

**House Bill No. 6705**

**Public Act No. 13-234**

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOUSING, HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC  
HEALTH.**

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

Sec. 123. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2013*) (a) The Department of Children and Families, in consultation with the Department of Education, shall establish the Raise the Grade pilot program, to be implemented in the cities of Hartford, Bridgeport and New Haven for a two-year period beginning July 1, 2013, to increase the academic achievement of children and youth who live in the custody of the Department of Children and Families or who are being served by the Court Support Services Division in said cities.

(b) The program shall use full-time coordinators to (1) assist with the identification of children or youth who are performing below grade level and are (A) in state custody, or (B) under juvenile justice supervision, and (2) develop plans, in collaboration with the child's or youth's legal guardian, educational surrogate or advocate, to improve the child's academic performance. Coordinators shall help facilitate the prompt transfer and review of educational records and report to the Department of Children and Families and the educational surrogate critical educational information, including, but not limited to, (i) progress monitoring, (ii) absenteeism, and (iii) discipline. Coordinators shall also help to support educational stability for children as described in section 17a-16a of the general statutes.

(c) Upon the conclusion of the pilot program, the Department of Children and Families, in coordination with the Court Support Services Division and the State Department of Education, shall report to the achievement gap task force the number and educational profile of children served by the program and the impact on their educational performance, including on (1) achievement, (2) absenteeism, and (3) adverse disciplinary measures.

Sec. 124. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2013*) (a) The Departments of Education and Children and Families shall be required to annually track the academic progress of each child and youth in state custody, from prekindergartners through those in twelfth grade, and submit a report on such progress to the achievement gap task force established pursuant to section 10-16mm of the general statutes. The Court Support Services Division, in collaboration with the State Department of Education, shall create an annual aggregate report on the academic progress of youth in its custody.

(b) For each child or youth who is in state custody pursuant to sections 17a-101 and 46b-129 of the general statutes, the Department of Children and Families shall include a description of the child's educational status and academic progress in his or her case plan, as defined in section 17a-15 of the general statutes. Such description shall include information regarding the child's current levels of educational performance, including absenteeism and grade level performance, and what supports or services will or are being provided to improve academic performance. For children and youth who are committed to Department of Children and Families' custody pursuant to section 46b-129 of the general statutes, the educational status information shall be included in reports to the Juvenile Court and shall be reviewed by the court when decisions are made regarding the child's well-being in care.

(c) Each youth who is in a secure facility run or contracted for by the Court Support Services Division shall have a case plan that describes the youth's educational needs and grade-level performance and identifies what supports or services will or are being provided to support academic performance.

(d) The Department of Children and Families and Court Support Services Division shall develop a plan to ensure that all facilities and school programs run or contracted by the department and the division are able to meet the academic and related service needs of enrolled children and youth. The plan shall ensure the ability to provide for (1) the development of effective practices for acquiring and reviewing students' educational records, including assessment of enrolled youth's present levels of academic performance; (2) the youth's identified educational and related service needs; (3) appropriate and ongoing professional development on providing educational and related services to abused, neglected and juvenile justice-involved youth; (4) research-based instruction and standards-based core curriculum for all enrolled youth; and (5) administrative review of all programs run or contracted for by the

department or division. Such plan shall be finalized by July 1, 2014, and submitted to the achievement gap task force established pursuant to section 10-16mm of the general statutes.