



General Assembly

Amendment

February Session, 2014

LCO No. 4291

SB0002604291SD0

Offered by:
SEN. WILLIAMS, 29th Dist.

To: Subst. Senate Bill No. 26

File No. 662

Cal. No. 302

"AN ACT EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION."

1 After the last section, add the following and renumber sections and
2 internal references accordingly:

3 "Sec. 501. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2014*) (a) For the fiscal years ending
4 June 30, 2015, to June 30, 2024, inclusive, the Office of Early Childhood,
5 in consultation with the Department of Education, shall design and
6 administer the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program to
7 reimburse local and regional boards of education for capital and
8 operating expenses related to establishing or expanding a preschool
9 program under the jurisdiction of the board of education for the town.
10 A local or regional board of education may submit an application to
11 the office, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this
12 section, and may receive (1) a grant for capital expenses in an amount
13 not to exceed seventy-five thousand dollars per classroom for costs
14 related to the renovation of an existing public school to accommodate
15 the establishment or expansion of a preschool program, and (2) an
16 annual grant for operating expenses (A) in an amount not to exceed
17 five thousand dollars per child served by such grant, or (B) in an

18 amount not to exceed seventy-five thousand dollars for each preschool
19 classroom, provided no town shall receive a total annual grant for
20 operating expenses greater than three hundred thousand dollars. Each
21 local or regional board of education that establishes or expands a
22 preschool program under this section shall be eligible to receive an
23 annual grant for operating expenses for a period of five years,
24 provided such preschool program meets standards established by the
25 Commissioner of Early Childhood. Such local or regional board of
26 education may submit an application for renewal of such grant to the
27 office.

28 (b) On and after July 1, 2014, local and regional boards of education,
29 individually or cooperatively, pursuant to section 10-158a of the
30 general statutes, may apply, at such time and in such manner as the
31 commissioner prescribes, to the office for a capital grant and an
32 operating grant for the purposes described in subsection (a) of this
33 section. To be eligible to receive such grants under this section, an
34 applicant board of education shall (1) demonstrate that it has a need
35 for establishing or expanding a preschool program using information
36 requested by the commissioner on a form prescribed by the
37 commissioner, such as data collected from the preschool experience
38 survey, described in section 502 of this act, (2) submit a plan for the
39 expenditure of grant funds received under this section that outlines
40 how such board of education will use such funds to establish or
41 expand a preschool program, including the amount that such board
42 will contribute to the operation of such preschool program, and (3)
43 submit a letter of support for establishing or expanding a preschool
44 program by the local or regional school readiness council, described in
45 section 10-16r of the general statutes, if any, for the school district. The
46 commissioner shall give priority to boards of education (A) that
47 demonstrate the greatest need for the establishment or expansion of a
48 preschool program, and (B) whose plan allocates at least sixty per cent
49 of the spaces in such preschool program to children who are members
50 of families that are at or below seventy-five per cent of the state
51 median income, or fifty per cent of the spaces in such preschool

52 program to children who are eligible for free and reduced price
53 lunches. The commissioner, in reviewing applications submitted under
54 this subsection, shall also take into consideration (i) whether an
55 applicant board of education (I) currently offers a full-day
56 kindergarten program, (II) will be cooperating and coordinating with
57 other governmental and community programs to provide services
58 during periods when the preschool program is not in session, or (III)
59 will collaborate with other boards of education, as part of a
60 cooperative arrangement pursuant to section 10-158a of the general
61 statutes, to offer a regional preschool program, and (ii) current
62 community capacity for preschool programs and current opportunities
63 for preschool for children in the community.

64 (c) A preschool program created or expanded under this section
65 shall (1) contain a classroom with an individual who holds certification
66 pursuant to section 10-145b of the general statutes with an
67 endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special
68 education and is an employee of the board of education providing a
69 preschool program under this section, (2) maintain a classroom size
70 and teacher-child ratio that is in compliance with standards
71 established by the National Association for the Education of Young
72 Children, (3) obtain accreditation, as described in section 10-16p of the
73 general statutes, not later than three years after the creation or
74 expansion of the preschool program, and (4) be located in a public
75 school or in a space maintained by an early care and education and
76 child development program provider, pursuant to an agreement
77 between a board of education and such early care and education and
78 child development program provider.

79 (d) Each local or regional board of education receiving a grant under
80 this section shall submit an annual report, on a form and in a manner
81 prescribed by the commissioner, to the Office of Early Childhood
82 regarding the status and operation of the preschool program.

83 (e) A local or regional board of education receiving grant funds
84 under this section may implement a sliding fee scale for the cost of

85 services provided to children enrolled in such preschool program.

86 Sec. 502. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) On or before March 1, 2015,
87 the Commissioner of Early Childhood, in consultation with the
88 Department of Education, shall develop a preschool experience survey
89 that may be included in kindergarten registration materials provided
90 by local and regional boards of education to parents or guardians of
91 children enrolling in kindergarten pursuant to section 10-184 of the
92 general statutes. The board shall use such survey to collect information
93 regarding (1) whether the child enrolling in kindergarten has
94 participated in a preschool program, and (2) (A) if such child has
95 participated in a preschool program, the nature, length and setting of
96 such preschool program, or (B) if the child has not participated in a
97 preschool program, the reasons why such child did not participate in a
98 preschool program, including, but not limited to, financial difficulty,
99 lack of transportation, parental choice regarding enrollment,
100 limitations related to the hours of operation of available preschool
101 programs and any other barriers to participation in a preschool
102 program.

103 Sec. 503. Subsection (c) of section 10-10a of the general statutes is
104 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
105 *1, 2014*):

106 (c) [~~On or before July 1, 2013, the department shall expand the~~] The
107 state-wide public school information system [as follows] shall:

108 (1) Track and report data relating to student, teacher and school and
109 district performance growth and make such information available to
110 local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating
111 educational performance and growth of teachers and students enrolled
112 in public schools in the state. Such information shall be collected or
113 calculated based on information received from local and regional
114 boards of education and other relevant sources. Such information shall
115 include, but not be limited to:

116 (A) In addition to performance on state-wide mastery examinations
117 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, data relating to students shall
118 include, but not be limited to, (i) the primary language spoken at the
119 home of a student, (ii) student transcripts, (iii) student attendance and
120 student mobility, [and] (iv) reliable, valid assessments of a student's
121 readiness to enter public school at the kindergarten level, and (v) data
122 collected, if any, from the preschool experience survey, described in
123 section 502 of this act;

124 (B) Data relating to teachers shall include, but not be limited to, (i)
125 teacher credentials, such as master's degrees, teacher preparation
126 programs completed and certification levels and endorsement areas,
127 (ii) teacher assessments, such as whether a teacher is deemed highly
128 qualified pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110, or
129 deemed to meet such other designations as may be established by
130 federal law or regulations for the purposes of tracking the equitable
131 distribution of instructional staff, (iii) the presence of substitute
132 teachers in a teacher's classroom, (iv) class size, (v) numbers relating to
133 absenteeism in a teacher's classroom, and (vi) the presence of a
134 teacher's aide. The department shall assign a unique teacher identifier
135 to each teacher prior to collecting such data in the public school
136 information system;

137 (C) Data relating to schools and districts shall include, but not be
138 limited to, (i) school population, (ii) annual student graduation rates,
139 (iii) annual teacher retention rates, (iv) school disciplinary records,
140 such as data relating to suspensions, expulsions and other disciplinary
141 actions, (v) the percentage of students whose primary language is not
142 English, (vi) the number of and professional credentials of support
143 personnel, and (vii) information relating to instructional technology,
144 such as access to computers.

145 (2) Collect data relating to student enrollment in and graduation
146 from institutions of higher education for any student who had been
147 assigned a unique student identifier pursuant to subsection (b) of this
148 section, provided such data is available.

149 (3) Develop means for access to and data sharing with the data
 150 systems of public institutions of higher education in the state.

151 Sec. 504. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Office of Early
 152 Childhood shall develop and implement an early childhood
 153 information system. Such early childhood information system shall
 154 facilitate and encourage the sharing of data between and among early
 155 childhood service providers by tracking (1) the health, safety and
 156 school readiness of all young children receiving early care and
 157 education services from (A) any local or regional board of education,
 158 including children enrolled in a preschool program under the
 159 Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program, pursuant to
 160 section 501 of this act, (B) school readiness program, as defined in
 161 section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or (C)
 162 any program receiving public funding, in a manner similar to the
 163 system described in section 10-10a of the general statutes, (2) the
 164 characteristics of the existing and potential workforce serving such
 165 children, (3) the characteristics of such programs serving such children,
 166 and (4) data collected, if any, from the preschool experience survey,
 167 described in section 502 of this act.

168 (b) Any local or regional board of education, school readiness
 169 program, or any child day care center as described in subdivision (1) of
 170 subsection (a) of section 19a-77 of the general statutes and licensed by
 171 the Department of Public Health or the Office of Early Childhood, shall
 172 ensure that all children and all staff in a school under the jurisdiction
 173 of such board, program or center are entered into the early childhood
 174 information system."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Sec. 501	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	New section
Sec. 502	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 503	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	10-10a(c)
Sec. 504	<i>from passage</i>	New section