



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 221

February Session, 2026



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 Section 10-156ii of the general statutes is repealed and the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 who is in a population
15 subgroup that is underrepresented in the teaching profession in this
16 state and for which such population subgroup has been identified as a
17 teacher shortage area by the Commissioner of Education pursuant to
18 section 10-8b, as amended by this act.

19 (b) Not later than January 1, [2023] 2027, the department shall, in

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

33 (c) For the fiscal years ending June 30, [2024] 2027, and each fiscal year
34 thereafter, the department shall annually award scholarships in
35 accordance with the provisions of this section and the guidelines
36 developed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

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

43 (e) On or before March first of each year, the commissioner shall
44 determine if there are any unexpended funds appropriated for purposes
45 of this section for the fiscal year. If the commissioner determines that
46 there are unexpended funds, the commissioner may expend up to two
47 hundred fifty thousand dollars of such unexpended funds for the
48 purpose of implementing the plan to promote the teaching profession
49 developed pursuant to section 10-155m.

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

52 scholarship program.

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

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

63 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall annually, by December first,
64 [determine subject and geographic] identify the following areas in
65 which a teacher shortage exists: [and] (1) Subject, (2) geographic, and (3)
66 population subgroups that are underrepresented in the teaching
67 profession in this state. The commissioner shall certify such [shortages]
68 teacher shortage areas to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority
69 for purposes of section 8-265pp. In [determining] identifying such
70 teacher [shortages] shortage areas, the commissioner shall consider the
71 following: [(1)] (A) The number of teacher vacancies in a particular
72 subject area or geographic area; [(2)] (B) the number of new certificates
73 in such subject areas and geographic areas or population subgroups
74 issued by the Department of Education during the preceding year; [and
75 (3)] (C) the number and types of classes being taught by persons whose
76 training is not specific to the field in which they are teaching; and (D)
77 those population subgroups that are underrepresented in the teaching
78 profession in this state using data collected in the state-wide public
79 school information system pursuant to section 10-10a.

80 (b) The Department of Education shall annually, by March first,
81 electronically distribute to the president of every institution of higher
82 education in this state offering a teacher preparatory program
83 information concerning teacher shortage areas, [determined] identified

84 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, for at least the prior five years.

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

ED *Joint Favorable Subst.*