

PA10-071

SB275

Education	31-38, 84-87, 117-119, 143-158, 180-194, 196, 198-200, 390-400, 667	62
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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2010**

**VOL.53
PART 14
4246 – 4582**

On page 19, Calendar 416, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 275, AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS FOR TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES, favorable report of the Committee on Education.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's good to see you up there.

I move acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The question is acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Representative Fleischmann, you have the floor.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the measure before us makes purely technical changes to the education statutes. All changes herein were put together by the legislative commissioner's offices. They will make our statutes read better and more clearly without having any affect on the underlying purposes of those statutes. I hope

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the entire chamber will join me in supporting this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Are there any further remarks? Will you remark further on the bill?

Representative Giuliano.

REP. GIULIANO (23rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, just a few questions, through you, to the proponent of the bill, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Please proceed, madam.

REP. GIULIANO (23rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You know, oftentimes, I think it's an annual event for us that we have technical revisions, minor revisions, department revisions. I think for the edification of the chamber and, through you, Mr. Speaker, I would just ask for some descriptors on these minor changes. I think that is helpful for people in having informed votes to understand what really true technicalities these might be. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, first, just to be clear, there are no minor changes here, only technical changes. So, for example, on line six it adds the word "established." In line 48, it adds the phrase, "of this section." In line 105 and 104, it adds the words, "as amended by this act." In line 161, it corrects a reference from Chapter 106 to Chapter 166, and I believe that is the entirety of the changes. They are all completely technical. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, sir.

Representative Giuliano.

REP. GIULIANO (23rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And through you, lines 29 through 34 speak to initial educator certification. This does not represent any substantive changes in the certification process for teachers in Connecticut. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

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Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Giuliano.

REP. GIULIANO (23rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank my colleague on the Education Committee for those clarifications of the technical changes, and I would stand in support the bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, madam.

Will you remark further on this bill? Will you remark further on this bill?

If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Will the members please take their seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber. The House is voting by roll call. Members to chamber, please..

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board and

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determine if your vote is properly cast. And if all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill 275 in concurrence with the Senate.

Total number voting 143

Necessary for adoption 72

Those voting Yea 143

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 8

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 476.

THE CLERK:

On page 24, Calendar 476, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 13, AN ACT CONCERNING REAL ESTATE

APPRAISAL MANAGEMENT COMPANIES, favorable report of the Committee on Judiciary.

Representative Fontana.

REP. FONTANA (87th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill

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**CONNECTICUT
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SENATE**

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cd
SENATE

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Calendar 210, PR; Calendar 216 is marked go;
Calendar 217, Senate Bill Number 201, Mr. President,
move to place this item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 221, pass temporarily.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 222, Senate Bill Number 275, Mr.
President, move to place this item on the consent
calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Calendar 224, Senate Bill Number 439, Mr.
President, move to refer this item to the Committee on
Human Services.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

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cd
SENATE

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April 21, 2010

Calendar page 9, Calendar 117, Senate Bill 232.

Calendar page 10, Calendar 119, substitute for
Senate Bill 261; Calendar 124, substitute for Senate
Bill 251.

Calendar page 11, Calendar 149, Senate Bill 244.

Calendar page 12, Calendar 161, substitute for
Senate Bill 258.

Calendar page 13, Calendar 180, substitute for
Senate Bill 152.

Calendar page 14, Calendar 216, substitute for
Senate Bill 256; Calendar 217, substitute for Senate
Bill 201; Calendar 222, substitute for Senate Bill
275.

Calendar page 15, Calendar Number 233, Senate
Bill Number 97.

Calendar Number -- page 16, Calendar 239, Senate
Bill 105.

Calendar page 17, Calendar 270, substitute for
Senate Bill 234.

Calendar page 18, Calendar 296, substitute for
House Bill 5138; Calendar 297, substitute for House
Bill 5219; Calendar 298, House Bill 5250.

Calendar page 19, Calendar 301, House Bill 5263;
Calendar 302, House Bill 5292; Calendar 303, House

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Bill 5265; Calendar 313, substitute for House Bill
5002.

Calendar page 20, Calendar 314, House Bill 5201.

Calendar page 24, Calendar 340, substitute for
Senate Bill 175.

Calendar page 25, Calendar 346, substitute for
Senate Bill 151; Calendar 350, Senate Bill 333;
Calendar 371, substitute for House Bill 5014.

Calendar page 26, Calendar 375, House Bill 5320.

Calendar page 27, Calendar 379, substitute for
House Bill 5278; Calendar 380, substitute for House
Bill 5452; Calendar 381, substitute for House Bill
5006; Calendar 382, House Bill 5157.

Calendar page 28, Calendar 384, substitute for
House Bill 5204.

Calendar page 29, Calendar 395, substitute for
Senate Bill 127; Calendar 396, Senate Bill 147.

Calendar page 30, Calendar 413, House Bill 5024;
Calendar 414, substitute for House Bill 5401.

Calendar page 31, Calendar 419, substitute for
House Bill 5303.

Calendar 32 -- page 32, Calendar Number 421,
substitute for House Bill 5388; and on calendar page
34, Calendar 46, substitute for Senate Bill 68;

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SENATE

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Calendar 50, substitute for Senate Bill 17.

Calendar page 35, Calendar 64, substitute for
Senate Bill 187.

Calendar page 37, Calendar 109, substitute for
Senate Bill 189.

Calendar page 39, Calendar Number 148, substitute
for Senate Bill 226.

Calendar page 40, Calendar 182, substitute for
Senate Bill 218.

Calendar page 41, Calendar 188, substitute for
Senate Bill 200.

Mr. President, that completes those items placed
on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

All right. If the Clerk has made an announcement
that a roll call vote is in progress in the Senate on
the first consent calendar, the machine will be open.
Senators may cast their vote.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll call on the
consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to
the chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll call on
the consent calendar. Will all Senators please return
to the chamber.

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THE CHAIR:

Would all Senators please check the roll call board to make certain that your vote is properly recorded. If all Senators have voted and if all votes are properly recorded, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk may take a tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar Number 1.

Total Number Voting	35
Those voting Yea	35
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar Number 1 is passed.

Are there any announcements or points of personal privilege? Are there any announcements or points of personal privilege?

Senator LeBeau.

SENATOR LEBEAU:

Thank you, Mr. President, for a -- for an announcement.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

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2010

REP. ROJAS: Post would also be --

SENATOR STILLMAN: Post would also.

REP. ROJAS: Yes.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay. Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you, Senator. Thank you very much, Representative.

Representative Urban, and then we're definitely getting to Commissioner McQuillan after Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I will be brief. I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to testify.

My -- I do not have my testimony in written form, but I will get it to you on that.

I am here to testify on Senate Bill 275, AN ACT CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS FOR 2015.

And the section I would specifically change, the 100 percent vouchers requirements by 2015 to 50 percent vouchers degree -- vouchers degrees and 50 percent associate degrees or approved programs of study.

Connecticut Charts-A-Course has been a participant in our results-based accountability initiative, and I believe you will be getting their folder on the RBA report card that they did, and the information contained in that report card fully supports the change in language that you're looking at here.

However, I would give -- I would like to suggest that the committee think even a little further along based on their RBA report card. And I specifically refer to their performance measure four, which shows that a significant amount of their resources are being devoted to subsidizing and scholarship levels of a bachelor degree program at the cost of being able to spend additional monies on the associate degree programs.

Now, why would I think that is so important? Well, the graduation rate on those associate degree programs is about 14 percent. Some of the money that's being -- going over to your bachelor degree programs could then be used to study why we have dropout rates, whether we're spreading our resources too thinly, could we better spend the money to get that percentage up in the associate degree area?

And so why do I say that?

Because oftentimes, once you get your bachelor's degree -- because of pay parity issues -- you don't stay as an early childhood teacher. You move on to K through 12.

So, in essence, we're sort of subsidizing the -- the K through 12. Not that I'm saying that that's a bad thing to have bachelor degrees. I'm merely saying that when Connecticut Charts-A-Course, did their RBA report card, they're looking at the result we're trying to achieve, and that's all children healthy and ready for school success at age five.

So specifically looking at this program as to how it helps our early childhood education and then not -- you know, not pushing that on to regular K through 12.

So I merely bring this up for the committee to be aware of the tremendous job that Connecticut Charts-A-Course has done on their RBA report card and the information that utilizing RBA throughout our government can give us with clear data-driven decisions that we can make.

And, as I said, if you look at this, you will see that the opportunity costs of continuing down the bachelor's degree program path is costing us in the area of our associate's degree, and I would also daresay that the associate degree programs coming out of our community colleges are really doing a tremendous job of preparing students to teach in preschool, much as they do in our registered nursing programs. They do a tremendous job of preparing our register nurses.

So I would hope that -- that this bill is favorably reported out of committee. I think it's going down the right track. And I would just offer that RBA study for further -- for further consideration.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd be glad to answer any questions.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you.

I guess the -- the issues I have with RBA is that it's a snapshot in time and there's no tracking measurement of going into the future and follow-up on what recommendations there would be to improve.

And I, you know -- getting cooperation from some of the executive branch agencies is difficult, too, I understand.

But I'd feel a lot more comfortable if we had a results-based accountability scheme where you had a tracking measurement going into the future and a real follow-up and accountability, what they needed to do to improve.

REP. URBAN: Senator -- whoops, sorry. We are very definitely -- that is exactly what we need, and you have made a very cogent point with the executive agencies. The baseline is to look at over a period of time, what does the baseline look at?

The indicators are then supposed to say how do we change that baseline?

SENATOR GAFFEY: Right.

REP. URBAN: And then we have the strategies that get us there. It has been a monumental task to get some of these executive agencies to participate.

But we are, in fact, getting there, and I do think if you took a look at the report cards, you would be pleasantly surprised at the progress that we've made.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Well, I commend you for your work. It's a struggle. I understand that.

REP. URBAN: It is.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Probably more than most.

But hopefully we can get to that point where we have -- because we're not to have (inaudible) accountability to that system until you have a tracking measurement for what -- what recommendations we may have for

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jr/gbr EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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them to improve.

Further questions -- Representative Heinrich.
How are you?

REP. HEINRICH: Very well, Mr. Chairman. Thank
you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: You're welcome.

REP. HEINRICH: Representative, thank you for
coming in.

I know that you have worked quite hard with --
in conjunction with the Department of
Education on RBA. They've -- they've been a
department that has stepped forward to work on
RBA quite a bill voluntarily.

And so perhaps -- I don't know if -- if you
wanted to talk very briefly about some of the
ways we actually have put into place some
tracking mechanisms so that we can look
forward as we work towards some of goals we've
set for the Education Committee.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Representative, for that
question.

And we have, indeed -- and the Department of
Education and also in the juvenile justice
area, we have indicators, we have datasets
that we are tracking as we speak, and we have
been able to look at, for instance, early
reading success and drilling down into that
program and finding that there were problems
there.

We've been able to look at urban violence
issues and drilling down and finding that
there were problems there that we could
address.

So as the senator pointed out, it is sometimes like pulling teeth, but we are, in fact, getting there.

REP. HEINRICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you, Representative Heinrich.

Any -- anything further? Thank you very much, Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Commissioner McQuillan.

COMMISSIONER MARK McQUILLAN: Thank you very much for accommodating the representatives.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER MARK McQUILLAN: I hope that that time will be deducted from my testimony.

We'll make this a clean sweep.

Thank you very much, Senator Gaffey and Representative Reynolds. I'm delighted to be here. I have a number of Raised Bills that I'd like to comment on in general, and then perhaps take specific questions that pertain to them.

Specifically, I'm planning to talk generally about Raised Bill 275, which is early childhood education; Raised Bill 279, on foreign language instruction; 278 on truancy; 51316 -- 5316, excuse me, adult education; 280, transportation, and finally on school violence, 5315.

That's a lot of cover. We have submitted

written testimony, and therefore I'll try not to repeat what's been written, but only to amplify the central points that we think are important to take note of.

Let me begin first with Raised Bill 275. This is the Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness Programs for 2015.

I think the dilemma that I've seen firsthand as the co-chair in the past two or three years, as the early childhood co-chair for the cabinet, is that we have a very serious problem in our state and in our country in terms of providing a trained workforce to work with young children.

This is about instruction as much as it is about finding time and space for students to be taught. But the dilemma we have is that the bill that the -- AN ACT CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS FOR 2015 is holding a standard that, while very admirable, is one that we realistically can't meet.

And the evidence of that has been borne out time and time again by analyses that have been put forward by Commissioner Meotti and his staff, showing that if you look at the current number of enrollees in our -- in our bachelor's programs for early childhood education, you look at the number of possible opportunities to grow the population to meet the demands for educating our youngest children, we simply can't get to this standard by 2015.

And that's really not an admission of its impro -- it being an improper standard. It's simply saying that as a standard, we have to find an alternative, because we can't get

there.

And so what the Raised Bill 275 is attempting to do is to find a middle ground that would cut in half the expectations, in some respects, and simultaneously try to build the workforce by requiring that people have additional qualifications for an early childhood credential to, I think, increase the skills that we know are so necessary to -- to work with children.

So we support this bill. Understandable that there is dispute, I think it's the issue, between an absolute standard on the one hand and an attainable standard on the other.

We feel that this bill does move to an attainable standard that I think is consistent with our overall needs to find the highest quality and allows us time to evolve as a system and building the workforce we need for our young children.

I'd like to move on next to Bill 279 concerning foreign language taught in our public schools.

This has been a discussion for several years now, and one that we at the department support largely in a direct way, but I think with some qualifications.

The dilemma that I have -- and I've always said this in previous testimony about the foreign language requirement -- is that this is presented independently of the secondary school reform initiative that we put forward last year.

And at one point last year when we debated secondary school reform and the increase in

I'm Mary Loftus Levine, and I'm the policy director for the Connecticut Education Association, representing over 40,000 educators in the public schools in our great state.

I'm here to testify against Raised Bill 275, and for Raised Bill Number 279.

As educators, we understand all too well the importance of school readiness programs not only for our students as a proven way to close the achievement gap, which gets much attention, but also for the economic future of our state.

Just last week, I was watching Charlie Rose on Bloomberg, Financial News -- my husband manages money -- and they had a fascinating interview with a whole group of brain researchers on early childhood language and the development of their language skills.

And one of the thought -- one of the things that I put in my testimony that I found very, very important for today it that children under the age of three have the incredible ability to learn not only their native language but several other languages far more easily and quicker than adults, and certainly even more than teenagers

The economist, Richard Rothstein, who was the former editor for education for the New York Times, recently reported on another study which compared the language development of children of college-educated parents to those who live in non-college-educated parent homes, and the study showed two things: Not only was the level of the vocabulary that the student heard on a daily basis important, but the

number of words that that child was exposed to by age three had a direct correlation to the student's achievement by third grade.

Other research that I know you've heard time and again shows that it's far more economical to put our dollars into early childhood now than into remediation later, in the worst-case scenario, incarceration facilities, where large percentages of our inmates never even had the opportunity to learn how to read.

What are we doing here in Connecticut? Well, we have a history of kicking this can down the road for a number of reasons. And most recently, we think that this bill -- which is why I'm here to speak against it today -- does that again.

If this bill passes, we will be waiting until 2015, which we thought was a date too far out when it was first passed, for -- only 50 percent of a preschool staff would be required to have these credentials.

The state Department of Education, I've attached their early childhood policy, and on the eighth bullet in that, I encourage you to read that, where it states that young children learn best from highly-qualified teachers who have specific training to effectively address their needs.

And the other bill we're in favor. We just caution you about setting online standards so that the students just aren't put in front of a computer to meet the requirement.

Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you, Mary. I would agree with you on your first set of comments

associated with the -- the delay in the credentialing. We're caught between a rock and a hard place on this, because testimony prior by Commissioner McQuillan is very true, that most of the time when you have somebody obtain their BA or BS, they move on to another position and get out of the area of teaching school readiness, which is where we need to have credentialed people.

I mean, I'm not happy at all that -- I mean, I wrote this bill a long time ago, and I'm not happy that after all this time --

MARY LOFTUS LEVINE: I know.

SENATOR GAFFEY: -- we have so many programs that don't have fully credentialed people.

And then to look at the prospect of delaying even further down the road doesn't make me happy either.

But reality being what it is, we're trying to look for some other solutions here. In fact, we had the folks in from Eastern Connecticut State University and listened to them, how they can make available certain professional development coursework that may get somebody credentialed quicker.

There are some monies that we -- we -- we have targeted in a bill that if they -- if they don't lapse, they can be used by the department for that professional development. That will be in a bill held -- heard next Monday, I believe.

So I'm cognizant of the concerns that you express. I'm happy to agree with them; yet I also have to deal with reality, unfortunately, so --

MARY LOFTUS LEVINE: I have a suggestion.

SENATOR GAFFEY: The old saying there's law and there's reality.

What's your suggestion?

MARY LOFTUS LEVINE: I do have a suggestion.

When we have a nine percent unemployment rate and we see elementary teachers are definitely getting laid off, perhaps we might postpone consideration of this given our labor market being very, very different from when this concept came up last year when the study came out from Mr. Meotti saying that there weren't enough people in the pipeline.

I believe that perhaps there may be a lot more people in the pipeline in this economic climate, given such a high unemployment rate, and one that's going to be even bigger as we see more and more teachers getting laid off.

So I don't know that we would want to jump this year and just to throw that out as another idea.

SENATOR GAFFEY: It's something certainly we should consider.

Thank you. Any questions for Mary? Thank you very much for your time.

MARY LOFTUS LEVINE: Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Carmen Milagros Saez. Carmen, welcome.

CARMEN MILAGROS SAEZ: Sorry. My name is Carmen Milagros Saez. I'm 31. I've lived in

to the letters or the notices.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you, Senator.

Further comments, further questions for --
thank you very much for taking the time. I do
appreciate it.

JUSTICE CHRISTINE KELLER: Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Karen Rainville.

KAREN RAINVILLE: Good evening. My name is Karen
Rainville. I'm the executive director of the
Connecticut Association for the Education of
Young Children.

We are the state membership association for
the early childhood community currently
representing more than 1700 members in
Connecticut, the majority of which are early
childhood teachers.

I'm here to speak in support of Bill 275, AN
ACT CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL
READINESS PROGRAMS.

I think we can all agree that Connecticut's
youngest children need and deserve highly
qualified teachers. The current law, which
mandated bachelor degrees by 2015 in publicly
funded programs, is an attempt to ensure just
that.

However, given what we know about the current
workforce, given the lack of availability and
access to early childhood degree programs, the
current law sets an unachievable goal.

Bill 275 offers a solution to the problem
while strengthening the intent that I believe
the current law was established for.

I saw this for many years, and I'd like to share with you two. It embeds a competency-based credential in addition to a degree where teachers will demonstrate application of knowledge, not just attainment of a degree, competencies that align with NAEYC, the national accrediting body for early childhood.

In addition, the current language speaks to teachers in funded classrooms. The language in Bill 275 speaks to 50 percent of the program staff. This is an important difference. Many programs have both funded and non-funded classrooms.

Current language sets mandates for only the portion of staff in funded classrooms in a program. With this new language, we look at the requirements for the entire program, ensuring that children -- that all children in that program will have the benefit of a highly qualified teacher.

While it's true we have a high unemployment rate in Connecticut, and some of those individuals may be elementary schoolteachers, I think the reality is that few are likely to choose to work in a publicly funded pre-K program, basically because there's no parity in salaries.

The average publicly funded preschool teacher works full time, 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, and averages \$28,000 a year. There's no comparison to a publicly -- to a teacher in a public school system.

We can't expect that that will solve our workforce issues, and certainly not on a long-term basis.

I encourage you to vote in favor of Bill 275, setting an achievable goal for Connecticut which ensures early childhood teachers are well-qualified and meet the standards of the profession.

Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you, Karen.

Questions from members of the committee?
Seeing none, thank you very much. Appreciate your testimony.

KAREN RAINVILLE: Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Sandy Cruserano. Is Sandy here?

Bruce, Bruce Douglas.

BRUCE DOUGLAS: Good evening, Senator Gaffey, members of the committee and Representative Fleischmann. My name is Bruce Douglas. I serve as the executive director of the Capitol Region Education Council, and we're here to testify this evening on Senate Bill 280.

I have with me here this evening Mr. Mason Thrall, who is the director of transportation for CREC. He has a long history in transportation, both managing and operating a private bus company, and now he works for the Capitol Region Education Council, so he will give the testimony on my behalf, please.

Thank you.

MASON THRALL: Good evening. I'm Mason Thrall, the director of transportation for the Capitol Region Education Council. I also serve on the board of directors for COSTA, the Connecticut

district should be reporting their truancy data and truancy programs to the state Department of Education. This data then should be forwarded on to the governor and General Assembly.

Interesting point here. Our statewide consortium consists of 25 school districts. To my knowledge, there are 174 school districts in the State of Connecticut. With the major impact that truancy imposes, leading to dropout, leading to incarceration, leading to the cost that's passed on to the state, I strongly believe that we need to be aware of what is actually occurring in the area of truancy in these other districts.

Truancy is not only an urban school district problem. It's a statewide problem and it needs to be addressed as such.

Thank you very much.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you very much.
Questions?

Thank you for your testimony. Alex Johnson.
Is he still here? Back on our previous list.

Darlene Ragozzine, Paul Susen.

PAUL SUSEN: Good evening, Representative Reynolds, the committee. On behalf of Chancellor Mark Herzog, I'm Paul Susen, chief academic student affairs officer for the Connecticut community colleges.

With me, Darlene Ragozzine, executive director, Connecticut Charts-A-Course. We are here to support Raised Bill 275.

You have the community college testimony. You

also have the Connecticut Charts-A-Course RBA, and you also have a -- a sheet, which is very important, from Connecticut Charts-A-Course which shows you the number of teachers with the various credentials as they're working through the ladder from the CDA all the way up to their bachelor's degree.

I will just make a couple of points about the community college testimony and then ask Darlene to make a couple of comments and be pleased to answer any questions that the committee might have.

We've been working diligently at the 12 community colleges to attempt to educate as many early childhood future educators as possible. We currently have over 2700 students at all 12 community colleges involved at some level of a certificate or an associate's degree in early childhood education.

Unfortunately, not many of those students will actually want to go on to a bachelor's degree because of lack of parity in salary.

We are working, however, to get all 12 of our colleges nationally accredited so that the outcomes from the community college programs will articulate as best as possible with the expectations of our -- our university partners.

We have also been working diligently with the state Department of Education to articulate our programs with the teacher certification perhaps.

The current statute which calls for 100 percent of teachers by 2015 to be bachelor's-prepared in publicly funded centers

simply is not going to happen. As you can see from the chart, we're -- currently only 36 percent of the teachers are bachelor's-prepared.

It will be a challenge even to meet the proposed language, but a challenge that I think is very important for community colleges.

With that said, let me ask Darlene to comment further, and then we'll be pleased to answer any questions you might have.

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: I'm just here to -- again, my name is Darlene Ragozzine, and I have the pleasure of directing Connecticut Charts-A-Course for the community colleges.

And I am here just to really help you understand the data that we've been collecting in the Charts-A-Course registry about the early childhood workforce.

We currently have in the -- in the Charts-A-Course registry about 42 percent of what we think is the Connecticut early childhood workforce. Out of that percentage, it's about 7,000, about 4,000 of them represent those people who work in publicly-funded programs.

We really have 100 percent of the staff in publicly-funded programs, so when you look at that chart that I gave you that shows the teaching staff and publicly-funded programs, that represents a hundred percent of the teaching staff in all DSS, SDE and Head Start state- and federally-funded programs.

And as you see -- and as Paul pointed out -- at this point in time, we have 36 percent of

those people at a bachelor's degree level, 24 percent of those people at an associate's degree level, and then the remaining 40 percent are either in a CDA and 12 credits or below that.

And if you just sort of chunk the numbers, in order for us to even try to get people to a -- an associate's degree, we would have to move 693 current individuals to that point in the next five years.

And as Paul will tell you, it takes about six years for us to get a person part time through an associate degree program, never mind then moving them beyond and to get baccalaureate Degree programs.

And so although it is laudable, and I think there are -- there isn't any early childhood person or any educator who wouldn't agree that it would be wonderful for us to have 100 percent of these teachers in school readiness programs to have bachelor's degrees -- the goal is not attainable.

It's not attainable because we can't -- even the 36 percent. The 36 percent is a moving target. I can stand here in front of you today and say, okay, we've got 36 percent and I have 24 percent, so really if I move about 60 people in the next year, I can get, you know -- I can get more people into a baccalaureate -- at the bachelor's degree level.

But I can't say to you I'm going to have six percent at this time next year or even a month from now or even three months from now, because they keep coming in and moving out.

It's actually like the -- the program -- we're

like the farm team for the -- for the major leagues. And when we -- and any director that you talk to will tell you that yes, some of her staff will work very hard, but once they get that bachelor's degree, they'll just turn around and leave because they can make money at the -- in the public schools.

So until we establish that parity and pay these people what they deserve -- I mean, we're not paying that 36 percent, what they should be making. I mean, we have 36 percent of the people now are working, and they're working at the baccalaureate degree level and they're not making parity.

So, you know, I -- I'm here to support the fact that I would love for us to have all bachelor's degrees, but I just -- I don't think it's a reality. I think that if we --

As Paul pointed out, the community colleges and the associate degree programs were doing as much as they can to improve the level of our associate degree program, but in terms of the workforce and the data that I'm looking at, it would just be unrealistic for me to sit here and say, okay, we can meet that 100 percent.

So -- and I'm happy to answer some questions.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you for your testimony.

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: Gloom and doom here.

SENATOR GAFFEY: The bill calls for the 50-50 by 2015. The Head Start federal standard is 50-50 by 2013.

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: It's 50 percent of the teachers -- it's 50 percent of the teachers

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who are -- who work in Head Start programs
have to have associate's degrees.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Okay. So you don't foresee a
conflict with --

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: No, I don't.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Okay.

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: I think where we're moving --
and NAEYC is moving in the same direction.
The 50-50, 50 percent have a bachelor's degree
and 50 percent have an associate's degree.

That really brings us in line with national
Head Start standards and national NAEYC
standards.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Questions? Representative Cook.

REP. COOK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good evening.

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: Good evening.

REP. COOK: I have a couple of questions, some that
you had answered and some that I have, if you
will, with me.

In the bill, there's -- there's no
conversation about related degrees that are in
there that would be acceptable, only this, if
you will.

Is there -- would you consider that to be a
flaw in the language? Is there something that
we need to do or is there a way that we can
include other degrees that would fall under a
similar category?

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: You know, I think that the
previous language in the bill actually did

refer to related degree.

The new language does not have related degrees in it, but it does specify that a person with a -- with teacher certification -- with an endorsement in early childhood education would actually meet the -- the regulation.

I think that's an important point. I think, you know, when I listened to the testimony of the person from CEA -- and she said that there's, like, nine -- there's nine percent unemployment and there's plenty of elementary people who are -- who are unemployed who may be able to work in these school ratings programs.

And I think that we do have research that shows that bachelor's degrees alone don't really make -- don't have definitive outcomes in terms of young children's success, that one of the things that it really points to is that teachers have to be well-trained in specialized knowledge in early childhood education.

So I think that if we can make sure that we include in our legislation that people have to graduate from programs that are highly specialized and have competencies in early childhood education, or a person has elementary education that they have evidence of strong early childhood within there, I think we would be okay.

REP. COOK: Thank you. May I? Thank you.

And talking about the publicly funded programs, we have all the conversations about Care for Kids and different types of services.

Preschools are different schools that accept

that type of finding? Are they considered your publicly-funded --

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: That's a great question, Michelle.

When we talk about publicly-funded, we talk about those programs that are funded through the Department of Social Services, child daycare, the state Department of Education school readiness and state and local Head Start.

It does not include a program -- a privately-owned program that might get Care for Kids. There are programs who have all of those funding streams. We sort of -- we call them mega-programs, where they have DSS funding, they have school readiness funding, they have Head Start funding and they also take Care for Kids.

One of the programs that comes to mind is New Opportunities in Waterbury. It's a very big program. It has all of those funding streams within it, you know, that operate, and that program is a publicly-funded program.

REP. COOK: Which leads me to my last question.

There are several teachers that have been teaching in a preschool setting or an early childhood setting for years, you know, 20, 25 years, what have you, and some of them probably in their opinion much too old to go back to school to worry about a degree.

Is there some type of grandfathering process in this? And with that consideration also, these -- these teachers are doing yeoman's work when it comes to the children that are there, and they're working for pennies on the

dollar.

How are they expected to now come up with the money to pay for this program if they're being, you know, made to become associated or baccalaureate degree?

Can you explain that?

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: If they work in a publicly-funded program, if an individual now works for -- in a publicly-funded program, they are entitled to get a scholarship through Connecticut Charts-A-Course that earlier Representative Urban was talking about the scholarship program.

They could get a scholarship from Connecticut Charts-A-Course to work towards an associate's degree, and they will, in fact -- there will be ways that people can become grandfathered in.

But suffice it to say, by 2015, the expectation will be that anyone coming into the field will have to have at a minimum an associate's degree in order to be a teacher in a -- in a program.

REP. COOK: I just think that we need to be very aware of the fact that there are teachers that have been working in schools for 20 or 30 years that may not have any intention on retiring by 2015 but also would absolutely have no desire to try to go back to school.

And I think that within the language or when we're going forward with this, we need to be aware of the fact that these people are working.

Some of them have been working in the same

program for 25 years and are still only making 14 or \$15 an hour. They do it because they love it, and I would like -- like to protect them and make sure that they don't lose their jobs, especially when we're trying to keep people employed.

So thanks.

DARLENE RAGOZZINE: And my colleague, I know Carlota Schechter -- Dr. Carlota Schechter is waiting to speak, and she's going to be talking a little bit about this, so she may be able to, you know, expand even on my answer.

But I think we don't want to lose anyone in the field, you know, Representative Cook. We -- as I said, you know, the retention rates are hard enough, because people don't make enough money.

We just want people to be well-qualified and competent, and, you know, we're here to try to do that, through the community colleges, Charts-A-Course, and through all the new programs that we're trying to put in place, so...

I thank you for your questions.

REP. COOK: Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Other questions? Thank you for your testimony.

Dr. Schechter.

CARLOTA SCHECHTER: Good evening, Representative Reynolds and members of the Education Committee.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify

before you. I'm Dr. Carlota Schechter. I'm here today speaking on behalf of Department of Higher Education Commissioner Meotti.

I'm currently a senior associate at the Department of Higher Education with a special interest in early childhood education. I have 19 years' experience as an early childhood professor in this state.

On behalf of Commissioner Meotti, I would like to convey our department's support for raised Bill 275. I'll briefly explain why we support this proposed change to staff qualifications for school readiness teachers, and then I'll be happy to take your questions.

I'm going to make three quick points that are elaborated in our written testimony.

Point number one, the Department of Higher Education is in full support of the concept that we have to increase the qualifications of the teachers who care for our youngest children, and we need to do this as quickly as we can.

I think few would disagree with this premise, but we also have to do it as smart as we can, using what we know about the recent research.

Point number two, there are two difficulties with the existing law that requires the teachers to have a bachelor's degree by 2015. The first difficulty -- 2A, if you will -- is that we're not going to get there. And Darlene has provided you with the data on that, so I'm not going to repeat that.

However, I will say that if the law is left unchanged, we are confident that in 2015 the result will be massive noncompliance, and the

workforce will not be significantly better qualified than where we are today. That's the reality of the situation, but I will say that this is not a debilitating reality.

And I'll get to the silver lining in just one second. But first I want to say the second problem -- 2B -- with our current law, is that requiring a college degree does not ensure that we have competent teachers in the classroom, even if the degree is a bachelor's degree and even if it's bachelor's degree in child development or related fields.

I assume that many of you as members of this committee have bachelor's degrees and yet would not feel properly prepared to manage a class of 18 three- and four-year-old children. This is a school that requires specialized competency.

And I will also say in regards to the related degrees, I have three related degrees. Only one of those prepared me to be a teacher of young children.

So related degrees are not the answer either. Educating young children requires specialized competency.

The good news is we now have recent research to demonstrate what those competencies are, and we can use that research to ensure that our teachers graduate from programs that teach them those skills. And that's my third point.

We feel raised Bill 275 will allow us to have more competent early -- a more competent early childhood workforce starting in 2015. The bill calls for two things: It calls for teachers to have college degrees. You've heard the 50-50 split. BA and associate's.

But it also stipulates that all teachers must have completed a program of study approved by the commissioners of higher education and education.

The Department of Education and the Department of Higher Education are ready to implement an approval process for early childhood higher education programs of study.

We will identify the two- and four-year higher education programs in Connecticut that prepare individuals to meet the research-based early childhood teaching competencies.

And as you've heard from the previous speakers, we're fortunate in Connecticut to have many strong early childhood programs at the associate's degree level, and they're undergoing a rigorous accreditation process.

I would like you to know that over the past three years, two very large groups of early childhood experts and stakeholders in this state have met and developed an early childhood workforce plan that calls for teachers to have either the associate's or the bachelor's degree from an approved higher education program.

And in addition, we've proposed that these individuals who graduate from these approved programs will be awarded a new Connecticut early childhood teacher credential to document their achievement of early childhood teaching competencies.

This is consistent with a national movement to establish a national early childhood credential. And in fact, the primary leader of that movement who has written a great deal

about it is Dr. Lynn Kagan of Columbia University, who is also a Connecticut resident in New Haven.

Connecticut is poised to set the example for the nation for how this can be done, how we can establish an early childhood credential that can be completed at either the associate's or the bachelor's level.

So just to quickly summarize, there's no question we need to increase qualifications. We need to do it quickly, and we need to be smart about it.

The current BA by 2015 requirement is not achievable, will result in noncompliance and will not ensure that we will have the -- the teachers will have the competencies that we now know given the current research that they need.

We believe that Raised Bill 275 is achievable, and it will allow us to ensure that teachers have these competencies.

So in summary, we can use this research on what is good for young children to set high expectations for our early childhood higher education programs and for our early childhood teachers.

We think that this bill will allow us to do this in a way that is (inaudible) and smart. Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you.

Questions, please? Thank you for your testimony. Thank you for waiting. James Ramos. Cari Carson, followed by Laura McCargar.

CARI CARSON: Good evening, Representative Reynolds and members of the Education Committee. My name is Cari Carson, and I'm a policy fellow at Connecticut Voices for Children.

I am here today testifying in support of Senate Bill 278, AN ACT CONCERNING TRUANCY, and Senate Bill 275, AN ACT CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS.

I know you've already heard a lot about both of these bills, a lot of reasons in support of both of these bills, so I just wanted to highlight a couple of changes that we noticed that could make the bills a little bit clearer.

And Senate Bill 278, AN ACT CONCERNING TRUANCY, in Section 2A, we thought making it explicit that the criteria -- defining the criteria for reporting should apply to truancy and attendance data, as just attendance data doesn't necessarily concern truancy, as it could be excused absences or unexcused absences.

And there was just a small drafting change in Section 2A that would clarify the language there, and that can be found on page 2 of our written testimony.

And also on the time frame, I believe Commissioner McQuillan mentioned that 15 days -- it was a little vague on whether that was school days or calendar days, so we just wanted to recommend that that language be changed to say ten school days, which we believe preserves the intent of the bill.

Connecticut Voices is also in support of Senate Bill 275, AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL

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'READINESS, for many of the reasons you've already heard today. We believe that a highly qualified workforce is extremely important. We believe this bill is able to meet that aim in an achievable manner by 2015.

If you have any questions, I'd be happy to take them. Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you.

Questions? Thank you for your testimony.

CARI CARSON: Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Laura, before you come up, Terri Drew, followed by Josh Michtom.

Welcome.

TERRI DREW: Thank you. Good evening.

Good evening, Senator and Representatives and a special good even to Representative Miller, who represents my hometown of Stamford.

As the director of the Stamford Youth Services Bureau -- and again, my name is Terri Drew -- I've had extensive involvement within our community around young people, and one of the things I can tell you is that the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council that testified before you earlier today regarding a bill -- we serve kids from the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council all the other way to the end of spectrum to the juvenile review board.

And there are a couple of glaring differences between those two groups of young people. The young people that you saw in the room earlier today go to school, get good grades and have the supports behind them to be

SB278

CAHS

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Testimony before the Education Committee

Submitted by Sherry Linton

SB275: An Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness Programs for 2015

Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS) would like to thank you, Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 275, an act that addresses the qualifications of School Readiness Programs. As we work toward having a quality early care and education experience accessible by all children, it is imperative that realistic options are created to enable the staff of early childhood programs to acquire the necessary credentials to offer quality services.

The current requirement to have an individual in each classroom of a program with a bachelors degree in early care and education or related field by 2015, creates very little flexibility for those who lack the degree but possess years of experience, and does not take into consideration the accessibility, or lack thereof, for current staff to attain such degrees. The proposed legislation addresses both of these concerns by providing a Credentialing process that expedites as well as creates multiple pathways for early childhood professionals to advance their qualifications. The intent of this bill aims to directly address the need to increase the number of trained teachers in a classroom within a time frame that aligns with the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Through the convening of early care and education providers, our organization can attest to the fact that Connecticut's early care and education community is committed to high quality standards as reflected by a highly qualified workforce. Therefore, it is incumbent on policy makers and those in higher education to create the pathways to ensure that those providers reach those desired goals. This bill affords that community such a reality that previously seemed unreachable.

For these reasons, CAHS supports SB275 which leads us in the direction of increasing the quality of early care and education being delivered to Connecticut's children.

For more information, I can be reached at slinton@cahs.org, (860) 951-2212 ext.233.

**Office for Workforce Competitiveness
Education Committee
Testimony in support of Raised Bill No. 275
March 1, 2010**

The Office for Workforce Competitiveness supports without reservation Raised Bill 275.

On behalf of the Governor's Early Childhood Research and Policy Council, the Office for Workforce Competitiveness and the Department of Higher Education chaired the ECE Workforce Subcommittee from September 2007 through December 2008. The membership included 50 representatives from state agencies, employers, higher education, and other philanthropic and advocacy organizations.

The immediate charge to the Workforce Subcommittee was to develop a plan to increase the number and qualifications of the workforce in publicly funded school and center-based early childhood education (ECE) programs for 3- and 4-year-old children. This included public preschools, Head Start and School Readiness programs, and Department of Social Service child care centers. The objectives for this plan were outlined in the Research and Policy Council's Investment Plan (fall 2006) which made specific recommendations for increasing the minimum requirements for the staff in publicly-funded ECE programs and for expanding the number of children served by these programs. Therefore, the subcommittee was charged with recommending strategies that will:

1. Increase the qualifications of the staff at all levels (administrators, teachers and assistant teachers) to meet the new requirements.
2. Increase the number of qualified staff so as to meet the projected expansion.
3. Develop the infrastructure needed to support these changes in a coordinated manner.

In order to gather information from stakeholders across the state, the consultant and staff conducted 38 interviews, held 3 focus groups, and conducted a poll of the members. Using data from interviews, focus groups, and poll the subcommittee identified goals, objectives, and action steps for a workforce plan. However, in December 2007 the sub-committee was unable to support the plan because of concerns over the standard for teachers. The ECE Workforce Subcommittee came to the decision that the state law requiring 100% of teachers to have a bachelor's degree by 2015 was unrealistic and an analysis of the capacity of the higher education system has confirmed this judgment. The Subcommittee developed an Alternative ECE Workforce Proposal that calls for 50% of teachers to have a bachelor's degree and the remaining to have an associate's degree by 2015. In addition, all teachers will be required to have a new ECE teaching credential by 2015. The alternative proposal and a draft workforce plan were submitted to the ECE Cabinet for consideration.

The bill before you today is a result of the deliberations and hard work of members of the ECE Workforce Subcommittee and other early childhood education advocates.

There are several reasons why we urge your support of this bill.

1) This bill raises the standard for teachers of young children in Connecticut. Raised Bill 275 sets a standard which will result in raising the qualifications and competencies of early childhood teachers in state funded preschool programs by requiring teachers in these programs to have a college degree by 2015 AND will allow us to require that these individuals meet a competency-based standard set by a committee of Connecticut early childhood educators

(Standards Committee) and based on the published standards of the national early childhood professional organization (NAEYC).

By 2015 these teachers must hold an associate's or a bachelor's degree from an approved competency-based higher education program. A minimum of 50% of teachers in each program must have a bachelor's and the remaining teachers must have an associate's degree (50/50 requirement). Individuals graduating from these approved programs would also earn an Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) as documentation of meeting this competency-based standard.

The Department of Higher Education has agreed to work with the Department of Education to establish a process for approving higher education programs that prepare teachers to meet the early childhood competencies established by the Standards Committee.

2) The standard set in PA 05-245 is unachievable. Public Act 05-245 requires School Readiness teachers to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree by 2015. Currently less than a third of these teachers hold a bachelor's degree.

In 2009 the Department of Higher Education conducted an analysis and determined that it would not be possible to meet the bachelor's by 2015 standard either by raising the qualifications of the current workforce or by preparing new bachelor's level early childhood teachers, or a combination of the two. The time required for students to complete bachelor's degrees makes the 2015 goal unattainable.

3) Raised Bill 275 will allow us to set a high standard based on competencies by 2015. By holding higher education institutions accountable to a competency-based standard we can ensure that graduates of both associates and bachelor's degree programs have the competencies required to teach young children.

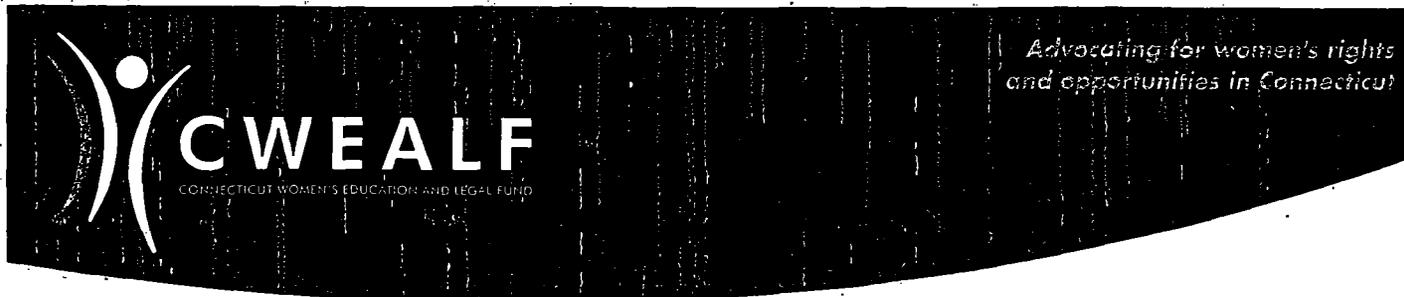
The Departments of Higher Education and Education have committed to implementing a competency-based early childhood teacher credential (ECTC) which is tied to a higher education program approval process. This outcome or competency-based process actually provides better assurance of a highly qualified early childhood workforce than called for in Public Act 05-245.

4) Raised Bill 275 reflects current research and national policies. The 50/50 requirement (a minimum of 50% of teachers with bachelor's and all others with associates degrees) is the standard that has been set by the federal government for Head Start (by 2013) and by the professional organization (National Association for the Education of Young Children) for accreditation of programs for young children (by 2015).

There is a growing body of research on the competencies teachers need to be effective in early childhood classrooms (i.e., Pianta and Howes, 2009) and college degrees alone do not ensure that individuals have these competencies.

National experts, including Connecticut resident Lynn Kagan (Professor of Early Childhood and Family Policy at Teachers College, Columbia University) have called for a national early childhood credential. Connecticut's ECTC would establish a first in the nation model for such a credential.

For these reasons, we urge your support of Raised Bill 275 and look forward to supporting the Departments of Higher Education and Education in training the workforce of 2015..



Education Committee

Testimony prepared by Dr. Alice Pritchard

March 1, 2010

Good afternoon. My name is Alice Pritchard and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF). CWEALF is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to empowering women, girls and their families to achieve equal opportunities in their personal and professional lives.

I urge your support of RB 275 An Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness Programs for 2015. Raised Bill 275 sets a standard which will result in raising the qualifications and competencies of early childhood teachers in state funded preschool programs by requiring teachers in these programs to have a college degree by 2015 AND will allow us to require that these individuals meet a competency-based standard set by a committee of Connecticut early childhood educators (Standards Committee) and based on the published standards of the national early childhood professional organization (NAEYC).

By 2015 these teachers must hold an associate's or a bachelor's degree from an approved competency-based higher education program. A minimum of 50% of teachers in each program must have a bachelor's and the remaining teachers must have an associate's degree (50/50 requirement). Individuals graduating from these approved programs would also earn an Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) as documentation of meeting this competency-based standard.

In addition, evidence suggests that the standard set in PA 05-245 is unachievable. Public Act 05-245 requires School Readiness teachers to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree by 2015. Currently less than a third of these teachers hold a bachelor's degree.

In 2009 the Department of Higher Education conducted an analysis and determined that it would not be possible to meet the bachelor's by 2015 standard either by raising the qualifications of the current workforce or by preparing new bachelor's level early childhood teachers, or a combination of the two. The time required for students to complete bachelor's degrees makes the 2015 goal unattainable.

Raised Bill 275 will allow the state to set a high standard based on competencies by 2015. By holding higher education institutions accountable to a competency-based standard we can ensure that graduates of both associates and bachelor's degree programs have the competencies required to teach young children.

In addition, the 50/50 requirement (a minimum of 50% of teachers with bachelor's and all others with associates degrees) is the standard that has been set by the federal government for Head Start (by 2013) and by the professional organization (National Association for the Education of Young Children) for accreditation of programs for young children (by 2015).

There is a growing body of research on the competencies teachers need to be effective in early childhood classrooms (i.e., Pianta and Howes, 2009) and college degrees alone do not ensure that individuals have these competencies.

For these reasons, we urge your support of Raised Bill 275.



State of Connecticut
Department of Higher Education

Testimony by the Connecticut Department of Higher Education
Before the Education Committee
3:30 p.m. – LOB Room 1E
March 1, 2010

Senate Bill 275 (Raised) An Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness Programs for 2015

The Department of Higher Education supports without reservation Raised Bill No. 275.

This bill raises the standard for teachers of young children in Connecticut.

- **Raised Bill 275** sets a standard which will result in raising the qualifications and competencies of early childhood teachers in state funded preschool programs.
 - **Current standard:** less than a college degree
Currently early childhood teachers in state-funded School Readiness programs and DSS Child Care Centers are required to have a minimum of a CDA credential and 12 college credits (4 college courses).
 - **Proposed standard:** College degree and skills as an early childhood teacher
The standard proposed in **Raised Bill 275** will require teachers in these programs to have a college degree by 2015 AND will allow us to require that these individuals meet a competency-based standard.
 - By 2015 these teachers must hold an associate's or a bachelor's degree from an approved competency-based higher education program. A minimum of 50% of teachers in each program must have a bachelor's and the remaining teachers must have an associates degree (50/50 requirement).
 - Individuals graduating from these approved programs would also earn an Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) as documentation of meeting this competency-based standard.

PA 05-245 Standard is not possible: All bachelor's teachers by 2015 is unachievable

- Public Act 05-245 requires School Readiness teachers to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree by 2015. Currently less than a third of these teachers hold a bachelor's degree.
- In 2009 the Department of Higher Education conducted an analysis and determined that it would not be possible to meet the bachelor's by 2015 standard either by raising the qualifications of the current workforce or by preparing new bachelor's level early childhood teachers, or both. The time required for students to complete bachelor's degrees makes the 2015 goal unattainable.

Raised Bill 275 will allow us to set a high standard based on competencies by 2015

- o By holding higher education institutions accountable to a competency-based standard we can ensure that graduates of both associates and bachelor's degree programs have the competencies required to teach young children.
- o The Departments of Higher Education and Education have committed to implementing a competency-based early childhood teacher credential (ECTC) which is tied to a higher education program approval process.
- o This outcome or competency-based process actually provides better assurance of a highly qualified early childhood workforce than called for in Public Act 05-245.

Raised Bill 275 reflects current research and national policies

- o The 50/50 requirement is the standard that has been set by the federal government for Head Start (by 2013) and by the professional organization (National Association for the Education of Young Children) for accreditation of programs for young children (by 2015).
- o We have a growing body of research on the competencies teachers need to be effective in early childhood classrooms (i.e., Pianta and Howes, 2009) and college degrees alone do not ensure that individuals have these competencies.
- o National experts, including Connecticut resident Lynn Kagan (Professor of Early Childhood and Family Policy at Teachers College, Columbia University) have called for a national early childhood credential. In her recent book* Dr. Kagan calls for a national credential at both the associate's and bachelors level. Connecticut's ECTC would establish a first in the nation model for such a credential.

Raised Bill 275 reflects 3 years of work by many CT early childhood experts and the Departments of Higher Education and Education are committed to its implementation

Workforce Subcommittee

- o In fall 2007 the Governor's Early Childhood Cabinet established a Workforce Subcommittee chaired by the Commissioner of the Department of Higher Education and the Director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness.
- o The membership included 50 representatives from state agencies, employers, higher education, and other philanthropic and advocacy organizations.
- o In spring 2008 this Subcommittee presented the Cabinet with a plan to create a more highly qualified workforce in publicly funded early childhood programs.
- o This plan called for 50/50 by 2015 and the ECTC (credential) and the group obtained the endorsements of both the Commissioners of Higher Education and Education for their proposal.

Standards Committee

- o In fall 2008 the Commissioners of Higher Education and Education appointed a Standards Committee to develop the recommendations for implementing the recommendations of the Workforce Subcommittee (specifically the 50/50 and ECTC recommendations).
- o The Standards Committee consisted of 23 members under the leadership of Doctors Merle Harris and Regina Miller.
- o In June 2009 the Standards Committee presented the Commissioners and the Governor's Early Childhood Cabinet with:
 - Standards for the ECTC (credential) for both the associate's and bachelors levels;
 - Recommendations for approval process for higher education programs leading to the credential; and
 - An outline for Expedited and Alternative Pathways to enable those in the current workforce to earn the Credential
- o One of the primary recommendations of the Standards Committee to move this work forward was to amend PA 05-245 to reflect the 50/50 standard for early childhood teachers in Connecticut.

DHE Commitment to the higher education approval process

The Department of Higher Education has agreed to work with the Department of Education to establish a process for approving higher education programs that prepare teachers to meet the early childhood competencies established by the Standards Committee.

**The Early Care and Education Teaching Workforce at the Fulcrum: An Agenda for Reform (2008)*

29,30


 Connecticut
Community
Colleges
Education That Works For a Lifetime

To: The Honorable Thomas P. Gaffey, Senate Chair
The Honorable Andrew M. Fleischman, House Chair
Members of the Education Committee

From: Paul Susen, Chief Academic Officer Connecticut Community Colleges
Darlene C. Ragozzine, Executive Director, Connecticut Charts-A-Course

Date: March 1, 2010

Re: Raised Bill No. 275

***AN ACT CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL
READINESS***

Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischman and Members of the Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony today and offer comments regarding ***S.B. No. 275, AN ACT CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL READINESS***

The Connecticut Community Colleges support the legislative intent and purpose of this bill as it will continue to promote access to quality programs for preschool children in our state by assuring a qualified and competent early childhood workforce. More importantly, it sets a goal that we feel is achievable while establishing a high standard of competence for the early childhood workforce.

As you know, the 12 Connecticut Community Colleges each offers an Associate Degrees in Early Childhood Education. This past fall we had a record enrollment of 2,715, up 13% from the previous year. The early childhood programs continue to be among the highest enrolled academic programs within the colleges. The number of graduates also increased in these programs by 9% between 2008 and 2009. Clearly, the Connecticut Community Colleges are assisting publicly funded preschool programs to meet the current staff qualifications of a minimum of Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) or associates or baccalaureate degree and 12 credits in early childhood education. Through the CT Charts-A-Course program (CCAC), many of these individuals also receive scholarships to acquire training toward credentials and degrees. CCAC reports that last year 565 scholarships were given toward associate degree credits.

We support this bill that would change the current state statute, from ... *that on or after July 1, 2015 each classroom will be headed by a teacher with a minimum of a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development or related field or certified with an endorsement in early childhood or special education to ... at least fifty per cent of its teachers hold a bachelor's degree and the remaining teachers hold an associate degree*

This standard is consistent with much of the current early childhood research and recommendations and is consistent with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and Head Start standards.

We also support the language in this bill that calls for teachers ...[to] have completed a program of study approved by the Commissioners of Education and Higher Education. This would require an approval process for academic programs offering early childhood programs by the Commissioners of Education and Higher Education. This will assure that all programs meet certain competencies for teaching young children. Our associate degree programs are all currently engaged in a process that will result in all programs having NAEYC Associate Degree Accreditation by 2013. This initiative is three-fold:

1. It will align each program with the current national standards and competencies for associate degree programs;
2. It will meet the State Department of Education requirement for articulation between associate degree programs in early childhood education and baccalaureate degree programs in early childhood teacher certification and ;
3. It will give them a strong foundational base to meet these new state competencies, which will then allow their graduates to acquire the proposed Early Childhood Teacher Credential.

Enclosed with this testimony is the CCAC 2010 RBA submission, as well as a detailed chart that displays the current status of the educational level of the teaching staff in publicly funded programs. Darlene Ragozzine, Executive Director of CCAC can speak in more detail regarding these measures related to the early childhood workforce in the state.

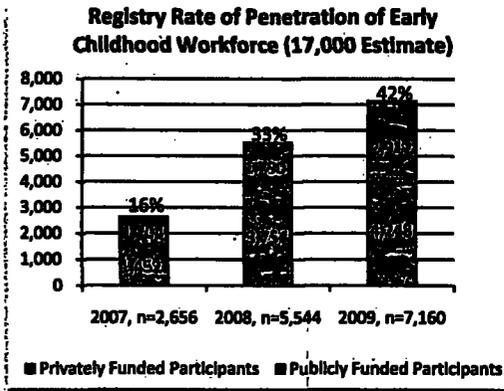


Program Report Card: Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC)

Program Purpose: To provide a coordinated and comprehensive system of early childhood professional development and program improvement.

Contributes to Population Quality of Life Result: Ready by Five and Fine by Nine: All Connecticut children are healthy and ready for school success at age 5, by promoting a qualified and highly skilled early childhood workforce and quality program environments.

Performance Measure 1: Professional Registry
Percentage of the early care and education workforce enrolled in the Registry.

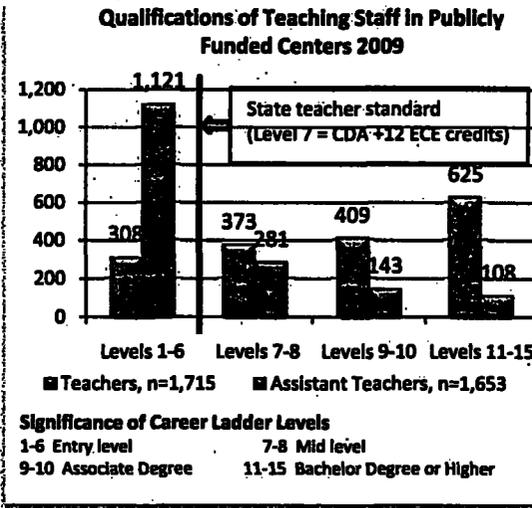


Story behind the baseline: The Early Childhood Professional Registry is an on-line database of individuals who work in the early care and education field. This measure shows a penetration rate by the Registry of 42% of the total estimated early care and education workforce of 17,000. (*Shaping Young Lives*, Child Health and Development Institute, 2005)

The growth in participants is a direct result of Head Start staff added to the mandatory enrollment of all DSS and SDE funded program staff. The Registry has captured 100% of the publicly funded staff and approximately 23% of staff in privately funded programs who voluntarily registered.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: increase the Registry's rate of penetration of the total workforce by enrolling any new publicly funded programs and approved Department of Public Health head teachers into the Registry.

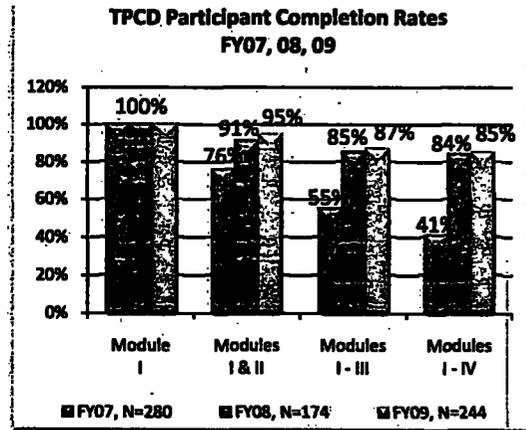
Performance Measure 2: Career Ladder Levels of Teaching Staff in Publicly Funded Centers
Educational levels of teaching staff in publicly funded centers, 2009



Story behind the baseline: This measure, using Registry data, shows the qualifications of teachers and assistant teachers in publicly funded centers. In 2009, 82% of teachers met the state standard of a level 7 (CDA and 12 ECE credits) or above, with 60% having an associate degree or higher. Only 33% of assistant teachers were at level 7 or above and 16% had a degree. There is no substantial change from 2008. Publicly funded centers include DSS Child Development programs, SDE School Readiness programs and federal and state funded Head Start programs.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: Target training, scholarships and professional development planning for teachers and assistant teachers who do not hold a CDA credential and 12 early childhood credits, while also moving the workforce beyond a CDA toward degrees using these initiatives.

Performance Measure 3: Training Program in Child Development and \$TART Education Bonus
Percent of participants who complete modules in the Training Program in Child Development, FY07, FY08 and FY09.



Story behind the baseline: The graph represents the percentages of participants in the TPCD who completed each module. Significant increases occurred in FY08, in modules II, III and IV compared to FY07. These results were sustained and even exceeded in FY09. Of particular note is the 85% completion rate of Module IV participants. This is a direct result of \$TART Educational Bonuses and other supports and incentives given to participants by CCAC and the training agencies. The \$TART Bonuses reward completion of modules, obtaining a CDA credential and 12 early childhood college credits.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: CCAC will implement a redesigned TPCD and continue the \$TART Bonuses in order to retain participants through the full course of modules, completion of the CDA and awarding of 12 college credits. CCAC will track the progress of these participants.



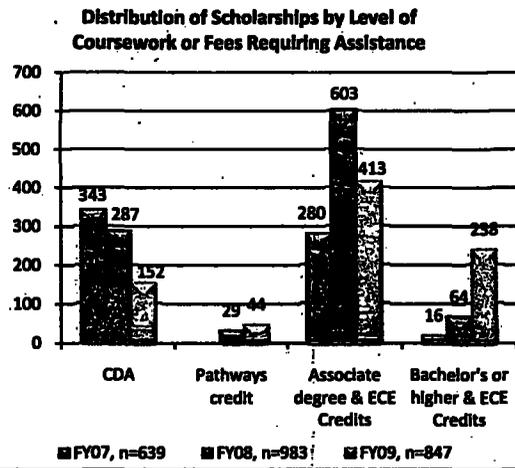
Program Report Card: Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC)

Program Purpose: To provide a coordinated and comprehensive system of early childhood professional development and program improvement.

Contributes to Population Quality of Life Result: Ready by Five and Fine by Nine: All Connecticut children are healthy and ready for school success at age 5, by promoting a qualified and highly skilled early childhood workforce and quality program environments.

Performance Measure 4: Scholarship Assistance Program

Distribution of scholarships leading to various educational levels.

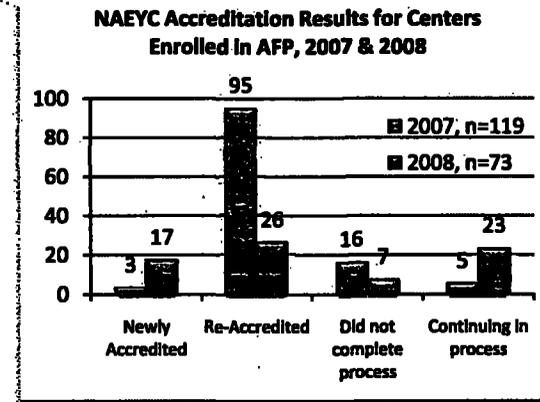


Story behind the baseline: This measure shows the distribution of scholarship recipients by the educational level they are seeking to achieve. Scholarships are available to staff of publicly funded programs within established priorities. The distribution of scholarships continued to shift from entry level training to more associate and higher degree coursework as professionals persisted in pursuing their education and took advantage of the scholarship program. Because higher level courses cost more, the number of scholarships decreased from FY08.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: Continue to target staff of publicly funded programs in order to meet teacher requirement and compliance with state law and NAEYC accreditation. CCAC counselors will approve scholarships that directly align with planned academic programs of study to effectively move early childhood professionals to degree completion.

Performance Measure 5: Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP)

Rate of successful accreditation of AFP centers.

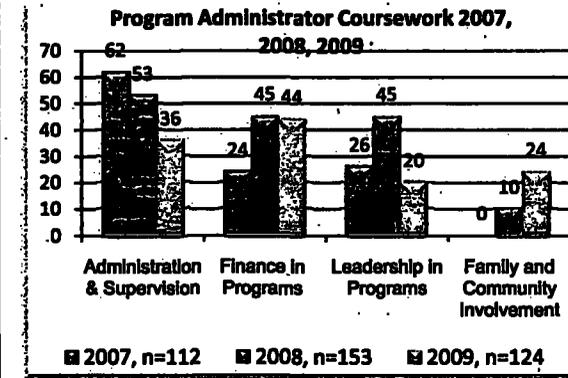


Story behind the baseline: This measure tracks the results of centers enrolled in the CCAC Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP) since 2007 when NAEYC launched its rigorous new system. During 2007 AFP placed special emphasis on re-accreditation because of the large number of sites needing to meet accreditation requirements under an NAEYC established deadline. Of the sites that enrolled in AFP in 2007, 82% achieved accreditation. In 2008, 59% of AFP sites are successful thus far. Because of the length of time and amount of program improvement work associated with NAEYC Accreditation, 28 sites continue in the process from these previous years. AFP enrolled 65 new sites in 2009 (26 for new accreditation and 39 for re-accreditation).

Proposed actions to turn the curve: Within available resources, continue to provide individualized support to enrolled programs, maintain a steady stream of new sites into the AFP, and reach out to all sites, so that CT remains at a top national rank for sites successfully achieving NAEYC Accreditation.

Performance Measure 6: Administrator Course Participation

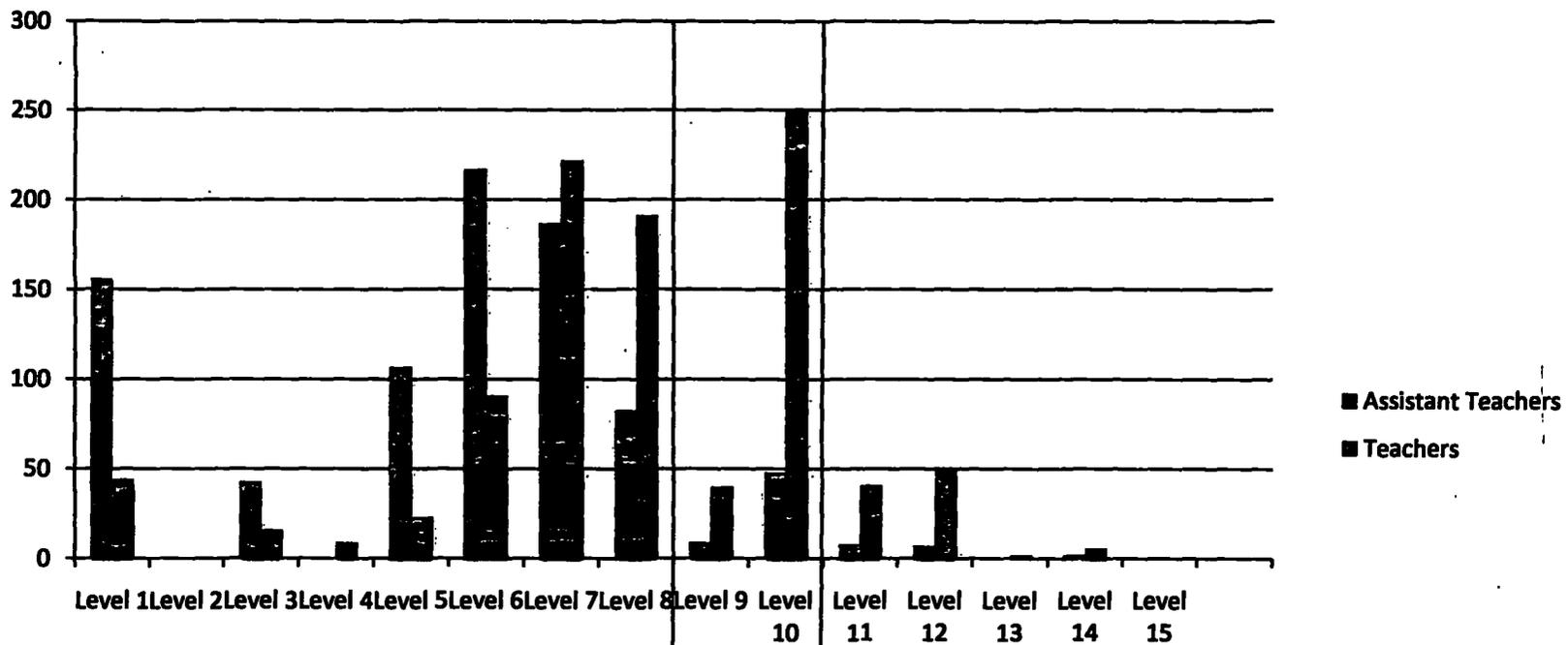
The number of early childhood administrators who participated in AFP sponsored coursework, 2007-9.



Story behind the baseline: This measure shows the number of students in CCAC/AFP sponsored college courses for program administrators, 2007 - 2009. The number of students increased from 112 in three different competency area courses in 2007 to 153 in four competency areas in 2008, then decreased to 124 in 2009, because of adjustments in the mix of courses with higher costs. There is substantial demand for these courses. DPH now requires at least 3 administrative credits for new administrators (as of 1/10) and NAEYC requires at least 9 credits. Through 2009, there were 672 participants (some taking more than one class) since courses began in 2000.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: Add classes in personnel management and increase CCAC course offerings within 5 competency areas to build education advancement. Fund additional coursework for individual administrators with scholarships. Target administrators whose programs are being accredited or re-accredited by NAEYC.

Scholarship Requests by Occupation

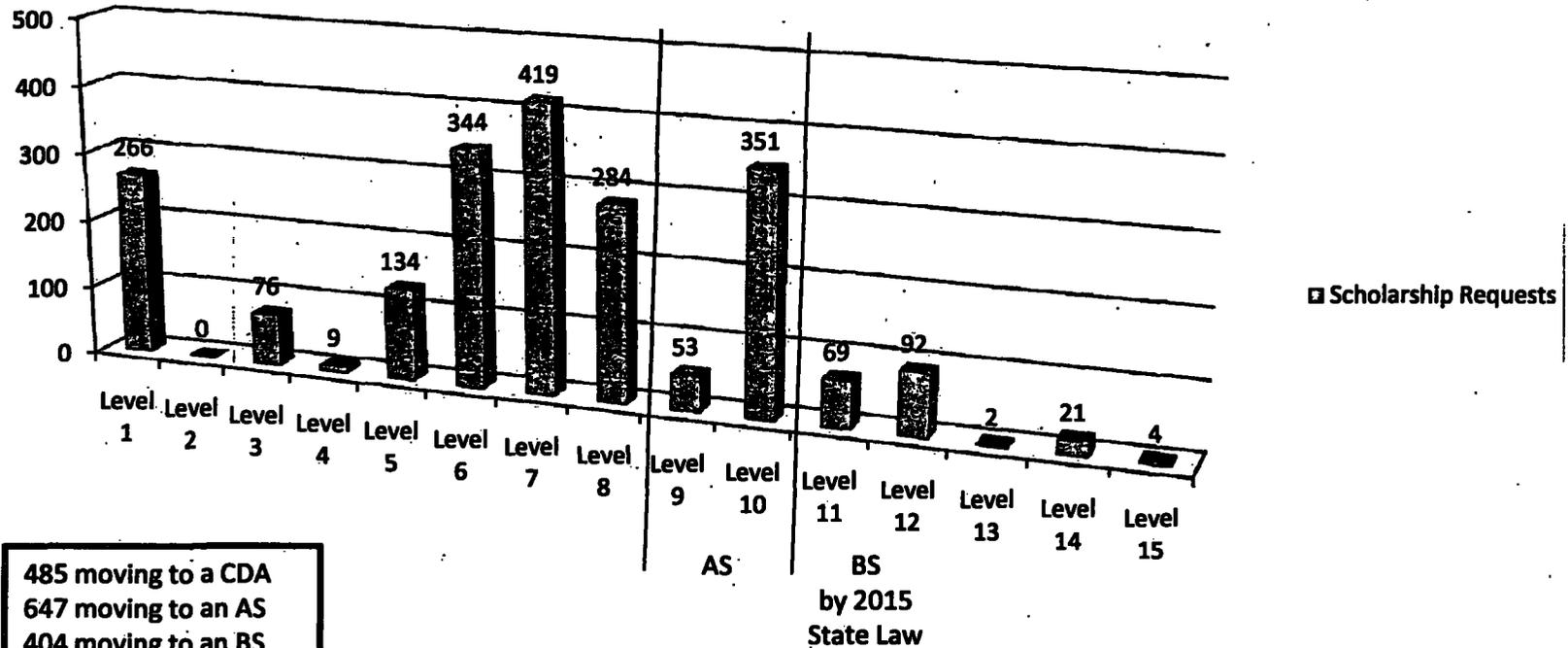


Level 7 - Current State Law
 Level 9-10 - AS
 Level 11-12 - 2015 State Law

AS
 BS
 by 2015
 State Law

Registry Data January 2010

Scholarship Requests by Ladder Level



Registry Data January 2010



Teaching Staff in Publicly Funded Centers - 12/07/2009					
Education and Training	Career Ladder Level	Teachers		Assistant Teachers	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
BA or more plus 12 ECE credits	11-15	621	36%	120	7%
AS plus 12 ECE credits	9-10	414	24%	142	8%
CDA plus 12 ECE credits or 30 credit credential	7-8	356	21%	273	16%
CDA or 12 ECE credits	6	151	9%	337	20%
Less than a CDA or 12 ECE credits	1-5	186	11%	807	48%
	TOTAL	1728		1679	

Source: CT Charts-A-Course Professional Registry

Meets the current state law for teacher in a publicly funded program

Meets the 2015 state law for teacher in a publicly funded program

**CONNECTICUT
VOICES
FOR CHILDREN**

**Testimony Supporting S.B. 278: "An Act Concerning Truancy" and
Supporting S.B. 275: "An Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness
Programs for 2015"**

Cari Carson, Tamara Kramer, Alexandra Dufresne, J.D., and Cyd Oppenheimer, J.D.
Education Committee
March 1, 2010

Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann, and distinguished Members of the Education Committee:

We testify today on behalf of Connecticut Voices for Children, a research-based public education and advocacy organization that works statewide to promote the well-being of Connecticut's children, youth, and families.

Connecticut Voices for Children *supports* S.B. 278 – "An Act Concerning Truancy" and S.B. 275 – "An Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness Programs for 2015."

I. Connecticut Voices for Children supports S.B. 278, which will help Connecticut better serve truant students.

Truancy¹ is a significant risk factor for dropout, delinquent behavior, and school failure.² Research shows that attendance rates in ninth grade are the best predictor of whether a high school freshman will graduate on-time from high school.³ In Connecticut, police officers have noted the significant link between reducing truancy and preventing juvenile delinquency.⁴ Truancy is also a risk factor for adult criminal justice involvement and incarceration.⁵ Research in Connecticut and nationally indicates that unmet educational and mental health needs are significant causes of truancy.⁶

¹ Section 10-198a of the Connecticut General Statutes defines a truant student as "a child age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school year." Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a (a). Available online at: <http://cga.ct.gov/2009/pub/chap168.htm#Sec10-198a.htm>; A habitually truant student is defined in statute as "a child age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and has twenty unexcused absences within a school year." Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-200. Available online at: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2009/pub/chap168.htm#Sec10-200.htm>.

² Myriam L. Baker, Jane Nady Sigmon, and M. Elaine Nugent. "Truancy Reduction: Keeping Students in School." Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice. September 2001. p. 1. Available online at: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/188947.pdf>.

³ Manpower Demonstration Research Center, "Fast Fact: Ninth-Grade Attendance Rates Predict High School Graduation." August 2007. Available online at: http://www.mdrc.org/area_fact_35.html.

⁴ See, e.g., S Goode, "Officers Find Few Truants in City Sweep." *Hartford Courant*, May 4, 2007; M Garriga, "Police, Panel Staffers Will Visit Truant Students." *New Haven Register*, February 15, 2007.

⁵ See note 2, p. 2.

⁶ Andrea Spencer and Emily Breon. "Truancy: A Closer Look – The Link Between Unmet Educational Needs and Truancy." Center for Children's Advocacy. p. 4; See note 2, p. 2.

pursuant to the provisions of subsection (c) of section 10-220 of the general statutes.”

S.B. 278 also states a timeframe in which the superintendent of schools must file a Family with Service Needs petition after attempts to engage a student and his or her family in solving the truancy problem have been unsuccessful.¹⁴ This timeframe is needed to ensure that students and families are referred to the services they need in a timely manner. A lack of a timeframe risks a delay in referral and the possibility of a student slipping by without services and with continued chronic absenteeism. Connecticut Voices for Children recommends that the language in S.B. 278, Sec. 1 (c) be clarified to read:

“...not later than [fifteen days] ten school days after failure to attend such meeting...”

This language provides a clear parameter that will help school personnel to address needs of truant students earlier, before truancy becomes chronic.

These provisions will help Connecticut to consistently identify its truant population and to serve these students in a timely manner, thereby reducing truancy. By reducing truancy rates, Connecticut can promote positive outcomes for its students, including increased school achievement, higher graduation rates, and lower delinquency rates.

II. Connecticut Voices for Children strongly supports the implementation of S.B. 275, which would amend the pre-school teacher standards established by PA 05-245 for school readiness programs.

In 2005, legislation was passed that created a new requirement for teachers in preschool classrooms that were recipients of school readiness funding. Currently, a school readiness classroom is only required to have one adult who has a child development associate degree and 12 college credits, which are four three-credit courses. The requirements set out in PA 05-245 require that each classroom have an adult with a minimum of either a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, childhood development, or a related field, or a certification with an endorsement in early childhood education or special education by July 1, 2015. With only 36% of the teachers in state-funded programs¹⁵ currently holding bachelor's degrees and 24% of the teachers in these programs holding associate degrees, Public Act 05-245 sets a goal that would be unachievable within five years.

Senate Bill 275 would maintain the intent of PA 05-245, which was to raise the standards and qualifications for teachers working with the state's youngest children, while creating a goal that is attainable. This new proposal requires that by 2015, at least 50% of early childhood teachers in state-funded programs hold a bachelor's degree from an approved, competency-based program and the remaining teachers must hold an associate degree from an approved, competency-based

¹⁴ Section 10-198a (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes states that a meeting shall be held with the parent or guardian of a child within ten school days of that child meeting the definition of a truant student. Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-198a (b). Available online at: <http://cga.ct.gov/2009/pub/chap168.htm#Sec10-198a.htm>

¹⁵ Publicly funded refers to all SDE School Readiness, DSS state funded centers, and state-funded Head Start.



Advocating for teachers
and public education

Connecticut Education
Association

Governance

Philip Apruzzese, President
Sheila Cohen, Vice President
Cheryl Prevost, Secretary
Jeff Leaks, Treasurer
Maureen Honan, NEA Director
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Affiliated with the
National Education
Association

**Testimony of Mary Loftus Levine, CEA Director of Policy and
Professional Practice**

Before the Education Committee on March 1, 2010

Raised Bill No. 275, LCO No. 1387

***An Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness Programs
for 2015***

and

Raised Bill No. 279, LCO No. 1389

An Act Concerning Foreign Languages Taught in Public Schools

My name is Mary Loftus Levine, and I am the Director of Policy and Professional Practice for the Connecticut Education Association, representing over 40,000 educators in our great public schools. I am here to testify against Raised Bill No. 275 regarding the staff qualification's bill.

As educators, we understand the importance of school readiness programs not only for our students as a proven way to close the achievement gap, but for the economic future of our state. Just last week, I watched an interview by Charlie Rose on the latest in brain research on infant and toddler learning regarding language development. We know that for example, children can learn not only their native language but multiple languages before age 3 far more easily than not only an adult but even faster than a teenager, because of the way are brains are wired.

The economist Richard Rothstein (former education columnist for the New York Times) recently reported a study which compared the language development of children of college educated parents to those who are in non-college educated homes. This study shows that the level of vocabulary and the number of words a child hears as an infant and toddler has a direct correlation to that child's achievement levels by third grade. All other research clearly shows it is far more economical to put dollars into early childhood now than into remediation, and in the worst case scenario, into incarceration facilities later - where large percentages of inmates never had the opportunity to even learn to read.

-over-

But what has Connecticut done?

Since 2003, Connecticut has been "kicking the can down the road" further and further. In fact last year, the date to require teachers to be certified in early childhood or hold a bachelor's degree was pushed to 2015. This bill now makes that situation even worse by lowering this requirement even further. If this bill were to pass, only 50% of a preschool staff would be required to have these credentials by 2015.

I would also like to draw your attention to our State Board of Education's recently adopted February 3, 2010 Position Statement on Early Childhood Education which I have attached, particularly the 8th bullet: "Young children learn best from highly qualified teachers with specific training to effectively address the unique learning needs of young children."

This bill makes it more and more impossible for us to ever close the achievement gap, to compete internationally with countries where high quality preschool is a right, to say nothing of how further weakening our early childhood education policy contributes to our poor Connecticut economy.

For all these reasons we ask that you not support Raised Bill No. 275.

However, I am here to testify in favor of Raised Bill No. 279 which increases the minimum high school graduation credit requirement to twenty-two from twenty by adding not fewer than two credits in world languages.

We also are in favor of the flexibility this bill allows for students to meet these requirements, but caution you on the lack of standards in lines 62-63 regarding the use of on-line coursework. We are in favor of on-line courses and have worked collaboratively with the Connecticut Consortium for Online Learning and with the Virtual High School in Massachusetts.

We suggest the bill be amended to reflect best practices and to ensure courses are taken from legitimate, high quality providers, ideally with on-site mentors at the student's high school to provide the support needed for many students to be successful with online education.

Thank you.



Education Committee
March 1, 2010

Testimony of Mark K. McQuillan, Commissioner of Education

ON

Raised Bills 275, 279, 278, 5316, 280, 5315

Raised Bill 275: AN ACT CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS FOR 2015

The Department of Education strongly supports **Raised Bill 275, An Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness Programs for 2015**. Current law requires that by 2015 school readiness classrooms are staffed with teachers who hold (1) a bachelor's degree from an accredited higher education institution in early childhood education, child development, or a related commissioner-approved field; or (2) a teaching certificate with a special education or early childhood endorsement. This target standard cannot be reached given: (1) the insufficient numbers of four-year Early Childhood Education (ECE) degree programs; and (2) the time it takes for those pursuing these degrees to complete their program.

This bill seeks to remedy these problems by revising the staff requirements to require that half of the teachers in programs accepting school readiness funds have either (1) a bachelor's degree from an accredited higher education institution or (2) a teaching certificate with an early childhood education endorsement. The remaining half of the teachers must have an associate's degree from an accredited higher education institution. All teachers, whether they have a bachelor's degree or an associate's degree, would have to either obtain a **new early childhood credential** that establishes competencies based on performance by completing a program of study approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education or hold a teaching certificate in early childhood education.

The 2015 standards in current state law are unattainable for a number of reasons. First, DHE analysis demonstrated it is not possible to prepare enough bachelors' level teachers to meet this requirement by 2015 - only 31% of teachers in these programs currently have a bachelor's degree. Further, certified teachers normally do not accept positions in community settings. They take teaching positions in the public schools where the salaries are higher and the benefits and hours are better.

While some may see the revised staffing requirements proposed in this bill as a step backwards, this bill actually raises the current standards for all teachers in state-funded School Readiness, Head Start, and DSS Child Care Centers (community-based early childhood settings) to an *attainable* standard for 2015. This proposal aligns with national policy and it represents significant progress over our current standard. As such, the Department of Education supports Raised Bill 275.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**EDUCATION
PART 2
318 – 666**

2010

dissuade students who might avoid careers in science simply for this dissection. I mean, there's -- this is a decision based on ethics and don't we want our future doctors and scientists to be driven by that sense of compassion. I mean, I think that's an attribute we should really nurture and give -- be more inclusive in our -- our learning environment. Just something to consider. Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Representative.

And I just want to encourage members to remember that this is a public hearing and that every comment you make should end with a question mark, because there are 55 people waiting to give their public testimony. With that I'd like to turn to Rhona Free.

RHONA FREE: Good afternoon, Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee.

For the record, I am Rhona Free, vice president of Academic Affairs at Eastern Connecticut State University speaking on behalf of Elsa Nunez, president of Eastern. I have with me Julia DeLapp, the director of our Center for Early Childhood Education.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today. We are grateful for your advocacy for education and the difference it can make, not only for our students, but for our state.

I would like to offer some comments on Senate Bill 380, AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CREDENTIALING. The bill directs the Commissioner of Education to use unexpended funds for providing professional development

SB275

to School Readiness staff to meet the qualifications and competencies of early childhood teachers in state funded preschool programs. These require, by 2015, that in each classroom there will be an individual with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or certification.

Current law requires School Readiness teachers to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree by 2015. However, there is growing evidence that suggests that this standard is unachievable. At this time, less than a third of these teachers hold a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, the State Department of Higher Education conducted an analysis and concluded that because of the time required for students to complete their bachelor's degrees, achieving the 2015 goal would require extraordinary measures. Moreover, the 50/50 requirement is the standard that has been set by the federal government for Head Start and by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

I would urge the Committee to consider combining the bill before you with Senate Bill 275, AN ACT CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS BY 2015, which requires that by 2015 these teachers must hold an associate's or a bachelor's degree from an approved competency-based higher education program. A minimum of 50 percent of teachers in each program must have a bachelor's degree and the remaining 50 percent of teachers must have an associate's degree. Individuals graduating from these approved programs would also earn an Early Childhood Teacher Credential as documentation of meeting this competency-based standard.

Eastern Connecticut State University is

uniquely positioned to help teachers and the State reach this 50/50 requirement. ECSU offers, as part of its current teacher preparation program, several courses that could be slightly modified to serve as the foundation of an appropriate competency-based baccalaureate program for School Readiness teachers. We would be willing, in collaboration with other higher education institutions in Connecticut, to develop a program that would articulate with associate degree programs currently offered in the community colleges.

We would also be happy to work with nontraditional education providers, in particular, Charter Oak State College, to design a program that can be taken to the workplace using a combination of technology-assisted courses and on-ground courses, as well as hands-on components, in an effort to create the capacity to meet the demands on higher education programs that this standard would imply.

Eastern, in collaboration with Central, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities, has capacity to offer an innovative credit-earning program that uses technology to promote the professional development of preschool teachers and childcare providers within their worksites. Eastern also host -- houses the Center for Early Childhood Education that opened in 2007 as a multidisciplinary research and training institute. This tremendous resource would facilitate any proposal for a technology-based preschool teacher education program.

The possibilities are exciting, and the need for enhanced teacher training for this workforce is evident. We, at Eastern, stand

ready to partner, to develop, and deliver high quality baccalaureate level course work to this very significant workforce.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for your testimony and for clarifying for many who might not understand that this new 50/50 requirement actually represents something that's aspirational that is beyond where we are now and would help us provide the kind of early childhood education we'd like to.

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you, Chairman Fleischmann.

Thank you, Rhona. I -- I want to echo the Chairman's comment. I thought this testimony was excellent.

Just let me ask you that in the face of reality here with fewer and fewer baccalaureate-degreed people staying within your early childhood classroom and going out to teach in other positions where they're far better compensated, in the ideal world, I would have a hope that the early childhood teachers were compensated to the level as every other teacher, but in reality they're not and with current budget constraints doesn't appear that they will be for some time. So in light of that reality and my concern that we are going to recede even further the amount -- the number of baccalaureate-degreed staff that are in the -- early School Readiness programs, does it make sense for us to be looking at an alternative credential? I mean, my concern is that we

won't be at 50/50, it'll slide all of a sudden to 40/60 and whatever. So should we be looking at an alternative credential here, a -- you know, like associate's plus concentration with the type of examples you used with Eastern working the Charter Oak with online courses, et cetera?

RHONA FREE: I think, at this point, we would encourage aiming for the 50/50 requirement by 2015. As an economist, one of my thoughts would be that as the demand for -- Early Childhood Education teachers to have a bachelor's degree goes into effect that would have the effect of pushing up salaries for Early Childhood Education teachers and that might attract more current students into those programs. I think that we also have the capability to provide distance education and other types of alternative deliveries so that some of the people who are currently working in Early Childhood Education but don't have a degree can get one and that helps us to meet the 50/50 requirement by 2015 as well.

I turn to Ms. DeLapp who may have other thoughts about the alternative credential.

SENATOR GAFFEY: How would you do that? Let me just ask the question now. I mean, in -- in the programs around Connecticut because we've been at this for quite some time. We wrote the law about 13 years ago. And we wanted to ensure quality and that's why we put pretty high standards in our -- in our programs. What is the status out here today, do you know as far as, I mean, we're striving to 50/50, but what do we have in actuality out in these programs as far as the ratio of degree versus nondegree staff?

JULIA DELAPP: Well, we did hear from Mr. Gay

earlier that it's about 36 percent of the lead teachers have bachelor's degrees. And I don't have the -- I could actually grab them out, statistics showing how many have associate's degrees and how many have less than that. But we have a long way to go. It's something like, I think, some analysis that was done by members of the Early Childhood cabinet had done some analysis that indicated that we would need over 1,000 teachers. We need to prepare them based on attrition of the teachers who are currently in the field. We would need to basically educate -- get credentialed 1,000 additional teachers by 2015 in order to meet the current number of teachers in those degree programs.

One thing that I would like to say is that with the proposed credential, with an associate's degree, and in some cases that could actually increase the qualifications of teachers in centers right now because it ensures a minimum coverage of early childhood course work in pedagogy and right now that is not in the current legislation. So you could get a bachelor's degree in early childhood or in a related field, and there is no standard for ensuring that they've really had broad coverage of early childhood and understand how to put that into practice.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Okay. So can I ask that you submit alternative language for our consideration in this bill that would very, very helpful. I agree with the you, the bill should be combined. But, with regard to the qualifications, if you could please submit to Chairman Fleischmann and myself and the Committee some alternative language that you'd think would be optimal. Considering where we are in this point and time, as far as how many are baccalaureate and how many are not. How

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many are not even associate degree -- degreed staff, that would be helpful.

JULIE DELAPP: Certainly.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Okay. Questions?

Representative Cook.

REP. COOK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Bear with me for a second. I'm trying to put my hands around a couple of things.

In the testimony that was received earlier and then also the charts of course gives out data about how many teachers do hold a bachelor's and the percentages of -- that are or not there. The 50/50, are you saying that it's completely not obtainable by 2015? Or are you thinking that it is something that we could actually go forward with?

JULIA DELAPP: What's not obtainable is that all teachers would have to have a bachelor's degree. I -- I do think that 50/50 is obtainable particularly if they're supports in place, scholarships, and the assurance that we can develop programs that meet the needs of working individuals.

REP. COOK: And how long do think that it would take a working individual to obtain a bachelor's degree or an associate's degree, if they're still trying to maintain the employment of which they have right now?

JULIA DELAPP: Right. That's a huge challenge and

it depends on where they start. It often takes four and a half years to get to -- go from nothing to an associate's degree, and it could a commensurate amount of time to get from an associate's degree to a bachelor's degree.

REP. COOK: Mr. Chair, if I may continue?

Thank you.

And with that, we're also understanding that we're assuming that they're going to have the ability acquire some type of scholarship or, you know, assistance, if you will. When a lot times the early childhood -- early childcare workers are making somewhere in the neighborhood of 8 to 10 dollars an hour. Some of my very good friends have been in the same place for 25 years and they're making \$14 an hour.

How are they supposed to pay now for education, if assuming they cannot obtain some type of assistance, work to pay their bills that they have to keep and now be forced to, you know, acquire this education within four years?

JULIA DELAPP: And those are all huge challenges and I think that's one of reasons why this legislation was -- 275 was proposed because there was so much concern that by 2015 childcare workers just simply couldn't get there. We do have resources in place right now, Connecticut Charts of Course offers scholarships for many of those individuals.

And then I think, the other piece that's good about the particular Bill 380 is that it does direct that unspent money from school readiness dollars would be used to support

individuals to get towards those degrees.

REP. COOK: Do you know how many people we're looking to provide scholarships for? Let's say everybody needed to have a scholarship provided for them, would the Charters of Course be able to provide for all of those people? Could we ask them?

Mr. Chair is that possible? I'm sorry. I know I'm -- but I think we're going on the assumption that people are going to be able to do this and that there assuming that --

REP. FLEISCHMANN: It's -- It's a perfectly fair question.

Charters of Course has given us their -- a breakdown of the numbers, if you'd like to have a sidebar conversation with them that's fine, but they're not testifying now. So I'd like to limit the questions to these folks who are before us.

JULIA DELAPP: Yeah. What I can say is that I share your concern that -- that we need resources to help people get there and that it continues to be an issue that once they get there degree that the salaries are low. And that -- that is definitely a concern.

REP. COOK: And what happens to those individuals that are not able to obtain their bachelor's, or if we are not able to legislate an associate's degree. What happens to those people that are now employed at 2015 who are at that break?

JULIA DELAPP: One option is they could become an assistant teacher in the classroom where they are in, or they could look for employment in a program that does not have state funding.

REP. COOK: So now we're unemploying people. The State is now going to force people to become unemployed in a position of which they've possibly been in for 20 or 25 years or have them take a lower position, which would, in fact, make them have a lower pay. Am I correct?

RHONA FREE: Well, this is the advantage of the 50/50 Bill. Not every head teacher would have to have the bachelor's degree with the 50/50 Bill. With the bill that requires 100 percent coverage, then I think the issue -- you're issue is even more significant.

JULIA DELAPP: I do want to say, though, that -- I mean, these are all very important concerns, but it is also important that young children are in centers where there are qualified teachers and teachers who -- who have the background to be able to provide that. And there are some very wonderful teachers out there who do not have degrees, but they're also some -- they're also some issues with quality in -- in some places. And I speak to this as a mother of a three-year-old who went touring many, many places before I chose the place where my child would go. And so I do -- I would not want to abandoned notions of ensuring that we -- sort of placing a goal that we reach towards that we get teachers to that point.

I also want to point out that Connecticut doesn't have -- there are many states that have higher standards than Connecticut. But I do -- I think what -- the best thing we can do is to provide some supports to get people to that point and providing a benchmark of having 50 percent of the teachers have a bachelor's degree and 50 percent having an associate's

degree is a step in the right direction.

REP. COOK: I would not disagree that we need to raise our standards. I mean, I have children in the public school some that have graduated. And I've worked in the early childhood system, but I also think that we need to be very conscious of what we're doing to force the hand, especially, now in the fiscal times we're in. We definitely want to raise the bar. I'm not arguing that point at all, but I am arguing the fact that we do not want to unemploy people or force them to take a position of lower pay who's been in a position for years because of something that we're going to legislate.

So I would really hope that we look at that and try to figure out a way to grandfather people in and work through the process. I just don't think that we're doing our job as legislators if we force people to lose their jobs. That's all I'm saying.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Representative.

Further comments or questions for the people before us, if not.

Thank you very much for your time and testimony.

Now we go to Don Fiftal of Darien.

Mr. Superintendent, welcome, thank you for your long trip. Please remember to turn on the microphone before you begin.

DONALD FIFTAL: Thank you, Mr. Chair and to the members of the Education Committee. I bid you

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**EASTERN
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Testimony by Rhona Free, Vice President of Academic Affairs on behalf of Elsa M. Núñez, President of Eastern Connecticut State University Before the Education Committee, March 8, 2010

Good morning, Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. For the record, I am Rhona Free, Vice President of Academic Affairs at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) speaking on behalf of Elsa Núñez, President of Eastern. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today. We are grateful for your advocacy for education and the difference it can make, not only for our students but for our state.

I would like to offer some comments on Senate Bill 380, "*An Act Concerning Early Childhood Education Credentialing*." The bill directs the Commissioner of Education to use unexpended funds for providing professional development to school readiness staff to meet the qualifications and competencies of early childhood teachers in state funded preschool programs—these require by 2015 that in each classroom there will be an individual with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or certification.

Current law (Public Act 05-245) requires School Readiness teachers to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree by 2015. However, there is growing evidence that suggests that this standard is unachievable. At this time, less than a third of these teachers hold a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, the State Department of Higher Education conducted an analysis and concluded that because of the time required for students to complete their bachelor's degrees, achieving the 2015 goal would require extraordinary measures. Moreover, the 50/50 requirement is the standard that has been set by the federal government for Head Start (by 2013) and by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (by 2015).

I would urge the Committee to consider combining the bill before you with Senate Bill 275, "*An Act Concerning Staff Qualifications for School Readiness Programs for 2015*," which requires that by 2015 these teachers must hold an associate's or a bachelor's degree from an approved competency-based higher education program. A minimum of 50 percent of teachers in each program must have a bachelor's degree and the remaining 50 percent of teachers must have an associate's degree (50/50 requirement). Individuals graduating from these approved programs would also earn an Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) as documentation of meeting this competency-based standard.

Eastern Connecticut State University is uniquely positioned to help teachers and the State reach this 50/50 requirement. ECSU offers, as part of its current teacher preparation program, several courses that could be slightly modified to serve as the foundation of an appropriate competency-based baccalaureate program for School Readiness teachers. We would be willing, in collaboration with other higher education institutions in Connecticut, to develop a program that would articulate with associate degree programs currently offered in the community colleges.