



General Assembly

February Session, 2022

Raised Bill No. 5279

LCO No. 1696



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:
(ED)

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 Section 10-16z of the general statutes is repealed and the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 parent member recommended by a parent advisory group
62 and appointed by the Governor may, within available appropriations,
63 be compensated for any time and travel related to meetings of the
64 cabinet.

65 (c) Within available resources, the Early Childhood Cabinet shall (1)
66 advise the Office of Early Childhood, established pursuant to section 10-
67 500, (2) not later than December 1, 2009, and annually thereafter,
68 develop an annual plan of action that assigns the appropriate state
69 agency to complete the tasks specified in the federal Head Start Act of
70 2007, P.L. 110-134, as amended from time to time, and (3) not later than
71 March 1, 2010, and annually thereafter, submit an annual state-wide
72 strategic report, pursuant to said federal Head Start Act, in accordance
73 with the provisions of section 11-4a, addressing the progress such
74 agencies have made toward the completion of such tasks outlined under
75 said federal Head Start Act and this subsection to the Governor and the
76 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance
77 of matters relating to education and human services.

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

80 Sec. 2. Subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the 2022
81 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is
82 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2022*):

83 (b) (1) The office shall be the lead agency for school readiness. For
84 purposes of this section and section 10-16u, school readiness program
85 providers eligible for funding from the office shall include local and
86 regional boards of education, regional educational service centers,
87 family resource centers and providers of child care centers, group child
88 care homes and family child care homes, as described in section 19a-77,
89 Head Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that
90 meet any standards established by the commissioner. The office shall
91 establish standards for school readiness programs. The office may
92 amend any such standards, including any standards relating to the staff
93 qualifications requirement described in subdivision (2) of this
94 subsection, to prevent classroom closures or the reduction of enrollment
95 in school readiness programs by responding to workforce shortages or
96 changes in workforce needs, supporting the expansion of degree
97 pathways and meeting equity goals. The standards may include, but
98 need not be limited to, guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum
99 content, including preliteracy development, lesson plans, parental
100 involvement, staff qualifications and training, transition to school and
101 administration. The office shall develop age-appropriate developmental
102 skills and goals for children attending such programs. The
103 commissioner, in consultation with the president of the Connecticut
104 State Colleges and Universities, the Commissioners of Education and
105 Social Services and other appropriate entities, shall develop a
106 professional development program for the staff of school readiness
107 programs.

108 Sec. 3. Subdivision (1) of section 19a-420 of the general statutes is
109 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
110 *2022*):

111 (1) "Youth camp" means any regularly scheduled program or
112 organized group activity [advertised as a camp or] operated only during
113 school vacations or on weekends by a person, partnership, corporation,
114 association, the state or a municipal agency for recreational or
115 educational purposes and accommodating for profit or under
116 philanthropic or charitable auspices five or more children, who are at

117 least three years of age and under sixteen years of age, who are (A) not
118 bona fide personal guests in the private home of an individual, and (B)
119 living apart from their relatives, parents or legal guardian, for a period
120 of three days or more per week or portions of three or more days per
121 week, provided any such relative, parent or guardian who is an
122 employee of such camp shall not be considered to be in the position of
123 loco parentis to such employee's child for the purposes of this chapter,
124 but does not include (i) classroom-based summer instructional
125 programs operated by any person, provided no activities that may pose
126 a health risk or hazard to participating children are conducted at such
127 programs, (ii) public schools, or private schools in compliance with
128 section 10-188 and approved by the State Board of Education or
129 accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of
130 Education, which operate a summer educational program, (iii) licensed
131 child care centers, or (iv) drop-in programs for children who are at least
132 six years of age administered by a nationally chartered boys' and girls'
133 club;

134 Sec. 4. Subsection (b) of section 17b-749k of the 2022 supplement to
135 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
136 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

137 (b) The Commissioner of Early Childhood shall, within available
138 appropriations, require any relative who provides child care services to
139 a child and who receives a child care subsidy from the Office of Early
140 Childhood, to submit to a check of (1) the National Sex Offender Public
141 Website maintained by the United States Department of Justice and the
142 registry established and maintained pursuant to section 54-257, (2) the
143 state child abuse registry established pursuant to section 17a-101k, and
144 (3) the [Connecticut On-Line Law Enforcement Communication
145 Teleprocessing System] Connecticut Criminal History Request System
146 maintained by the Department of Emergency Services and Public
147 Protection. If such check reveals that the name of any such relative
148 appears in such databases, on said registry or in said system, the
149 commissioner may require such relative to submit to state and national
150 criminal history records checks conducted in accordance with section

151 29-17a.

152 Sec. 5. Section 10-520b of the general statutes is repealed and the
 153 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

154 The Office of Early Childhood, upon receipt of a proper application
 155 and in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Early Childhood,
 156 shall issue an early childhood teacher credential to any person who
 157 holds (1) an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood
 158 education from an institution of higher education that is regionally
 159 accredited, provided such associate degree program is approved by (A)
 160 the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher
 161 Education, and (B) the Office of Early Childhood, or (2) a bachelor's
 162 degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an
 163 institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, provided
 164 such bachelor's degree program is approved by (A) the Board of Regents
 165 for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (B) the Office
 166 of Early Childhood. [Any early childhood teacher credential issued
 167 pursuant to subdivision (1) of this section shall be valid until June 30,
 168 2021.] For purposes of this section, "concentration in early childhood
 169 education" has the same meaning as provided in section 10-16p, as
 170 amended by this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	10-16z
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	10-16p(b)(1)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2022</i>	19a-420(1)
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	17b-749k(b)
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	10-520b

Statement of Purpose:

To expand the membership of the Early Childhood Cabinet, to authorize the Office of Early Childhood to amend the standards for school readiness programs in certain circumstance, to revise the definition of youth camp to delete the requirement that a youth camp advertises as a camp, to update the reference to the Connecticut Criminal History

Request System in the statute background checks, and to extend the term of validity for the 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.]