



House of Representatives

File No. 680

General Assembly

February Session, 2022

(Reprint of File No. 408)

Substitute House Bill No. 5279
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
April 29, 2022

***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE
OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-16z of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2022*):

3 (a) There is established the Early Childhood Cabinet. The cabinet
4 shall consist of: (1) The Commissioner of Early Childhood, or the
5 commissioner's designee, (2) the Commissioner of Education, or the
6 commissioner's designee, (3) the Commissioner of Social Services, or the
7 commissioner's designee, (4) the president of the Connecticut State
8 Colleges and Universities, or the president's designee, (5) the
9 Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's designee, (6) the
10 Commissioner of Developmental Services, or the commissioner's
11 designee, (7) the Commissioner of Children and Families, or the
12 commissioner's designee, (8) the executive director of the Commission
13 on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity or the executive

14 director's designee, (9) the project director of the Connecticut Head Start
15 State Collaboration Office, (10) a parent or guardian of a child who
16 attends or attended a school readiness program appointed by the
17 minority leader of the House of Representatives, (11) a representative of
18 a local provider of early childhood education appointed by the minority
19 leader of the Senate, (12) a representative of the Connecticut Family
20 Resource Center Alliance appointed by the majority leader of the House
21 of Representatives, (13) a representative of a state-funded child care
22 center appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, (14) two
23 appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom
24 is a member of a board of education for a town designated as an alliance
25 district, as defined in section 10-262u, and one of whom is a parent who
26 has a child attending a school in an educational reform district, as
27 defined in section 10-262u, (15) two appointed by the president pro
28 tempore of the Senate, one of whom is a representative of an association
29 of early education and child care providers and one of whom is a
30 representative of a public elementary school with a prekindergarten
31 program, (16) ~~eight~~ ten appointed by the Governor, one of whom is a
32 representative of the Connecticut Head Start Association, one of whom
33 is a representative of the business community in this state, one of whom
34 is a representative of the philanthropic community in this state, one of
35 whom is a representative of the Connecticut State Employees
36 Association, one of whom is an administrator of the child care
37 development block grant pursuant to the Child Care and Development
38 Block Grant Act of 1990, one of whom is responsible for administering
39 grants received under section 1419 of Part B of the Individuals with
40 Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1419, as amended from time to time,
41 one of whom is responsible for administering the provisions of Title I of
42 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 USC 6301 et seq., [and]
43 one of whom is responsible for coordinating education services to
44 children and youth who are homeless, one of whom is a licensed family
45 child care home provider and a member of a staffed family child care
46 network identified by the Commissioner of Early Childhood, and one of
47 whom is a parent recommended by a parent advisory group that has
48 been appointed by the Commissioner of Early Childhood, (17) the

49 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's
50 designee, (18) the Lieutenant Governor, or the Lieutenant Governor's
51 designee, (19) the Commissioner of Housing, or the commissioner's
52 designee, and (20) the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction
53 Services, or the commissioner's designee.

54 (b) The Commissioner of Early Childhood shall serve as a
55 cochairperson of the cabinet. The other cochairperson of the cabinet
56 shall be appointed from among its members by the Governor. The
57 cabinet shall meet at least quarterly. Members shall not be compensated
58 for their services, [Any member who fails to attend three consecutive
59 meetings or who fails to attend fifty per cent of all meetings held during
60 any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned from the cabinet]
61 except the following members, who are parents or guardians, may,
62 within available appropriations, be compensated for any time and travel
63 related to meetings of the cabinet: (1) The parent or guardian of a child
64 who attends or attended a school readiness program and was appointed
65 by the minority leader of the House of Representatives under
66 subdivision (10) of subsection (a) of this section, (2) the parent who has
67 a child attending a school in an educational reform district, as defined
68 in section 10-262u, and was appointed by the speaker of the House of
69 Representatives under subdivision (14) of subsection (a) of this section,
70 and (3) the parent who was recommended by a parent advisory group
71 and appointed by the Governor under subdivision (16) of subsection (a)
72 of this section.

73 (c) Within available resources, the Early Childhood Cabinet shall (1)
74 advise the Office of Early Childhood, established pursuant to section 10-
75 500, (2) not later than December 1, 2009, and annually thereafter,
76 develop an annual plan of action that assigns the appropriate state
77 agency to complete the tasks specified in the federal Head Start Act of
78 2007, P.L. 110-134, as amended from time to time, and (3) not later than
79 March 1, 2010, and annually thereafter, submit an annual state-wide
80 strategic report, pursuant to said federal Head Start Act, in accordance
81 with the provisions of section 11-4a, addressing the progress such
82 agencies have made toward the completion of such tasks outlined under

83 said federal Head Start Act and this subsection to the Governor and the
84 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance
85 of matters relating to education and human services.

86 (d) The Early Childhood Cabinet shall be within the Office of Early
87 Childhood for administrative purposes only.

88 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 17b-749k of the 2022 supplement to
89 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
90 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

91 (b) The Commissioner of Early Childhood shall, within available
92 appropriations, require any relative who provides child care services to
93 a child and who receives a child care subsidy from the Office of Early
94 Childhood, to submit to a check of (1) the National Sex Offender Public
95 Website maintained by the United States Department of Justice and the
96 registry established and maintained pursuant to section 54-257, (2) the
97 state child abuse registry established pursuant to section 17a-101k, and
98 (3) the [Connecticut On-Line Law Enforcement Communication
99 Teleprocessing System] Connecticut Criminal History Request System
100 maintained by the Department of Emergency Services and Public
101 Protection. If such check reveals that the name of any such relative
102 appears in such databases, on said registry or in said system, the
103 commissioner may require such relative to submit to state and national
104 criminal history records checks conducted in accordance with section
105 29-17a.

106 Sec. 3. Section 10-520b of the general statutes is repealed and the
107 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

108 The Office of Early Childhood, upon receipt of a proper application
109 and in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Early Childhood,
110 shall issue an early childhood teacher credential to any person who
111 holds (1) an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood
112 education from an institution of higher education that is regionally
113 accredited, provided such associate degree program is approved by (A)
114 the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher

115 Education, and (B) the Office of Early Childhood, or (2) a bachelor's
116 degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an
117 institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, provided
118 such bachelor's degree program is approved by (A) the Board of Regents
119 for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (B) the Office
120 of Early Childhood. [Any early childhood teacher credential issued
121 pursuant to subdivision (1) of this section shall be valid until June 30,
122 2021.] For purposes of this section, "concentration in early childhood
123 education" has the same meaning as provided in section 10-16p, as
124 amended by this act.

125 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 10-16p of the 2022 supplement to the
126 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
127 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2022*):

128 (a) As used in sections 10-16o to 10-16r, inclusive, 10-16u, 17b-749a
129 and 17b-749c:

130 (1) "School readiness program" means a nonsectarian program that
131 (A) meets the standards set by the Office of Early Childhood pursuant
132 to subsection (b) of this section and the requirements of section 10-16q,
133 and (B) provides a developmentally appropriate learning experience of
134 not less than four hundred fifty hours and one hundred eighty days for
135 eligible children, except as provided in subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

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

140 (3) "Priority school" means a school in which forty per cent or more
141 of the lunches served are served to students who are eligible for free or
142 reduced price lunches pursuant to federal law and regulations,
143 excluding such a school located in a priority school district pursuant to
144 section 10-266p or in a former priority school district receiving a grant
145 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and, on and after July 1, 2001,
146 excluding such a school in a transitional school district receiving a grant

147 pursuant to section 10-16u;

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

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

158 (6) "Year-round" means [fifty] forty-eight weeks per year, except as
159 provided in subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

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

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

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

168 (10) "Concentration in early childhood education" means a program
169 of study in early childhood education, including, but not limited to,
170 early childhood education, child study, child development or human
171 growth and development.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2022	10-16z
Sec. 2	from passage	17b-749k(b)

Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	10-520b
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	10-16p(a)

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 23 \$	FY 24 \$
Office of Early Childhood	GF - Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in a potential minimal cost by allowing the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to compensate parent members of the Early Childhood Cabinet for any time and travel related to meetings of the cabinet, within available appropriations. Any such costs are anticipated to be negligible.

The bill makes technical, conforming, and other changes that have no fiscal impact.

House "A" specifies the parent members eligible for compensation, which increases the associated potential minimal costs. The amendment also removes provisions related to family child care home staffing and enrollment requirements, which have no fiscal impact.

The Out Years

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

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5279 (as amended by House "A")******AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes the following changes in the early childhood education statutes:

1. expands the Early Childhood Cabinet's membership and changes its attendance and compensation requirements (§ 1);
2. makes a technical change to the criminal history records check system that certain child care providers who accept state child care subsidies must use (§ 2);
3. extends the validity of the early childhood teacher credential issued by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to certain people with associate degrees (§ 3); and
4. reduces the number of weeks a child care program must operate to be a "year-round" program, lowering the threshold from 50 to 48 weeks per year and impacting certain OEC program operations (§ 4).

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

*House Amendment "A" adds a provision allowing all parent members of the Early Childhood Cabinet to be compensated and removes provisions that change family child care home staffing and enrollment requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022, except the provisions on criminal

history records checks (§ 2) and early childhood teacher credentials (§ 3) take effect upon passage.

§ 1 — EARLY CHILDHOOD CABINET MEMBERSHIP

The Early Childhood Cabinet is an advisory body to OEC. The bill increases the cabinet's membership from 25 to 27, adding two appointments to the governor's eight in current law. These new appointees must be (1) an individual who is a licensed family child care home provider and member of a staffed family child care network (i.e., a regional community initiative offering ongoing support services) identified by the OEC commissioner and (2) a parent recommended by an OEC-appointed parent advisory group. The bill specifies that the following appointed parent or guardian members may be compensated, within available appropriations, for their time at and travel to cabinet meetings:

1. one who has a child who attends or attended a school readiness program and is appointed by the House minority leader,
2. one who has a child attending school in an educational reform district and is appointed by the House speaker, and
3. one who was recommended by a parent advisory group and is appointed by the governor.

Additionally, the bill eliminates from current law the mechanism that removes members from the cabinet if they miss three consecutive meetings or 50% of all meetings in one calendar year. By law, the cabinet must meet at least quarterly.

§ 3 — EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER CREDENTIAL

By law, OEC may issue an early childhood teaching credential to people who hold either an associate degree or a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education. The degree program must be (1) from a regionally accredited institution and (2) approved by OEC and either (a) the Board of Regents for Higher Education or (b) the Office of Higher Education.

Under current law, this credential's validity ends on June 30, 2021, when issued to someone who holds an associate degree. The bill removes the credential's termination date, making it valid indefinitely, as when issued by the office to someone with a bachelor's degree.

§ 4 — YEAR-ROUND PROGRAM DEFINITION

The bill lowers, from 50 to 48, the number of weeks per year that a child care program must generally operate to be considered a "year-round" program. This new definition broadens the potential number of (1) school readiness programs that must use the excess portion of their per-pupil school readiness grant for salary staff increases and (2) child care programs to which the commissioner must give preference when (a) purchasing services and (b) awarding a supplemental quality enhancement grant.

School Readiness Staff Salary Increases

By law, school readiness programs are non-religious, state-funded programs that provide a developmentally appropriate learning experience for children three to five years old who are too young to enroll in kindergarten.

Existing law requires state-licensed school readiness programs that operate full-day, year-round programs and receive school readiness per-pupil state grants to use any grant amount exceeding \$8,927 per child exclusively to increase the salary of individuals directly responsible for teaching or caring for children in school readiness program classrooms (CGS § 10-16p(l)). By reducing the number of weeks that a school readiness program must operate to be considered a "year-round" program, the bill broadens the potential number of school readiness programs that must use their per-pupil grant excess for staff salary increases.

Purchase of Child Care Services

By law, if the OEC commissioner directly purchases child care services, she must give preference to providers of full-day and year-round programs. These programs may be provided by public schools,

child care centers, group or family child care homes, family resource centers, or Head Start, among others (CGS § 17b-749a). By reducing the number of weeks that a child care program must operate to be considered a “year-round” program, the bill broadens the potential number of child care programs to which the commissioner must give preference when purchasing services.

Supplemental Quality Enhancement Grant

By law, the OEC’s supplemental quality enhancement grant program provides, within available appropriations, competitive grants to child care centers or school readiness programs to help them enhance their programs through accreditation or the purchase of educational equipment, among other things. The commissioner must give priority to applicant programs that operate year-round, among other criteria (CGS § 17b-749c). By reducing the number of weeks that a program must operate to be considered a “year-round” program, the bill broadens the potential number of programs to which the commissioner must give preference when awarding this grant.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 39 Nay 0 (03/25/2022)