



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

Raised Bill No. 221

LCO No. 1609



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:
(ED)

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 Section 10-156ii of the general statutes is repealed and the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, 2026*):

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

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

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

35 (d) The Commissioner of Education shall develop scholarship
36 repayment criteria for recipients who (1) are not employed as a certified
37 teacher by a local or regional board of education in [the] this state
38 following graduation from a teacher preparation program, or (2)
39 received a scholarship under this section with the commitment that such
40 recipient would teach in a subject or geographic shortage area as
41 identified by the Commissioner of Education pursuant to section 10-8b,
42 as amended by this act, and are not teaching in such subject or
43 geographic shortage area. Any amounts repaid to the department shall
44 be deposited in the General Fund.

45 (e) On or before March first of each year, the commissioner shall
46 determine if there are any unexpended funds appropriated for purposes
47 of this section for the fiscal year. If the commissioner determines that
48 there are unexpended funds, such unexpended funds may be used by

49 the commissioner for the purpose of implementing the plan to promote
50 the teaching profession developed pursuant to section 10-155m.

51 [(e)] (f) The department may accept gifts, grants and donations, from
52 any source, public or private, for the aspiring educators [diversity]
53 scholarship program.

54 [(f)] (g) Not later than January 1, [2024] 2028, and annually thereafter,
55 the department shall develop a report that includes annual data on the
56 [race and ethnicity of the diverse] population subgroups of students
57 who receive a scholarship under the program and the teacher
58 preparation program in which they are enrolled. The department shall
59 submit such report to the joint standing committee of the General
60 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in
61 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.

62 Sec. 2. Section 10-8b of the general statutes is repealed and the
63 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

64 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall annually, by December first,
65 [determine subject and geographic] identify the following areas in
66 which a teacher shortage exists: [and] (1) Subject, (2) geographic, and (3)
67 population subgroups that are underrepresented in the teaching
68 profession in this state. The commissioner shall certify such [shortages]
69 teacher shortage areas to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority
70 for purposes of section 8-265pp. In [determining] identifying such
71 teacher [shortages] shortage areas, the commissioner shall consider the
72 following: [(1)] (A) The number of teacher vacancies in a particular
73 subject area or geographic area; [(2)] (B) the number of new certificates
74 in such subject area and geographic areas or population subgroups
75 issued by the Department of Education during the preceding year; [and
76 (3)] (C) the number and types of classes being taught by persons whose
77 training is not specific to the field in which they are teaching; and (D)
78 those subgroups of the population that are underrepresented in the
79 teaching profession in this state using data collected in the state-wide

80 public school information system pursuant to section 10-10a.

81 (b) The Department of Education shall annually, by March first,
82 electronically distribute to the president of every institution of higher
83 education in this state offering a teacher preparatory program
84 information concerning teacher shortage areas, [determined] identified
85 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, for at least the prior five years.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>July 1, 2026</i> | 10-156ii |
| Sec. 2 | <i>July 1, 2026</i> | 10-8b |

Statement of Purpose:

To expand eligibility under the aspiring educators scholarship program.

[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.]