



General Assembly

February Session, 2024

***Raised Bill No. 5346***

LCO No. 2296



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:  
(ED)

***AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILD CARE.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-511 of the 2024 supplement to the general  
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof  
3 (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

4 The Comptroller shall establish the Early Childhood Education Fund.  
5 Said fund may contain any moneys required or permitted by law to be  
6 deposited in the fund, including any unexpended funds deposited  
7 pursuant to section 8-210, as amended by this act, or section 10-16p, as  
8 amended by this act, and any funds received from any public or private  
9 contributions, gifts, grants, donations, bequests or devises to the fund.  
10 Such fund shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year but shall be  
11 available for expenditure during the next fiscal year.

12 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 8-210 of the 2024 supplement to the  
13 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
14 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

15 (b) The state, acting by and in the discretion of the Commissioner of

16 Early Childhood, may enter into a contract with a municipality, a group  
17 child care home or family child care home, as described in section 19a-  
18 77, a human resource development agency or a nonprofit corporation  
19 for state financial assistance in developing and operating child care  
20 centers, group child care homes and family child care homes for  
21 children disadvantaged by reasons of economic, social or environmental  
22 conditions, provided no such financial assistance shall be available for  
23 the operating costs of any such child care center, group child care home  
24 or family child care home unless it has been licensed by the  
25 Commissioner of Early Childhood pursuant to section 19a-80. Such  
26 financial assistance shall be available for a program of a municipality, of  
27 a group child care home or family child care home, of a human resource  
28 development agency or of a nonprofit corporation which may provide  
29 for personnel, equipment, supplies, activities, program materials and  
30 renovation and remodeling of the physical facilities of such child care  
31 centers, group child care homes or family child care homes. Such  
32 contract shall provide for state financial assistance, within available  
33 appropriations, in the form of a state grant-in-aid (1) for a portion of the  
34 cost of such program, as determined by the Commissioner of Early  
35 Childhood, if not federally assisted, (2) equal to one-half of the amount  
36 by which the net cost of such program, as approved by the  
37 Commissioner of Early Childhood, exceeds the federal grant-in-aid  
38 thereof, or (3) in an amount not less than (A) the per child cost as  
39 described in subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 10-16q, for each  
40 child in such program that is three or four years of age and each child  
41 that is five years of age who is not eligible to enroll in school, pursuant  
42 to section 10-15c, while maintaining services to children under three  
43 years of age under this section, and (B) thirteen thousand five hundred  
44 dollars for each child three years of age or under who is in infant or  
45 toddler care and not in a preschool program. Any such contract entered  
46 into on or after July 1, 2022, shall include a provision that at least sixty  
47 per cent of the children enrolled in such child care center, group child  
48 care home or family child care home are members of families who are  
49 at or below seventy-five per cent of the state median income. The  
50 Commissioner of Early Childhood may authorize child care centers,

51 group child care homes and family child care homes receiving financial  
52 assistance under this subsection to apply a program surplus to the next  
53 program year. The Commissioner of Early Childhood shall consult with  
54 directors of child care centers in establishing fees for the operation of  
55 such centers. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, the Commissioner  
56 of Early Childhood shall, within available appropriations, enter into  
57 contracts under this section for the purpose of expanding the number of  
58 spaces available to children three years of age or under who are in infant  
59 or toddler care and not in a preschool program. Any unexpended funds  
60 appropriated for purposes of this section shall not lapse at the end of the  
61 fiscal year but shall be deposited in the Early Childhood Education Fund  
62 established pursuant to section 10-511, as amended by this act.

63 Sec. 3. Subsection (e) of section 10-16p of the 2024 supplement to the  
64 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
65 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

66 (e) [(1)] If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of this  
67 section are not expended, the commissioner [may] shall deposit such  
68 unexpended funds in the [account established under section 10-16aa  
69 and use such unexpended funds in accordance with the provisions of  
70 section 10-16aa] Early Childhood Education Fund established pursuant  
71 to section 10-511, as amended by this act.

72 [(2) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, and each fiscal year  
73 thereafter, if funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of  
74 this section are not expended, an amount up to one million dollars of  
75 such unexpended funds may be available for the provision of  
76 professional development for early childhood care and education  
77 program providers, and staff employed in such programs, provided  
78 such programs accept state funds for infant, toddler and preschool slots.  
79 Such unexpended funds may be available for use in accordance with the  
80 provisions of this subparagraph for the subsequent fiscal year. The  
81 commissioner may use such unexpended funds on and after July 1, 2015,  
82 to support early childhood education programs accepting state funds in  
83 satisfying the staff qualifications requirements of subparagraphs (B) and

84 (C) of subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section. The commissioner  
85 shall use any such funds to provide assistance to individual staff  
86 members, giving priority to those staff members (A) attending an  
87 institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for  
88 Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education, and approved by  
89 the Office of Early Childhood, and regionally accredited, at a maximum  
90 of ten thousand dollars per staff member per year for the cost of higher  
91 education courses leading to a bachelor's degree or, not later than  
92 December 31, 2015, an associate degree, as such degrees are described  
93 in said subparagraphs (B) and (C), or (B) receiving noncredit  
94 competency-based training approved by the office, at a maximum of one  
95 thousand dollars per staff member per year, provided such staff  
96 members have applied for all available federal and state scholarships  
97 and grants, and such assistance does not exceed such staff members'  
98 financial need. Individual staff members shall apply for such  
99 unexpended funds in a manner determined by the commissioner. The  
100 commissioner shall determine how such unexpended funds shall be  
101 distributed.

102 (3) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of this  
103 section are not expended pursuant to subsection (c) of this section,  
104 deposited pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, or used  
105 pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection, the commissioner may  
106 use such unexpended funds to support local school readiness programs.  
107 The commissioner may use such funds for purposes including, but not  
108 limited to, (A) assisting local school readiness programs in meeting and  
109 maintaining accreditation requirements, (B) providing training in  
110 implementing the preschool assessment and curriculum frameworks,  
111 including training to enhance literacy teaching skills, (C) developing a  
112 state-wide preschool curriculum, (D) developing student assessments  
113 for students in grades kindergarten to two, inclusive, (E) developing  
114 and implementing best practices for parents in supporting preschool  
115 and kindergarten student learning, (F) developing and implementing  
116 strategies for children to successfully transition to preschool and from  
117 preschool to kindergarten, including through parental engagement and

118 whole-family supports that may be utilized through the two-  
119 generational initiative, established pursuant to section 17b-112l, or  
120 through other available resources, (G) providing for professional  
121 development, including assisting in career ladder advancement, for  
122 school readiness staff, (H) providing supplemental grants to other  
123 towns that are eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this  
124 section, and (I) developing a plan to provide spaces in an accredited  
125 school readiness program or a school readiness program seeking  
126 accreditation to all eligible children who reside in an area or town  
127 described in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of  
128 subsection (d) of this section.]

129       Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) The Department of Administrative  
130 Services shall conduct a study regarding the availability of state  
131 property for the provision of early childhood care and early childhood  
132 education programs, housing and adult training programs. Such study  
133 shall include, but need not be limited to, a review of (1) state-owned  
134 buildings that house offices of agencies of the state for the purpose of  
135 determining whether such buildings contain available space that may  
136 be utilized to provide early childhood care and early childhood  
137 education programs, and (2) real property owned by the state that is  
138 vacant and may be developed for the purpose of providing early  
139 childhood care and early childhood education programs, housing or  
140 adult training programs. Not later than January 1, 2026, the department  
141 shall submit a report on its findings and any recommendations to the  
142 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
143 matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of  
144 section 11-4a of the general statutes.

145       Sec. 5. (*Effective from passage*) The Office of Early Childhood shall  
146 conduct a study regarding the feasibility of expanding the qualifications  
147 required for a person to be issued an early childhood teacher credential  
148 under section 10-520b of the general statutes to include experience in  
149 nontraditional child care settings and other forms of informal child care.  
150 Not later than January 1, 2025, the office shall submit a report on its  
151 findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the

152 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education,  
153 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	10-511
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	8-210(b)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	10-16p(e)
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**Statement of Purpose:**

To provide the Early Childhood Education Fund with unexpended funds from certain early childhood programs; to require the Department of Administrative Services to conduct a study of state-owned buildings and property for the purpose of utilizing or converting such buildings and property for early childhood care, early childhood education, housing and adult training programs; and to require the Office of Early Childhood to study ways to include experience in nontraditional child care settings and other informal child care arrangements for purposes of issuing an early childhood teacher credential.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*