



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

**Committee Bill No. 6**

LCO No. 5130



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:  
(KID)

***AN ACT CONCERNING RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS FOR  
INFANTS, TODDLERS AND DISCONNECTED YOUTHS.***

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

1       Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Office of Early Childhood  
2       shall be the lead agency for administering and distributing funds under  
3       the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program, 42 USC 1766, as  
4       amended from time to time. The office shall encourage child care  
5       centers, group child care homes and family child care homes, as such  
6       terms are described in section 19a-77 of the general statutes, to  
7       participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, including, but  
8       not limited to, annually advertising the program to child care centers,  
9       group child care homes and family child care homes that are not  
10      participating in the program and through the sharing of relevant data  
11      between the office and other state agencies.

12      Sec. 2. Section 10-215h of the general statutes is repealed and the  
13      following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

14      (a) The Department of Education shall administer, within available  
15      appropriations and in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood,

16 a child nutrition outreach program to increase (1) participation in the  
17 federal School Breakfast Program [,] and federal Summer Food Service  
18 Program; [and federal Child and Adult Care Food Program;] and (2)  
19 federal reimbursement for [such] said programs.

20 (b) The child nutrition outreach program shall:

21 (1) Encourage schools to (A) participate in the federal School  
22 Breakfast Program; (B) employ innovative breakfast service methods  
23 where students eat their breakfast in their classrooms or elsewhere after  
24 school starts, rather than only before school and only in the cafeteria;  
25 and (C) apply to the in-classroom breakfast grant program pursuant to  
26 section 10-215g;

27 (2) (A) Encourage local and regional school districts to sponsor  
28 Summer Food Service Program sites; (B) recruit other sponsors of such  
29 sites; and (C) make grants to site sponsors to assist them in increasing  
30 child participation; and

31 [(3) Encourage child care centers, group child care homes and family  
32 child care homes, as such terms are described in section 19a-77, to  
33 participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, including, but  
34 not limited to, through the sharing of relevant data between the  
35 department and the office; and]

36 [(4)] (3) Publicize the availability of federally funded child nutrition  
37 programs throughout the state.

38 Sec. 3. Section 22 of public act 24-45 is repealed and the following is  
39 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

40 (a) Not later than January 1, 2025, and [annually] biennially  
41 thereafter, the executive board of the Connecticut Preschool Through  
42 Twenty and Workforce Information Network, established pursuant to  
43 section 10a-57g of the general statutes, shall submit [an annual] a report  
44 on disconnected youth. In developing such report, the executive board  
45 shall use the data model established through the data sharing agreement

46 0043 regarding Research on Disengaged and Disconnected Youth in  
47 Connecticut. The executive board shall submit such report to the (1) joint  
48 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
49 matters relating to education, children, the judiciary, labor, human  
50 services, public health and appropriations, (2) Connecticut Advisory  
51 Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, established pursuant to  
52 section 2-79a of the general statutes, and (3) Two-Generational Advisory  
53 Board, established pursuant to section 17b-112l of the general statutes,  
54 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.  
55 On or after January first, and prior to February first, of the year  
56 following the submission of the report, the joint standing committees  
57 described in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall hold a hearing on  
58 the report. As used in this section, "disconnected youth" has the same  
59 meaning as provided in section 21 of this act.

60 (b) In developing the report for January 1, 2027, the executive board  
61 shall include a plan to incorporate data provided by the Office of Early  
62 Childhood, the Department of Developmental Services, the Connecticut  
63 State Colleges and Universities and the Office of Health Strategy  
64 through an enterprise memorandum of understanding, as defined in  
65 section 10a-57g. Such data provided by the Office of Early Childhood  
66 may include, but need not be limited to, child-level data regarding the  
67 child care subsidy program established pursuant to section 17b-749 of  
68 the general statutes, the birth-to-three program established pursuant to  
69 section 17a-248b of the general statutes, Early Start CT administered  
70 pursuant to section 10-550a of the general statutes, the family bridge  
71 program administered, in part, by the Office of Early Childhood, early  
72 childhood home visiting programs, as described in section 17b-751b,  
73 and early care and education programs. Such data provided by the  
74 Office of Health Strategy may include, but need not be limited to, data  
75 from the all-payer claims database program established pursuant to  
76 section 19a-755a of the general statutes.

77 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section,  
78 "kindergarten preparatory academy" means any kindergarten

79 preparation program established by a local or regional board of  
80 education that enrolls students who turn five years of age on or after  
81 September first of the school year and who are not eligible to enroll in  
82 school during such school year pursuant to section 10-15c of the general  
83 statutes.

84 (b) Not later than July 1, 2026, the Department of Education shall  
85 develop guidance for local and regional boards of education concerning  
86 the administration of kindergarten preparatory academies. Such  
87 guidance shall include, but need not be limited to, information  
88 concerning (1) the availability of grants or subsidies for meals or lunches  
89 for students enrolled in a kindergarten preparatory academy, including  
90 such grants or subsidies through the federal Child and Adult Care Food  
91 Program, 42 USC 1766, as amended from time to time, and free or  
92 reduced-price lunches, (2) whether the families of students enrolled in a  
93 kindergarten preparatory academy are eligible for subsidies under the  
94 child care subsidy program pursuant to section 17b-749 of the general  
95 statutes, (3) whether students enrolled in a kindergarten preparatory  
96 academy may count as resident students, as defined in section 10-262f  
97 of the general statutes, for purposes of equalization aid under section  
98 10-262h of the general statutes, and (4) whether the regulations adopted  
99 by the State Board of Education or the Commissioner of Early  
100 Childhood govern the administration of a kindergarten preparatory  
101 academy, including regulations relating to student-to-teacher ratios,  
102 parental involvement and notification procedures, recess, removal from  
103 the classroom, special education identification and curriculum  
104 requirements.

105 (c) The department shall make such guidance available, upon  
106 request, to a local or regional board of education and shall post such  
107 guidance on the department's Internet web site.

108 Sec. 5. Section 10-506 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
109 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

110 (a) For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2025] 2026, and each fiscal year

111 thereafter, the Office of Early Childhood, in consultation with the  
112 Department of Education, shall design and administer the Connecticut  
113 Smart Start competitive grant program to provide grants to local and  
114 regional boards of education for capital and operating expenses related  
115 to establishing or expanding a preschool program under the jurisdiction  
116 of the board of education for the town or for establishing or expanding  
117 a kindergarten preparatory academy, as defined in section 4 of this act.  
118 A local or regional board of education may submit an application to the  
119 office, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section,  
120 and may receive (1) a grant for capital expenses in an amount not to  
121 exceed [seventy-five] one hundred five thousand dollars per classroom  
122 for costs related to the renovation of an existing public school to  
123 accommodate the establishment or expansion of a preschool program or  
124 a kindergarten preparatory academy, and (2) an annual grant for  
125 operating expenses (A) in an amount not to exceed [five] seven  
126 thousand dollars per child served by such grant, or (B) in an amount not  
127 to exceed [seventy-five] one hundred five thousand dollars for each  
128 preschool classroom. Each local or regional board of education that  
129 establishes or expands a preschool program or a kindergarten  
130 preparatory academy under this section shall be eligible to receive an  
131 annual grant for operating expenses for a period of five years, provided  
132 such preschool program meets standards established by the  
133 Commissioner of Early Childhood. Such local or regional board of  
134 education may submit an application for renewal of such grant to the  
135 office.

136 (b) On and after July 1, [2014] 2025, local and regional boards of  
137 education, individually or cooperatively, pursuant to section 10-158a,  
138 may apply, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner  
139 prescribes, to the office for a capital grant and an operating grant for the  
140 purposes described in subsection (a) of this section. To be eligible to  
141 receive such grants under this section, an applicant board of education  
142 shall (1) demonstrate that it has a need for establishing or expanding (A)  
143 a preschool program using information requested by the commissioner  
144 on a form prescribed by the commissioner, such as data collected from

145 the preschool experience survey, described in section 10-515, or (B) a  
146 kindergarten preparatory academy, (2) submit a plan for the  
147 expenditure of grant funds received under this section that outlines how  
148 such board of education will use such funds to establish or expand a  
149 preschool program or a kindergarten preparatory academy, including,  
150 but not limited to, the amount that such board will contribute to the  
151 operation of such preschool program or kindergarten preparatory  
152 academy and how such board of education will provide access to  
153 preschool for children who would not otherwise be able to enroll in a  
154 preschool program or provide access to a kindergarten preparatory  
155 academy for children who would not otherwise be able to enroll in  
156 kindergarten pursuant to section 10-15c, and (3) submit a letter of  
157 support for establishing or expanding a preschool program by the local  
158 or regional school readiness council, described in section 10-16r, if any,  
159 for the school district. The commissioner shall give priority to boards of  
160 education (A) that demonstrate the greatest need for the establishment  
161 or expansion of a preschool program or a kindergarten preparatory  
162 academy, and (B) whose plan allocates at least sixty per cent of the  
163 spaces in such preschool program to children who are members of  
164 families who are at or below seventy-five per cent of the state median  
165 income. The commissioner, in reviewing applications submitted under  
166 this subsection, shall also take into consideration (i) whether an  
167 applicant board of education (I) currently offers a full-day kindergarten  
168 program, (II) will be cooperating and coordinating with other  
169 governmental and community programs to provide services during  
170 periods when the preschool program or kindergarten preparatory  
171 academy is not in session, or (III) will collaborate with other boards of  
172 education, as part of a cooperative arrangement pursuant to section 10-  
173 158a, to offer a regional preschool program, and (ii) current community  
174 capacity for preschool programs or a kindergarten preparatory  
175 academy and current opportunities for preschool for children in the  
176 community.

177 (c) A preschool program or a kindergarten preparatory academy  
178 created or expanded under this section shall (1) contain a classroom

179 with an individual who holds certification pursuant to section 10-145b  
180 with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood  
181 special education and is an employee of the board of education  
182 providing a preschool program or a kindergarten preparatory academy  
183 under this section, (2) maintain a classroom size and teacher-child ratio  
184 that is in compliance with standards established by the National  
185 Association for the Education of Young Children, (3) obtain  
186 accreditation, as described in section 10-16p, not later than three years  
187 after the creation or expansion of the preschool program, and (4) be  
188 located in a public school or in a space maintained by an early care and  
189 education and child development program provider, pursuant to an  
190 agreement between a board of education and such early care and  
191 education and child development program provider.

192 (d) Each local or regional board of education receiving a grant under  
193 this section shall submit an annual report, on a form and in a manner  
194 prescribed by the commissioner, to the Office of Early Childhood  
195 regarding the status and operation of the preschool program.

196 (e) A local or regional board of education receiving grant funds under  
197 this section may implement a sliding fee scale for the cost of services  
198 provided to children enrolled in such preschool program.

199 Sec. 6. Subdivision (3) of section 19a-420 of the general statutes is  
200 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
201 *2025*):

202 (3) "Day camp" means any youth camp which is established,  
203 conducted or maintained on any parcel or parcels of land on which there  
204 are located dwelling units or buildings intended to accommodate five  
205 or more children who are at least three years of age and under sixteen  
206 years of age during daylight hours for at least three days a week with  
207 the campers eating and sleeping at home, except for one meal per day;  
208 [, but does not include programs operated by a municipal agency;]

209 Sec. 7. Subsection (a) of section 19a-421 of the general statutes is

210 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
211 *2025*):

212 (a) No person or municipal agency shall establish, conduct or  
213 maintain a youth camp without a license issued by the office.  
214 Applications for such license shall be made in writing at least thirty days  
215 prior to the opening of the youth camp on forms provided and in  
216 accordance with procedures established by the commissioner and shall  
217 be accompanied by a fee of eight hundred fifteen dollars or, if the  
218 applicant is a nonprofit, nonstock corporation or association, a fee of  
219 three hundred fifteen dollars or, if the applicant is a day camp affiliated  
220 with a nonprofit organization, for no more than five days duration and  
221 for which labor and materials are donated, no fee. All such licenses shall  
222 be valid for a period of one year from the date of issuance unless  
223 surrendered for cancellation or suspended or revoked by the  
224 commissioner for violation of this chapter or any regulations adopted  
225 under section 19a-428 and shall be renewable upon payment of an eight-  
226 hundred-fifteen-dollar license fee or, if the licensee is a nonprofit,  
227 nonstock corporation or association, a three-hundred-fifteen-dollar  
228 license fee or, if the applicant is a day camp affiliated with a nonprofit  
229 organization, for no more than five days duration and for which labor  
230 and materials are donated, no fee.

231 Sec. 8. Subsection (a) of section 10-16z of the general statutes is  
232 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
233 *2025*):

234 (a) There is established the Early Childhood Cabinet. The cabinet  
235 shall consist of: (1) The Commissioner of Early Childhood, or the  
236 commissioner's designee, (2) the Commissioner of Education, or the  
237 commissioner's designee, (3) the Commissioner of Social Services, or the  
238 commissioner's designee, (4) the chancellor of the Connecticut State  
239 Colleges and Universities, or the chancellor's designee, (5) the  
240 Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's designee, (6) the  
241 Commissioner of Developmental Services, or the commissioner's



242 designee, (7) the Commissioner of Children and Families, or the  
243 commissioner's designee, (8) the executive director of the Commission  
244 on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity or the executive  
245 director's designee, (9) the project director of the Connecticut Head Start  
246 State Collaboration Office, (10) a parent or guardian of a child who  
247 attends or attended a school readiness program appointed by the  
248 minority leader of the House of Representatives, (11) a representative of  
249 a local provider of early childhood education appointed by the minority  
250 leader of the Senate, (12) a representative of the Connecticut Family  
251 Resource Center Alliance appointed by the majority leader of the House  
252 of Representatives, (13) a representative of a state-funded child care  
253 center appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, (14) two  
254 appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom  
255 is a member of a board of education for a town designated as an alliance  
256 district, as defined in section 10-262u, and one of whom is a parent who  
257 has a child attending a school in an educational reform district, as  
258 defined in section 10-262u, (15) two appointed by the president pro  
259 tempore of the Senate, one of whom is a representative of an association  
260 of early education and child care providers and one of whom is a  
261 representative of a public elementary school with a prekindergarten  
262 program, (16) ten appointed by the Governor, one of whom is a  
263 representative of the Connecticut Head Start Association, one of whom  
264 is a representative of the business community in this state, one of whom  
265 is a representative of the philanthropic community in this state, one of  
266 whom is a representative of the Connecticut State Employees  
267 Association, one of whom is an administrator of the child care  
268 development block grant pursuant to the Child Care and Development  
269 Block Grant Act of 1990, one of whom is responsible for administering  
270 grants received under section 1419 of Part B of the Individuals with  
271 Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1419, as amended from time to time,  
272 one of whom is responsible for administering the provisions of Title I of  
273 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 USC 6301 et seq., one  
274 of whom is responsible for coordinating education services to children  
275 and youth who are homeless, one of whom is a licensed family child

276 care home provider and a member of a staffed family child care network  
277 identified by the Commissioner of Early Childhood, and one of whom  
278 is a parent recommended by a parent advisory group that has been  
279 appointed by the Commissioner of Early Childhood, (17) the Secretary  
280 of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee, (18)  
281 the Lieutenant Governor, or the Lieutenant Governor's designee, (19)  
282 the Commissioner of Housing, or the commissioner's designee, [and]  
283 (20) the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or the  
284 commissioner's designee, and (21) the executive director of the  
285 Connecticut Library Consortium, or a cooperating library service unit  
286 as defined in section 11-9e, or the executive director's designee.

287       Sec. 9. Section 10-514 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
288 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

289       (a) Not later than January 1, 2020, the Office of Early Childhood shall  
290 create, and update as necessary, a one-page document that (1) lists  
291 important developmental milestones experienced by children ages birth  
292 to five years, and (2) contains notice that any parent or guardian who is  
293 concerned that such parent or guardian's child has not met one or more  
294 such developmental milestones may access the Office of Early  
295 Childhood Child Development Infoline for information concerning  
296 appropriate services, and the Help Me Grow program under the Office  
297 of Early Childhood, pursuant to section 17b-751d, for information  
298 concerning (A) access to developmental screening and evaluation  
299 programs at no cost to parents and guardians for children ages birth to  
300 five years, (B) connections to community and in-home programs and  
301 services, (C) support for parenting and healthy child development, and  
302 (D) early intervention and special education services for children ages  
303 birth to five years. The office shall make such document available on its  
304 Internet web site.

305       (b) On and after July 1, 2024, each operator of a child care center,  
306 group child care home or family child care home, as described in section  
307 19a-77, other than those centers or homes that serve school-age children

308 exclusively, shall post a copy of the document developed pursuant to  
309 subsection (a) of this section in a conspicuous place on the premises of  
310 such child care center, group child care home or family child care home.

311       Sec. 10. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Office of Early Childhood  
312 shall conduct a quarterly review to determine the number of children  
313 who were referred to the birth-to-three program, established pursuant  
314 to section 17a-248b of the general statutes, and who were subsequently  
315 determined to be ineligible for the birth-to-three program, and the  
316 reasons for such children's ineligibility. The office shall provide notice  
317 to the parents or guardians for each such child determined to be  
318 ineligible for the birth-to-three program that such child may receive  
319 additional supports and services under the Help Me Grow program.  
320 The office shall collect information for any such child that receives  
321 supports and services under the Help Me Grow program, including, but  
322 not limited to, the types of supports and services received by such child  
323 and any information relating to additional referrals for such child.

324       Sec. 11. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Office of Early Childhood  
325 shall provide, through the Help Me Grow program, trainings and other  
326 social, educational and workforce support to teenage parents in those  
327 communities with teen birth rates greater than ten per cent, according  
328 to the most recent data collected by the Department of Public Health.

329       Sec. 12. (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Office of Early Childhood shall  
330 develop a report on the office's utilization of the Sparkler mobile  
331 application that provides parents and guardians with children ages  
332 birth to five years with mobile developmental screening, promotion and  
333 linkage to supports. Such report shall address the following areas: (1)  
334 How the mobile application assesses whether or how much children  
335 and families are learning, (2) the intended and achieved outcomes of the  
336 coaching sessions provided by the mobile application, including  
337 whether the mobile application measures the working alliance between  
338 the coach and the parents or guardians, (3) whether the mobile  
339 application is promoting healthy early brain development, and if so,

340 how such brain development is being measured, (4) how results are  
 341 being provided to parents and guardians, (5) whether the children in  
 342 families using the mobile application are growing and developing over  
 343 time, and how the mobile application measures and tracks such growth  
 344 and development over time, and (6) how the mobile application is  
 345 linking families with health and education providers and whether the  
 346 mobile application is assisting in the establishment of care teams and  
 347 coordinated services for families. Not later than January 1, 2026, the  
 348 office shall submit such report to the joint standing committee of the  
 349 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, in  
 350 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

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

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-215h
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	PA 24-45, Sec. 22
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-506
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	19a-420(3)
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	19a-421(a)
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-16z(a)
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	10-514
Sec. 10	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 11	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section

**Statement of Purpose:**

To provide support for children from birth to age five and address challenges faced by disconnected youths.

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

Co-Sponsors: SEN. LOONEY, 11th Dist.; SEN. DUFF, 25th Dist.  
 SEN. ANWAR, 3rd Dist.; SEN. CABRERA, 17th Dist.

SEN. COHEN, 12th Dist.; SEN. FLEXER, 29th Dist.  
SEN. GADKAR-WILCOX, 22nd Dist.; SEN. GASTON, 23rd Dist.  
SEN. HOCHADEL, 13th Dist.; SEN. HONIG, 8th Dist.  
SEN. KUSHNER, 24th Dist.; SEN. LESSER, 9th Dist.  
SEN. LOPES, 6th Dist.; SEN. MAHER, 26th Dist.  
SEN. MARONEY, 14th Dist.; SEN. MARX, 20th Dist.  
SEN. MCCRORY, 2nd Dist.; SEN. MILLER P., 27th Dist.  
SEN. NEEDLEMAN, 33rd Dist.; SEN. OSTEN, 19th Dist.  
SEN. RAHMAN, 4th Dist.; SEN. SLAP, 5th Dist.  
SEN. WINFIELD, 10th Dist.; REP. MARTINEZ, 22nd Dist.

S.B. 6