



**Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session**

**Document Name:**

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| <b>Document Name</b> | <b>Office of Early Childhood Legislative Proposals</b> |
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**Naming Format:** AGENCY ACRONYM PROPOSAL NUMBER - TOPIC

*Please insert a copy of the fully drafted bill at the end of this document (required for review)*

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| <b>Legislative Liaison</b>               | Maggie Adair<br><a href="mailto:maggie.adair@ct.gov">maggie.adair@ct.gov</a><br>860-878-8936              |
| <b>Division Requesting This Proposal</b> | Early Care and Education, Quality Improvement, Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Unit, Legal             |
| <b>Drafter</b>                           | Maggie Adair, Cynthia Watts-Elder, Marybeth Miller, Kristin Dudanowicz, Cheryl Sparks, Margaret Gustafson |

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| <b>Title of Proposal</b>                      | ACC the Recommendations of the Office of Early Childhood   |
| <b>Statutory Reference, if any</b>            | Various  |
| <b>Brief Summary and Statement of Purpose</b> | To improve, simplify, and align CT’s early care and education system, remove administrative barriers, address legal protections, and support early care and education providers. |

**SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY**

*Summarize sections in groups where appropriate*

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| <p><b>SCHOOL READINESS</b></p> <p><b>1) Allow School Readiness to enroll and serve infants and toddlers.</b></p> <p><u>Summary/Rationale:</u><br/>This proposal would expand the definition of School Readiness to include infants and toddlers age birth to three years of age. This change in eligibility would move toward greater alignment and integration of OEC’s state-funded early care and education programs (i.e.,</p> |
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## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

School Readiness and Child Day Care (CDC)). Expanding the definition of School Readiness to include infants and toddlers increases Communities' capacity to address the acute shortage of infant and toddler spaces, take advantage of recent state and federal funds targeted at infant and toddler care, and help communities better meet families' needs through School Readiness Council planning.

- 2) Delete language that requires any School Readiness rate increase to be used exclusively for staff salaries.**

Summary/Rationale:

Increasing wage compensation is critically needed for child care programs to recruit and retain staff. However, child care program budgets are complex and must cover the cost of other needs such as rent, utilities, classroom and playground equipment, instructional materials, and staff professional development. This language is not meaningful, in that programs already spend 65-95% of their funds on staffing. This is overly bureaucratic and adds to the administrative burden for programs and for OEC.

- 3) Change School Readiness grant awards from annually to every two years.**

Summary/Rationale:

Changing School Readiness Grant awards from annually to every two years will align with the biennial budget and Child Day Care contracts. Changing grant awards from annual to biennial will also relieve undue burden on programs and districts to complete applications on an annual basis.

- 4) Amend language regarding a child that is not ready for kindergarten.**

Summary/Rationale:

Language regarding a child that is not ready for kindergarten is amended to more appropriate language as there is no specific criteria defining when a child would be considered ready or not ready for kindergarten.

### CHILD DAY CARE

- 1) Delete language that requires any Child Day Care rate increase to be used exclusively for staff salaries.**

Summary/Rationale:

Increasing wage compensation is critically needed for child care programs to recruit and retain staff. However, child care program budgets are complex and must cover the cost of other needs such as rent, utilities, classroom and playground equipment, instructional materials, and staff professional development. This language is not meaningful, in that



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

programs already spend 65-95% of their funds on staffing. This is overly bureaucratic and adds to the administrative burden for programs and for OEC.

### **SMART START**

- 1) Remove sunset language to the Smart Start program; remove language related to free and reduced lunch.**

Summary/Rationale:

This proposal deletes the sunset date for the Smart Start program. This proposal also removes the option to prioritize enrollment based on free and reduced lunch status. This will result in more consistent data related to income for enrolled students and will align with other state funded preschool programs. Reporting based solely on income status will be phased in for existing Smart Start programs.

### **QUALIFIED STAFF MEMBER (QSM)**

- 1) Streamline Qualified Staff Member (QSM) Requirements.**

Summary/Rationale:

This proposal would streamline the Qualified Staff Member (QSM) requirements to reduce the complexity of the requirements, offer existing non-ECE degree holders a pathway to QSM compliance, and provider and recognize benchmarks for staff working toward bachelor's degrees and uses current data to inform new benchmarks in the preliminary language.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER CREDENTIAL (ECTC)**

- 1) Repeal Early Childhood Development Credential (ECTC)**

Summary/Rationale:

Sec. 10-520b would no longer be needed if the Qualified Streamline Member (QSM) proposal, referenced above, passes in legislation because that language removes the process for the individual review route to the ECTC and the repealed language eliminates the higher education ECTC program approval process.

### **CARE 4 KIDS**

- 1) Remove specific income eligibility threshold for recipient who qualify based on their loss of eligibility for TANF.**

Summary/Rationale:

This proposal deletes this language as there is now a federally required second-tier for



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

eligibility, known as graduated phase-out, which OEC has set to 65% of the State Median Income. Current statutory language must be amended to comply with federal law.

### **PARENT CABINET**

**1) Establish the Office of Early Childhood Parent Cabinet in statute.**

Summary/Rationale:

The OEC Parent Cabinet was co-created with a group of parent leaders and the first-ever Cabinet were seated in September 2021. The role of the Parent Cabinet is to serve as a vehicle to elevate family voice and build connections among Connecticut families, communities, and the OEC. Through leadership opportunities, the Parent Cabinet raises up and incorporates the expertise of parents with young children throughout the OEC to strengthen family-centered policies and programs. The Cabinet also has representation on the ECE Cabinet and links with Two Gen Council and Parent Ambassadors in 50 communities. The cabinet is important advisory infrastructure to assure that the state systems are responsive to family needs. This OEC Parent Cabinet should be added to the responsibilities of the agency pursuant to CGS 10-500(b).

### **LOCAL EARLY CHILDHOOD COLLABORATIVES**

**1) Change the name from “early childhood councils” to “local early childhood collaboratives.”**  
CGS 10-502

Summary/Rationale:

This is a technical change. These local and regional entities are referred to as “Local Early Childhood Collaboratives” (LECCs).

### **LICENSING/LEGAL**

**1) Allow the OEC to require a medical examination of a child care provider as part of an office investigation.**

Summary/Rationale:

This proposal would permit the OEC to order a child care operator or person who has who has an ownership interest or serves as an officer, corporate director, managing member or managing partner of the operator, and participates in the management or control of such operator’s provision of child care services, to submit to a medical examination as part of an office investigation concerning the health, safety, and welfare of the children cared for in the child care program. This legislative proposal would align with the Department of Health’s authority to order such examinations as part of an investigation into the inability of a health care professional to practice with reasonable skill or safety, as set forth in CGS 19a-12e.

**2) Permit the OEC to share unredacted information and records with law enforcement regarding an office investigation of licensed child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes, and youth camps.**



# Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

Summary/Rationale:  
 This proposal would permit the OEC to share unredacted information and records with law enforcement regarding an office investigation of licensed child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes, and youth camps. This legislative proposal would align with the Department of Children and Families’ authority to share information with law enforcement, pursuant to CGS 17a-28.

## BACKGROUND

Origin of Proposal

New Proposal

Resubmission

**If this is a resubmission, please share the prior bill number, the reason the bill did not move forward, and any changes made or conversations had since it was last proposed:**

*Please consider the following, if applicable:*

|   |  |
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| <b>Have there been changes in federal/state laws or regulations that make this legislation necessary?</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>School Readiness #1</b> - P.A. 22-80 and the P.A. 22-118 allocated \$25M in state funds for 1,300 additional infant and toddler spaces and increased the per child rate to \$13,500. In response to this legislation, OEC proposes to open School Readiness eligibility to include infant and toddlers to support expansion of care for our youngest children and address a statewide shortage of infant and toddler spaces.</li> <li>2) <b>Smart Start #1</b> - CGS 10-506 sunsets the Smart Start program effective June 30, 2024. OEC proposes to remove the sunset statutory language to continue providing high-quality preschool spaces in public schools in a shared-cost partnership.</li> <li>3) <b>Care 4 Kids #2</b> - New CCDF federal regulations requires a second tier for eligibility, in accordance with 45 CFR 98.21(b), known as a graduated phase-out that OEC has set to 65% of the State Median Income. Current statutory language must be amended to comply with federal law.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Has this proposal or a similar</b>   |  |



**Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session**

**Document Name:**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>proposal been implemented in other states? If yes, to what result?</b></p> |   |
| <p><b>Have certain constituencies called for this proposal?</b></p>              | <p>Early Childhood advocacy groups and child care providers have advocated for increasing access to and quality of CT’s early care and education system. There is an increased call to support the stability of the child care industry, with particular focus on compensation for the workforce to help with recruitment and retention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The early care and education community has advocated for increased access to infant and toddler care – <b>School Readiness #1.</b></li> <li>• School Readiness liaisons and programs have also provided feedback that annual grant applications are redundant, cumbersome, and take away time working coordination and quality assurance of the program – <b>School Readiness #3.</b></li> <li>• State funded early care and education providers have voiced feedback about the Qualified Staff Member legislation and requirements and concerns about barriers to meet those requirements – <b>Qualified Staff Member #1.</b></li> </ul> |

**INTERAGENCY IMPACT**

*List each affected agency. Copy the table as needed.*

Check here if this proposal does NOT impact other agencies

**FISCAL IMPACT**

*Include the section number(s) responsible for the fiscal impact and the anticipated impact*

Check here if this proposal does NOT have a fiscal impact

|  |  |
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| <p><b>State</b></p>  | <p><b>Smart Start</b></p> <p>1) Removing the Smart Start funding sunset date of June 30, 2024, would have a state fiscal impact if the state budget continues funding for the program.</p> |
| <p><b>Municipal (Include any municipal mandate that can be found within legislation)</b></p> | <p><b>No adverse fiscal impact.</b></p>  |



Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

|         |                   |
|---------|-------------------|
| Federal | No fiscal impact. |
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**MONITORING & EVALUATION PLAN**

*If applicable, please describe the anticipated measurable outcomes and the data that will be used to track those outcomes. Include the section number(s) responsible for those outcomes*

**[ ] Check here if this proposal does NOT lead to any measurable outcomes**

**Smart Start – # 1:** OEC collects data on the children served in Smart Start programs via a new online system, ECE Reporter. Smart Start programs report on the total number of children served, the number of children with Individual Education Programs (IEPS), the number of dual language learners, and income levels. These data allow OEC to determine if programs are adhering to enrollment priorities. In addition, Smart Start programs submit annual reports detailing successes and challenges associated with implementing the program. All state funded early care and education programs are monitored by OEC program managers on a multi-year cycle. The monitoring process includes a desk audit of compliance with OEC requirements and may include a site visit and classroom observation.

**SCHOOL READINESS**

- 1) Allow School Readiness to enroll and serve infants and toddlers.**

CGS 10-16p(a):

(2) “Eligible children” means children from birth through [three and] four years of age and children five years of age who are not eligible to enroll in kindergarten school pursuant to section 10-15c, or who are eligible to enroll in [school] kindergarten and will attend a school readiness program pursuant to section 10-16t;

- 2) Delete language that requires any School Readiness rate increase to be used exclusively for staff salaries.**

CGS 10-16p (3) (l):

[For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, and each fiscal year thereafter, any school readiness program that (1) is licensed by the Office of Early Childhood pursuant to chapter 368a, (2) provides full day and year-round child care and education programs for children, and (3) receives funds pursuant to this section or section 10-16u, shall use any amount of the per child



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

### Document Name:

cost as described in subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 10-16q that is over the amount of eight thousand nine hundred twenty-seven dollars, exclusively to increase the salaries of those individuals with direct responsibility for teaching or caring for children in a classroom at such school readiness program.]

### 3) Change School Readiness grant awards from annually to every two years.

#### CGS 10-16p(c):

Grant awards shall be made [annually] [commencing in 2023 and every other fiscal year thereafter](#) contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory annual evaluation.

### 4) Amend language regarding a child that is not ready for kindergarten.

#### CGS 10-16t:

A local school readiness council may elect to reserve up to five per cent of the spaces in its school readiness programs for children who are five years of age and are eligible to attend [school] [kindergarten](#) pursuant to section 10-15c. Such children shall only be eligible to participate in the school readiness program if they have been in the program for at least one year and the parent or legal guardian of such a child, the school readiness program provider and the local or regional school district [agree that the child would benefit from another year of the school readiness program and will defer attending kindergarten the next year. A written authorization signed by the parent or legal guardian indicating the child will not attend kindergarten for the year in which the child is otherwise eligible shall be maintained at the local or regional school district.](#) [in which the child would otherwise be attending school agree that the child is not ready for kindergarten.]

## CHILD DAY CARE

### 1) Delete language that requires any Child Day Care rate increase to be used exclusively for staff salaries.

#### CGS 8-210(b):

[For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and each fiscal year thereafter, the amount per child pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection that is over the amount of the per child cost that was prescribed pursuant to the contract under said subdivision (3) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, shall be used exclusively to increase the salaries of early childhood educators employed at the child care center.]





## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

### SMART START

- 1) Remove sunset language to the Smart Start program; remove language related to free and reduced lunch.

#### CGS 10-506:

**Sec. 10-506. Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program.** [(a) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2015, to June 30, 202[4], inclusive, t] The Office of Early Childhood, in consultation with the Department of Education, shall design and administer the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program to provide grants to local and regional boards of education for capital and operating expenses related to establishing or expanding a preschool program under the jurisdiction of the board of education for the town. A local or regional board of education may submit an application to the office, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, and may receive (1) a grant for capital expenses in an amount not to exceed seventy-five thousand dollars per classroom for costs related to the renovation of an existing public school to accommodate the establishment or expansion of a preschool program, and (2) an annual grant for operating expenses (A) in an amount not to exceed five thousand dollars per child served by such grant, or (B) in an amount not to exceed seventy-five thousand dollars for each preschool classroom, provided no town shall receive a total annual grant for operating expenses greater than three hundred thousand dollars. Each local or regional board of education that establishes or expands a preschool program under this section shall be eligible to receive an annual grant for operating expenses for a period of five years, provided such preschool program meets standards established by the Commissioner of Early Childhood. Such local or regional board of education may submit an application for renewal of such grant to the office.

(b) On and after July 1, 2014, local and regional boards of education, individually or cooperatively, pursuant to section 10-158a, may apply, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner prescribes, to the office for a capital grant and an operating grant for the purposes described in subsection (a) of this section. To be eligible to receive such grants under this section, an applicant board of education shall (1) demonstrate that it has a need for establishing or expanding a preschool program using information requested by the commissioner on a form prescribed by the commissioner, such as data collected from the preschool experience survey, described in section 10-515, (2) submit a plan for the expenditure of grant funds received under this section that outlines how such board of education will use such funds to establish or expand a preschool program, including, but not limited to, the amount that such board will contribute to the operation of such preschool program and how such board of education will provide access to preschool for children who would not otherwise be able to enroll in a preschool program, and (3) submit a letter of support for establishing or expanding a preschool program by the local or regional school readiness council, described in



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

### Document Name:

section 10-16r, if any, for the school district. The commissioner shall give priority to boards of education (A) that demonstrate the greatest need for the establishment or expansion of a preschool program, and (B) whose plan allocates at least sixty per cent of the spaces in such preschool program to children who are members of families that are at or below seventy-five per cent of the state median income[, or fifty per cent of the spaces in such preschool program to children who are eligible for free and reduced price lunches].

### QUALIFIED STAFF MEMBER (QSM)

#### 1) Streamline Qualified Staff Member (QSM) Requirements.

CGS 10-16p(b)(2):

For purposes of this section:

- (A) “Designated staff member” means the person assigned the primary responsibility for a classroom of children.
- (B) “Designated qualified staff member” means a designated staff member who possesses at least one of the following staff qualifications:
  - (i) a bachelor's degree or higher with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited; or
  - (ii) a certificate issued pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education; or
  - (iii) was deemed to meet the bachelor’s degree requirements by the Office, by confirmed employment, without a concentration in early childhood education, but with at least twelve early childhood credits from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited; or
  - (iv) after June 30, 2023, a bachelor’s degree from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, without a concentration in early childhood education, but with at least twelve applicable early childhood credits as determined by the Office
- (C) “State funds for any combination of infant, toddler and preschool spaces” means the Office established program and funded, but excludes the child care subsidy program established pursuant to section 17b-749.
- (D) “OEC funded child care program” means each early childhood education program accepting state funds directly from the Office or indirectly through Office subcontractors, for any combination of infant, toddler and preschool spaces, shall ensure each designated qualified staff member meets the staff qualifications.



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

(3) (A) From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2027: twenty-five per cent of the designated staff members at each OEC funded child care program shall be designated qualified staff members.

(B) From July 1, 2027, to June 30, 2030: fifty per cent of the designated qualified members at each OEC funded child care program shall be designated qualified staff members.

(C) From July 1, 2030, to June 30, 2033: seventy-five per cent of the designated qualified members at each OEC funded child care program shall be designated qualified staff members.

(D) On and after of July 1, 2033: one hundred per cent of the designated qualified members at each OEC funded child care program shall be designated qualified staff members.

[(2) For purposes of this section:

(A) Prior to July 1, 2022, “staff qualifications” means that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program, there is in each classroom an individual who has at least the following: (i) A childhood development associate credential or an equivalent credential issued by an organization approved by the commissioner and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from an institution of higher education (I) accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (II) regionally accredited; (ii) an associate degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from such an institution; (iii) a four-year degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from such an institution; (iv) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or special education; (v) an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited; or (vi) a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited;

(B) From July 1, 2022, until June 30, 2025, “staff qualifications” means that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program, (i) at least fifty per cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children (I) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education, (II) have been issued an early childhood teacher credential, pursuant to section 10-520b, (III) hold at least an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, or (IV) satisfy the requirements of subdivision (3), (4) or (5) of this subsection, and (ii) such remaining individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children hold a childhood development associate credential or an equivalent credential issued by an organization approved by the commissioner and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

### Document Name:

development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from an institution of higher education (I) accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (II) regionally accredited;

(C) From July 1, 2025, until June 30, 2029, “staff qualifications” means that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program, (i) at least fifty per cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children (I) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education, (II) have been issued an early childhood teacher credential, pursuant to subdivision (2) of section 10-520b, (III) hold at least a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, or (IV) satisfy the requirements of subdivision (3), (4) or (5) of this subsection, and (ii) such remaining individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children (I) hold an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, or (II) have been issued an early childhood teacher credential, pursuant to subdivision (1) of section 10-520b; and

(D) On and after July 1, 2029, “staff qualifications” means that for each early childhood education program accepting state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program, one hundred per cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of children (i) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education, (ii) have been issued an early childhood teacher credential, pursuant to subdivision (2) of section 10-520b, (iii) hold at least a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, or (iv) satisfy the requirements of subdivision (3), (4) or (5) of this subsection.

(3) Any individual with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development or a bachelor's degree and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, who, on or before June 30, 2015, is employed by an early childhood education program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program shall be considered to meet the staff qualifications required under subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (2) of this subsection. No such early childhood education program shall terminate any such individual from employment for purposes of meeting the staff qualification requirements set forth in subparagraph (B), (C) or (D) of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(4) Any individual with an associate degree or a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development or an associate degree or a bachelor's degree and twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, other than an associate degree or a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education, may submit documentation concerning such degree for review and assessment by the office as to whether such degree has a sufficient concentration in early childhood education so as to satisfy the requirements set forth in subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (2) of this subsection.



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

(5) Any individual with an associate degree with twelve credits or more in early childhood education or child development, as determined by the commissioner or the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, after consultation with the commissioner, from an institution of higher education (A) accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (B) regionally accredited, who has been employed in the same early childhood education program that accepts state funds for infant, toddler and preschool spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program since 1995 shall be considered to meet the staff qualifications required under subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (2) of this subsection until June 30, 2025. On and after July 1, 2025, such individual shall hold a childhood development associate credential or an equivalent credential, described in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (2) of this subsection, or otherwise meet the staff qualifications required under subparagraphs (C) and (D) of subdivision (2) of this subsection. Any such individual who terminates his or her employment with such early childhood education program on or before June 30, 2025, and accepts a position at another early childhood education program accepting state funds for spaces associated with such program's child care program or school readiness program shall submit documentation of such individual's progress toward meeting the staff qualification requirements set forth in subparagraph (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (2) of this subsection in a manner determined by the office.]

### EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER CREDENTIAL (ECTC)

#### 1) Repeal Early Childhood Development Credential (ECTC)

Sec. 10-520b:

**[Sec. 10-520b. Early childhood teacher credential.** The Office of Early Childhood, upon receipt of a proper application and in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Early Childhood, shall issue an early childhood teacher credential to any person who holds (1) an associate degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, provided such associate degree program is approved by (A) the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education, and (B) the Office of Early Childhood, or (2) a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood education from an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited, provided such bachelor's degree program is approved by (A) the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education, and (B) the Office of Early Childhood. Any early childhood teacher credential issued pursuant to subdivision (1) of this section shall be valid until June 30, 2021. For purposes of this section, "concentration in early childhood education" has the same meaning as provided in section 10-16p.]

### CARE 4 KIDS



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

- 1) **Remove specific income eligibility threshold for recipient who qualify based on their loss of eligibility for TANF.**

CGS 17b-749(b):

(b) The commissioner shall establish income standards for applicants and recipients at a level to include a family with gross income up to fifty per cent of the state-wide median income, except the commissioner (1) may increase the income level up to the maximum level allowed under federal law [.] and (2) upon the request of the Commissioner of Children and Families, may waive the income standards for adoptive families so that children adopted on or after October 1, 1999, from the Department of Children and Families are eligible for the child care subsidy program [,] and (3) on and after March 1, 2003, shall reduce the income eligibility level to up to fifty-five per cent of the state-wide median income for applicants and recipients who qualify based on their loss of eligibility for temporary family assistance]. [The commissioner shall institute a two-tier eligibility threshold in accordance with 45 CFR 98.21\(b\), as amended from time to time.](#) The commissioner may adopt regulations in accordance with chapter 54 to establish income criteria and durational requirements for such waiver of income standards.

### PARENT CABINET

- 1) **Establish the Office of Early Childhood Parent Cabinet in statute.**

CGS 10-500(b):

**Sec. 10-500. Office of Early Childhood. Commissioner. Responsibilities. Successor department. Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office.** (a) There is established an Office of Early Childhood. The office shall be under the direction of the Commissioner of Early Childhood, whose appointment shall be made by the Governor. Such appointment shall be in accordance with the provisions of sections 4-5 to 4-8, inclusive. The commissioner shall be responsible for implementing the policies and directives of the office. The commissioner shall have the authority to designate any employee as his or her agent to exercise all or part of the authority, powers and duties of the commissioner in his or her absence. Said office shall be within the Department of Education for administrative purposes only.

(b) The office shall be responsible for: . . .

[Establishing a Parent Cabinet advisory committee to the Office of Early Childhood to strengthen partnership and communication with families, bring awareness to gaps and barriers in services, increase access to services for families, and help the agency make improvements to the lives of young children and families across the state related to its services and programs.](#)



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

Document Name:

### LOCAL EARLY CHILDHOOD COLLABORATIVES

- 1) **Change the name from “early childhood councils” to “local early childhood collaboratives.”**

CGS 10-502:

**Sec. 10-502. (Formerly Sec. 10-16bb). Collaboration with local and regional early childhood councils.** The Office of Early Childhood shall collaborate with and may, within available appropriations, provide funding to local and regional early childhood [councils] [collaboratives](#) for the implementation of early care and education and child development programs at the local level. Such [local](#) early childhood [councils] [collaboratives](#) shall: (1) Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for an early childhood system for the community served by such [local](#) early childhood [councils] [collaboratives](#), (2) develop policy and program planning, (3) encourage community participation by emphasizing substantial parental involvement, (4) collect, analyze and evaluate data with a focus on program and service outcomes, (5) allocate resources, and (6) perform any other functions that will assist in the provision of early childhood programs and services. Such [local](#) early childhood [councils] [collaboratives](#) may enter into memoranda of agreement with the local or regional school readiness council, described in section 10-16r, of the town or region served by such [local](#) early childhood [councils] [collaboratives](#) to perform the duties and functions of a school readiness council, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-16r, or if no such local or regional school readiness council exists for the town or region of such [local](#) early childhood [councils] [collaboratives](#), perform the duties and functions of a school readiness council, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-16r.

### LICENSING/LEGAL

- 1) **Allow the OEC to require a medical examination of a child care provider as part of an office investigation.**

CGS 19a-87a(e):

In addition to any powers the office may have, in any investigation (1) concerning an application, reinstatement or renewal of a license for a child care center, a group child care home or a family child care home, as such terms are defined in section 19a-77, (2) of a complaint concerning child care services, as described in section 19a-77, or (3) concerning the possible provision of unlicensed child care services, the office may administer oaths, issue subpoenas, compel testimony, [and] order the production of books, records and documents, [and order the operator or a person who has who an ownership interest or serves as an officer, corporate director, managing member or managing partner of the operator, provided that such person also provides child care and participates in the management or control of such operator’s provision of child care services, to submit to a medical examination to be performed by a physician, physician assistant, or an advanced practice registered nurse. The physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse shall make a written statement of his or her findings.](#) If



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

### Document Name:

any person refuses to appear, testify, [or] produce any book, record or document, [or submit to an examination](#) when so ordered, [the office may petition the Superior Court and said Court or any \[a\] judge of the Superior Court shall have jurisdiction and](#) may make such order as may be appropriate to aid in the enforcement of this section.

- 2) **Permit the OEC to share unredacted information and records with law enforcement regarding an office investigation of licensed child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes, and youth camps.**

### CGS 19a-87a(d):

Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child care center or a group child care home is operating without a current and valid license or in violation of regulations adopted under section 19a-79 or in a manner which may pose a potential danger to the health, welfare and safety of a child receiving child care services, may report such information to the Office of Early Childhood. The office shall investigate any report or complaint received pursuant to this subsection. The name of the person making the report or complaint shall not be disclosed unless (1) such person consents to such disclosure, (2) a judicial or administrative proceeding results therefrom, or (3) a license action pursuant to subsection (a) of this section results therefrom. All records obtained by the office in connection with any such investigation shall not be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 for a period of thirty days from the date of the petition or other event initiating such investigation, or until such time as the investigation is terminated pursuant to a withdrawal or other informal disposition or until a hearing is convened pursuant to chapter 54, whichever is earlier, [except that the name of the person making the report or complaint, and all records generated or obtained by the office in connection with any such investigation shall be disclosed, without redaction, to a state or federal law enforcement officer, including a military law enforcement authority under the United States Department of Defense upon a written request from such state or federal law enforcement officer seeking such report, record or complaint](#). A formal statement of charges issued by the office shall be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 from the time that it is served or mailed to the respondent. Records which are otherwise public records shall not be deemed confidential merely because they have been obtained in connection with an investigation under this section.

### CGS 19a-87e(e):

(e) Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a family child care home, as defined in section 19a-77, is operating without a current and valid license or in violation of the regulations adopted under section 19a-87b or in a manner which may pose a potential danger to the health, welfare and safety of a child receiving child care services, may report such information to the Office of Early Childhood. The office shall investigate any report or complaint received pursuant to this subsection. The name of the person making the report or complaint shall not be disclosed unless (1) such person consents to such disclosure, (2) a judicial or administrative proceeding





## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

### Document Name:

results from such report or complaint, or (3) a license action pursuant to subsection (a) of this section results from such report or complaint. All records obtained by the office in connection with any such investigation shall not be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 for a period of thirty days from the date of the petition or other event initiating such investigation, or until such time as the investigation is terminated pursuant to a withdrawal or other informal disposition or until a hearing is convened pursuant to chapter 54, whichever is earlier, [except that the name of the person making the report or complaint, and all records generated or obtained by the office in connection with any such investigation shall be disclosed, without redaction, to a state or federal law enforcement officer, including a military law enforcement authority under the United States Department of Defense upon a written request from such state or federal law enforcement officer seeking such report, record or complaint.](#) A formal statement of charges issued by the office shall be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 from the time that it is served or mailed to the respondent. Records which are otherwise public records shall not be deemed confidential merely because they have been obtained in connection with an investigation under this section.

### CGS 19a-429:

**Sec. 19a-429. Complaints against youth camps. Investigation of complaints. Disclosure of information re complaints and investigations.** Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a youth camp, as defined in section 19a-420, is operating without a current and valid license or in violation of regulations adopted under section 19a-428 or in a manner which may pose a potential danger to the health, welfare and safety of a child receiving youth camp services, may report such information to the office. The office shall investigate any report or complaint received pursuant to this section. In connection with any investigation of a youth camp, the commissioner or the commissioner's authorized agent may administer oaths, issue subpoenas, compel testimony and order the production of books, records and documents. If any person refuses to appear, to testify or to produce any book, record or document when so ordered, a judge of the Superior Court may make such order as may be appropriate to aid in the enforcement of this section. The name of the person making the report or complaint shall not be disclosed unless (1) such person consents to such disclosure, (2) a judicial or administrative proceeding results therefrom, or (3) a license action pursuant to section 19a-423 results from such report or complaint. All records obtained by the office in connection with any such investigation shall not be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 for a period of thirty days from the date of the petition or other event initiating such investigation, or until such time as the investigation is terminated pursuant to a withdrawal or other informal disposition or until a hearing is convened pursuant to chapter 54, whichever is earlier, [except that the name of the person making the report or complaint, and all records generated or obtained by the office in connection with any such investigation shall be disclosed, without redaction, to a state or federal law enforcement officer, including a military law enforcement authority under the United States Department of Defense upon a written request from such state or federal law](#)



## Agency Legislative Proposal – 2023 Session

### Document Name:

[enforcement officer seeking such report, record or complaint](#). A formal statement of charges issued by the office shall be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 from the time that it is served or mailed to the respondent. Records which are otherwise public records shall not be deemed confidential merely because they have been obtained in connection with an investigation under this section.