 procedures to determine the compliance of educator preparation
69 programs, including intermediate administrator and supervisor
70 programs, in the provision of instruction on scientifically-based reading
71 research and instruction, as defined in section 10-14u of the general
72 statutes.

73 Sec. 4. (*Effective July 1, 2024*) (a) As used in this section, "advanced
74 course or program" means an honors class, advanced placement class,
75 International Baccalaureate program, Cambridge International
76 program, dual enrollment program, dual credit course or program,
77 early college program or any other advanced or accelerated course or
78 program that is offered, and for which credit is awarded, by a local or
79 regional board of education in grades nine to twelve, inclusive.

80 (b) The Department of Education shall conduct a study regarding the
81 feasibility of establishing and administering a state-wide program that

82 supports public high school students in participating in an advanced
83 course or program, and which gives priority to students from low-
84 income families. In conducting such study, the department shall consult
85 with local and regional boards of education and public and independent
86 institutions of higher education. Such study shall review current in-state
87 programs to provide advanced courses or programs, identify and
88 analyze similar programs in other states and provide recommendations
89 on the framework and criteria for implementing a state-wide program
90 in the state.

91 (c) Not later than January 1, 2026, the department shall submit such
92 report, and any recommendations on the establishment and
93 implementation of such state-wide program, to the joint standing
94 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
95 relating to education in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a
96 of the general statutes.

97 Sec. 5. Subsection (f) of section 10-5 of the general statutes is repealed
98 and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

99 (f) [Not later than September 1, 2017, the State Board of Education]
100 The Department of Education shall establish criteria by which a local or
101 regional board of education, or the governing board of any other school
102 that awards diplomas, may affix the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy
103 on a diploma awarded to a student who has achieved a high level of
104 proficiency in English and one or more foreign languages. For purposes
105 of this subsection, "foreign language" means a world language other
106 than English and includes American Sign Language and any other
107 language spoken by a [federally recognized] Native American tribe.

108 Sec. 6. Subdivision (1) of subsection (k) of section 10-264l of the 2024
109 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is
110 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

111 (k) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, and each fiscal year
112 thereafter, any tuition charged to a local or regional board of education
113 by (A) a regional educational service center operating an interdistrict

114 magnet school, [or any tuition charged by] (B) the Hartford school
115 district operating the Great Path Academy on behalf of Manchester
116 Community College, or (C) any interdistrict magnet school operator
117 described in section 10-264s, for any student enrolled in kindergarten to
118 grade twelve, inclusive, in such interdistrict magnet school shall be in
119 an amount equal to the difference between (A) the average per pupil
120 expenditure of the magnet school for the prior fiscal year, and (B) the
121 amount of any per pupil state subsidy calculated under subsection (c)
122 of this section plus any revenue from other sources calculated on a per
123 pupil basis, except for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each
124 fiscal year thereafter, the per student tuition charged to a local or
125 regional board of education shall not exceed fifty-eight per cent the per
126 student tuition charged during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. If
127 any such board of education fails to pay such tuition, the commissioner
128 may withhold from such board's town or towns a sum payable under
129 section 10-262i in an amount not to exceed the amount of the unpaid
130 tuition to the magnet school and pay such money to the fiscal agent for
131 the magnet school as a supplementary grant for the operation of the
132 interdistrict magnet school program. In no case shall the sum of such
133 tuitions exceed the difference between (i) the total expenditures of the
134 magnet school for the prior fiscal year, and (ii) the total per pupil state
135 subsidy calculated under subsection (c) of this section plus any revenue
136 from other sources. The commissioner may conduct a comprehensive
137 financial review of the operating budget of a magnet school to verify
138 such tuition rate.

139 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) In determining the rights and
140 benefits earned by a teacher under sections 10-151 and 10-156 of the
141 general statutes, employment in a school operated by Goodwin
142 University Magnet Schools, Inc. or Goodwin University Educational
143 Services, Inc. shall not be deemed to interrupt the continuous
144 employment of a teacher who was employed by a local or regional board
145 of education during the school year immediately prior to employment
146 in such school and such teacher shall continue as an employee of
147 Goodwin University Magnet Schools, Inc. or Goodwin University

148 Educational Services, Inc., subject to the provisions of section 10-151 of
149 the general statutes.

150 Sec. 8. Section 10-264o of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes
151 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
152 *passage*):

153 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter, interdistrict
154 magnet schools that begin operations on or after July 1, 2008, pursuant
155 to the decision in *Sheff v. O'Neill*, 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related
156 stipulation or order in effect, as determined by the Commissioner of
157 Education, may operate without district participation agreements and
158 enroll students from any district through a lottery designated by the
159 commissioner.

160 (b) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, and each fiscal year
161 thereafter, any tuition charged to a local or regional board of education
162 by a regional educational service center or by Goodwin University
163 Magnet Schools operating an interdistrict magnet school assisting the
164 state in meeting its obligations pursuant to the decision in *Sheff v.*
165 *O'Neill*, 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order in effect,
166 as determined by the Commissioner of Education, for any student
167 enrolled in kindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive, in such interdistrict
168 magnet school shall be in an amount equal to the difference between (1)
169 the average per pupil expenditure of the magnet school for the prior
170 fiscal year, and (2) the amount of any per pupil state subsidy calculated
171 under subsection (c) of section 10-264l, plus any revenue from other
172 sources calculated on a per pupil basis, except for the fiscal year ending
173 June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, the per student tuition
174 charged to a local or regional board of education shall not exceed fifty-
175 eight per cent the per student tuition charged during the fiscal year
176 ending June 30, 2024. If any such board of education fails to pay such
177 tuition, the commissioner may withhold from such board's town or
178 towns a sum payable under section 10-262i in an amount not to exceed
179 the amount of the unpaid tuition to the magnet school and pay such
180 money to the fiscal agent for the magnet school as a supplementary

181 grant for the operation of the interdistrict magnet school program. In no
182 case shall the sum of such tuitions exceed the difference between (A) the
183 total expenditures of the magnet school for the prior fiscal year, and (B)
184 the total per pupil state subsidy calculated under subsection (c) of
185 section 10-264*l*, plus any revenue from other sources. The commissioner
186 may conduct a comprehensive review of the operating budget of a
187 magnet school to verify such tuition rate.

188 (c) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, a regional educational
189 service center operating an interdistrict magnet school assisting the state
190 in meeting its obligations pursuant to the decision in *Sheff v. O'Neill*,
191 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order in effect, as
192 determined by the Commissioner of Education, and offering a preschool
193 program shall not charge tuition for a child enrolled in such preschool
194 program.

195 (2) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, a regional educational
196 service center operating an interdistrict magnet school assisting the state
197 in meeting its obligations pursuant to the decision in *Sheff v. O'Neill*,
198 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order in effect, as
199 determined by the Commissioner of Education, and offering a preschool
200 program may charge tuition to the Department of Education for a child
201 enrolled in such preschool program in an amount not to exceed an
202 amount equal to the difference between (A) the average per pupil
203 expenditure of the preschool program offered at the magnet school for
204 the prior fiscal year, and (B) the amount of any per pupil state subsidy
205 calculated under subsection (c) of section 10-264*l*, plus any revenue from
206 other sources calculated on a per pupil basis. The commissioner may
207 conduct a comprehensive review of the operating budget of any such
208 magnet school charging such tuition to verify such tuition rate.

209 (3) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, a regional educational
210 service center operating an interdistrict magnet school assisting the state
211 in meeting its obligations pursuant to the decision in *Sheff v. O'Neill*,
212 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order in effect, as
213 determined by the Commissioner of Education, and offering a preschool

214 program may charge tuition to the parent or guardian of a child enrolled
215 in such preschool program in an amount that is in accordance with the
216 sliding tuition scale adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant
217 to section 10-264p. The Department of Education shall be financially
218 responsible for any unpaid portion of the tuition not charged to such
219 parent or guardian under such sliding tuition scale. Such tuition shall
220 not exceed an amount equal to the difference between (A) the average
221 per pupil expenditure of the preschool program offered at the magnet
222 school for the prior fiscal year, and (B) the amount of any per pupil state
223 subsidy calculated under subsection (c) of section 10-264l, plus any
224 revenue from other sources calculated on a per pupil basis. The
225 commissioner may conduct a comprehensive review of the operating
226 budget of any such magnet school charging such tuition to verify such
227 tuition rate.

228 (4) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, and each fiscal year
229 thereafter, a regional educational service center or Goodwin University
230 Magnet Schools operating an interdistrict magnet school assisting the
231 state in meeting its obligations pursuant to the decision in *Sheff v.*
232 *O'Neill*, 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order in effect,
233 as determined by the Commissioner of Education, and offering a
234 preschool program shall charge tuition to the parent or guardian of a
235 child enrolled in such preschool program in an amount up to four
236 thousand fifty-three dollars, except such regional educational service
237 center or Goodwin University Magnet Schools shall not charge tuition
238 to such parent or guardian with a family income at or below seventy-
239 five per cent of the state median income. The Department of Education
240 shall, within available appropriations, be financially responsible for any
241 unpaid tuition charged to such parent or guardian with a family income
242 at or below seventy-five per cent of the state median income. The
243 commissioner may conduct a comprehensive financial review of the
244 operating budget of any such magnet school charging such tuition to
245 verify such tuition rate.

246 Sec. 9. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 10-264l of the 2024
247 supplement to the general statutes are repealed and the following is

248 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

249 (a) The Department of Education shall, within available
250 appropriations, establish a grant program (1) to assist (A) local and
251 regional boards of education, (B) regional educational service centers,
252 (C) the Board of Trustees of the Community-Technical Colleges on
253 behalf of Quinebaug Valley Community College and Three Rivers
254 Community College, and (D) cooperative arrangements pursuant to
255 section 10-158a, and (2) in assisting the state in meeting its obligations
256 pursuant to the decision in *Sheff v. O'Neill*, 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any
257 related stipulation or order in effect, as determined by the
258 commissioner, to assist (A) the Board of Trustees of the Community-
259 Technical Colleges on behalf of a regional community-technical college,
260 (B) the Board of Trustees of the Connecticut State University System on
261 behalf of a state university, (C) the Board of Trustees of The University
262 of Connecticut on behalf of the university, (D) the board of governors
263 for an independent institution of higher education, as defined in
264 subsection (a) of section 10a-173, or the equivalent of such a board, on
265 behalf of the independent institution of higher education, and (E) any
266 other third-party not-for-profit corporation approved by the
267 commissioner with the operation of interdistrict magnet school
268 programs. All interdistrict magnet schools shall be operated in
269 conformance with the same laws and regulations applicable to public
270 schools. For the purposes of this section "an interdistrict magnet school
271 program" means a program which (i) supports racial, ethnic and
272 economic diversity, (ii) offers a special and high quality curriculum, and
273 (iii) requires students who are enrolled to attend at least half-time. An
274 interdistrict magnet school program does not include a regional
275 agricultural science and technology school, a technical education and
276 career school or a regional special education center. For the school year
277 commencing July 1, 2017, and each school year thereafter, the governing
278 authority for each interdistrict magnet school program shall (I) restrict
279 the number of students that may enroll in the school from a participating
280 district to seventy-five per cent of the total school enrollment, and (II)
281 maintain a total school enrollment that is in accordance with the

282 [reduced-isolation setting] enrollment standards for interdistrict
283 magnet school programs, developed by the Commissioner of Education
284 pursuant to section 10-264r, as amended by this act.

285 (b) (1) Applications for interdistrict magnet school program
286 operating grants awarded pursuant to this section shall be submitted
287 annually to the Commissioner of Education at such time and in such
288 manner as the commissioner prescribes, except that on and after July 1,
289 2009, applications for such operating grants for new interdistrict magnet
290 schools, other than those that the commissioner determines will assist
291 the state in meeting its obligations pursuant to the decision in *Sheff v.*
292 *O'Neill*, 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order in effect,
293 as determined by the commissioner, shall not be accepted until the
294 commissioner develops a comprehensive state-wide interdistrict
295 magnet school plan. The commissioner shall submit such
296 comprehensive state-wide interdistrict magnet school plan on or before
297 October 1, 2016, to the joint standing committees of the General
298 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education and
299 appropriations.

300 (2) In determining whether an application shall be approved and
301 funds awarded pursuant to this section, the commissioner shall
302 consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to: (A) Whether the
303 program offered by the school is likely to increase student achievement;
304 (B) whether the program is likely to reduce racial, ethnic and economic
305 isolation; (C) the percentage of the student enrollment in the program
306 from each participating district; and (D) the proposed operating budget
307 and the sources of funding for the interdistrict magnet school. For a
308 magnet school not operated by a local or regional board of education,
309 the commissioner shall only approve a proposed operating budget that,
310 on a per pupil basis, does not exceed the maximum allowable threshold
311 established in accordance with this subdivision. The maximum
312 allowable threshold shall be an amount equal to one hundred twenty
313 per cent of the state average of the quotient obtained by dividing net
314 current expenditures, as defined in section 10-261, by average daily
315 membership, as defined in said section, for the fiscal year two years

316 prior to the fiscal year for which the operating grant is requested. The
317 Department of Education shall establish the maximum allowable
318 threshold no later than December fifteenth of the fiscal year prior to the
319 fiscal year for which the operating grant is requested. If requested by an
320 applicant that is not a local or regional board of education, the
321 commissioner may approve a proposed operating budget that exceeds
322 the maximum allowable threshold if the commissioner determines that
323 there are extraordinary programmatic needs. For the fiscal years ending
324 June 30, 2017, [June 30, 2018, June 30, 2020, and June 30, 2021] to June 30,
325 2025, inclusive, in the case of an interdistrict magnet school that will
326 assist the state in meeting its obligations pursuant to the decision in
327 Sheff v. O'Neill, 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order
328 in effect, as determined by the commissioner, the commissioner shall
329 also consider whether the school is meeting the [reduced-isolation
330 setting] enrollment standards for interdistrict magnet school programs,
331 developed by the commissioner pursuant to section 10-264r, as
332 amended by this act. If such school has not met such [reduced-isolation
333 setting] enrollment standards, it shall not be entitled to receive a grant
334 pursuant to this section unless the commissioner finds that it is
335 appropriate to award a grant for an additional year or years and
336 approves a plan to bring such school into compliance with such
337 [reduced-isolation setting] enrollment standards. If requested by the
338 commissioner, the applicant shall meet with the commissioner or the
339 commissioner's designee to discuss the budget and sources of funding.

340 (3) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2018, to June 30, 2025,
341 inclusive, the commissioner shall not award a grant to an interdistrict
342 magnet school program that (A) has more than seventy-five per cent of
343 the total school enrollment from one school district, or (B) does not
344 maintain a total school enrollment that is in accordance with the
345 [reduced-isolation setting] enrollment standards for interdistrict
346 magnet school programs, developed by the Commissioner of Education
347 pursuant to section 10-264r, as amended by this act, except the
348 commissioner may award a grant to such school for an additional year
349 or years if the commissioner finds it is appropriate to do so and

350 approves a plan to bring such school into compliance with such
351 residency or [reduced-isolation setting] enrollment standards.

352 (4) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2018, to [June 30, 2021] June 30,
353 2025, inclusive, if an interdistrict magnet school program does not
354 maintain a total school enrollment that is in accordance with the
355 [reduced-isolation setting] enrollment standards for interdistrict
356 magnet school programs, developed by the commissioner pursuant to
357 section 10-264r, as amended by this act, for two or more consecutive
358 years, the commissioner may impose a financial penalty on the operator
359 of such interdistrict magnet school program, or take any other measure,
360 in consultation with such operator, as may be appropriate to assist such
361 operator in complying with such [reduced-isolation setting] enrollment
362 standards.

363 Sec. 10. Section 10-264r of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes
364 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
365 *1, 2024*):

366 Not later than July 1, 2017, the Commissioner of Education shall
367 develop, and revise as necessary thereafter, reduced-isolation
368 enrollment standards for interdistrict magnet school programs that shall
369 serve as the enrollment requirements for purposes of section 10-264l, as
370 amended by this act. Such standards shall (1) comply with the decision
371 of *Sheff v. O'Neill*, 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order
372 in effect, for an interdistrict magnet school program located in the Sheff
373 region, as defined in subsection (k) of section 10-264l, as amended by
374 this act, (2) define the term "reduced-isolation student" for purposes of
375 the standards, (3) establish a requirement for the minimum percentage
376 of reduced-isolation students that can be enrolled in an interdistrict
377 magnet school program, provided such minimum percentage is not less
378 than twenty per cent of the total school enrollment, (4) allow an
379 interdistrict magnet school program to have a total school enrollment of
380 reduced-isolation students that is not more than one per cent below the
381 minimum percentage established by the commissioner, provided the
382 commissioner approves a plan that is designed to bring the number of

383 reduced-isolation students of such interdistrict magnet school program
384 into compliance with the minimum percentage, and (5) for the school
385 year commencing July 1, 2018, authorize the commissioner to establish
386 on or before May 1, 2018, and revise as necessary thereafter, an
387 alternative reduced-isolation student enrollment percentage for an
388 interdistrict magnet school program located in the Sheff region,
389 provided the commissioner (A) determines that such alternative (i)
390 increases opportunities for students who are residents of Hartford to
391 access an educational setting with reduced racial isolation or other
392 categories of diversity, including, but not limited to, geography,
393 socioeconomic status, special education, multilingual learners and
394 academic achievement, (ii) complies with the decision of Sheff v.
395 O'Neill, 238 Conn. 1 (1996), or any related stipulation or order in effect,
396 and (B) approves a plan for such interdistrict magnet school program
397 that is designed to bring the number of reduced-isolation students of
398 such interdistrict magnet school program into compliance with such
399 alternative or the minimum percentage described in subdivision (2) of
400 this section. Not later than May 1, 2018, the commissioner shall submit
401 a report on each alternative reduced-isolation student enrollment
402 percentage established, pursuant to subdivision (4) of this section, for
403 an interdistrict magnet school program located in the Sheff region to the
404 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
405 matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of
406 section 11-4a. The reduced-isolation [setting] enrollment standards for
407 interdistrict magnet school programs shall not be deemed to be
408 regulations, as defined in section 4-166.

409 Sec. 11. Subsection (b) of section 22-38d of the general statutes is
410 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
411 *2024*):

412 (b) The Department of Education, in consultation with the
413 Department of Agriculture, school food service directors and interested
414 farming organizations, shall (1) establish a week-long promotional
415 event, to be known as Connecticut-Grown for Connecticut Kids Week,
416 in late September or early October each year, that will promote

417 Connecticut agriculture and foods to children through school meal and
418 classroom programs, at farms, farmers' markets and other locations in
419 the community, (2) encourage and solicit school districts, individual
420 schools and other educational institutions under its jurisdiction to
421 purchase Connecticut-grown farm products, (3) provide outreach,
422 guidance and training to districts, parent and teacher organizations,
423 schools and school food service directors concerning the value of and
424 procedure for purchasing and incorporating into their regular menus
425 Connecticut-grown farm products, (4) in consultation with the
426 Department of Agriculture, arrange for local, regional and state-wide
427 events where potential purchasers and farmers can interact, and (5)
428 provide technical assistance and support for schools to arrange for
429 interaction between students and farmers, including field trips to farms
430 and in-school presentations by farmers.

431 Sec. 12. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 10-74o of the 2024
432 supplement to the general statutes are repealed and the following is
433 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

434 (a) As used in this section and sections 10-74q and 10-74r, as amended
435 by this act:

436 (1) "Transition service" [means a service for a student who requires
437 special education that facilitates the student's transition from school to
438 postsecondary activities such as postsecondary education and training,
439 employment or independent living] has the same meaning as provided
440 in 34 CFR 300.43, as amended from time to time;

441 (2) "Transition resources" means sources of information, counseling
442 or training concerning transition services or programs;

443 (3) ["Public transition program"] "Transition program" means a
444 program [operated by a local or regional board of education or a
445 regional educational service center] to provide transition services as
446 recommended by the planning and placement team for a student who
447 requires special education and is eighteen to twenty-two years of age,
448 inclusive, based on the goals set forth in such student's individualized

449 education program; and

450 (4) "Transition coordinator" means a director of pupil personnel or
451 other person employed by a local or regional board of education, as
452 designated by such director, who assists parents and students in the
453 school district governed by such board navigate the transition resources,
454 transition services and [public] transition programs operated by a local
455 or regional board of education or a regional educational service center
456 available for such students.

457 (b) The Department of Education shall employ a State-wide
458 Transition Services Coordinator within the Bureau of Special Education.
459 The State-wide Transition Services Coordinator shall (1) coordinate the
460 provision of transition resources, transition services and [public]
461 transition programs operated by a local or regional board of education
462 or a regional educational service center throughout the state in
463 collaboration with the liaisons appointed by other state agencies
464 pursuant to section 10-74m, as amended by this act, (2) establish
465 minimum standards for [public] transition programs operated by a local
466 or regional board of education or a regional educational service center
467 and metrics for measuring such standards, (3) perform [unannounced]
468 site visits of [public] transition programs operated by a local or regional
469 board of education or a regional educational service center for the
470 purpose of determining the effectiveness of and suggesting
471 improvements to such programs and post data on the department's
472 Internet web site related to how such [public] transition program
473 measured against the minimum standards established pursuant to
474 subdivision (2) of this subsection, except the State-wide Transition
475 Services Coordinator or the Department of Education may perform any
476 necessary unannounced site visit of such transition programs in
477 addition to the site visits described in this subdivision, (4) develop and
478 make available on the department's Internet web site a course for
479 educators and school staff who do not provide transition services to
480 inform such educators and staff about transition services and programs,
481 including, but not limited to, about the purpose, essential programming
482 and deadlines of such programs, (5) establish minimum standards for

483 the training of transition coordinators and maintain a record of each
484 transition coordinator completing the training program developed by
485 the Department of Education pursuant to section 10-74r, as amended by
486 this act, and (6) establish best practices for the provision of transition
487 services and distribute such best practices to each transition coordinator.

488 Sec. 13. Section 10-74m of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes
489 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
490 *1, 2024*):

491 (a) The Department of Education shall enter into memoranda of
492 understanding with the Office of Early Childhood and the Departments
493 of Developmental Services, Aging and Disability Services, Children and
494 Families, Social Services and Correction regarding the provision of
495 special education and related services to children, including, but not
496 limited to, education, health care, transition resources, transition
497 services and [public] transition programs, as those terms are defined in
498 section 10-74o, as amended by this act. Such memoranda of
499 understanding shall account for current programs and services, utilize
500 best practices and be updated or renewed at least every five years.

501 (b) The Office of Early Childhood and the Departments of
502 Developmental Services, Aging and Disability Services, Children and
503 Families, Social Services and Correction shall, as necessary, enter into
504 memoranda of understanding regarding the provision of special
505 education and related services to children as such services relate to one
506 another. Such memoranda of understanding shall account for current
507 programs and services, utilize best practices and be updated or renewed
508 at least every five years.

509 (c) The Office of Early Childhood and the Departments of
510 Developmental Services, Aging and Disability Services, Children and
511 Families, the Labor Department, Mental Health and Addiction Services,
512 Public Health, Social Services and Correction shall each appoint an
513 employee to act as a liaison to the Department of Education's State-wide
514 Transition Services Coordinator, established pursuant to section 10-74o₂,

515 as amended by this act. Each liaison shall provide information and
516 advice to such coordinator concerning the transition resources,
517 transition services and [public] transition programs provided by the
518 agency such liaison represents.

519 Sec. 14. Subsection (a) of section 10-74n of the 2024 supplement to the
520 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
521 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

522 (a) The [State Education Resource Center, established pursuant to
523 section 10-357a] Department of Education's State-wide Transition
524 Services Coordinator, established pursuant to section 10-74o, as
525 amended by this act, in collaboration with the [Departments of
526 Education, Developmental Services, Social Services and Aging and
527 Disability Services and the Offices of Workforce Strategy and Policy and
528 Management] liaisons appointed by other state agencies pursuant to
529 section 10-74m, as amended by this act, shall: (1) Develop and maintain
530 an easily accessible and navigable online listing of the transition
531 resources, transition services and [public] transition programs, as those
532 terms are defined in section 10-74o, as amended by this act, provided by
533 each such [center, department or office] state agency, including, but not
534 limited to, for each resource, service and program (A) a plain language
535 description, (B) eligibility requirements, and (C) application deadlines
536 and instructions, and (2) annually collect information related to
537 transition resources, programs and services provided by other state
538 agencies. The Departments of Aging and Disability Services,
539 Developmental Services, [and] Social Services, Children and Families,
540 Mental Health and Addiction Services, Public Health and Correction,
541 the Labor Department and the Office of [Policy and Management] Early
542 Childhood shall each post a link to such online listing on an easily
543 accessible location of said departments' Internet web sites.

544 Sec. 15. Subsection (a) of section 10-74r of the 2024 supplement to the
545 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
546 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

547 (a) Not later than January 1, 2024, each local and regional board of
548 education shall ensure that a transition coordinator has been
549 designated, who may be the director of pupil personnel or another
550 employee of such board appointed as transition coordinator by such
551 director. Each transition coordinator shall (1) complete the training
552 program developed by the Department of Education pursuant to
553 subsection (a) of section 10-74q, provided (A) each transition
554 coordinator appointed prior to the date upon which the training
555 program commences shall complete such training program during the
556 three-year period immediately following such date, and (B) each new
557 transition coordinator appointed after such date shall complete such
558 training program not later than one year after being appointed, and (2)
559 ensure that parents of students requiring special education receive
560 information concerning transition resources, transition services or
561 [public] transition programs in accordance with section 10-74n, as
562 amended by this act, and are aware of the eligibility requirements and
563 application details of such resources, services and programs that
564 specifically apply to such student.

565 Sec. 16. Subparagraph (B) of subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of
566 section 10-76d of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed
567 and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

568 (B) At the first planning and placement team meeting when a child
569 reaches the age of fourteen and has a statement of transition service
570 needs included in such child's individualized education program
571 pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, the planning and
572 placement team shall, for each [public] transition program, as defined
573 in section 10-74o, as amended by this act, operated by the local or
574 regional board of education or the regional educational service center
575 where the board is located and each program for [adults] adult services
576 for which such child may be eligible after graduation, (i) upon the
577 approval of the parent or guardian of such child, or a surrogate parent
578 of such child appointed pursuant to section 10-94g, or such child if such
579 child is an emancipated minor, notify the state agency that provides
580 such program about the potential eligibility of such child, and (ii)

581 provide such parent, guardian, surrogate parent or child a listing of such
582 programs that includes, but is not limited to, (I) a plain language
583 description of such program, (II) eligibility requirements for such
584 program, and (III) deadlines and instructions for applications for such
585 programs.

586 Sec. 17. Subsection (b) of section 10-95i of the general statutes is
587 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
588 *2024*):

589 (b) During the five-year period beginning January 1, 2020, and during
590 each five-year period thereafter, the board shall evaluate each existing
591 technical education and career school trade program in accordance with
592 a schedule which the board shall establish. A trade program may be
593 reauthorized for a period of not more than five years following each
594 evaluation on the basis of: The projected employment demand for
595 students enrolled in the trade program, including consideration of the
596 employment of graduates of the program during the preceding five
597 years; anticipated technological changes; the availability of qualified
598 instructors; the existence of similar programs at other educational
599 institutions; and student interest in the trade program. As part of the
600 evaluation, the board shall consider geographic differences that may
601 make a trade program feasible at one school and not another and
602 whether certain combinations of program offerings shall be required.
603 Prior to any final decision on the reauthorization of a trade program, the
604 board shall consult with the [craft] program advisory committees for the
605 trade program being evaluated.

606 Sec. 18. Section 10-95j of the general statutes is repealed and the
607 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

608 The Technical Education and Career System board shall include in
609 the report required pursuant to section 10-95k, a summary of the
610 following:

611 (1) Admissions policies for the Technical Education and Career
612 System;

613 (2) Recruitment and retention of faculty;

614 (3) Efforts to strengthen consideration of the needs of and to develop
615 greater public awareness of the Technical Education and Career System;
616 and

617 (4) Efforts to strengthen the role of [career and technical education]
618 program advisory committees and increase employer participation.

619 Sec. 19. Section 10-96c of the general statutes is repealed and the
620 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

621 The executive director of the Technical Education and Career System
622 may indemnify and hold harmless any person, as defined in section 1-
623 79, who makes a gift of tangible property or properties with a fair
624 market value in excess of one thousand dollars to the Technical
625 Education and Career System for instructional purposes. Any
626 indemnification under this section shall be solely for any damages
627 caused as a result of the use of such tangible property, provided there
628 shall be no indemnification for any liability resulting from (1)
629 intentional or wilful misconduct by the person providing such tangible
630 property to [the department or] the Technical Education and Career
631 System, or (2) hidden defects in such tangible property that are known
632 to and not disclosed by the person providing such tangible property to
633 [the department or] the Technical Education and Career System at the
634 time the gift is made.

635 Sec. 20. Section 10-66p of the general statutes is repealed and the
636 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

637 (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 4-98, 4-212 to 4-219,
638 inclusive, 4a-51 and 4a-57, the Commissioner of Education may allocate
639 funds to allow regional educational service centers and state education
640 organizations to provide professional development services, technical
641 assistance and evaluation activities to local and regional boards of
642 education, state charter schools, technical education and career schools,
643 school readiness providers and other educational entities, as

644 determined by the commissioner. Regional educational service centers
645 and state education organizations shall expend such funds in
646 accordance with procedures and conditions prescribed by the
647 commissioner. For purposes of this [section] subsection, state education
648 organizations may include, but not be limited to, organizations or
649 associations representing superintendents, boards of education and
650 elementary and secondary schools.

651 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 4-98, 4-212 to 4-219,
652 inclusive, 4a-51 and 4a-57, the executive director of the Technical
653 Education and Career System may allocate funds to allow regional
654 educational service centers to provide professional development
655 services, technical assistance, special education services and evaluation
656 activities to technical education and career schools, as determined by the
657 executive director. Regional educational service centers shall expend
658 such funds in accordance with procedures and conditions prescribed by
659 the executive director.

660 Sec. 21. Section 10-95 of the general statutes is repealed and the
661 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

662 There is established a state-wide system of technical education and
663 career schools to be known as the Technical Education and Career
664 System. The Technical Education and Career System shall offer (1) full-
665 time comprehensive secondary education at technical high schools
666 located throughout the state, and [may offer] (2) part-time, [and]
667 evening [] and extracurricular programs in vocational, technical,
668 technological and postsecondary education and training.

669 Sec. 22. Section 10-95p of the general statutes is repealed and the
670 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

671 (a) There is established a division of postsecondary educational
672 programs within the Technical Education and Career System. The
673 division shall administer any postsecondary educational program that
674 (1) was offered at a technical education and career school during the
675 school year commencing July 1, 2016, or (2) is approved by the Technical

676 Education and Career System board. [on or after July 5, 2017.]

677 (b) Any student admitted for enrollment in a postsecondary
678 educational program administered by the division shall have a high
679 school diploma or its equivalent, or [be twenty-one years of age or older]
680 have completed the school year in which such student reaches twenty-
681 two years of age.

682 Sec. 23. Section 10-76q of the general statutes is repealed and the
683 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

684 (a) The Technical Education and Career System, established pursuant
685 to section 10-95, as amended by this act, shall: (1) Provide the
686 professional services necessary to identify, in accordance with section
687 10-76a, children requiring special education who are enrolled at a
688 technical education and career school; (2) identify each such child; (3)
689 determine the appropriateness of the technical education and career
690 school for the educational needs of each such child; (4) provide an
691 appropriate educational program for each such child, including, but not
692 limited to, providing and funding transition programs, as defined in
693 section 10-74o, as amended by this act; (5) maintain a record thereof; and
694 (6) annually evaluate the progress and accomplishments of special
695 education programs provided by the Technical Education and Career
696 System.

697 (b) Where it is deemed appropriate that a child enrolled in a technical
698 education and career school receive special education, the parents or
699 guardian of such child shall have a right to the hearing and appeal
700 process as provided for in section 10-76h.

701 (c) Prior to a student's enrollment in a technical education and career
702 school, the local or regional board of education for the town in which
703 such student resides shall convene a planning and placement team
704 meeting, except the planning and placement team meeting for a student
705 who has been educated in a home shall be convened by the Technical
706 Education and Career System. The purpose of such meeting shall be to
707 address such student's transition to such technical education and career

708 school and ensure that such student's individualized education
709 program reflects the current supports and services that such student
710 requires in order to access a free and appropriate public education in the
711 least restrictive environment. A representative from such technical
712 education and career school shall be invited to such meeting.

713 Sec. 24. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) As used in this section and
714 sections 25 to 32, inclusive, of this act:

715 (1) "Accredited" means an early care and education program (A)
716 accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young
717 Children, National Association for Family Child Care or other
718 nationally recognized accreditations or certifications as approved by the
719 commissioner, or (B) that has received Early Head Start or Head Start
720 federal approval;

721 (2) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Early Childhood;
722 and

723 (3) "Office" means the Office of Early Childhood.

724 Sec. 25. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Office of Early Childhood
725 shall operate and administer Early Start CT in order to provide state
726 funding to early care and education programs throughout the state and
727 coordinate and facilitate the efficient delivery of such early care and
728 education programs for eligible children. Under Early Start CT, the
729 office shall:

730 (1) Provide open access for infants and toddlers and preschool-age
731 children to high-quality early care and education programs that
732 promote the health and safety of children and prepare them for school;

733 (2) Provide opportunities for parents to choose among affordable and
734 accredited early care and education programs;

735 (3) Encourage coordination and cooperation among early care and
736 education programs and prevent the duplication of services;

737 (4) Identify the specific service needs and unique resources available
738 to particular municipalities;

739 (5) Prevent or minimize the potential for developmental delay in
740 children prior to their reaching the age of five;

741 (6) Strengthen the family through: (A) Encouragement of family
742 engagement and partnership in a child's development and education,
743 and (B) enhancement of a family's capacity to meet the special needs of
744 the children, including children with disabilities;

745 (7) Reduce educational costs by decreasing the need for special
746 education services for school-age children;

747 (8) Assure that children with disabilities are integrated into early care
748 and education programs available to children who do not have
749 disabilities;

750 (9) Improve the availability and quality of Early Start CT programs
751 and their coordination with the services of child care providers;

752 (10) Facilitate the racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of the
753 children, families and staff in early care and education programs; and

754 (11) Maximize local and federal early care and education funding to
755 expand capacity and access.

756 Sec. 26. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) As part of Early Start CT, the
757 state, acting by and in the discretion of the Commissioner of Early
758 Childhood, may enter into direct or third-party contracts to provide
759 financial assistance to municipalities, local and regional boards of
760 education, regional educational service centers, family resource centers,
761 Head Start programs, preschool programs, nonprofit organizations,
762 child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes, as
763 such terms are described in section 19a-77 of the general statutes, and
764 any other programs that meet standards established by the
765 commissioner for the purpose of operating early care and education
766 programs that focus on providing early childhood services based on

767 economic, social or environmental conditions, including in regions with
768 insufficient access to child care. At least sixty per cent of the eligible
769 children enrolled in an early care and education program receiving
770 financial assistance under Early Start CT shall be members of a family
771 that is at or below seventy-five per cent of the state median income. No
772 such financial assistance shall be available to (1) any such child care
773 center, group child care home or family child care home unless such
774 center or home has been licensed by the Commissioner of Early
775 Childhood pursuant to section 19a-80 or 19a-87b of the general statutes,
776 as amended by this act, or (2) any such local or regional board of
777 education or regional educational service center unless the preschool
778 program is approved by the Department of Education. The
779 commissioner shall ensure that the majority of such early care and
780 education programs receiving such financial assistance shall serve
781 children that reside in or attend early care and education programs
782 located in priority school districts pursuant to section 10-266p of the
783 general statutes, former priority school districts or towns with schools
784 deemed severe need schools because forty per cent or more of the
785 lunches served are served to students who are eligible for free or
786 reduced price lunches pursuant to federal law. In determining whether
787 to enter into a contract for financial assistance under this section, the
788 commissioner may consider (A) a community's participation in the
789 state's subsidized child care subsidy program established pursuant to
790 section 17b-749 of the general statutes, and (B) the Centers for Disease
791 Control and Prevention's social vulnerability index determined by
792 census tract.

793 (b) Any contract for financial assistance entered into under this
794 section shall be contingent upon available funding and a successful
795 application submitted to the office and which has been informed by the
796 appropriate local or regional governance partner's needs assessment
797 and community plan, as described in section 27 of this act.

798 (c) The office, in operating and administering Early Start CT, may
799 allocate an amount up to ten per cent of the total financial assistance
800 under the contract with each local or regional governance partner

801 established pursuant to section 27 of this act, but not more than one
802 hundred fifty thousand dollars, for coordination, program evaluation
803 and administration. Such amount shall be increased by an amount equal
804 to local funding provided for early childhood education coordination,
805 program evaluation and administration, not to exceed fifty thousand
806 dollars. Each local or regional governance partner shall designate a staff
807 person to be responsible for such coordination, program evaluation and
808 administration and to act as a liaison between the town or towns and
809 the commissioner.

810 (d) Any early care and education program receiving financial
811 assistance under Early Start CT shall not discriminate based on ancestry,
812 race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual
813 orientation, religion, learning, physical, intellectual or mental disability
814 or any other protected class described in chapter 814c of the general
815 statutes.

816 (e) No financial assistance received as part of Early Start CT under
817 this section shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding
818 received for early care and education on behalf of children in an early
819 care and education program.

820 (f) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, the office may pay, in
821 an individual contract entered into under this section, a per-child rate
822 or an amount per classroom that has been determined by the
823 commissioner. (A) The per-child rate paid by the office under this
824 section for each eligible child enrolled in a program under Early Start
825 CT who is three or four years of age and each child who is five years of
826 age and not eligible to enroll in school, pursuant to section 10-15c of the
827 general statutes, shall be at least ten thousand five hundred dollars for
828 each such child. The amount per classroom for such children described
829 in this subparagraph shall be at an equivalent rate per child multiplied
830 by the total capacity of the classroom as determined by the
831 commissioner on a case by case basis and established in the contract. (B)
832 The per-child rate paid by the office under this section for each eligible
833 child enrolled in a program under Early Start CT who is under the age

834 of three and enrolled in an infant or toddler classroom and not in a
835 preschool classroom shall be at least thirteen thousand five hundred
836 dollars for each such child. The amount per classroom for such children
837 described in this subparagraph shall be at an equivalent rate per child
838 multiplied by the total capacity of the classroom as determined by the
839 commissioner on a case by case basis and established in the contract.

840 (2) For purposes of implementing the provisions of this subsection,
841 the commissioner shall develop policies and procedures governing
842 classroom sizes, payments and required enrollment rates. The
843 commissioner shall use data-driven, outcomes-based contract
844 provisions to facilitate and incentivize full enrollment.

845 (g) The office may use up to three per cent of funds allocated to the
846 early care and education appropriation to evaluate program
847 effectiveness and impact on participating children, families and
848 programs, including, but not limited to, child outcomes, later school
849 performance, quality standards, professional development and
850 preparation, and parent engagement impact.

851 (h) Any Early Start CT facility that has been approved to operate an
852 early care or education program financed through the Connecticut
853 Health and Education Facilities Authority and has received a
854 commitment for debt service from the Department of Social Services,
855 pursuant to section 17b-749i of the general statutes, on or before June 30,
856 2014, and on or after July 1, 2014, from the office shall be exempt from
857 the requirement for issuance of requests for proposals.

858 Sec. 27. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) There shall be established,
859 within available appropriations, local or regional governance partners
860 to assist in the provision of early care and education in a community
861 under Early Start CT. A town or school district and appropriate
862 representatives of groups or entities interested in early care and
863 education in such town or school district may establish a local
864 governance partner. Two or more towns or school districts and
865 appropriate representatives of groups or entities interested in early care

866 and education in a region may establish a regional governance partner.

867 (b) The membership of each local or regional governance partner
868 shall reflect the racial, ethnic and socioeconomic composition of the
869 town or region it serves and consist of early care and education
870 stakeholders, including, but not limited to, elected and appointed
871 officials, parents, representatives with expertise in early care and
872 education, a representative, where applicable, of Smart Start established
873 pursuant to section 10-506 of the general statutes, as amended by this
874 act, local education and healthcare providers in the community, a local
875 homeless education liaison, community representatives from a
876 workforce or job training entity and other community representatives
877 who provide services to children.

878 (c) The role and responsibilities of a local or regional governance
879 partner shall include, but are not limited to, (1) conducting and
880 administering a data-driven needs assessment for its respective
881 community or region in accordance with the provisions of subsection
882 (d) of this section, (2) employing strategies to solicit parental
883 engagement and membership, (3) providing periodic technical
884 assistance regarding best practices in early care and education and
885 family engagement for its town or region, (4) jointly sponsoring with the
886 office, professional development opportunities, and (5) ensuring that
887 community outreach is regularly conducted and maintained with
888 community stakeholders.

889 (d) Each local or regional governance partner shall, within available
890 appropriations, conduct a data-driven needs assessment for the town or
891 region in which such partner serves. Such needs assessment may
892 include recommendations for the preferred distribution and allocation
893 of child care spaces within such partner's respective town or region, and,
894 subject to the office's approval, may include a data-driven methodology
895 to reassign child care spaces before the contract date has lapsed. Such
896 needs assessment shall be created by the office in collaboration with
897 communities and shall directly inform, among other things, the
898 assignment of child care spaces across a mixed-delivery system,

899 including, but not limited to, licensed family child care homes, group
900 child care homes, child care centers and license-exempt public schools.

901 (e) Each local or regional governance partner shall employ a staff
902 liaison to aid and support the local or regional governance partner in
903 implementing the provisions of this section. Each staff liaison shall
904 ensure (1) that partnerships are established and fostered among child
905 care providers, (2) that cooperation is maintained with the Office of
906 Early Childhood in monitoring and evaluating early care and education
907 programs, (3) that existing and potential resources and services
908 available to children and families are identified, (4) facilitation and
909 coordination of efficient, data-driven, delivery of services to children
910 and families, including (A) referral procedures, and (B) before and after
911 school child care for children attending school day, school year
912 programs, (5) the exchange of information with other community
913 organizations serving the needs of children and families, (6) that
914 recommendations are made to school officials concerning transition
915 from child care programs to preschool programs and kindergarten, (7)
916 that effective community engagement strategies are employed to ensure
917 diverse participation, (8) that biannual child assessments, approved by
918 the office, are performed at programs, and conducted in partnership
919 with families, and (9) collaboration with the office related to planning
920 improvements to the state early care and education governance
921 structure.

922 (f) The office shall monitor each local or regional governance partner
923 to ensure compliance with the provisions of this section.

924 Sec. 28. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Office of Early Childhood
925 shall establish a sliding fee scale for families that are enrolled in an early
926 care and education program under Early Start CT. Such sliding scale
927 shall be based on family income and be consistent with the sliding fee
928 scale used in the child care subsidy program described in section 17b-
929 249 of the general statutes.

930 Sec. 29. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) Except as otherwise provided

931 in subsection (b) of this section, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025,
932 and each fiscal year thereafter, if funds appropriated to the Office of
933 Early Childhood for Early Start CT are not expended by the
934 Commissioner of Early Childhood, an amount up to two million dollars
935 of such unexpended funds may be available (1) for the provision of
936 professional development for early care and education program
937 providers, and staff employed in such programs, provided such
938 programs are receiving financial assistance under Early Start CT for
939 infant, toddler and preschool slots, or (2) to support early care and
940 education programs in satisfying the designated qualified staff member
941 requirements described in section 31 of this act, provided such programs
942 receive financial assistance under Early Start CT. The commissioner
943 shall determine how such unexpended funds shall be distributed.

944 (b) If any unexpended funds described in subsection (a) of this section
945 are not expended by the office under said subsection, the commissioner,
946 with the consent of the Secretary of the Office of Policy and
947 Management, may use such unexpended funds to provide support for
948 purposes that include, but are not limited to, (1) assisting early care and
949 education programs in meeting and maintaining accreditation
950 requirements, (2) providing training in implementing preschool
951 assessments and curricula, including training to enhance literacy
952 teaching skills, (3) developing and implementing best practices for
953 parents in supporting preschool and kindergarten student learning, (4)
954 developing and implementing strategies for children to successfully
955 transition to preschool and from preschool to kindergarten, including
956 through parental engagement and whole-family supports that may be
957 utilized through the two-generational initiative, established pursuant to
958 section 17b-112l of the general statutes, or through other available
959 resources, and (5) providing for professional development.

960 Sec. 30. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) Any early care and education
961 program receiving financial assistance under Early Start CT, including,
962 but not limited to, licensed family child care homes, group child care
963 homes, child care centers and other licensed exempt child care providers
964 and settings, shall be accredited not later than three years after entering

965 into a contract with the Office of Early Childhood under Early Start CT
966 pursuant to section 26 of this act. Any such program that is not
967 accredited shall have an approved program plan not later than twelve
968 months after entering into a contract with the office.

969 Sec. 31. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section:

970 (1) "Office of Early Childhood funded early care and education
971 program" means an early care and education program that accepts state
972 funds directly from the office or indirectly through office
973 subcontractors, for any combination of infant, toddler, preschool and
974 before and after school, but does not include the child care subsidy
975 program established pursuant to section 17b-749 of the general statutes.

976 (2) "Designated staff member" means the person assigned the
977 primary responsibility for a classroom of children in an Office of Early
978 Childhood funded early care and education program.

979 (3) "Designated qualified staff member" means a designated staff
980 member who possesses at least one of the following:

981 (A) A bachelor's degree or higher with a concentration in early
982 childhood education from an institution of higher education that is (i)
983 regionally accredited and accredited by the National Association for the
984 Education of Young Children, (ii) regionally accredited and working
985 toward achieving accreditation from the National Association for the
986 Education of Young Children, or (iii) regionally accredited;

987 (B) A certificate issued pursuant to section 10-145b of the general
988 statutes with an endorsement in early childhood education or early
989 childhood special education;

990 (C) Deemed to meet the bachelor's degree requirements by the office
991 without a concentration in early childhood education, but with at least
992 twelve early childhood credits from an institution of higher education
993 that is regionally accredited;

994 (D) A bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education that

995 is regionally accredited, without a concentration in early childhood
996 education, but with at least twelve applicable early childhood credits as
997 determined by the office;

998 (E) Permission from the office if such designated staff member is
999 enrolled in an institution of higher education and engaged in and
1000 making progress in an early childhood planned program of study
1001 leading to an early childhood bachelor's degree.

1002 (b) When a bachelor's degree designated qualified staff member is not
1003 assigned, a person may be deemed a designated qualified staff member
1004 if such person possesses at least one of the qualifications included in
1005 subsection (c) of this section and is under the supervision of an on-site
1006 bachelor's degree designated qualified staff member, except any family
1007 child care home provider that accepts state funds shall meet the
1008 designated qualified staff member qualifications.

1009 (c) When a bachelor's degree designated qualified staff member
1010 supervises an associate degree designated qualified staff member, the
1011 person possessing a bachelor's degree may supervise such associate
1012 degree designated qualified staff member at an off-site location. The
1013 associate degree designated qualified staff member, under the
1014 supervision of a bachelor's degree qualified staff member, shall possess
1015 at least one of the following:

1016 (1) An associate degree or higher with a concentration in early
1017 childhood education from an institution of higher education that is (i)
1018 regionally accredited and accredited by the National Association for the
1019 Education of Young Children, (ii) regionally accredited and working
1020 toward achieving accreditation from the National Association for the
1021 Education of Young Children, or (iii) regionally accredited;

1022 (2) Deemed to meet the associate degree requirements by the office
1023 without a concentration in early childhood education, but with at least
1024 twelve early childhood credits from an institution of higher education
1025 that is regionally accredited;

1026 (3) An associate degree from an institution of higher education that is
1027 regionally accredited, without a concentration in early childhood
1028 education, but with at least twelve applicable early childhood credits as
1029 determined by the office;

1030 (4) Permission from the office if such associate degree designated
1031 qualified staff member is enrolled in an institution of higher education
1032 and engaged in an early childhood planned program of study leading
1033 to an early childhood associate degree.

1034 (d) (1) From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027, inclusive, twenty-five per
1035 cent of the designated staff members at each Office of Early Childhood
1036 funded early childhood education program shall be designated
1037 qualified staff members meeting one of the criteria at the bachelor's
1038 degree level. If the Office of Early Childhood funded early care and
1039 education program is a family child care home, the designated qualified
1040 staff member for such family child care home shall have achieved or be
1041 working toward an early childhood associate degree or bachelor's
1042 degree.

1043 (2) From July 1, 2027, to June 30, 2030, inclusive, fifty per cent of the
1044 designated qualified members at each Office of Early Childhood funded
1045 early childhood education program shall be designated qualified staff
1046 members meeting one of the criteria at the bachelor's degree level. If the
1047 Office of Early Childhood funded early care and education program is
1048 a family child care home, the designated qualified staff member for such
1049 family child care home shall have achieved or be working toward an
1050 early childhood associate degree or bachelor's degree.

1051 (3) On and after July 1, 2030, sixty per cent of the designated qualified
1052 members at each Office of Early Childhood funded child care program
1053 shall be designated qualified staff members meeting one of the criteria
1054 at the bachelor's degree level. If the Office of Early Childhood funded
1055 early care and education program is a family child care home, the
1056 designated qualified staff member for such family child care home shall
1057 have achieved or be working toward an early childhood associate

1058 degree or bachelor's degree.

1059 Sec. 32. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) As part of Early Start CT, the
1060 Commissioner of Early Childhood shall establish a state-funded
1061 competitive program in which contracts are entered into with nonprofit
1062 agencies and local and regional boards of education, which are federal
1063 Head Start grant recipients, to assist in (1) establishing extended-day
1064 and full-day, year-round, Head Start programs or expanding existing
1065 Head Start programs to extended-day or full-day, year-round
1066 programs, (2) enhancing program quality, (3) increasing the number of
1067 children served in those programs that are both Head Start and Early
1068 Head Start grant recipients or delegates, (4) increasing the number of
1069 Early Head Start children served above those who are federally funded,
1070 and (5) increasing the hours for children currently receiving Early Head
1071 Start services. Nonprofit agencies or boards of education seeking
1072 contracts pursuant to this section shall make application to the
1073 commissioner on such forms and at such times as the commissioner
1074 shall prescribe. The commissioner shall include contract provisions that
1075 mandate at least twenty-five per cent of the funding for such contracts
1076 shall be for the purpose of enhancing program quality. All contracts
1077 entered into under this section shall be funded within the limits of
1078 available appropriations or otherwise from federal funds and private
1079 donations. All Head Start programs funded pursuant to this section
1080 shall be in compliance with federal Head Start program performance
1081 standards.

1082 Sec. 33. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of Early
1083 Childhood shall implement policies and procedures necessary to (1)
1084 administer the provisions of sections 24 to 32, inclusive, of this act, (2)
1085 implement infant and toddler and school-age ratios and group size
1086 requirements, and (3) implement head teacher staffing requirements for
1087 programs that serve only school-age children, while in the process of
1088 adopting such policies and procedures in regulation form.

1089 (b) Any existing regulations relating to infant and toddler and school-
1090 age ratios, group size requirements and head teacher staffing

1091 requirements for programs that serve only school-age children that are
1092 generally applicable to child care centers and group child care homes
1093 shall continue to be applicable to such centers and homes that serve
1094 infants and toddlers and school-age children until replaced and
1095 superseded by the policies and procedures described in this section.

1096 (c) The commissioner shall post notice of the intent to adopt
1097 regulations on the department's Internet web site and the eRegulations
1098 System not later than twenty days after the date of implementation of
1099 such policies and procedures. Such policies and procedures shall be
1100 valid until the time final regulations are adopted.

1101 Sec. 34. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) Notwithstanding the provisions
1102 of sections 4-98, 4-212 to 4-219, inclusive, 4a-51 and 4a-57 of the general
1103 statutes, the Commissioner of Early Childhood may, within available
1104 appropriations, allocate funds to regional educational service centers for
1105 the provision of professional development services, technical assistance
1106 and evaluation and program planning and implementation activities,
1107 local and regional boards of education, child care centers, group child
1108 care homes and family child care homes, as such terms are described in
1109 section 19a-77 of the general statutes, and other early childhood care and
1110 education entities, as determined by the commissioner. Any funds
1111 allocated by the commissioner under this section shall be expended in
1112 accordance with procedures and conditions prescribed by the
1113 commissioner.

1114 Sec. 35. (*Effective July 1, 2024*) (a) For the fiscal year ending June 30,
1115 2025, the office may pay, in an individual contract entered into under
1116 sections 8-210, as amended by this act, and 10-16p of the general
1117 statutes, or a grant awarded pursuant to section 10-16n of the general
1118 statutes, as amended by this act, a per-child rate or an amount per
1119 classroom that has been determined by the commissioner. (1) The per-
1120 child rate paid by the office under this section for each eligible child
1121 enrolled in a program under Early Start CT who is three or four years of
1122 age and each child who is five years of age and not eligible to enroll in
1123 school, pursuant to section 10-15c of the general statutes, shall be at least

1124 ten thousand five hundred dollars for each such child. The amount per
1125 classroom for such children described in this subdivision shall be at an
1126 equivalent rate per child multiplied by the total capacity of the
1127 classroom as determined by the commissioner on a case by case basis
1128 and established in the contract. (2) The per-child rate paid by the office
1129 under this section for each eligible child enrolled in a program under
1130 Early Start CT who is under the age of three and enrolled in an infant or
1131 toddler classroom and not in a preschool classroom shall be at least
1132 thirteen thousand five hundred dollars for each such child. The amount
1133 per classroom for such children described in this subdivision shall be at
1134 an equivalent rate per child multiplied by the total capacity of the
1135 classroom as determined by the commissioner on a case by case basis
1136 and established in the contract.

1137 (b) For purposes of implementing the provisions of this section, the
1138 commissioner shall develop policies and procedures governing
1139 classroom sizes, payments and required enrollment rates. The
1140 commissioner shall use data-driven, outcomes-based contract
1141 provisions to facilitate and incentivize full enrollment.

1142 Sec. 36. Subsection (b) of section 8-210 of the 2024 supplement to the
1143 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
1144 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

1145 (b) The state, acting by and in the discretion of the Commissioner of
1146 Early Childhood, may enter into a contract with a municipality, a group
1147 child care home or family child care home, as described in section 19a-
1148 77, a human resource development agency or a nonprofit corporation
1149 for state financial assistance in developing and operating child care
1150 centers, group child care homes and family child care homes for
1151 children disadvantaged by reasons of economic, social or environmental
1152 conditions, provided no such financial assistance shall be available for
1153 the operating costs of any such child care center, group child care home
1154 or family child care home unless it has been licensed by the
1155 Commissioner of Early Childhood pursuant to section 19a-80. Such
1156 financial assistance shall be available for a program of a municipality, of

1157 a group child care home or family child care home, of a human resource
1158 development agency or of a nonprofit corporation which may provide
1159 for personnel, equipment, supplies, activities, program materials and
1160 renovation and remodeling of the physical facilities of such child care
1161 centers, group child care homes or family child care homes. Such
1162 contract shall provide for state financial assistance, within available
1163 appropriations, in the form of a state grant-in-aid (1) for a portion of the
1164 cost of such program, as determined by the Commissioner of Early
1165 Childhood, if not federally assisted, (2) equal to one-half of the amount
1166 by which the net cost of such program, as approved by the
1167 Commissioner of Early Childhood, exceeds the federal grant-in-aid
1168 thereof, or (3) (A) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, in an amount
1169 not less than [(A)] (i) the per child cost as described in subdivision (1) of
1170 subsection (b) of section 10-16q, as amended by this act, for each child
1171 in such program that is three or four years of age and each child that is
1172 five years of age who is not eligible to enroll in school, pursuant to
1173 section 10-15c, while maintaining services to children under three years
1174 of age under this section, and [(B)] (ii) thirteen thousand five hundred
1175 dollars for each child three years of age or under who is in infant or
1176 toddler care and not in a preschool program, and (B) for the fiscal year
1177 ending June 30, 2025, in accordance with the provisions of section 35 of
1178 this act. Any such contract entered into on or after July 1, 2022, shall
1179 include a provision that at least sixty per cent of the children enrolled in
1180 such child care center, group child care home or family child care home
1181 are members of families who are at or below seventy-five per cent of the
1182 state median income. The Commissioner of Early Childhood may
1183 authorize child care centers, group child care homes and family child
1184 care homes receiving financial assistance under this subsection to apply
1185 a program surplus to the next program year. The Commissioner of Early
1186 Childhood shall consult with directors of child care centers in
1187 establishing fees for the operation of such centers. For the fiscal year
1188 ending June 30, 2023, the Commissioner of Early Childhood shall,
1189 within available appropriations, enter into contracts under this section
1190 for the purpose of expanding the number of spaces available to children
1191 three years of age or under who are in infant or toddler care and not in

1192 a preschool program.

1193 Sec. 37. Subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 10-16q of the 2024
1194 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is
1195 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

1196 (b) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, the per child cost of
1197 the Office of Early Childhood school readiness program offered by a
1198 school readiness provider shall not exceed eight thousand nine hundred
1199 twenty-seven dollars. For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2021, to June
1200 30, 2024, inclusive, the per child cost of the Office of Early Childhood
1201 school readiness program offered by a school readiness provider shall
1202 not exceed nine thousand twenty-seven dollars. For the fiscal year
1203 ending June 30, 2025, the per child cost of the Office of Early Childhood
1204 full-time school readiness program offered by a school readiness
1205 provider shall [not exceed ten thousand five hundred dollars] be in
1206 accordance with the provisions of section 35 of this act.

1207 Sec. 38. Subsection (b) of section 10-16n of the general statutes is
1208 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1209 *2024*):

1210 (b) The Office of Early Childhood shall annually allocate to each town
1211 in which the number of children under the temporary family assistance
1212 program, as defined in subdivision (17) of section 10-262f, equals or
1213 exceeds nine hundred children, (1) determined for the fiscal [year] years
1214 ending June 30, 1996, to June 30, 2024, inclusive, an amount equal to one
1215 hundred fifty thousand dollars plus eight and one-half dollars for each
1216 child under the temporary family assistance program, provided such
1217 amount may be reduced proportionately so that the total amount
1218 awarded pursuant to this subsection does not exceed two million seven
1219 hundred thousand dollars, and (2) for the fiscal year ending June 30,
1220 2025, an amount determined in accordance with the provisions of
1221 section 35 of this act. The office shall award grants to the local and
1222 regional boards of education for such towns and nonprofit agencies
1223 located in such towns which meet the criteria established pursuant to

1224 subsection (a) of this section to maintain the programs established or
1225 expanded with funds provided pursuant to this subsection in the fiscal
1226 years ending June 30, 1996, and June 30, 1997. Any funds remaining in
1227 the allocation to such a town after grants are so awarded shall be used
1228 to increase allocations to other such towns. Any funds remaining after
1229 grants are so awarded to boards of education and nonprofit agencies in
1230 all such towns shall be available to local and regional boards of
1231 education and nonprofit agencies in other towns in the state for grants
1232 for such purposes.

1233 Sec. 39. Subsection (l) of section 19a-87b of the 2024 supplement to the
1234 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
1235 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

1236 (l) For the fiscal [years] year ending June 30, 2022, [to June 30, 2026,
1237 inclusive] and each fiscal year thereafter, the Commissioner of Early
1238 Childhood may issue a license to maintain a family child care home [in
1239 New Britain, New Haven, Bridgeport, Stamford, Hartford, Danbury or
1240 Waterbury] anywhere in the state in accordance with the provisions of
1241 this chapter to a person or group of persons who have partnered with
1242 an association, organization, corporation, institution or agency, public
1243 or private, to provide child care services in a space provided by such
1244 association, organization, corporation, institution or agency, provided
1245 such space has been approved by the commissioner and is not in a
1246 private family home. The commissioner shall not approve more than
1247 twenty facilities throughout the state to be used for licenses issued
1248 under this subsection. The commissioner may approve more than one
1249 facility in each [such] city or town to be used for licenses issued under
1250 this subsection. An application for a license under this subsection shall
1251 include a copy of the current fire marshal certificate of compliance with
1252 the Fire Safety Code, and written verification of compliance with the
1253 State Building Code, local zoning and building requirements and local
1254 health ordinances. The commissioner may require an applicant for a
1255 license under this subsection to comply with additional conditions
1256 relating to the health and safety of the children who will be served in
1257 such facility. The commissioner may waive any requirement that does

1258 not apply to such facility. Any license issued under this subsection shall
1259 [expire on June 30, 2026] be for a term of four years, except that the
1260 commissioner may suspend or revoke any such license at any time in
1261 accordance with the provisions of section 19a-87e.

1262 Sec. 40. Subsection (a) of section 10-506 of the 2024 supplement to the
1263 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
1264 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

1265 (a) For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2015] 2025, and each fiscal year
1266 thereafter, the Office of Early Childhood, in consultation with the
1267 Department of Education, shall design and administer the Connecticut
1268 Smart Start competitive grant program to provide grants to local and
1269 regional boards of education for capital and operating expenses related
1270 to establishing or expanding a preschool program under the jurisdiction
1271 of the board of education for the town. A local or regional board of
1272 education may submit an application to the office, in accordance with
1273 the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, and may receive (1) a
1274 grant for capital expenses in an amount not to exceed seventy-five
1275 thousand dollars per classroom for costs related to the renovation of an
1276 existing public school to accommodate the establishment or expansion
1277 of a preschool program, and (2) an annual grant for operating expenses
1278 (A) in an amount not to exceed five thousand dollars per child served
1279 by such grant, or (B) in an amount not to exceed seventy-five thousand
1280 dollars for each preschool classroom. [, provided no town shall receive
1281 a total annual grant for operating expenses greater than three hundred
1282 thousand dollars.] Each local or regional board of education that
1283 establishes or expands a preschool program under this section shall be
1284 eligible to receive an annual grant for operating expenses for a period of
1285 five years, provided such preschool program meets standards
1286 established by the Commissioner of Early Childhood. Such local or
1287 regional board of education may submit an application for renewal of
1288 such grant to the office.

1289 Sec. 41. Sections 8-210, 10-16n to 10-16r, inclusive, 10-16t, 10-16u, 10-
1290 16aa, 10-520b, 17b-749a and 17b-749d of the general statutes are

1291 repealed. (Effective July 1, 2025)"

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2024	10-14z(a)
Sec. 2	July 1, 2024	10-14gg(a)
Sec. 3	July 1, 2024	New section
Sec. 4	July 1, 2024	New section
Sec. 5	July 1, 2024	10-5(f)
Sec. 6	from passage	10-264l(k)(1)
Sec. 7	July 1, 2024	New section
Sec. 8	from passage	10-264o
Sec. 9	July 1, 2024	10-264l(a) and (b)
Sec. 10	July 1, 2024	10-264r
Sec. 11	July 1, 2024	22-38d(b)
Sec. 12	July 1, 2024	10-74o(a) and (b)
Sec. 13	July 1, 2024	10-74m
Sec. 14	July 1, 2024	10-74n(a)
Sec. 15	July 1, 2024	10-74r(a)
Sec. 16	July 1, 2024	10-76d(a)(9)(B)
Sec. 17	July 1, 2024	10-95i(b)
Sec. 18	July 1, 2024	10-95j
Sec. 19	July 1, 2024	10-96c
Sec. 20	from passage	10-66p
Sec. 21	from passage	10-95
Sec. 22	from passage	10-95p
Sec. 23	July 1, 2024	10-76q
Sec. 24	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 25	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 26	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 27	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 28	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 29	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 30	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 31	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 32	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 33	from passage	New section
Sec. 34	July 1, 2024	New section
Sec. 35	July 1, 2024	New section
Sec. 36	July 1, 2024	8-210(b)

Sec. 37	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	10-16q(b)(1)
Sec. 38	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	10-16n(b)
Sec. 39	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	19a-87b(l)
Sec. 40	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	10-506(a)
Sec. 41	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	Repealer section