



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 851

January Session, 2025

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1513

Senate, May 8, 2025

The Committee on Appropriations reported through SEN. OSTEN of the 19th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING ASPIRING EDUCATORS.

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-156ii of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

3 (a) There is established an aspiring educators [diversity] scholarship
4 program administered by the Talent Office within the Department of
5 Education. The program shall provide an annual scholarship to [diverse
6 students] aspiring educators who (1) graduated from a public high
7 school in [an alliance district, as defined in section 10-262u] the state,
8 and (2) are enrolled in a teacher preparation program at any four-year
9 institution of higher education. [A diverse student] An aspiring
10 educator may receive an annual scholarship in an amount up to ten
11 thousand dollars for each year such [diverse student] aspiring educator
12 is enrolled and in good standing in a teacher preparation program. As
13 used in this section, ["diverse" has the same meaning as provided in
14 section 10-156bb] "aspiring educator" means an individual who is from
15 a subgroup of the population that is underrepresented in the teaching

16 profession in the state and has been identified as a teacher shortage area
17 pursuant to section 10-8b, as amended by this act.

18 (b) Not later than January 1, [2023] 2026, the [department] Talent
19 Office shall, in consultation with the chairpersons of the joint standing
20 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
21 relating to education, develop a policy concerning the administration of
22 the scholarship. Such policy shall include, but need not be limited to,
23 provisions regarding (1) any additional eligibility criteria, (2) payment
24 and distribution of the scholarships to [diverse students] aspiring
25 educators through the teacher preparation programs in which they are
26 enrolled, and (3) the notification of students in high school [in alliance
27 districts] of the scholarship program, including the opportunity to apply
28 for a scholarship under the program while enrolled in high school and
29 prior to graduation if such student will be enrolled in a teacher
30 preparation program during the following fall semester at a four-year
31 institution of higher education.

32 (c) For the fiscal years ending June 30, [2024] 2026, and each fiscal year
33 thereafter, the [department] Talent Office shall award scholarships in
34 accordance with the provisions of this section and the guidelines
35 developed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

36 (d) The [Commissioner of Education] Talent Office shall develop
37 scholarship repayment criteria for recipients who are not employed as a
38 certified teacher by a local or regional board of education in the state
39 following graduation from a teacher preparation program. Any
40 amounts repaid to the department shall be deposited in the General
41 Fund.

42 (e) The [department] Talent Office may accept gifts, grants and
43 donations, from any source, public or private, for the aspiring educators
44 [diversity] scholarship program.

45 (f) Not later than January 1, [2024] 2027, and annually thereafter, the
46 [department] Talent Office shall develop a report that includes annual
47 data on the [race and ethnicity of the diverse] population subgroups of

48 students who receive a scholarship under the program and the teacher
49 preparation program in which they are enrolled. The [department]
50 Talent Office shall submit such report to the joint standing committee of
51 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
52 education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.

53 Sec. 2. Section 10-8b of the general statutes is repealed and the
54 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

55 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall annually, by December first,
56 determine subject [and] areas, geographic areas and population
57 subgroups in which a teacher shortage exists and shall certify such
58 shortages to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority for purposes
59 of section 8-265pp. In determining teacher shortages, the commissioner
60 shall consider the following: (1) The number of teacher vacancies in a
61 particular subject or geographic area; (2) the number of new certificates
62 in such areas issued by the Department of Education during the
63 preceding year; [and] (3) the number and types of classes being taught
64 by persons whose training is not specific to the field in which they are
65 teaching; and (4) those subgroups of the population in the state that are
66 underrepresented in the teaching profession.

67 (b) The Department of Education shall annually, by March first,
68 electronically distribute to the president of every institution of higher
69 education in this state offering a teacher preparatory program
70 information concerning teacher shortage areas, determined pursuant to
71 subsection (a) of this section, for at least the prior five years.

72 Sec. 3. Section 10-146j of the general statutes is repealed and the
73 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

74 (a) For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2024] 2026, and each fiscal year
75 thereafter, the Talent Office within the Department of Education shall
76 [establish] administer an educator apprenticeship initiative that enables
77 students enrolled in an educator preparation program, residency
78 program or alternate route to certification program to gain classroom
79 teaching experience while working toward becoming full-time, certified

80 teachers upon successful completion of such programs under the
81 educator apprenticeship initiative. The [department] Talent Office shall
82 seek certification from the Labor Department for the educator
83 apprenticeship initiative for purposes of leveraging federal grants and
84 funding.

85 (b) The [Commissioner of Education] Talent Office shall develop (1)
86 participation guidelines for those educator preparation programs,
87 residency programs and alternate route to certification programs
88 included under the educator apprenticeship initiative, (2)
89 administration guidelines for the implementation of the educator
90 apprenticeship initiative that are consistent with federal laws and
91 regulations, and (3) compensation levels for students enrolled in such
92 educator preparation programs, residency programs and alternate route
93 to certification programs included under the educator apprenticeship
94 initiative.

95 (c) The [Commissioner of Education] Talent Office may permit a
96 person enrolled in a residency program to participate in the educator
97 apprenticeship initiative upon the request of the superintendent in
98 whose school district such person is employed or assigned as part of
99 such residency program. Upon successful completion of such residency
100 program and with the recommendation of such superintendent, the
101 State Board of Education shall issue an initial educator certificate to such
102 person and such person shall not be required to complete the
103 examination requirements set forth in section 10-145f.

104 Sec. 4. Section 10-156aa of the general statutes is repealed and the
105 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

106 (a) There is established the [Task Force to Diversity the] Aspiring
107 Educator Workforce Task Force to study and develop strategies to
108 increase and improve the recruitment, preparation and retention of
109 [minority teachers, as defined in section 10-155/] aspiring educators, as
110 defined in section 10-156ii, as amended by this act, in public schools in
111 the state. Such study shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) an
112 analysis of the causes of [minority teacher] aspiring educator shortages

113 in the state, (2) an examination of current state-wide and school district
114 demographics, and (3) a review of best practices.

115 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

116 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;

117 (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;

118 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
119 Representatives, who is a member of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus
120 of the General Assembly;

121 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

122 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
123 Representatives;

124 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

125 (7) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

126 (8) The chancellor of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities,
127 or the chancellor's designee;

128 (9) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children,
129 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's designee;

130 (10) Three appointed by the executive director of the Commission on
131 Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, one of whom has
132 expertise in African American affairs, one of whom has expertise in
133 Latino and Puerto Rican affairs, and one of whom has expertise in Asian
134 Pacific American affairs; and

135 (11) On and after July 1, 2018, one appointed by the chairpersons of
136 the task force.

137 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),
138 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member
139 of the General Assembly.

140 (d) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than
141 thirty days after June 22, 2015, except the member appointed pursuant
142 to subdivision (11) of subsection (b) of this section shall be appointed
143 not later than thirty days after July 1, 2018. Any vacancy shall be filled
144 by the appointing authority.

145 (e) (1) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president
146 pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force
147 from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall
148 schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later
149 than sixty days after June 22, 2015.

150 (2) On and after the appointment of the member described in
151 subdivision (11) of subsection (b) of this section, such member shall
152 serve as an additional chairperson of the task force with the same
153 authority and responsibilities as the chairpersons selected pursuant to
154 subdivision (1) of this subsection.

155 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
156 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education
157 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

158 (g) Not later than June 30, 2017, the task force shall submit a report
159 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of
160 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
161 education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.

162 (h) The task force shall terminate on ~~[January 1, 2026]~~ July 1, 2030.

163 Sec. 5. Section 10-156bb of the general statutes is repealed and the
164 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

165 There is established an [Increasing Educator Diversity] Aspiring
166 Educator Policy Oversight Council within the Talent Office of the
167 Department of Education. The council shall consist of (1) the
168 Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee, (2) two
169 representatives from the [Task Force to Diversify the] Aspiring Educator
170 Workforce Task Force, established pursuant to section 10-156aa, as

171 amended by this act, (3) one representative from each of the exclusive
172 bargaining units for certified employees, chosen pursuant to section 10-
173 153b, (4) the chancellor of the Connecticut State Colleges and
174 Universities, or the chancellor's designee, and (5) a representative from
175 an alternate route to certification program, appointed by the
176 Commissioner of Education. The council shall hold quarterly meetings
177 and advise, at least quarterly, the Commissioner of Education, or the
178 commissioner's designee, on ways to (A) encourage [diverse students]
179 aspiring educators in middle and secondary school to attend institutions
180 of higher education and enter teacher preparation programs, (B) recruit
181 [diverse students] aspiring educators attending institutions of higher
182 education to enroll in teacher preparation programs and pursue
183 teaching careers, (C) recruit and retain [diverse] aspiring educators in
184 Connecticut schools, (D) recruit [diverse] aspiring educators from other
185 states to teach in Connecticut schools, and (E) recruit [diverse]
186 professionals in other fields to enter teaching as aspiring educators. The
187 council shall report, annually, in accordance with the provisions of
188 section 11-4a, on the recommendations given to the commissioner, or
189 the commissioner's designee, pursuant to the provisions of this section,
190 to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having
191 cognizance of matters relating to education. For purposes of this section,
192 ["diverse" means individuals whose race is defined as other than white,
193 or whose ethnicity is defined as Hispanic or Latino by the federal Office
194 of Management and Budget for use by the Bureau of Census of the
195 United States Department of Commerce] "aspiring educator" has the
196 same meaning as provided in section 10-156ii, as amended by this act.

197 Sec. 6. Section 10-156cc of the general statutes is repealed and the
198 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

199 Not later than July 1, [2017] 2026, and annually thereafter, the Talent
200 Office within the Department of Education shall submit a report using
201 results-based accountability measures to assess the effectiveness of
202 [minority teacher] aspiring educator recruitment programs in the state
203 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
204 cognizance of matters relating to education and appropriations, in

205 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a. Such [minority teacher]
206 aspiring educator recruitment programs shall include, but not be
207 limited to, any program administered by a regional educational service
208 center pursuant to section 10-155l, as amended by this act, [and the
209 minority teacher] the aspiring educator incentive program administered
210 by the Office of Higher Education pursuant to section 10a-168a, as
211 amended by this act, and the maximizing Connecticut's certification,
212 recruitment or residency year program for aspiring educators pursuant
213 to section 10-156gg, as amended by this act. As used in this section,
214 "aspiring educator" has the same meaning as provided in section 10-
215 156ii, as amended by this act.

216 Sec. 7. Section 10-156dd of the general statutes is repealed and the
217 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

218 Not later than January 1, [2017] 2026, and annually thereafter, the
219 Talent Office within the Department of Education shall conduct a
220 survey of students participating in [minority teacher] aspiring educator
221 recruitment programs offered by local or regional boards of education,
222 regional educational service centers or at a public institution of higher
223 education in the state. Such survey shall include questions relating to
224 the components and effectiveness of the [minority teacher] aspiring
225 educator recruitment program. The department shall report, annually,
226 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, on the results and
227 findings of the survey to the joint standing committee of the General
228 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education.

229 Sec. 8. Section 10-156ee of the general statutes is repealed and the
230 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

231 Not later than January 1, [2019] 2026, the Talent Office within the
232 Department of Education, in consultation with the [Increasing Educator
233 Diversity] Aspiring Educator Policy Oversight Council, established
234 pursuant to section 10-156bb, as amended by this act, shall (1) identify
235 relevant research and successful practices to enhance recruitment of
236 [diverse] aspiring educators throughout the state, (2) identify and
237 establish public, private and philanthropic partnerships to increase

238 recruitment of [diverse] aspiring educators, (3) utilize, monitor and
239 evaluate innovative methods to attract [diverse] aspiring educator
240 candidates to the teaching profession, particularly in [subject] areas in
241 which a teacher shortage exists, as determined by the Commissioner of
242 Education pursuant to section 10-8b, as amended by this act, (4)
243 modernize the process for aspiring educators to obtain educator
244 certification under this chapter by eliminating obstacles to certification
245 to increase competitiveness with other states, (5) identify and utilize
246 high-quality, affordable and bias-free educator assessments, (6) adopt
247 cut scores for educator assessments, that do not exceed the multistate
248 cut scores, to increase competitiveness with surrounding states, (7)
249 support new and existing educator preparation programs that commit
250 to enrolling greater numbers of [diverse] aspiring educator candidates
251 in a manner that supports interstate reciprocity, (8) monitor, advise and
252 support, and intervene in when necessary, local and regional boards of
253 education's efforts to prioritize recruitment of [diverse] aspiring
254 educators and develop innovative strategies to attract and retain
255 [diverse] aspiring educators within their districts, (9) (A) [on and after
256 July 1, 2019,] include a question regarding the demographic data of
257 applicants for positions requiring educator certification in the
258 department's annual hiring survey distributed to local and regional
259 boards of education, and (B) not later than July 1, [2020] 2025, and
260 annually thereafter, submit a report, in accordance with the provisions
261 of section 11-4a, on the applicant demographic data collected pursuant
262 to subparagraph (A) of this subdivision to the [Task Force to Diversify
263 the] Aspiring Educator Workforce Task Force, established pursuant to
264 section 10-156aa, as amended by this act, and to the joint standing
265 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
266 relating to education, and (10) not later than July 1, 2022, develop and
267 make available, in consultation with the State Education Resource
268 Center, a video training module for school district personnel involved
269 in or responsible for hiring educators relating to implicit bias and anti-
270 bias in the hiring process. For purposes of this section, ["diverse"]
271 "aspiring educator" has the same meaning as provided in section [10-
272 156bb] 10-156ii, as amended by this act.

273 Sec. 9. Section 10-156ff of the general statutes is repealed and the
274 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

275 For the school year commencing July 1, [2020] 2025, and each school
276 year thereafter, the [Increasing Educator Diversity] Aspiring Educator
277 Policy Oversight Council, established pursuant to section 10-156bb, as
278 amended by this act, in consultation with the [Task Force to Diversify
279 the] Aspiring Educator Workforce Task Force, established pursuant to
280 section 10-156aa, as amended by this act, shall develop and implement
281 strategies and utilize existing resources to ensure that at least two
282 hundred fifty new [diverse] aspiring educators seeking positions as
283 teachers and administrators, of which at least thirty per cent are men,
284 are hired and employed by local and regional boards of education each
285 year in the state. As used in this section, ["diverse"] "aspiring educator"
286 has the same meaning as provided in section [10-156bb] 10-156ii, as
287 amended by this act.

288 Sec. 10. Section 10-156gg of the general statutes is repealed and the
289 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

290 (a) As used in this section:

291 (1) ["Minority" has the same meaning as provided in section 10-
292 156bb] "Aspiring educator" means an individual belonging to a
293 subgroup of the population that is underrepresented in the teaching
294 profession in the state and has been identified as a teacher shortage area
295 pursuant to section 10-8b, as amended by this act;

296 [(2) "Minority candidate" means an individual who is a minority and
297 employed by a local or regional board of education as a paraeducator or
298 an associate instructor;]

299 [(3)] (2) "Residency program" means a certification program
300 approved by the State Board of Education that requires participants to
301 complete a residency in which such participants serve (A) in a position
302 otherwise requiring professional certification, and (B) in a full-time
303 position for ten school months at a local or regional board of education

304 in the state under the supervision of (i) a certified administrator or
305 teacher, and (ii) a supervisor from the regional educational service
306 center or private, nonprofit teacher or administrator operating such
307 certification program; and

308 [(4)] (3) "Alliance district" has the same meaning as provided in
309 section 10-262u.

310 (b) For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2022] 2026, and each fiscal year
311 thereafter, the Talent Office within the Department of Education shall
312 administer the [minority candidate certification, retention or residency
313 year program] maximizing Connecticut's certification, recruitment or
314 residency year program for aspiring educators. Such program shall
315 assist (1) [minority candidates] aspiring educators in enrolling in a
316 residency program for purposes of becoming full-time, certified
317 teachers upon successful completion of such residency program, and (2)
318 local and regional boards of education in hiring and retaining such
319 [minority candidates] aspiring educators.

320 (c) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2023] 2026, and each fiscal
321 year thereafter, each local and regional board of education for an
322 alliance district shall partner with the operator of a residency program
323 for purposes of enrolling [minority candidates] aspiring educators and
324 placing them in such school district as part of such residency program.
325 Following the successful completion of the residency program by [a
326 minority candidate] an aspiring educator, such board may hire such
327 [minority candidate] aspiring educator. Such board may apply to the
328 [Commissioner of Education] Talent Office, at such time and in such
329 manner as the [commissioner] Talent Office prescribes, to receive a
330 payment, as described in subdivision (2) of this subsection, for any of
331 the costs described in subsection (e) of this section.

332 (2) For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2025] 2026, the Commissioner
333 of Education shall withhold from an alliance district, from the funds
334 transferred by the Comptroller pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-
335 262u, an amount equal to ten per cent of any increase in such funds that
336 such alliance district received for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021,

337 over the amount of such funds that it received for the fiscal year ending
338 June 30, 2020. The [department] Talent Office shall use such funds to
339 make a payment to such alliance district and such alliance district shall
340 expend such payment for any of the costs described in subsection (e) of
341 this section.

342 (d) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2023] 2026, and each fiscal
343 year thereafter, any local or regional board of education, other than a
344 local or regional board of education for an alliance district, may partner
345 with the operator of a residency program for purposes of enrolling
346 [minority candidates] aspiring educators and placing them in such
347 school district as part of such residency program. Following the
348 successful completion of the residency program by [a minority
349 candidate] an aspiring educator, such board may hire such [minority
350 candidate] aspiring educator. Such board may apply to the
351 [Commissioner of Education] Talent Office, at such time and in such
352 manner as the [commissioner] Talent Office prescribes, to receive a
353 grant for any of the costs described in subsection (e) of this section.

354 (2) The [commissioner] Talent Office may, within available
355 appropriations, award a grant to a local or regional board of education
356 described in subdivision (1) of this subsection for any of the costs
357 described in subsection (e) of this section.

358 (e) Any payments made or grants awarded under this section may be
359 used for costs associated with the (1) enrollment of such [minority
360 candidates] aspiring educators in a residency program, (2) certification
361 process for such [minority candidates] aspiring educators, (3) hiring of
362 such [minority candidates] aspiring educators following the successful
363 completion of a residency program, or (4) retention of such [minority
364 candidates] aspiring educators as certified employees of the school
365 district.

366 (f) Any unexpended funds paid or awarded to a local or regional
367 board of education under this section shall not lapse at the end of the
368 fiscal year but shall be available for expenditure during the next fiscal
369 year for purposes of implementing the provisions of this section.

370 (g) The [department] Talent Office shall develop guidelines and
371 criteria for the implementation of the [minority candidate certification,
372 retention or residency year program] and administration of funds under
373 this section.

374 Sec. 11. Section 10-156jj of the general statutes is repealed and the
375 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

376 (a) Not later than March 15, [2024] 2026, each local and regional board
377 of education shall submit the [increasing educator diversity] aspiring
378 educator recruitment plan described in subsection (a) of section 10-220,
379 as amended by this act, to the [Commissioner of Education] Talent
380 Office within the Department of Education for review and approval.

381 (b) The [Commissioner of Education] Talent Office shall review each
382 [increasing educator diversity] aspiring educator recruitment plan
383 submitted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. The [commissioner]
384 Talent Office may approve such plan or may return such plan to the
385 local or regional board of education that submitted such plan with
386 instructions to revise such plan. Not later than May 15, [2024] 2026, any
387 such board shall revise such plan in accordance with such instructions
388 and submit such revised plan to the commissioner for approval.

389 (c) For the school year commencing July 1, [2024] 2026, and each
390 school year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall
391 implement the [increasing educator diversity] aspiring educator
392 recruitment plan approved by the [commissioner] Talent Office
393 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. Each such board shall make
394 such plan available on the Internet web site of such board.

395 (d) The Department of Education shall make each [increasing
396 educator diversity] aspiring educator recruitment plan available on the
397 Internet web site of the department.

398 Sec. 12. Subsection (a) of section 10-220 of the general statutes is
399 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
400 *2025*):

401 (a) Each local or regional board of education shall maintain good
402 public elementary and secondary schools, implement the educational
403 interests of the state, as defined in section 10-4a, and provide such other
404 educational activities as in its judgment will best serve the interests of
405 the school district; provided any board of education may secure such
406 opportunities in another school district in accordance with provisions of
407 the general statutes and shall give all the children of the school district,
408 including children receiving alternative education, as defined in section
409 10-74j, as nearly equal advantages as may be practicable; shall provide
410 an appropriate learning environment for all its students which includes
411 (1) adequate instructional books, supplies, materials, equipment,
412 staffing, facilities and technology, (2) equitable allocation of resources
413 among its schools, (3) proper maintenance of facilities, and (4) a safe
414 school setting; shall, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (f)
415 of this section, maintain records of allegations, investigations and
416 reports that a child has been abused or neglected by a school employee,
417 as defined in section 53a-65, employed by the local or regional board of
418 education; shall have charge of the schools of its respective school
419 district; shall make a continuing study of the need for school facilities
420 and of a long-term school building program and from time to time make
421 recommendations based on such study to the town; shall adopt and
422 implement an indoor air quality program that provides for ongoing
423 maintenance and facility reviews necessary for the maintenance and
424 improvement of the indoor air quality of its facilities; shall adopt and
425 implement a green cleaning program, pursuant to section 10-231g, that
426 provides for the procurement and use of environmentally preferable
427 cleaning products in school buildings and facilities; on and after July 1,
428 2021, and every five years thereafter, shall report to the Commissioner
429 of Administrative Services on the condition of its facilities and the action
430 taken to implement its long-term school building program, indoor air
431 quality program and green cleaning program, which report the
432 Commissioner of Administrative Services shall use to prepare a report
433 every five years that said commissioner shall submit in accordance with
434 section 11-4a to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
435 having cognizance of matters relating to education; shall advise the

436 Commissioner of Administrative Services of the relationship between
437 any individual school building project pursuant to chapter 173 and such
438 long-term school building program; shall have the care, maintenance
439 and operation of buildings, lands, apparatus and other property used
440 for school purposes and at all times shall insure all such buildings and
441 all capital equipment contained therein against loss in an amount not
442 less than eighty per cent of replacement cost; shall determine the
443 number, age and qualifications of the pupils to be admitted into each
444 school; shall develop and implement a written [increasing educator
445 diversity] aspiring educator recruitment plan for purposes of
446 subdivision (3) of section 10-4a; shall employ and dismiss the teachers
447 of the schools of such district subject to the provisions of sections 10-151
448 and 10-158a; shall designate the schools which shall be attended by the
449 various children within the school district; shall make such provisions
450 as will enable each child of school age residing in the district to attend
451 some public day school for the period required by law and provide for
452 the transportation of children wherever transportation is reasonable and
453 desirable, and for such purpose may make contracts covering periods of
454 not more than (A) five years, or (B) ten years if such contract includes
455 transportation provided by at least one zero-emission school bus, as
456 defined in 42 USC 16091(a)(8), as amended from time to time; may
457 provide alternative education, in accordance with the provisions of
458 section 10-74j, or place in another suitable educational program a pupil
459 enrolling in school who is nineteen years of age or older and cannot
460 acquire a sufficient number of credits for graduation by age twenty-one;
461 may arrange with the board of education of an adjacent town for the
462 instruction therein of such children as can attend school in such adjacent
463 town more conveniently; shall cause each child five years of age and
464 over and under eighteen years of age who is not a high school graduate
465 and is living in the school district to attend school in accordance with
466 the provisions of section 10-184; shall not delegate the authority to
467 schedule interscholastic football games on Thanksgiving Day to any
468 nonprofit organization or other entity that is otherwise responsible for
469 governing interscholastic athletics in this state and shall not adopt a
470 policy or prohibition against the scheduling of an interscholastic football

471 game on Thanksgiving Day; and shall perform all acts required of it by
472 the town or necessary to carry into effect the powers and duties imposed
473 by law.

474 Sec. 13. Section 10-145p of the general statutes is repealed and the
475 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

476 (a) The Talent Office within the Department of Education shall
477 review and approve proposals for alternate route to certification
478 programs for school administrators. In order to be approved, a proposal
479 shall provide that the alternate route to certification program (1) be
480 provided by a public or independent institution of higher education, a
481 local or regional board of education, a regional educational service
482 center or a private, nonprofit teacher or administrator training
483 organization approved by the State Board of Education; (2) accept only
484 those participants who (A) hold a bachelor's degree from an institution
485 of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher
486 Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally accredited, (B) (i)
487 have at least forty school months teaching experience, of which at least
488 ten school months are in a position requiring certification at a public
489 school, in this state or another state, or (ii) have less than ten months
490 teaching experience in a public school in another state while holding
491 professional certification, provided (I) such participant provides a
492 statement of justification for participation in such alternate route to
493 certification program and receives approval from the department for
494 such participant's participation in such alternate route to certification
495 program, and (II) the number of such participants shall not be greater
496 than ten per cent of the total number of participants in such alternate
497 route to certification program for a school year, and (C) are
498 recommended by the immediate supervisor or district administrator of
499 such person on the basis of such person's performance; (3) require each
500 participant to (A) complete a one-year residency that requires such
501 person to serve (i) in a position requiring an intermediate administrator
502 or supervisor endorsement, and (ii) in a full-time position for ten school
503 months at a local or regional board of education in the state under the
504 supervision of (I) a certified administrator, and (II) a supervisor from an

505 institution or organization described in subdivision (1) of this
506 subsection, or (B) have ten school months experience in a full-time
507 position as an administrator in a public or nonpublic school in another
508 state that is approved by the appropriate state board of education in
509 such other state; and (4) meet such other criteria as the [department]
510 Talent Office requires.

511 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (d) of section 10-
512 145b, on and after July 1, 2010, the State Board of Education, upon
513 receipt of a proper application, shall issue an initial educator certificate
514 in the certification endorsement area of administration and supervision,
515 which shall be valid for three years, to any person who (1) successfully
516 completed the alternate route to certification program for
517 administrators and superintendents pursuant to this section, and (2)
518 meets the requirements established in subsection (b) of section 10-145f.

519 (c) Notwithstanding any regulation adopted by the State Board of
520 Education pursuant to section 10-145b, any person who successfully
521 completed the alternate route to certification program for
522 administrators pursuant to this section and was issued an initial
523 educator certificate in the endorsement area of administration and
524 supervision shall obtain a master's degree not later than five years after
525 such person was issued such initial educator certificate. If such person
526 does not obtain a master's degree in such time period, such person shall
527 not be eligible for a professional educator certificate.

528 (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (B) of
529 subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section, any entity described in
530 subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section that administers an
531 alternate route to certification program for school administrators,
532 approved by the [Department of Education] Talent Office under this
533 section, shall permit any person who has provided service to a local or
534 regional board of education in a supervisory or managerial role for at
535 least forty school months and held a professional educator certificate for
536 at least ten school months during such forty school months, to
537 participate in such alternate route to certification program for school

538 administrators, provided such person holds a bachelor's degree from an
539 institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for
540 Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally accredited
541 and is recommended by the immediate supervisor or district
542 administrator of such person on the basis of such person's performance.

543 Sec. 14. Section 10-145t of the general statutes is repealed and the
544 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

545 (a) For purposes of this section, "school support staff" means any
546 person employed by a local or regional board of education as a behavior
547 analyst or an assistant behavior analyst, as such terms are defined in
548 section 20-185i, an athletic coach, as defined in section 10-149d, or a
549 paraeducator.

550 (b) (1) The Talent Office within the Department of Education shall
551 review and approve proposals for alternate route to certification
552 programs for persons employed as school support staff. In order to be
553 approved, a proposal shall provide that the alternate route to
554 certification program (A) be provided by a public or independent
555 institution of higher education, a local or regional board of education, a
556 regional educational service center or a private, nonprofit teacher or
557 administrator training organization approved by the State Board of
558 Education; (B) accept only those participants who (i) have been
559 employed as school support staff by a local or regional board of
560 education for at least forty school months, and (ii) are recommended by
561 the immediate supervisor or district administrator of such person on the
562 basis of such person's performance; (C) require each participant to
563 complete a one-year residency that requires such person to serve (i) in a
564 position requiring professional certification, and (ii) in a full-time
565 position for ten school months at a local or regional board of education
566 in the state under the supervision of (I) a certified administrator or
567 teacher, and (II) a supervisor from an institution or organization
568 described in subparagraph (A) of this subdivision; and (D) meet such
569 other criteria as the [department] Talent Office requires.

570 (2) The [department] Talent Office may approve any program that

571 (A) accepts participants who hold a bachelor's degree from an
572 institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for
573 Higher Education or the Office of Higher Education or regionally
574 accredited, or (B) partners with an institution of higher education that is
575 regionally accredited, or has received an equivalent accreditation, to
576 provide a dual degree-plus-certification program for participants who
577 hold an associate degree. The [department] Talent Office shall give
578 priority to those programs that provide participants flexibility in
579 remaining in their positions as a school support staff while pursuing an
580 initial educator certificate, other than the period when such participants
581 are completing the one-year residency requirement described in
582 subparagraph (C) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

583 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (d) of section 10-
584 145b, on and after July 1, 2016, the State Board of Education, upon
585 receipt of a proper application, shall issue an initial educator certificate,
586 which shall be valid for three years, to any person who (1) successfully
587 completed the alternate route to certification program under this
588 section, and (2) meets the requirements established in subsection (b) of
589 section 10-145f.

590 (d) Notwithstanding any regulation adopted by the State Board of
591 Education pursuant to section 10-145b, any person who successfully
592 completed the alternate route to certification program under this section
593 and was issued an initial educator certificate in the endorsement area of
594 administration and supervision shall obtain a master's degree not later
595 than five years after such person was issued such initial educator
596 certificate. If such person does not obtain a master's degree in such time
597 period, such person shall not be eligible for a professional educator
598 certificate.

599 Sec. 15. Section 10-145w of the general statutes is repealed and the
600 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

601 (a) As used in this section, "person from an alternate profession"
602 means a person who (1) holds at least a bachelor's degree from an
603 institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for

604 Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or that is regionally
605 accredited, and (A) is a paraeducator, (B) is a veteran, as defined in
606 section 27-103, (C) holds a charter school educator permit, issued by the
607 State Board of Education pursuant to section 10-145q, (D) is employed
608 or was previously employed as a professor at an accredited institution
609 of higher education, as defined in section 10a-34, or (E) has completed
610 at least five years of work experience requiring consistent exercise of
611 discretion and independent judgment in the field related to the relevant
612 endorsement area, or (2) holds a master's degree from a social work
613 program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or, for any
614 person educated outside the United States or its territories, an
615 educational program deemed equivalent by the council.

616 (b) (1) The Talent Office within the Department of Education, in
617 consultation with the Office of Higher Education, shall develop or
618 review and approve proposals for alternate route to certification
619 programs for persons from an alternate profession. Any alternate route
620 to certification program developed or approved under this section shall
621 (A) include instruction in classroom management and culturally
622 responsive pedagogy and practice, (B) align with the standards of
623 teaching competencies adopted by the State Board of Education, and (C)
624 meet such other criteria as the department requires.

625 (2) Any alternate route to certification program developed or
626 approved under this section shall reserve ten per cent of available seats
627 for persons from an alternate profession described in subparagraph (B)
628 of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section. If such seats are not
629 filled by such persons from an alternate profession, such seats shall be
630 made available for all persons from an alternate profession described in
631 subsection (a) of this section.

632 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (d) of section 10-
633 145b, on and after July 1, 2019, the State Board of Education, upon
634 receipt of a proper application, shall issue an initial educator certificate,
635 which shall be valid for three years, to any person who (1) successfully
636 completed an alternate route to certification program developed or

637 approved under this section, and (2) meets the requirements established
638 in subsection (b) of section 10-145f.

639 (d) The [department] Talent Office shall include on its Internet web
640 site a description of, and the requirements for, each alternate route to
641 certification program for persons from an alternate profession
642 developed or approved by the [department] Talent Office.

643 Sec. 16. Section 10-155d of the general statutes is repealed and the
644 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

645 (a) The Office of Higher Education shall encourage and support
646 experimentation and research in the preparation of teachers for public
647 elementary and secondary schools. To help fulfill the purposes of this
648 section, the Office of Higher Education shall appoint an advisory
649 council composed of qualified professionals which shall render
650 assistance and advice to the office. In carrying out its activities pursuant
651 to this section, the office shall consult with the [State Board of
652 Education] Talent Office within the Department of Education and such
653 other agencies as it deems appropriate to assure coordination of all
654 activities of the state relating to the preparation of teachers for public
655 elementary and secondary schools.

656 (b) The Office of Higher Education, with the approval of the
657 Commissioner of Education, shall expand, within available
658 appropriations, participation in its summer alternate route to
659 certification program and its weekend and evening alternate route to
660 certification program. The office shall expand the weekend and evening
661 program for participants seeking certification in a subject shortage area
662 pursuant to section 10-8b, as amended by this act. The office, in
663 collaboration with the Department of Education, shall develop (1) a
664 regional alternate route to certification program targeted to the subject
665 shortage areas, (2) an alternate route to certification program for former
666 teachers whose certificates have expired and who are interested in
667 resuming their teaching careers, and (3) an alternate route to
668 certification program targeted for computer science teachers.

669 (c) The Office of Higher Education, in consultation with the Talent
670 Office within the Department of Education, shall develop alternate
671 route to certification programs for (1) school administrators and
672 superintendents, (2) early childhood education teachers, and (3)
673 computer science teachers. The programs shall include mentored
674 apprenticeships and criteria for admission to the programs.

675 Sec. 17. Section 10-155l of the general statutes is repealed and the
676 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

677 (a) For purposes of this section, ["minority" means individuals whose
678 race is defined as other than white, or whose ethnicity is defined as
679 Hispanic or Latino by the federal Office of Management and Budget for
680 use by the Bureau of Census of the United States Department of
681 Commerce] "aspiring educator" means an individual belonging to a
682 subgroup of the population that is underrepresented in the teaching
683 profession in the state and has been identified as a teacher shortage area
684 pursuant to section 10-8b, as amended by this act.

685 (b) The Regional Educational Service Center Minority Recruiting
686 Alliance, in consultation with the Talent Office within the Department
687 of Education, the Board of Regents for Higher Education, the constituent
688 units of the state system of higher education and the Connecticut
689 Conference of Independent Colleges, shall study methods to (1)
690 encourage [minority] middle and secondary school students who may
691 be aspiring educators to attend institutions of higher education and
692 enter teacher preparation programs, (2) recruit [minority students]
693 aspiring educators attending institutions of higher education to enroll
694 in teacher preparation programs and pursue teaching careers, and (3)
695 recruit and maintain [minority teachers] aspiring educators in
696 Connecticut schools.

697 (c) Not later than October 1, 2007, the Regional Educational Service
698 Center [Minority] Aspiring Educator Recruiting Alliance, in
699 consultation with the Department of Education, the Board of Regents
700 for Higher Education, the constituent units of the state system of higher
701 education and the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges,

702 shall propose guidelines to the Commissioner of Education and the
703 chancellor of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities for pilot
704 programs to recruit and retain minority teachers and may consider, but
705 such consideration need not be limited to, the establishment and
706 operation of the following pilot programs:

707 (1) A fellows program leading to the eligibility for an educator
708 certificate for [minority individuals] aspiring educators who have (A)
709 completed an intensive summer session focusing on classroom
710 management and methodology, (B) received a bachelor's degree from
711 an institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Regents for
712 Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally
713 accredited, (C) achieved a satisfactory score on the examination
714 required pursuant to section 10-145f or have had such requirement
715 waived pursuant to said section, and (D) have such other qualifications
716 for the issuance of an educator certificate as are required for individuals
717 participating in the alternate route to certification program under
718 section 10-155d, as amended by this act;

719 (2) A competitive grant program to assist local and regional boards
720 of education to form and operate future teachers' clubs as part of the
721 extracurricular activities at middle and high schools under their
722 jurisdiction; and

723 (3) A program to allow [minority college seniors] aspiring educators
724 who are in their senior year of college and who are majoring in subject
725 shortage areas pursuant to section 10-8b, as amended by this act, but
726 who are not enrolled in a teacher preparation program to receive up to
727 three credits for working as cadet teachers in a public school and, upon
728 graduation and recommendation by school officials, to allow such cadet
729 teachers to enter a fellows program pursuant to subdivision (1) of this
730 subsection if such a program is in operation.

731 (d) Not later than January 1, 2008, the Regional Educational Service
732 Center [Minority] Aspiring Educator Recruiting Alliance shall report, in
733 accordance with section 11-4a, on (1) the results of the study pursuant
734 to subsection (b) of this section, (2) the guidelines for pilot programs

735 developed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and (3) the
736 establishment and operation of any pilot program pursuant to
737 subsection (c) of this section to the Department of Education, the Board
738 of Regents for Higher Education and the joint standing committees of
739 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
740 education and higher education.

741 Sec. 18. Section 10a-168a of the general statutes is repealed and the
742 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

743 (a) There is established a Connecticut [minority teacher] aspiring
744 educator incentive program administered by the Office of Higher
745 Education, of which the [minority] aspiring educator loan
746 reimbursement grant program established pursuant to section 10a-168b,
747 as amended by this act, shall be a component part. As used in this
748 section, "aspiring educator" has the same meaning as provided in
749 section 10-155l, as amended by this act.

750 (b) Within available appropriations, the program shall provide grants
751 to [minority students] aspiring educators (1) in teacher [education]
752 preparation programs for their junior or senior year, or both such years,
753 at any four-year institution of higher education, (2) completing the
754 requirements of such a teacher [education] preparation program as a
755 graduate student, provided such student received a grant pursuant to
756 this section for one year at the undergraduate level, or (3) enrolled in the
757 alternate route to certification program administered through the Office
758 of Higher Education or the Talent Office within the Department of
759 Education. No student shall receive a grant under the program for more
760 than two years. Maximum grants shall not exceed five thousand dollars
761 per year. The office shall ensure that at least ten per cent of the grant
762 recipients are minority students who transfer from a Connecticut
763 regional community-technical college.

764 (c) The Office of Higher Education may accept gifts, grants and
765 donations, from any source, public or private, for the Connecticut
766 minority teacher incentive program.

767 Sec. 19. Section 10a-168b of the general statutes is repealed and the
768 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

769 (a) For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2020] 2026, and each fiscal year
770 thereafter, the Office of Higher Education, in collaboration with the
771 [Minority Teacher Recruitment] Aspiring Educator Policy Oversight
772 Council, established pursuant to section 10-156bb, as amended by this
773 act, and the [Task Force to Diversify the] Aspiring Educator Workforce
774 Task Force, established pursuant to section 10-156aa, as amended by this
775 act, shall, within available appropriations, administer [a minority] the
776 aspiring educator loan reimbursement grant program for persons who
777 meet the eligibility requirements described in subsection (b) of this
778 section. As used in this section, "aspiring educator" has the same
779 meaning as provided in section 10-155l, as amended by this act.

780 (b) The program shall provide student loan reimbursement grants to
781 any person who (1) is [defined as a minority pursuant to section 10-155l]
782 an aspiring educator, (2) holds professional certification pursuant to
783 chapter 166, and (3) is employed as an administrator or a teacher by a
784 local or regional board of education.

785 (c) Any person who satisfies the eligibility requirements prescribed
786 in subsection (b) of this section may receive an annual grant for
787 reimbursement of federal or state educational loans (1) in an amount up
788 to ten per cent of such person's federal or state educational loans but
789 that does not exceed five thousand dollars in any year, and (2) for a
790 period not to exceed ten years. Such person shall only be reimbursed for
791 loan payments made while such person is employed by a local or
792 regional board of education.

793 (d) Persons may apply to the Office of Higher Education for grants
794 under this section at such time and in such manner as the Commissioner
795 of Higher Education prescribes.

796 (e) Any unexpended funds appropriated for purposes of this section
797 shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year but shall be available for
798 expenditure during the next fiscal year.

799 (f) The Office of Higher Education may accept gifts, grants and
 800 donations, from any source, public or private, for the [minority] aspiring
 801 educator loan reimbursement grant program.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156ii
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-8b
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-146j
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156aa
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156bb
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156cc
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156dd
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156ee
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156ff
Sec. 10	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156gg
Sec. 11	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-156jj
Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-220(a)
Sec. 13	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-145p
Sec. 14	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-145t
Sec. 15	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-145w
Sec. 16	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-155d
Sec. 17	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-155l
Sec. 18	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10a-168a
Sec. 19	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10a-168b

ED Joint Favorable C/R

APP

APP Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: See Below

Explanation

The bill expands eligibility for the Aspiring Educators Scholarship Program, which results in a cost to the State Department of Education beginning in FY 26. The bill additionally: (1) extends a teacher recruitment partial set-aside of the Alliance District portion of the ECS grant into FY 26; (2) makes the Talent Office within the State Department of Education (SDE) responsible for numerous teacher recruitment activities; and (3) makes technical and procedural changes related to teacher recruitment. Fiscal impacts are described below.

Section 1 expands eligibility for the Aspiring Educators Scholarship Program to students who graduated from any Connecticut public high school, rather than in Alliance Districts only, and are underrepresented in the teaching profession. This results in a cost annually to SDE beginning in FY 26. Costs will vary based on the number of additional award recipients due to the bill, and the amount of grants they receive. In FY 25, \$10 million was appropriated for the program and \$770,000 has been spent; 149 applicants have been awarded scholarships.

Section 2 requires SDE to annually determine populations that are underrepresented in the teaching profession in order to implement Section 1. This has no fiscal impact as SDE has sufficient expertise to

make the determination.

Sections 3 - 9, 13 - 17, and 19 move the administration of various teacher recruitment programs and responsibilities to SDE's Talent Office and make technical changes to related programs, a task force, and a council. These sections have no net fiscal impact to SDE.

Section 10 extends, through FY 26, the requirement that a portion of an Alliance District's ECS increase must be used for aspiring educator recruitment and retention. In FY 25, 25 districts had ECS funding set aside for the aspiring educators portion, ranging from approximately \$28,000 to \$707,000.

Sections 11 and 12 require each local and regional board of education to submit and implement an aspiring educator recruitment plan by March 15, 2026. This has no fiscal impact to boards of education as it is anticipated they can meet the requirements with existing resources.

Section 18 expands eligibility for an Office of Higher Education teacher incentive program. This is not anticipated to have a fiscal impact as it is not expected to increase the number of recipients of the program's grant.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the level of funding of the scholarship program and award amounts, and the number of applicants.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 1513*****AN ACT CONCERNING ASPIRING EDUCATORS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes “aspiring educators,” rather than “diverse” or “minority” educators, eligible for existing law’s diversity teacher recruitment scholarship, teacher residency program, minority teacher recruitment grant, and minority educator loan, potentially broadening the pool of eligible people. It similarly modifies the scope of various governmental duties, reports, boards, and programs to encompass or target aspiring educators, rather than diverse or minority educators.

Under current law, these programs generally target diverse or minority educators or students. “Diverse” or “minority” individuals are those whose race is other than white, or whose ethnicity is defined as Hispanic or Latino by the federal Office of Management and Budget for use by the U.S. Census Bureau of Census. Under the bill, an “aspiring educator” is an individual from a population subgroup that is underrepresented in the teaching profession in Connecticut and has been identified as a teacher shortage area under state law. (The bill does not define subgroup, but the term could include things in addition to race and ethnicity.)

The bill also specifies that certain State Department of Education (SDE) duties, including administering the teacher scholarship and residency programs and approving certain alternate route to certification (ARC) programs, are the responsibility of the department’s Talent Office. ARC programs provide a path to teacher certification other than going through a traditional four-year college teacher preparation program.

The bill requires school boards to submit an aspiring educator

recruitment plan to SDE for approval rather than an increasing educator diversity plan as required under current law.

The bill also makes numerous conforming and technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 1, 2, 10 & 17-19 — SCHOLARSHIP, RESIDENCY, AND GRANT PROGRAMS

Definition (§§ 1, 2, 10 & 17)

Under current law “diverse” or “minority” individuals are whose race is other than white, or whose ethnicity is defined as Hispanic or Latino by the federal Office of Management and Budget for use by the U.S. Census Bureau of Census. Under the bill an “aspiring educator” is an individual from a population subgroup that (1) is underrepresented in the teaching profession in Connecticut and (2) the SDE commissioner has identified as a teacher shortage area.

Under current law, the SDE commissioner annually determines subjects and geographic areas with teacher shortages based on teacher vacancies, new certificates issued, and classes being taught by people without training specific to the subject. Under the bill, the commissioner must also determine the population subgroups in which a teacher shortage exists and, when doing so, consider the population subgroups that are underrepresented in teaching in the state.

This potentially broadens eligibility for these programs. Although the bill does not define subgroup, presumably subgroup categories could include things in addition to race and ethnicity, such as gender, socio-economic status, disability, or another status.

Aspiring Educator Scholarship (§ 1)

Under current law, the diverse student scholarship program, which the bill renames the aspiring educator scholarship program, awards annual scholarships of up to \$10,000 for students who graduated from high school in an alliance district (see BACKGROUND) and are enrolled in good standing in a teacher preparation program at any four-year

institution of higher education. The bill eliminates the requirement that students graduate from an alliance district and replaces it with any school district in the state, thus broadening eligibility.

Beginning in FY 26, the bill also makes SDE's Talent Office, rather than SDE, responsible for the program's administration, including developing an administration policy for it. The bill requires the office to award the scholarships for FY 26 (which begins July 1, 2025) according to the bill and the policy the office develops, but the bill sets January 1, 2026, for the policy's deadline. By January 1, 2027, the Talent Office must develop and submit an annual report to the Education Committee on the population subgroups of scholarship recipients. Under current law, SDE reports on the race and ethnicity of the diverse students receiving the scholarship.

Residency Year Program for Alliance Districts (§ 10)

Under current law, SDE administers the minority candidate certification, retention, or residency year program to help (1) minority candidates enroll in a residency program to become certified teachers after completing the program and (2) local and regional boards of education hire and retain the minority candidates. The bill renames the program as the maximizing Connecticut's certification, recruitment, or residency year program for aspiring educators and specifically places its administration under SDE's Talent Office.

The bill also broadens eligibility for the program by (1) extending it to aspiring educators, as defined in the bill, rather than minority candidates, and (2) eliminating the requirement that a candidate be employed by a school board as a paraeducator or an associate instructor.

Under the bill, as under existing law, participation in the program is mandatory for alliance districts and optional for other districts. Participating district school boards must partner with a residency program operator to enroll and place eligible candidates in the district as part of the program. Boards may apply to the state for funds to cover certain expenses associated with enrolling candidates in a residency

program, hiring them after their completion, or retaining them.

The bill also extends to FY 26 the requirement for the education commissioner to hold back a portion of an alliance district's education cost sharing grant (specifically, up to 10% of the FY 21 increase over the district's FY 20 amount). As under existing law, the funds must be used to give the district payments for any of its residency program costs.

Grant Programs (§§ 18 & 19)

Current law requires the Office of Higher Education (OHE) to award grants to minority students in teacher preparation programs, graduate school, or an ARC program for up to \$5,000 for two years. It also requires OHE to administer a minority educator loan reimbursement grant program for certified minority teachers working for a school district.

The bill makes aspiring educators, as defined in the bill, eligible for the program, rather than minority students (see § 1).

By law, reimbursement grants are up to \$5,000 year for up to 10 years, but the total cannot exceed 10% of the person's loans.

§§ 11 & 12 — ASPIRING EDUCATORS RECRUITMENT PLAN

Under current law, each school board must submit an increasing educator diversity plan by March 15, 2024, to the education commissioner for approval. The commissioner must review plans for approval and return any unapproved plan to the school board with instructions to revise it. Any board required to revise its plan must do so and resubmit it by May 15, 2024. School boards must implement their plans beginning with the 2024-25 school year.

The bill eliminates this requirement and instead requires each board to adopt an aspiring educator recruitment plan, rather than an educator diversity plan, and requires SDE's Talent Office to review them. Boards have until March 15, 2026, to submit their aspiring educator plans and if the Talent Office requires a plan revision it must be resubmitted by May 15, 2026. School boards must implement the new plans beginning with the 2026-27 school year. The bill does not require any plan be in

place for the 2025-26 school year.

As under current law, school boards must post their plans on their websites and SDE must post all of the plans on its website.

§§ 3-9 & 13-17 — ADDITIONAL CHANGES TO RELATED EDUCATION LAW

The bill makes numerous other changes, principally to (1) modify the scope of various duties, reports, boards, and programs to aspiring educators, rather than diverse or minority educators, and (2) transfer certain related responsibilities from SDE to SDE's Talent Office. The table below shows these changes as well as additional changes not described above.

Table: Additional Changes

Sec.	Topic	Current Law	Bill
3	Educator apprenticeship initiative	SDE administers the program	SDE's Talent Office administers the program
4	Task Force to Diversify the Educator Workforce	Requires the task force to develop strategies to increase the recruitment and retention of minority teachers Task force terminates on January 1, 2026	Renames as the Aspiring Educator Workforce Task Force Requires it to develop strategies to increase the recruitment and retention of aspiring educators, rather than minority teachers Extends life of task force to July 1, 2030
5 & 9	Increasing Educator Diversity Policy Oversight Council	Advises the education commissioner on various efforts to recruit and retain diverse educators Places council in SDE Requires council to develop strategies to add at least 250 new diverse educators per year	Renames as the Aspiring Educator Policy Oversight Council Applies to efforts and strategies involving aspiring educators, rather than diverse educators Places council within SDE's Talent Office
6	Minority teacher	Requires SDE to submit	Specifies that the Talent

Sec.	Topic	Current Law	Bill
	report requirement	an annual report on the effectiveness of minority teacher recruitment efforts	Office must prepare report Requires report to be about aspiring educator recruitment Requires report to specifically include effectiveness of residency program (see § 10)
7	Minority teacher recruitment survey	Requires SDE to annually survey students in minority teacher recruitment programs run by regional educational service centers or at a public college or university in the state	Specifies that the Talent Office must do the survey Requires report to be about aspiring educator recruitment Expands survey's scope to include programs offered by local and regional school boards
8	Diverse educator recruitment duties	Requires SDE and the Oversight Council to take numerous steps to enhance diverse teacher recruitment (e.g., establishing partnerships for recruitment and reviewing relevant research and successful practices)	Requires Talent Office to perform these duties with the Oversight Council Changes diverse educator references to aspiring educators
13-15	ARC programs for (1) administrator certification, (2) support staff to obtain teacher certification, and (3) those working alternate professions to obtain teacher certification	SDE reviews and approves proposals for these ARC programs	Requires Talent Office, rather than SDE, to review and approve proposals
16	OHE ARC program development	Requires OHE to consult with SDE to develop ARC programs	Requires OHE to consult with SDE's Talent Office to develop ARC programs
17	Regional Educational Service Center Minority Recruiting	Obsolete pilot program	Changes minority references to aspiring educators

Sec.	Topic	Current Law	Bill
	Alliance Pilot Programs		

BACKGROUND

Accountability Index

The “accountability index” for a school district or an individual school is the score resulting from multiple weighted measures that (1) include the mastery test scores (i.e. performance index) and, if appropriate, high school graduation rates and (2) may include academic growth over time, attendance and chronic absenteeism, postsecondary education and career readiness, enrollment in and graduation from institutions of higher education and postsecondary education programs, civics and arts education, and physical fitness (CGS § 10-223e(a)).

Alliance Districts

The Alliance District program requires each of the state’s 36 lowest performing school districts (as measured by the accountability index, see above) to submit an improvement plan to SDE for approval before the department releases the district’s alliance funding (i.e. a portion of the annual education cost sharing grant that these districts receive). The plan must detail how it intends to use its alliance funding and how this will increase student achievement.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Change of Reference - APP
Yea 31 Nay 14 (03/24/2025)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 41 Nay 12 (04/24/2025)