



**Agency Legislative Proposal – 2024 Session**  
**Document Name:**

<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>Division Requesting This Proposal</b>	Early Care and Education, Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Unit, Birth to Three, Legal
<b>Drafter</b>	Maggie Adair, Cynthia Watts-Elder, Marybeth Miller, Liz Proietti, Kristen Dudanowicz, Julie Giaccone

<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 clarify that school-age programs are not required to post developmental milestones, allow expansion of child care access through family child care incubator model in a community in New London County, establish OEC authority to contract with the RESCs, establish a Care 4 Kids policy and procedures manual to enable OEC to align and comply with federal regulations, add subsidized guardianship to Care 4 Kids protective services category, and improve equitable access to Birth to Three services in licensed child care settings.

**SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY**

*Summarize sections in groups where appropriate*



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**1) School-age programs are not required to post developmental milestones.**

Summary-Rationale:

P.A. 19-106 requires licensed child care centers, group child care homes, and family child homes to post information about developmental milestones for children birth to age 5 on the premise. This clarifies that school-age programs are not required to post such documents as these programs serve school-age children generally older than age 5.

**2) Expand the family child care home incubator model to a community in New London County and extend the license deadline to 2028.**

Summary/Rationale:

Connecticut has a significant shortage of infant and toddler care, which creates a challenge for working families. Moreover, the majority of the rural communities in New London County are “child care deserts.” Expanding the family child care incubator model to an additional community is one step forward to building a network of licensed family child care homes to serve up to 9 children in each home. Family child care homes often serve infants and toddlers.

**3) Grant the OEC Commissioner the authority to enter into contracts with the Regional Education Service Centers (RESCS).**

Summary/Rationale:

This could grant the OEC Commissioner the authority to allocate funds to allow regional educational service centers to provide professional development services, technical assistance and evaluation, and program planning and implementation activities to local and regional boards of education, school readiness programs, child care centers, group child care homes and family child care homes, and other early childhood are and education entities, as determined by the commissioner. This is the same authority granted to the State Department of Education Commissioner. This bill would allow the OEC to continue funding protocol that was allowed when procurement policies were less restrictive under the COVID-19 public health emergency. Under these COVID conditions, OEC was able to direct funds quickly to the RESCs to provide critical educational supports to child care providers facing duress during the pandemic. The public health emergency has since been lifted and these procurement allowances are no longer in place. This same provision is allowed for the State Department of Education, which was extended to School Readiness when the program was housed at SDE prior to the establishment of the OEC.



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- 4) Establish a Care 4 Kids manual outlining program policies and procedures to align and comply with federal CCDBG regulations, in lieu of Connecticut Care 4 Kids regulations.**

Summary/Rationale:

The OEC seeks to establish a Care 4 Kids policy and procedures manual to align and comply with the federal regulations outlined in 45 CFR 98 in lieu of promulgating state regulations 17b-749-01 – 17b-749-23. This would allow OEC greater flexibility in expeditiously implementing federal policy changes. The Care 4 Kids policy and procedural manual will be published on OEC’s website and promptly updated, ensuring timely compliance with federal requirements.

- 5) Include “subsidized guardianship” under the Care 4 Kid protective services category.**

Rationale/Summary:

Language passed in the 2023 legislative session that establishes a Care 4 Kids protective services category in Sec. 17b-749. One group of families falling under “subsidized guardianship” was not included in the legislation. This creates an inequity and therefore, subsidized guardianship should be added to the statute for inclusion in the protective services category. DCF is in agreement with this proposal.

- 6) Require licensed child care centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes to allow Birth to Three professionals to deliver services on-site at such licensed setting.**

Rationale/Summary:

Birth to Three supports children in natural learning environments, where children spend their day-to-day with those they trust. These environments resemble the child's home, community, and child care settings. The child care setting may be incorporated into the child's individualized family service plan (IFSP) when deemed appropriate, as identified by the IFSP team. With this, interventionists need access to child care settings to support children and improve child outcomes. When there is a delay in receiving services or services not provided in environments that the child needs most, it may cause a decrease in child outcomes. Further, allowing interventionists in the child care setting offers equitable access and support to children by providing the necessary support and services to succeed for their child care teachers as well. Unfortunately, there have been instances where Birth to Three providers have been denied access to licensed child care settings. During COVID, this was a



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understandable, but since, some the prohibitions have remained, denying children access to their least restrictive environment.

**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:*

<b>Have there been changes in federal/state laws or regulations that make this legislation necessary?</b>	Federal Child Care Development Block Grant Act rules have changed over the years and the OEC Care 4 Kids regulations have not kept updated to comply with these rules. We are seeking to adhere to the federal rules with a Care 4 Kids policy and procedures manual in lieu of the current outdated state regulations.
<b>Has this proposal or a similar proposal been implemented in other states? If yes, to what result?</b>	Unknown.
<b>Have certain constituencies called for this proposal?</b>	Advocates for the Birth to Three system have asked for improved access to child care centers and homes to deliver Birth to Three services. The agency has also received requests to allow other communities to establish an incubator model.



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**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

State	No fiscal impact. All proposals would be implemented within available appropriations.
Municipal (Include any municipal mandate that can be found within legislation)	No fiscal impact.
Federal	No fiscal impact.

**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

Birth to Three could establish a process to measure whether more children are receiving services in licensed child care settings as a result of Proposal #6 being implemented.

**1) School-age programs are not required to post developmental milestones.**

Section 10-514 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2024):

On and after [February 1, 2020] July 1, 2024, each operator of a child care center, group child care home, or family child care home, as described in section 19a-77 of the general





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statutes, shall post a copy of the document developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section in a conspicuous place on the premises of such child care center, group child care home or family child care home. [Programs exclusively serving school age children are not required to post such document.](#)

### **2) Expand the family child care home incubator model to a community in New London County and extend the license deadline to 2028.**

Section 19a-87b (l) of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2024):

(l) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2022, to June 30, 20[26]28, inclusive, the Commissioner of Early Childhood may issue a license to maintain a family child care home in New Britain, New Haven, Bridgeport, Stamford, Hartford, Danbury, [or] Waterbury, [or a community in New London County](#), in accordance with the provisions of this chapter to a person or group of persons who have partnered with an association, organization, corporation, institution or agency, public or private, to provide child care services in a space provided by such association, organization, corporation, institution or agency, provided such space has been approved by the commissioner and is not in a private family home. The commissioner shall not approve more than one facility in each such city to be used for licenses issued under this subsection. An application for a license under this subsection shall include a copy of the current fire marshal certificate of compliance with the Fire Safety Code, and written verification of compliance with the State Building Code, local zoning and building requirements and local health ordinances. The commissioner may require an applicant for a license under this subsection to comply with additional conditions relating to the health and safety of the children who will be served in such facility. The commissioner may waive any requirement that does not apply to such facility. Any license issued under this subsection shall expire on June 30, 2026, except that the commissioner may suspend or revoke any such license at any time in accordance with the provisions of section 19a-87e.

### **3) Grant the OEC Commissioner the authority to enter into contracts with the Regional Education Service Centers (RESCS).**

[Section 1. \(NEW\) \(Effective July 1, 2023\) Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 4-98, 4-212 to 4-219, inclusive, 4a-51 and 4a-57 of the general statutes, the Commissioner of Early Childhood may allocate funds to allow regional educational service centers to provide professional development services, technical assistance and evaluation, and](#)



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program planning and implementation activities to local and regional boards of education, school readiness programs, child care centers, group child care homes and family child care homes, as such terms are described in section 19a-77 of the general statutes, and other early childhood care and education entities, as determined by the commissioner. Any funds allocated by the commissioner under this section shall be expended in accordance with procedures and conditions prescribed by the commissioner.

**4) Establish a Care 4 Kids manual outlining program policies and procedures to align and comply with federal CCDBG regulations, in lieu of Connecticut Care 4 Kids regulations.**

Section 17b-749 (h) of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2024):

On or after July 1, ~~[2014]~~ 2024, the commissioner shall adopt the Code of Federal Regulations, 45 CFR 98, in lieu of [adopt] adopting regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, and establish a manual outlining program policies and procedures to implement the provisions of this section.

**5) Include “subsidized guardianship” under the Care 4 Kid protective services category.**

Section 17b-749 (a) of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2024):

(a) The Commissioner of Early Childhood shall establish and operate a child care subsidy program to increase the availability, affordability and quality of child care services for families with a parent or caretaker who (1) is (A) working or attending high school, or (B) subject to the provisions of subsection (d) of this section, is enrolled or participating in (i) a public or independent institution of higher education, (ii) a private career school authorized pursuant to sections 10a-22a to 10a-22o, inclusive, (iii) a job training or employment program administered by a regional workforce development board, (iv) an apprenticeship program administered by the Labor Department's office of apprenticeship training, (v) an alternate route to certification program approved by the State Board of Education, (vi) an adult education program pursuant to section 10-69 or other high school equivalency program, or (vii) a local Even Start program or other adult education program approved by the Commissioner of Early Childhood; or (2) receives cash assistance under





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the temporary family assistance program from the Department of Social Services and is participating in an education, training or other job preparation activity approved pursuant to subsection (b) of section 17b688i or subsection (b) of section 17b-689d. Services available under the child care subsidy program shall include the provision of child care subsidies for children under the age of thirteen or children under the age of nineteen with special needs. The Commissioner of Early Childhood may institute a protective service class in which the commissioner may waive eligibility requirements for at-risk populations that meet the guidelines prescribed by the commissioner, and subject to review by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management. Such at-risk populations are children placed in a foster home by the Department of Children and Families and for whom the parent or legal guardian receives foster care payments, [children placed in a subsidized guardianship by the Department of Children and Families](#), [adopted] children [adopted through the Department of Children and Families](#) for one year from the date of adoption, and homeless children and youths, as defined in 42 USC 11434a, as amended from time to time. The Office of Early Childhood shall open and maintain enrollment for the child care subsidy program and shall administer such program within the existing budgetary resources available. The office shall issue a notice on the office's Internet web site any time the office closes the program to new applications, changes eligibility requirements, changes program benefits or makes any other change to the program's status or terms, except the office shall not be required to issue such notice when the office expands program eligibility. Any change in the office's acceptance of new applications, eligibility requirements, program benefits or any other change to the program's status or terms for which the office is required to give notice pursuant to this subsection, shall not be effective until thirty days after the office issues such notice.

**6) Require licensed child care centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes to allow Birth to Three professionals to deliver services on-site at such licensed setting.**

Section 19a-82 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2024):

[b\) Any licensed child care center, group child care home, or family child care home shall allow for children who are eligible for the Birth to Three system with an individualized family service plan \(IFSP\) to receive early intervention services at the child care center, group child care home, or family child care home from the designated early intervention service provider as listed on the IFSP.](#)