



General Assembly

**Substitute Bill No. 6686**

January Session, 2023



**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. Subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 10-16p of the  
2 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
3 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

4 (2) "Eligible children" means children [three and] from birth to four  
5 years of age, inclusive, and children five years of age who are not  
6 eligible to enroll in school pursuant to section 10-15c, or who are  
7 eligible to enroll in school and will attend a school readiness program  
8 pursuant to section 10-16t, as amended by this act;

9 Sec. 2. Subsections (c) to (l), inclusive, of section 10-16p of the  
10 general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
11 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

12 (c) The commissioner shall establish a grant program to provide  
13 spaces in accredited school readiness programs located in priority  
14 school districts, as described in section 10-266p, or in former priority  
15 school districts for eligible children. The state, acting by and in the  
16 discretion of the Commissioner of Early Childhood, in consultation  
17 with a town or regional school readiness council, may enter into a  
18 contract with a municipality, local or regional board of education,

19 regional educational service center, family resource center, provider of  
20 a child care center, group child care home or family child care home, as  
21 described in section 19a-77, Head Start program, preschool program or  
22 other program that meets such standards established by the  
23 commissioner, to provide, within available appropriations, state  
24 financial assistance. Eligibility shall be determined for a five-year  
25 period based on an applicant's designation as a priority school district  
26 for the initial year of application, except that if a school district that  
27 receives a grant pursuant to this subsection is no longer designated as  
28 a priority school district at the end of such five-year period, such  
29 former priority school district shall continue to be eligible to receive a  
30 grant pursuant to this subsection. Grant awards shall be made  
31 [annually] for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, and biennially  
32 thereafter, contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory annual  
33 evaluation. The chief elected official of such town and the  
34 superintendent of schools for such priority school district or former  
35 priority school district shall submit a plan for the expenditure of grant  
36 funds and responses to the local request for proposal process to the  
37 commissioner. The commissioner shall review and approve such  
38 plans. The plan shall: (1) Be developed in consultation with the local or  
39 regional school readiness council established pursuant to section 10-  
40 16r; (2) be based on a needs and resource assessment; (3) provide for  
41 the issuance of requests for proposals for providers of accredited  
42 school readiness programs, provided, after the initial requests for  
43 proposals, facilities that have been approved to operate a child care  
44 program financed through the Connecticut Health and Education  
45 Facilities Authority and have received a commitment for debt service  
46 from the Department of Social Services, pursuant to section 17b-749i,  
47 on or before June 30, 2014, and on or after July 1, 2014, from the office,  
48 are exempt from the requirement for issuance of annual requests for  
49 proposals; and (4) identify the need for funding pursuant to section  
50 17b-749a in order to extend the hours and days of operation of school  
51 readiness programs in order to provide child care services for children  
52 attending such programs.

53 (d) (1) The commissioner shall establish a competitive grant  
54 program to provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs or  
55 school readiness programs seeking accreditation located in (A) an area  
56 served by a priority school or a former priority school, (B) a town  
57 ranked one to fifty when all towns are ranked in ascending order  
58 according to town wealth, as defined in subdivision (26) of section 10-  
59 262f, whose school district is not a priority school district pursuant to  
60 section 10-266p, (C) a town formerly a town described in subparagraph  
61 (B) of this subdivision, as provided for in subdivision (2) of this  
62 subsection, or (D) a town designated as an alliance district, as defined  
63 in section 10-262u, whose school district is not a priority school district  
64 pursuant to section 10-266p. A town in which a priority school is  
65 located, a regional school readiness council, pursuant to subsection (c)  
66 of section 10-16r, for a region in which such a school is located or a  
67 town described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision may apply for  
68 such a grant in an amount equal to the number of spaces in an  
69 accredited school readiness program or a school readiness program  
70 seeking accreditation multiplied by the per child cost set forth in  
71 subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 10-16q. Eligibility shall be  
72 determined for a three-year period based on an applicant's designation  
73 as having a priority school or being a town described in subparagraph  
74 (B) of this subdivision for the initial year of application. The state,  
75 acting by and in the discretion of the Commissioner of Early  
76 Childhood, in consultation with a town or regional school readiness  
77 council, may enter into a contract with a municipality, local or regional  
78 board of education, regional educational service center, family  
79 resource center, provider of a child care center, group child care home  
80 or family child care home, as described in section 19a-77, Head Start  
81 program, preschool program or other program that meets such  
82 standards established by the commissioner, to provide, within  
83 available appropriations, state financial assistance. The chief elected  
84 official of such town and the superintendent of schools of the school  
85 district or the regional school readiness council shall submit a plan, as  
86 described in subsection (c) of this section, for the expenditure of such  
87 grant funds to the commissioner. In awarding grants pursuant to this

88 subsection, the commissioner shall give preference to applications  
89 submitted by regional school readiness councils and may, within  
90 available appropriations, provide a grant to such town or regional  
91 school readiness council that increases the number of spaces for  
92 eligible children who reside in an area or town described in  
93 subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of this subdivision, in an  
94 accredited school readiness program or a school readiness program  
95 seeking accreditation.

96 (2) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (C) of this subdivision,  
97 commencing with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, if a town  
98 received a grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection and is  
99 no longer eligible to receive such a grant, the town may receive a  
100 phase-out grant for each of the three fiscal years following the fiscal  
101 year such town received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of  
102 this subsection.

103 (B) The amount of such phase-out grants shall be determined as  
104 follows: (i) For the first fiscal year following the fiscal year such town  
105 received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in  
106 an amount that does not exceed seventy-five per cent of the grant  
107 amount such town received for the town or school's final year of  
108 eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection; (ii) for the  
109 second fiscal year following the fiscal year such town received its final  
110 grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that  
111 does not exceed fifty per cent of the grant amount such town received  
112 for the town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to  
113 subdivision (1) of this subsection; and (iii) for the third fiscal year  
114 following the fiscal year such town received its final grant pursuant to  
115 subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that does not exceed  
116 twenty-five per cent of the grant amount such town received for the  
117 town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of  
118 this subsection.

119 (C) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, and each fiscal year  
120 thereafter, any town that received a grant pursuant to subparagraph

121 (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection for the fiscal year ending June  
122 30, 2010, shall continue to receive a grant under this subsection even if  
123 the town no longer meets the criteria for such grant pursuant to  
124 subparagraph (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

125 (e) (1) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of this  
126 section are not expended, the commissioner may deposit such  
127 unexpended funds in the account established under section 10-16aa  
128 and use such unexpended funds in accordance with the provisions of  
129 section 10-16aa.

130 (2) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, and each fiscal year  
131 thereafter, if funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of  
132 this section are not expended, an amount up to one million dollars of  
133 such unexpended funds may be available for the provision of  
134 professional development for early childhood care and education  
135 program providers, and staff employed in such programs, provided  
136 such programs accept state funds for infant, toddler and preschool  
137 slots. Such unexpended funds may be available for use in accordance  
138 with the provisions of this subparagraph for the subsequent fiscal year.  
139 The commissioner may use such unexpended funds on and after July  
140 1, 2015, to support early childhood education programs accepting state  
141 funds in satisfying the staff qualifications requirements of  
142 subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this  
143 section. The commissioner shall use any such funds to provide  
144 assistance to individual staff members, giving priority to those staff  
145 members (A) attending an institution of higher education accredited  
146 by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher  
147 Education, and approved by the Office of Early Childhood, and  
148 regionally accredited, at a maximum of ten thousand dollars per staff  
149 member per year for the cost of higher education courses leading to a  
150 bachelor's degree or, not later than December 31, 2015, an associate  
151 degree, as such degrees are described in said subparagraphs (B) and  
152 (C), or (B) receiving noncredit competency-based training approved by  
153 the office, at a maximum of one thousand dollars per staff member per

154 year, provided such staff members have applied for all available  
155 federal and state scholarships and grants, and such assistance does not  
156 exceed such staff members' financial need. Individual staff members  
157 shall apply for such unexpended funds in a manner determined by the  
158 commissioner. The commissioner shall determine how such  
159 unexpended funds shall be distributed.

160 (3) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of this  
161 section are not expended pursuant to subsection (c) of this section,  
162 deposited pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, or used  
163 pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection, the commissioner may  
164 use such unexpended funds to support local school readiness  
165 programs. The commissioner may use such funds for purposes  
166 including, but not limited to, (A) assisting local school readiness  
167 programs in meeting and maintaining accreditation requirements, (B)  
168 providing training in implementing the preschool assessment and  
169 curriculum frameworks, including training to enhance literacy  
170 teaching skills, (C) developing a state-wide preschool curriculum, (D)  
171 developing student assessments for students in grades kindergarten to  
172 two, inclusive, (E) developing and implementing best practices for  
173 parents in supporting preschool and kindergarten student learning, (F)  
174 developing and implementing strategies for children to successfully  
175 transition to preschool and from preschool to kindergarten, including  
176 through parental engagement and whole-family supports that may be  
177 utilized through the two-generational initiative, established pursuant  
178 to section 17b-112*l*, or through other available resources, (G) providing  
179 for professional development, including assisting in career ladder  
180 advancement, for school readiness staff, (H) providing supplemental  
181 grants to other towns that are eligible for grants pursuant to subsection  
182 (c) of this section, and (I) developing a plan to provide spaces in an  
183 accredited school readiness program or a school readiness program  
184 seeking accreditation to all eligible children who reside in an area or  
185 town described in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision  
186 (1) of subsection (d) of this section.

187 (f) Any school readiness program that receives funds pursuant to  
188 this section or section 10-16u shall not discriminate on the basis of race,  
189 color, national origin, gender, religion or disability. For purposes of  
190 this section, a nonsectarian program means any public or private  
191 school readiness program that is not violative of the Establishment  
192 Clause of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut or the  
193 Establishment Clause of the Constitution of the United States of  
194 America.

195 (g) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no funds received by  
196 a town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-  
197 16u shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding received by  
198 such town for early childhood education, provided a town may use an  
199 amount determined in accordance with this subsection for  
200 coordination, program evaluation and administration. Such amount  
201 shall be at least five per cent of the total grant allocation, but not more  
202 than seventy-five thousand dollars and shall be determined by the  
203 commissioner based on the school readiness grant award allocated to  
204 the town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-  
205 16u and the number of operating sites for coordination, program  
206 evaluation and administration. Such amount shall be increased by an  
207 amount equal to local funding provided for early childhood education  
208 coordination, program evaluation and administration, not to exceed  
209 twenty-five thousand dollars. Each town that receives a grant pursuant  
210 to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-16u shall designate  
211 a person to be responsible for such coordination, program evaluation  
212 and administration and to act as a liaison between the town and the  
213 commissioner. Each school readiness program that receives funds  
214 pursuant to this section or section 10-16u shall provide information to  
215 the commissioner or the school readiness council, as requested, that is  
216 necessary for purposes of any school readiness program evaluation.

217 (h) Any town receiving a grant pursuant to this section may use  
218 such grant, with the approval of the commissioner, to prepare a facility  
219 or staff for operating a school readiness program and shall be adjusted

220 based on the number of days of operation of a school readiness  
221 program if a shorter term of operation is approved by the  
222 commissioner.

223 (i) A town may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible  
224 children who reside in such town at an accredited school readiness  
225 program located in another town. A regional school readiness council  
226 may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible children who  
227 reside in the region covered by the council at an accredited school  
228 readiness program located outside such region.

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

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

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

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



251 program.]

252 Sec. 3. Section 10-16t of the general statutes is repealed and the  
253 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

254 A local school readiness council may elect to reserve up to five per  
255 cent of the spaces in its school readiness programs for children who are  
256 five years of age and are eligible to attend school pursuant to section  
257 10-15c. Such children shall only be eligible to participate in the school  
258 readiness program if (1) they have been in the program for at least one  
259 year, [and] (2) the parent or legal guardian of such a child, the school  
260 readiness program provider and the local or regional school district in  
261 which the child would otherwise be attending school agree that the  
262 child [is not ready for kindergarten] would benefit from another year  
263 in the program and to defer attendance in kindergarten until the  
264 following year, and (3) a written authorization, signed by the parent or  
265 guardian of such a child, indicating that such child will not attend  
266 kindergarten until the following year is filed with the local or regional  
267 school district in which such child would otherwise be attending  
268 school.

269 Sec. 4. Subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section 10-505 of the  
270 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
271 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

272 (3) "Eligible children" means children (A) [three and] from birth to  
273 four years of age, inclusive, and children five years of age who are not  
274 eligible to enroll in school pursuant to section 10-15c, or who are  
275 eligible to enroll in school and will attend a school readiness program  
276 pursuant to section 10-16t, as amended by this act, and (B) who reside  
277 (i) in an area served by a priority school or a former priority school, as  
278 described in subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of section 10-16p, as  
279 amended by this act, (ii) in a town ranked one to fifty when all towns  
280 are ranked in ascending order according to town wealth, as defined in  
281 subdivision (26) of section 10-262f, whose school district is not a  
282 priority school district pursuant to section 10-266p, (iii) in a town

283 formerly a town described in clause (ii) of this subparagraph, as  
284 provided for in subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of section 10-16p, as  
285 amended by this act, or (iv) in a town designated as an alliance district,  
286 as defined in section 10-262u, whose school district is not a priority  
287 school district pursuant to section 10-266p;

288 Sec. 5. Subsection (b) of section 8-210 of the general statutes is  
289 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
290 *1, 2023*):

291 (b) The state, acting by and in the discretion of the Commissioner of  
292 Early Childhood, may enter into a contract with a municipality, a  
293 group child care home or family child care home, as described in  
294 section 19a-77, a human resource development agency or a nonprofit  
295 corporation for state financial assistance in developing and operating  
296 child care centers, group child care homes and family child care homes  
297 for children disadvantaged by reasons of economic, social or  
298 environmental conditions, provided no such financial assistance shall  
299 be available for the operating costs of any such child care center, group  
300 child care home or family child care home unless it has been licensed  
301 by the Commissioner of Early Childhood pursuant to section 19a-80.  
302 Such financial assistance shall be available for a program of a  
303 municipality, of a group child care home or family child care home, of  
304 a human resource development agency or of a nonprofit corporation  
305 which may provide for personnel, equipment, supplies, activities,  
306 program materials and renovation and remodeling of the physical  
307 facilities of such child care centers, group child care homes or family  
308 child care homes. Such contract shall provide for state financial  
309 assistance, within available appropriations, in the form of a state grant-  
310 in-aid (1) for a portion of the cost of such program, as determined by  
311 the Commissioner of Early Childhood, if not federally assisted, (2)  
312 equal to one-half of the amount by which the net cost of such program,  
313 as approved by the Commissioner of Early Childhood, exceeds the  
314 federal grant-in-aid thereof, or (3) in an amount not less than (A) the  
315 per child cost as described in subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of

316 section 10-16q, for each child in such program that is three or four  
317 years of age and each child that is five years of age who is not eligible  
318 to enroll in school, pursuant to section 10-15c, while maintaining  
319 services to children under three years of age under this section, and (B)  
320 thirteen thousand five hundred dollars for each child three years of age  
321 or under who is in infant or toddler care and not in a preschool  
322 program. Any such contract entered into on or after July 1, 2022, shall  
323 include a provision that at least sixty per cent of the children enrolled  
324 in such child care center, group child care home or family child care  
325 home are members of families [that] who are at or below seventy-five  
326 per cent of the state median income. [For the fiscal year ending June 30,  
327 2024, and each fiscal year thereafter, the amount per child pursuant to  
328 subdivision (3) of this subsection that is over the amount of the per  
329 child cost that was prescribed pursuant to the contract under said  
330 subdivision (3) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, shall be used  
331 exclusively to increase the salaries of early childhood educators  
332 employed at the child care center.] The Commissioner of Early  
333 Childhood may authorize child care centers, group child care homes  
334 and family child care homes receiving financial assistance under this  
335 subsection to apply a program surplus to the next program year. The  
336 Commissioner of Early Childhood shall consult with directors of child  
337 care centers in establishing fees for the operation of such centers. For  
338 the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, the Commissioner of Early  
339 Childhood shall, within available appropriations, enter into contracts  
340 under this section for the purpose of expanding the number of spaces  
341 available to children three years of age or under who are in infant or  
342 toddler care and not in a preschool program.

343 Sec. 6. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 10-506 of the general  
344 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof  
345 (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

346 (a) For the fiscal [years] year ending June 30, 2015, [to June 30, 2024,  
347 inclusive] and each fiscal year thereafter, the Office of Early  
348 Childhood, in consultation with the Department of Education, shall

349 design and administer the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant  
350 program to provide grants to local and regional boards of education  
351 for capital and operating expenses related to establishing or expanding  
352 a preschool program under the jurisdiction of the board of education  
353 for the town. A local or regional board of education may submit an  
354 application to the office, in accordance with the provisions of  
355 subsection (b) of this section, and may receive (1) a grant for capital  
356 expenses in an amount not to exceed seventy-five thousand dollars per  
357 classroom for costs related to the renovation of an existing public  
358 school to accommodate the establishment or expansion of a preschool  
359 program, and (2) an annual grant for operating expenses (A) in an  
360 amount not to exceed five thousand dollars per child served by such  
361 grant, or (B) in an amount not to exceed seventy-five thousand dollars  
362 for each preschool classroom, provided no town shall receive a total  
363 annual grant for operating expenses greater than three hundred  
364 thousand dollars. Each local or regional board of education that  
365 establishes or expands a preschool program under this section shall be  
366 eligible to receive an annual grant for operating expenses for a period  
367 of five years, provided such preschool program meets standards  
368 established by the Commissioner of Early Childhood. Such local or  
369 regional board of education may submit an application for renewal of  
370 such grant to the office.

371 (b) On and after July 1, 2014, local and regional boards of education,  
372 individually or cooperatively, pursuant to section 10-158a, may apply,  
373 at such time and in such manner as the commissioner prescribes, to the  
374 office for a capital grant and an operating grant for the purposes  
375 described in subsection (a) of this section. To be eligible to receive such  
376 grants under this section, an applicant board of education shall (1)  
377 demonstrate that it has a need for establishing or expanding a  
378 preschool program using information requested by the commissioner  
379 on a form prescribed by the commissioner, such as data collected from  
380 the preschool experience survey, described in section 10-515, (2)  
381 submit a plan for the expenditure of grant funds received under this  
382 section that outlines how such board of education will use such funds

383 to establish or expand a preschool program, including, but not limited  
384 to, the amount that such board will contribute to the operation of such  
385 preschool program and how such board of education will provide  
386 access to preschool for children who would not otherwise be able to  
387 enroll in a preschool program, and (3) submit a letter of support for  
388 establishing or expanding a preschool program by the local or regional  
389 school readiness council, described in section 10-16r, if any, for the  
390 school district. The commissioner shall give priority to boards of  
391 education (A) that demonstrate the greatest need for the establishment  
392 or expansion of a preschool program, and (B) whose plan allocates at  
393 least sixty per cent of the spaces in such preschool program to children  
394 who are members of families [that] who are at or below seventy-five  
395 per cent of the state median income, [, or fifty per cent of the spaces in  
396 such preschool program to children who are eligible for free and  
397 reduced price lunches.] The commissioner, in reviewing applications  
398 submitted under this subsection, shall also take into consideration (i)  
399 whether an applicant board of education (I) currently offers a full-day  
400 kindergarten program, (II) will be cooperating and coordinating with  
401 other governmental and community programs to provide services  
402 during periods when the preschool program is not in session, or (III)  
403 will collaborate with other boards of education, as part of a  
404 cooperative arrangement pursuant to section 10-158a, to offer a  
405 regional preschool program, and (ii) current community capacity for  
406 preschool programs and current opportunities for preschool for  
407 children in the community.

408 Sec. 7. Subsection (b) of section 10-500 of the general statutes is  
409 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
410 *1, 2023*):

411 (b) The office shall be responsible for:

412 (1) Delivering services to young children and their families to  
413 ensure optimal health, safety and learning for each young child,  
414 including, but not limited to, coordinating agency efforts and data  
415 sharing in the two-generational initiative established pursuant to

416 section 17b-112l;

417 (2) Developing and implementing the early childhood information  
418 system, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-501;

419 (3) Developing and reporting on the early childhood accountability  
420 plan, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-503;

421 (4) Implementing a communications strategy for outreach to  
422 families, service providers and policymakers;

423 (5) Beginning a state-wide longitudinal evaluation of the school  
424 readiness program examining the educational progress of children  
425 from prekindergarten programs to grade four, inclusive;

426 (6) Developing, coordinating and supporting public and private  
427 partnerships to aid early childhood initiatives;

428 (7) Developing a state-wide developmentally appropriate  
429 kindergarten entrance inventory that measures a child's level of  
430 preparedness for kindergarten, but shall not be used as a measurement  
431 tool for program accountability;

432 (8) Creating a unified set of reporting requirements for the purpose  
433 of collecting the data elements necessary to perform quality  
434 assessments and longitudinal analysis;

435 (9) Comparing and analyzing data collected pursuant to reporting  
436 requirements created under subdivision (8) of this subsection with the  
437 data collected in the state-wide public school information system,  
438 pursuant to section 10-10a, for population-level analysis of children  
439 and families;

440 (10) Continually monitoring and evaluating all early care and  
441 education and child development programs and services, focusing on  
442 program outcomes in satisfying the health, safety, developmental and  
443 educational needs of all children;

444 (11) Coordinating home visitation services across programs for  
445 young children;

446 (12) Providing information and technical assistance to persons  
447 seeking early care and education and child development programs and  
448 services;

449 (13) Assisting state agencies and municipalities in obtaining  
450 available federal funding for early care and education and child  
451 development programs and services;

452 (14) Providing technical assistance to providers of early care and  
453 education programs and services to obtain licensing and improve  
454 program quality;

455 (15) Establishing a quality rating and improvement system  
456 developed by the office that covers home-based, center-based and  
457 school-based early child care and learning;

458 (16) Maintaining an accreditation facilitation initiative to assist early  
459 childhood care and education program and service providers in  
460 achieving national standards and program improvement;

461 (17) Consulting with the Early Childhood Cabinet, established  
462 pursuant to section 10-16z, and the Head Start advisory committee,  
463 established pursuant to section 10-16n;

464 (18) Ensuring a coordinated and comprehensive state-wide system  
465 of professional development for providers and staff of early care and  
466 education and child development programs and services;

467 (19) Providing families with opportunities for choice in services  
468 including quality child care and community-based family-centered  
469 services;

470 (20) Integrating early childhood care and education and special  
471 education services;

472 (21) Promoting universal access to early childhood care and  
473 education;

474 (22) Ensuring nonduplication of monitoring and evaluation;

475 (23) Performing any other activities that will assist in the provision  
476 of early care and education and child development programs and  
477 services;

478 (24) Developing early learning and development standards to be  
479 used by early care and education providers;

480 (25) Developing and implementing a performance-based evaluation  
481 system to evaluate licensed child care centers, in accordance with the  
482 provisions of section 17b-749f; [and]

483 (26) Promoting the delivery of services to infants and toddlers to  
484 ensure optimal health, safety and learning of children from birth to  
485 three years of age; and

486 (27) Establishing a parent cabinet to advise the office on ways to  
487 strengthen partnership and communication with families, bring  
488 awareness to gaps and barriers to services, increase access to services  
489 for families and help make improvements to the lives of young  
490 children and families in the state.

491 Sec. 8. Section 10-502 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
492 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

493 The Office of Early Childhood shall collaborate with and may,  
494 within available appropriations, provide funding to local [and  
495 regional] early childhood [councils] collaboratives for the  
496 implementation of early care and education and child development  
497 programs at the local level. Such local early childhood [councils]  
498 collaboratives shall: (1) Develop and implement a comprehensive plan  
499 for an early childhood system for the community served by such local  
500 early childhood [council] collaborative, (2) develop policy and



501 program planning, (3) encourage community participation by  
502 emphasizing substantial parental involvement, (4) collect, analyze and  
503 evaluate data with a focus on program and service outcomes, (5)  
504 allocate resources, and (6) perform any other functions that will assist  
505 in the provision of early childhood programs and services. Such local  
506 early childhood [councils] collaboratives may enter into memoranda of  
507 agreement with the local or regional school readiness council,  
508 described in section 10-16r, of the town or region served by such local  
509 early childhood [council] collaborative to perform the duties and  
510 functions of a school readiness council, in accordance with the  
511 provisions of section 10-16r, or if no such local or regional school  
512 readiness council exists for the town or region of such local early  
513 childhood [council] collaborative, perform the duties and functions of  
514 a school readiness council, in accordance with the provisions of section  
515 10-16r.

516 Sec. 9. Subsection (d) of section 19a-87a of the general statutes are  
517 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
518 *1, 2023*):

519 (d) Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child care  
520 center or a group child care home is operating without a current and  
521 valid license or in violation of regulations adopted under section 19a-  
522 79 or in a manner which may pose a potential danger to the health,  
523 welfare and safety of a child receiving child care services, may report  
524 such information to the Office of Early Childhood. The office shall  
525 investigate any report or complaint received pursuant to this  
526 subsection. The name of the person making the report or complaint  
527 shall not be disclosed unless (1) such person consents to such  
528 disclosure, (2) a judicial or administrative proceeding results  
529 therefrom, [or] (3) a license action pursuant to subsection (a) of this  
530 section results therefrom, or (4) a state or federal law enforcement  
531 officer, including, but not limited to, a military law enforcement  
532 authority under the United States Department of Defense, requests  
533 such information. All records obtained by the office in connection with

534 any such investigation shall not be subject to the provisions of section  
535 1-210 for a period of thirty days from the date of the petition or other  
536 event initiating such investigation, or until such time as the  
537 investigation is terminated pursuant to a withdrawal or other informal  
538 disposition or until a hearing is convened pursuant to chapter 54,  
539 whichever is earlier, except such records, whether obtained or  
540 generated by the office, shall be disclosed, without redaction, to a state  
541 or federal law enforcement officer, including, but not limited to, a  
542 military law enforcement authority under the United States  
543 Department of Defense upon written request. A formal statement of  
544 charges issued by the office shall be subject to the provisions of section  
545 1-210 from the time that it is served or mailed to the respondent.  
546 Records which are otherwise public records shall not be deemed  
547 confidential merely because they have been obtained in connection  
548 with an investigation under this section.

549 Sec. 10. Subsection (e) of section 19a-87e of the general statutes is  
550 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
551 *1, 2023*):

552 (e) Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a family  
553 child care home, as defined in section 19a-77, is operating without a  
554 current and valid license or in violation of the regulations adopted  
555 under section 19a-87b or in a manner which may pose a potential  
556 danger to the health, welfare and safety of a child receiving child care  
557 services, may report such information to the Office of Early Childhood.  
558 The office shall investigate any report or complaint received pursuant  
559 to this subsection. The name of the person making the report or  
560 complaint shall not be disclosed unless (1) such person consents to  
561 such disclosure, (2) a judicial or administrative proceeding results from  
562 such report or complaint, [or] (3) a license action pursuant to  
563 subsection (a) of this section results from such report or complaint, or  
564 (4) a state or federal law enforcement officer, including, but not limited  
565 to, a military law enforcement authority under the United States  
566 Department of Defense, requests such information. All records

567 obtained by the office in connection with any such investigation shall  
568 not be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 for a period of thirty  
569 days from the date of the petition or other event initiating such  
570 investigation, or until such time as the investigation is terminated  
571 pursuant to a withdrawal or other informal disposition or until a  
572 hearing is convened pursuant to chapter 54, whichever is earlier,  
573 except such records, whether obtained or generated by the office, shall  
574 be disclosed, without redaction, to a state or federal law enforcement  
575 officer, including, but not limited to, a military law enforcement  
576 authority under the United States Department of Defense, upon  
577 written request. A formal statement of charges issued by the office  
578 shall be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 from the time that it is  
579 served or mailed to the respondent. Records which are otherwise  
580 public records shall not be deemed confidential merely because they  
581 have been obtained in connection with an investigation under this  
582 section.

583 Sec. 11. Section 19a-429 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
584 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

585 Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a youth camp,  
586 as defined in section 19a-420, is operating without a current and valid  
587 license or in violation of regulations adopted under section 19a-428 or  
588 in a manner which may pose a potential danger to the health, welfare  
589 and safety of a child receiving youth camp services, may report such  
590 information to the office. The office shall investigate any report or  
591 complaint received pursuant to this section. In connection with any  
592 investigation of a youth camp, the commissioner or the commissioner's  
593 authorized agent may administer oaths, issue subpoenas, compel  
594 testimony and order the production of books, records and documents.  
595 If any person refuses to appear, to testify or to produce any book,  
596 record or document when so ordered, a judge of the Superior Court  
597 may make such order as may be appropriate to aid in the enforcement  
598 of this section. The name of the person making the report or complaint  
599 shall not be disclosed unless (1) such person consents to such

600 disclosure, (2) a judicial or administrative proceeding results  
601 therefrom, [or] (3) a license action pursuant to section 19a-423 results  
602 from such report or complaint, or (4) a state or federal law enforcement  
603 officer, including, but not limited to, a military law enforcement  
604 authority under the United States Department of Defense, requests  
605 such information. All records obtained by the office in connection with  
606 any such investigation shall not be subject to the provisions of section  
607 1-210 for a period of thirty days from the date of the petition or other  
608 event initiating such investigation, or until such time as the  
609 investigation is terminated pursuant to a withdrawal or other informal  
610 disposition or until a hearing is convened pursuant to chapter 54,  
611 whichever is earlier, except such records, whether obtained or  
612 generated by the office, shall be disclosed, without redaction, to a state  
613 or federal law enforcement officer, including, but not limited to, a  
614 military law enforcement authority under the United States  
615 Department of Defense, upon written request. A formal statement of  
616 charges issued by the office shall be subject to the provisions of section  
617 1-210 from the time that it is served or mailed to the respondent.  
618 Records which are otherwise public records shall not be deemed  
619 confidential merely because they have been obtained in connection  
620 with an investigation under this section.

621 Sec. 12. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) The Office of Early  
622 Childhood, in consultation with the Department of Public Health, shall  
623 develop best practices for ordering a medical examination by a  
624 physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse  
625 during any investigation (1) concerning an application, reinstatement  
626 or renewal of a license for a child care center, group child care home or  
627 family child care home, as such terms are defined in section 19a-77 of  
628 the general statutes, (2) of a complaint concerning child care services,  
629 as described in section 19a-77 of the general statutes, or (3) concerning  
630 the possible provision of unlicensed child care services. The best  
631 practices shall include, but need not be limited to, specifications for (A)  
632 who would be subject to a medical examination ordered by the office,  
633 (B) how the nature and scope of a medical examination would be

634 determined, (C) how the physician, physician assistant or advanced  
 635 practice registered nurse would be chosen to conduct a medical  
 636 examination, and (D) the possible consequences and enforcement  
 637 mechanisms for any failure to submit to a medical examination.

638 (b) Not later than February 1, 2024, the Office of Early Childhood  
 639 shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
 640 general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General  
 641 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education a report  
 642 concerning the best practices developed pursuant to subsection (a) of  
 643 this section. Such report may include, but need not be limited to,  
 644 legislative recommendations to authorize the office to order medical  
 645 examinations in accordance with the best practices developed  
 646 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10-16p(a)(2)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10-16p(c) to (l)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10-16t
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10-505(a)(3)
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	8-210(b)
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10-506(a) and (b)
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10-500(b)
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10-502
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	19a-87a(d)
Sec. 10	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	19a-87e(e)
Sec. 11	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	19a-429
Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section

**ED**            *Joint Favorable Subst.*