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2024 Education Legislation Update

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Connecticut Association of Schools
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Agenda

Topics to be discussed



- Statutory Changes Affecting Students
- Statutory Changes Affecting Employment
- Statutory Changes Affecting Educator Certification
- Statutory Changes Affecting Teaching and Curriculum
- Statutory Changes Affecting Special Education
- Statutory Changes Affecting School District Operations
- Miscellaneous Statutory Changes Affecting Schools

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**Statutory Changes Affecting
Students**

In-School Suspension

Public Act No. 24-45, Section 13



- An in-school suspension is an exclusion from regular classroom activity but not exclusion from school, provided that such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which the suspension was imposed.
- The Act **reduces** the number of consecutive school days for in-school suspension from 10 to 5 school days.

Early Grades Out-of-School Suspension

Public Act No. 24-45, Section 14



- Under prior law, students in preschool to grade 2 could be suspended out of school for conduct on school grounds that was “of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.”
- The Act revises this standard to still require conduct on school grounds, but it must be “behavior that causes physical harm.”
- The Act also reduces the maximum length for out-of-school suspension in these early grades from 10 to 5 school days.

Early Grades Out-of-School Suspension

Public Act No. 24-45, Section 14



When a student in the early grades returns to school from an out-of-school suspension, the student must receive services that are

- ❑ trauma-informed,
- ❑ developmentally appropriate, and
- ❑ align with any behavioral intervention plan, IEP, or Section 504 plan that the student may have.



The administration must also consider whether to convene a PPT meeting to conduct an evaluation to determine if the student may require special education or related services.

Expulsion Hearing Notice

Public Act No. 24-93, Section 12



- Absent an emergency, students cannot be expelled without a formal hearing and a notice of the expulsion hearing must be sent at least 5 business days prior to the hearing.
- The Act clarifies that the 5 business days does not include the day of the hearing.

Parental Notification of Student Behavior

Public Act No. 24-93, Section 11



- By law, a classroom teacher of record may request a behavior intervention meeting with the school's crisis intervention team for any student whose behavior causes:
 1. a serious disruption to other student's instruction;
 2. self-harm; or
 3. physical harm to the teacher, another student, or staff in the teacher's classroom.
- The Act creates two new parental notification requirements regarding such behavior.

Parental Notification of Student Behavior

Public Act No. 24-93, Section 11

Within 24 hours after such behavior occurs,
a school principal or administrator must:

Notify the student's parent/guardian that the student's behavior caused (1) a serious disruption to other student's instruction; (2) self-harm; or (3) physical harm to the teacher, another student, or staff in the teacher's classroom, and

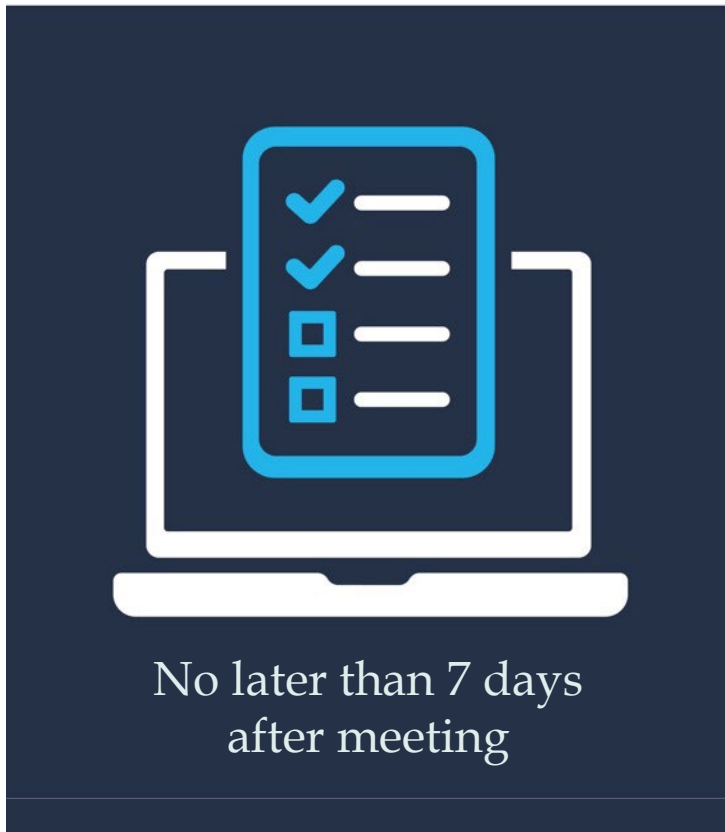
Inform the parent/guardian that the classroom teacher may request a behavior intervention meeting.

Parental Notification of Student Behavior

Public Act No. 24-93, Section 11

If a behavior intervention meeting is requested by the classroom teacher, the school's crisis intervention team must provide:

1. notice that such meeting shall take place; **and**
2. a written summary of the meeting (in the parent/guardian's dominant language) that includes resources and supports identified by the team to address the student's social, emotional and instructional needs **no later than 7 days after the meeting.**



High School Graduation Requirements

Public Act No. 24-45, Sections 9 and 10

Mastery-Based Diploma Assessment

Beginning with the graduating class of 2027, the Act **eliminates optional language** allowing BOEs to require a one-credit mastery-based diploma assessment in order to graduate from high school.

Personal Financial Management and Financial Literacy

Under existing law, beginning with the graduating class of 2027, students are required to complete a one-half credit in personal financial management and financial literacy, which could count toward the students' humanities or elective credits. This personal finance requirement **can now count towards students' STEM credit requirement.**

High School Graduation Requirements

Public Act No. 24-45, Sections 9 and 10

Community Service

Under existing law, BOEs may offer one-half credit in community service which, if satisfactorily completed under certain conditions, qualifies for high school graduation credit. **Partisan political activities may now qualify** as community service.

Physical Education

A **physician's assistant**, in addition to a physician or APRN, may now write a certificate to excuse a student from participation in physical education if it is medically contraindicated by the student's physical condition.

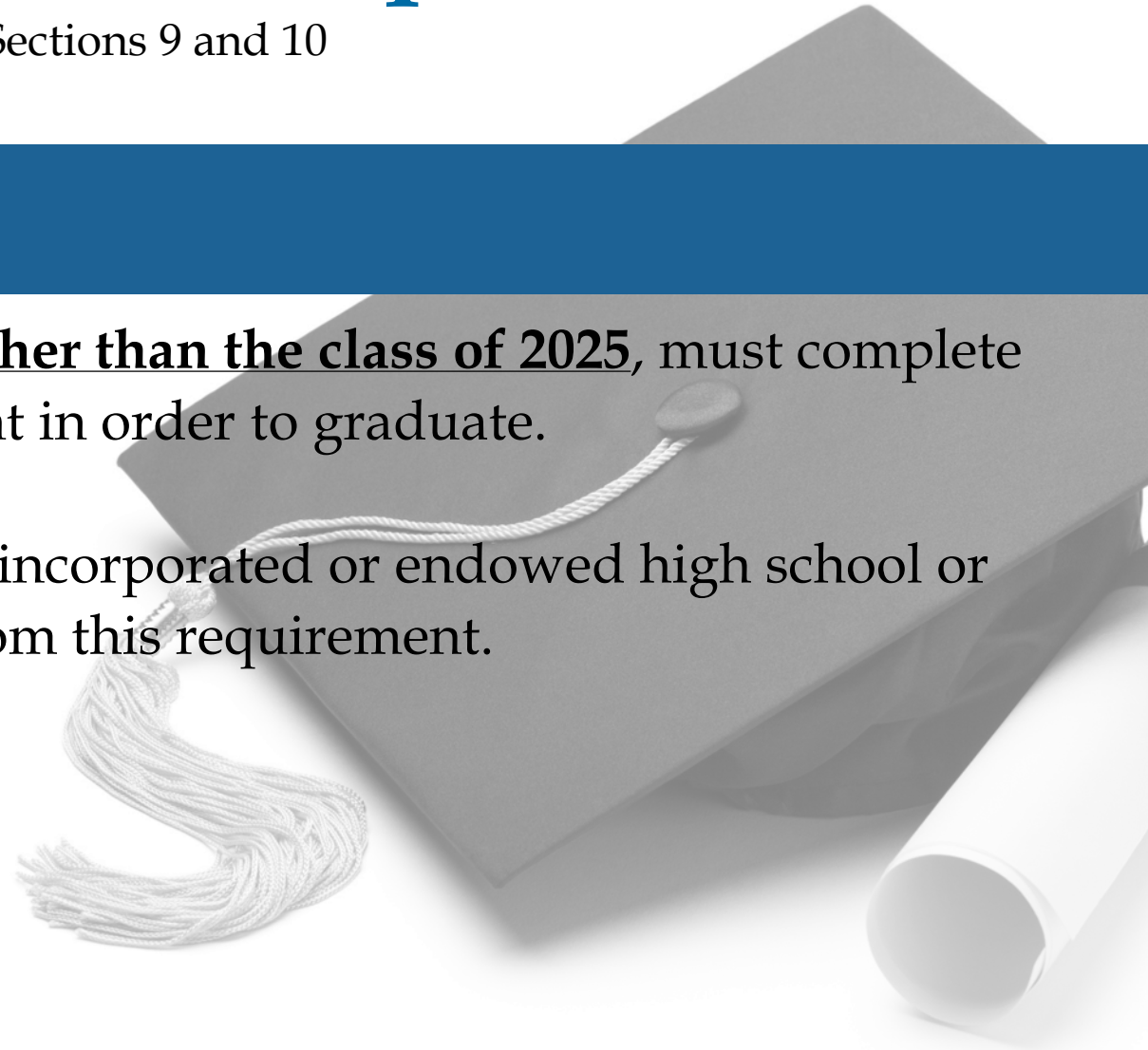
High School Graduation Requirements

Public Act No. 24-45, Sections 9 and 10

FAFSA

Each student in the graduating class of 2027, **rather than the class of 2025**, must complete (1) a FAFSA or (2) a waiver for such requirement in order to graduate.

In addition, students who (1) are enrolled in an incorporated or endowed high school or academy and (2) hold an F-1 visa are exempt from this requirement.



Credit Recovery Program

Public Act No. 24-45, Section 25



- BOEs that include a credit recovery program as part of their alternative education program *now must also permit* students who are (1) enrolled in their traditional school program and (2) at risk of not graduating to enroll in the credit recovery program while still enrolled in the traditional school program.

Student Success Plans

Public Act No. 24-45, Sections 9, 11, and 12



- Under existing law, BOEs must create a student success plan for each public school student beginning in grade 6.
- These plans must now explicitly consider enrollment opportunities in the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS).

Reminder: 2023 Legislation on School Climate

Pursuant to **2023 legislation**:

- BOEs must adopt and implement a **new school climate policy** developed by CABE and adopted by the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative by the 2025-2026 school year.
- BOEs must also adopt a **restorative practices response policy** by the 2025-2026 school year.



Reminder: 2023 Legislation on School Climate

Pursuant to 2023 legislation:

- The school climate committee must develop and administer a school climate survey to students, school employees and students' families, starting with the 2025-2026 school year and every 2 years thereafter.
- Each school climate specialist, in collaboration with the district's school climate coordinator, must develop the school climate improvement plan. The plan must consider the results of the school climate survey and recommendations from the school climate committee.



2024 Legislation on School Climate

Public Act No. 24-45, Sections 16, 17, and 19

The **Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative (Collaborative)** must develop:



1. **School climate survey standards**, including but not limited to standards for the collection of data on diversity, equity and inclusion and for the reduction in disparities in data collection between school districts; and
2. A **model school climate improvement plan**.

School Climate Survey and School Climate Improvement Plan

Public Act No. 24-45, Sections 18 and 19



Clarifies that the school climate survey must:

- Meet the school climate survey standards developed by the Collaborative; or
- Be the state-wide school climate survey developed by the Collaborative.

Clarifies that the school climate improvement plan may:

- incorporate the model plan developed by the Collaborative.

Ban on Parent Participation in School Activities as a Condition of Student Enrollment

Public Act No. 24-93, Section 7



- BOEs are now prohibited from conditioning student enrollment in their schools on parent or guardian participation in school activities, such as through volunteering.

MOUs with Youth Service Bureaus

Public Act No. 24-45, Section 23

- The Act provides that BOEs, upon request of their local youth services bureaus (YSBs), must enter into MOUs with their YSBs to establish procedures for the release and sharing of student information with the YSBs as they work with students and their families.
- CABE and CAPSS worked with representatives of the Connecticut Youth Services Association to develop a template memorandum, which they have shared with Connecticut school districts. It provides that school officials may share personally identifiable student information with a YSB employee when that employee performs functions on behalf of the school district, such as attendance support and truancy prevention. When YSB personnel perform such functions, they may be considered “school officials” under FERPA who are entitled to receive such information. Such personnel must comply with FERPA’s confidentiality obligations regarding the use and maintenance of such information.

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**Statutory Changes
Affecting Employment**

Paid Sick Leave

Public Act No. 24-8



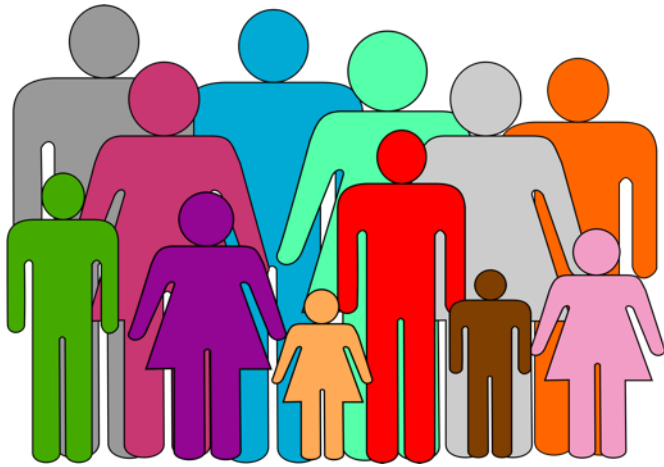
- Under current law, certain employers with at least 50 employees must provide their “service workers,” as defined in the law, with up to 40 hours of paid sick leave annually, in accordance with statutory requirements.
- The Act significantly expands and revises this law.
- Effective January 1, 2025, the sick leave law will expand to cover all employees (with limited exception), not just “service workers.”
- Sick leave shall accrue up to a maximum of 40 hours a year.

Paid Sick Leave

Broader Range of Family Members

Public Act No. 24-8, Sections 1 and 3

Under current law, employees were only permitted to use paid sick days to care for themselves or their child or spouse.



Under the revised law, employees are permitted to use paid sick leave to care for additional family members, including a spouse, child (including an adult child), parent, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling of an employee or an individual related to the employee by blood or affinity whose close association to the employee is equivalent to those family relationships.

Paid Sick Leave

Leave Usage

Public Act No. 24-8, Section 3

Employees must be allowed to use paid sick leave, as follows:



1. for (a) **the employee's own illness, injury, or health condition**; (b) the medical diagnosis, care or treatment of an employee's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; (c) preventative medical care for an employee's mental or physical health, or (d) a **mental health wellness day** during which an employee attends to the employee's emotional and psychological well-being in lieu of attending a regularly scheduled shift;
2. for (a) **the employee's family member's illness, injury, or health condition**; (b) the medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of such family member's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or (c) for preventative medical care for such family member's mental or physical health;

Paid Sick Leave

Leave Usage

Public Act No. 24-8, Section 3



3. for **closure by order of a public official**, due to a public health emergency, of an employer's place of business, or a covered family member's school or place of care;
4. for a determination by certain entities that the **employee or the employee's family member poses a risk to the health of others** due to such employee's or family member's exposure to a communicable illness, whether or not the employee or family member contracted the communicable illness; and
5. where an employee or an employee's family member is a **victim of family violence or sexual assault**, provided such employee is not the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of such family violence or sexual assault, for (a) medical care or psychological or other counseling, (b) obtaining services from a victim services organization, (c) relocating due to such family violence or sexual assault, or (d) participating in any civil or criminal proceedings related to or resulting from such family violence or sexual assault.

Paid Sick Leave

Other Requirements

Public Act No. 24-8

Documentation



Employers **may not require** an employee to provide documentation that paid sick leave (provided in accordance with the Act) is taken for a permitted purpose.

Paid Sick Leave

Other Requirements

Public Act No. 24-8

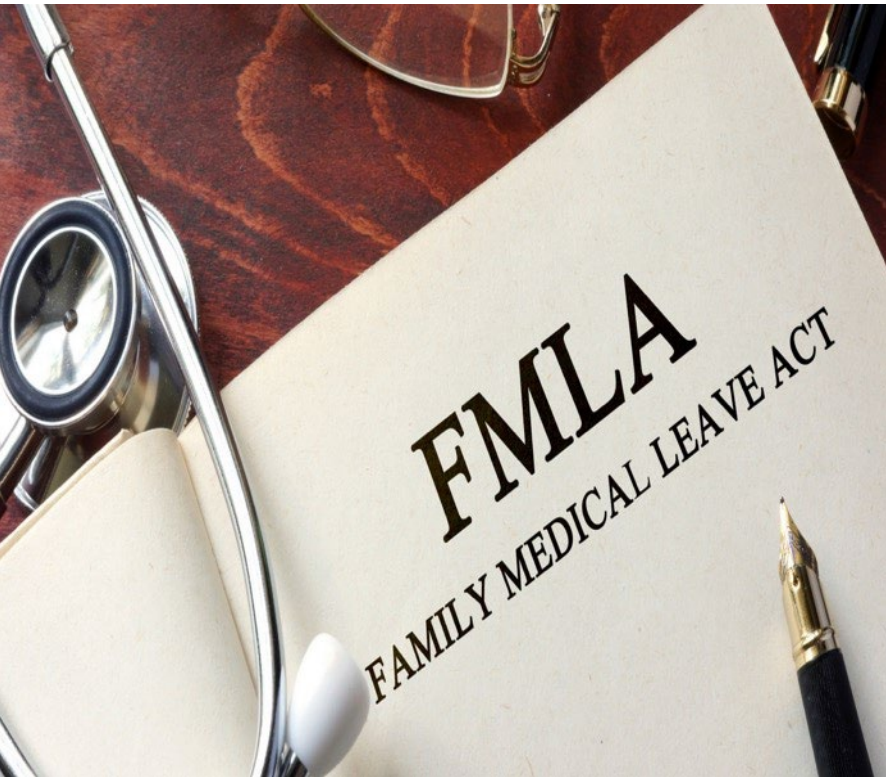
Compliance



An employer that offers any other paid leave, or combination of leave, that may be used for the same purposes and under the same conditions as those described in the revised law shall be **deemed in compliance** with the new requirements.

FMLA for Noncertified School Board Employees

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 18



- Under federal law, public school employees qualify for unpaid leave benefits under the federal FMLA if they have (1) been employed by the BOE for at least 12 months and (2) worked for such employer at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12 months.
- Effective October 1, 2024, the same benefits must be provided to noncertified employees (not just paraeducators) who have (1) been employed by the BOE for at least 12 months and (2) worked for such employer at least 950 (rather than 1,250) hours in the previous 12 months.

Similarly, noncertified employees must only work 950 (rather than 1,250) hours in the previous 12 months to request leave to serve as an organ or bone marrow donor.

Mandated Reporter Statute

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-101

State law designates school employees (and others) as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect.

- Must report to DCF or law enforcement within prescribed timeframes when they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child:
 - (1) has been abused or neglected;
 - (2) has had nonaccidental physical injury, or injury at variance with the history given of such injury, inflicted upon such child; or
 - (3) is at imminent risk of physical harm.

Mandated Reporter Statute: Preliminary Inquires

Public Act No. 24-41, Sections 40, 48 and 49

The revised law states that *nothing in the law precludes* mandated reporters from conducting a preliminary inquiry to determine if reasonable cause exists prior to making a report.



Such preliminary inquiries are not considered an investigation conducted by a BOE.

No later than October 1, 2024, DCF must **update its training and refresher training programs** regarding (1) the proper manner in which to conduct a preliminary inquiry and (2) DCF's Careline and investigations by DCF, local law enforcement, and BOEs.

Mandated Reporters: Immunity from Liability

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 41



- Existing law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to persons, institutions, and agencies that, *in good faith*, report suspected child abuse or neglect or alleged sexual assault of a student to DCF or law enforcement.
- This protection is now extended to persons, institutions, and agencies that, *in good faith*, do not make such a report.

Mandated Reporters: Failure to Report

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 43



DCF must now assess (not investigate) a mandated reporter's failure to make reports within the time period prescribed by law.

- Such assessment must be conducted in accordance with a policy to be developed by DCF.
- As required under existing law, the policy must include when referrals must be made to law enforcement and when DCF shall require mandated reporters who have failed to make reports to participate in an educational and training program.

Exemption of Certain Law Enforcement Records from Disclosure under FOIA

Public Act No. 24-56, Section 1



- The FOIA exempts from disclosure law enforcement agency records not otherwise available to the public that were compiled in connection with detecting or investigating a crime, if the disclosure of such records would not be in the public interest because it would result in the disclosure of the identify of informants or witnesses not otherwise known, provided certain conditions are met.
- This exemption is now expanded to also protect the identify of mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, not otherwise known.

In-Service Training

Public Act No. 24-45, Section 2



- Clarifies that the manner and frequency of the in-service training requirements in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-220a shall be determined by the BOE's professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC), but that the training must be provided at least once every 5 years.

School Nurse Orientation

Public Act No. 24-93, Section 15



- Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, BOEs are required to **annually approve and provide** PD programs or activities for all school nurses and nurse practitioners, including training and instruction in the implementation of IEPs and Section 504 plans, within 30 days of appointing or contracting with such nurse.
- The Act **expands PD and learning requirements** such that, within 6 months of being appointed or entering into a contract with the BOE, new school nurses and nurse practitioners must receive an **orientation to school health services**, to be developed by an association representing school nurses in Connecticut.

“Paraeducator”

Public Act No. 24-41, Sections 20-38



The terms:

- “school paraprofessional”
- “paraprofessional” and
- “paraprofessional teacher aide”

are changed to “paraeducator” in a number of education-related statutes.



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**Statutory Changes
Affecting Educator Certification**

Initial Educator Certificate

Public Act No. 24-41, Sections 1 and 6

The new law simplifies the requirements to obtain an initial educator certification:

Directs the SBE, upon receipt of a proper application and other requirements, to issue an initial educator certificate to any person with a bachelor's degree or advanced degree from an accredited higher education institution who has:



- 1) successfully completed an SBE-approved educator preparation program,
- 2) successfully completed an ARC program (without needing to satisfy the requirements of a ninety-day certificate or a resident teacher certificate, as previously required), or
- 3) is an educator from another state and meets the requirements set forth in Connecticut law.

The SBE also has the **authority to waive** these requirements.

Initial Educator Certificate

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 1

The act makes an initial educator certification valid for 10 years, rather than 3 years.



This change applies to:

- any initial educator certificate issued on or after July 1, 2025, **and**
- any certificate that has not expired by July 1, 2025 (which shall be extended to be valid for a period of 10 years from the date of issuance).

Repeal of the Provisional Educator Certification

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 1



- Under existing law, Connecticut has 3 levels of teacher certification: initial, provisional, and professional.
- As of July 1, 2025, the **provisional educator certificate is repealed.**
- At that time, a person who holds a provisional educator certificate and is not eligible for a professional certificate shall be **eligible for an initial certificate.**

Professional Educator Certificate

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 1

The revised law changes the requirements for a professional certification.

As of July 1, 2025, upon proper application, the SBE must issue a professional educator certificate to any candidate who:

- (1) has completed at least 50 school months (5 years) of successful teaching for one or more BOEs or approved nonpublic schools in Connecticut while holding an initial educator or provisional educator certificate;
- (2) has satisfactorily completed the teacher education and mentoring (TEAM) program; and
- (3) either (a) holds a master's degree or higher in an appropriate subject matter area or (b) completes an alternate pathway to professional licensure jointly approved by the SBE and the Educator Preparation and Certification Board. The SBE may waive this requirement for good cause.



Broadening Grades Covered by Certain Teaching Endorsements

Public Act No. 24-41, Sections 2 and 4



- An educator endorsement, issued prior to July 1, 2025, to teach elementary grades 1-6 or K-6 **shall now** be valid for grades PreK-6. Any new elementary endorsements issued on and after July 1, 2025, shall also be valid for grades PreK-6.
- The following endorsements for grades 7-12 **shall now** be valid for grades 4-12, regardless of when the endorsements were issued: biology, business, chemistry, earth science, English, French, German, general science, history and social studies, Italian, Latin and classical humanities, Mandarin Chinese, mathematics, Portuguese, physics, Russian, Spanish, and any other world language.

Any person who holds an educator certificate whose endorsement has been revised as described above will not be required to apply for a revised endorsement.

Subject Area Assessments and Cross Endorsements

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 5



Simplifies the process for cross endorsements to allow any person who:

1. holds an educator certificate and
2. scores a satisfactory evaluation on the appropriate SBE-approved subject area assessment to be issued a cross endorsement in the relevant certification endorsement area.

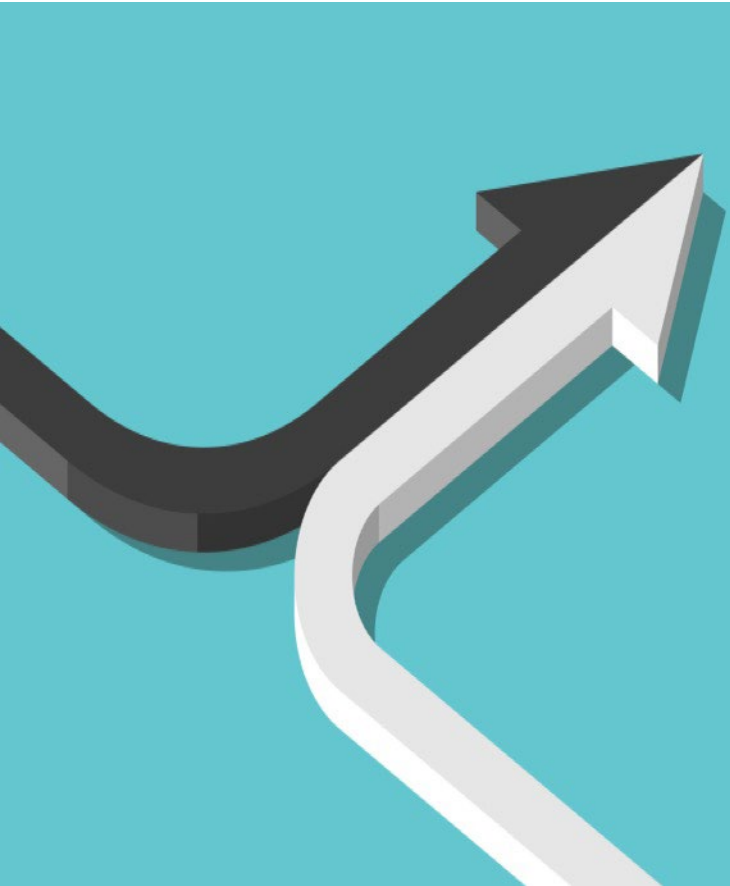
This simplified process **does not apply** to the endorsement areas of special education, teaching English to speakers of other languages, bilingual, remedial reading and remedial language arts, or school library media specialist.

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**Statutory Changes
Affecting Teaching
and Curriculum**

Partnerships Between High Schools and Community-Technical Colleges

Public Act No. 24-93, Section 8



Regional community-technical colleges must consult with administrators and counselors at public high schools located within their state region to establish a collaborative partnership, which may include, but is not limited to:

- (1) collaborative counseling programs for students interested in specific careers,
- (2) the evaluation and alignment of curricula, and
- (3) offering support or educational programming to improve student outcomes.

Model Digital Citizenship Curriculum

Public Act No. 24-151, Section 145



- By January 1, 2025, the CSDE, in collaboration with the Commission for Educational Technology, must develop a model digital citizenship curriculum that BOEs may utilize for grades K-12.
- The model digital citizenship curriculum shall (1) be rigorous, age appropriate, and aligned with SBE-approved curriculum guidelines; (2) include content and instruction to develop digital citizenship skills and dispositions to cultivate positive student relationships and school climate; and (3) include topics that are aligned with CSDE's model curriculum for civics and citizenship.

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**Statutory Changes
Affecting Special Education**

Notice Requirements Before PPTs

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 23

Under current law, BOEs must give a parent/guardian at least 5 days' notice before any PPT meeting.



This notice now must explain that a parent/guardian has the right, at the PPT, to:

- (1) be present at and participate in all portions of the meeting where an educational program for the student is developed, reviewed, or revised;
- (2) have advisors of the person's own choosing, the paraeducator assigned to the student, the birth-to-three coordinator, if any, and a language interpreter present, if there is an apparent need or upon request; and
- (3) have each recommendation made in the student's birth-to-three individualized transition plan, if any, addressed by the PPT during such meeting at which an educational program for such child or pupil is developed.

Transition Services and Programs for Students Receiving Special Education Services

Public Act No. 24-78, Sections 12 through 16

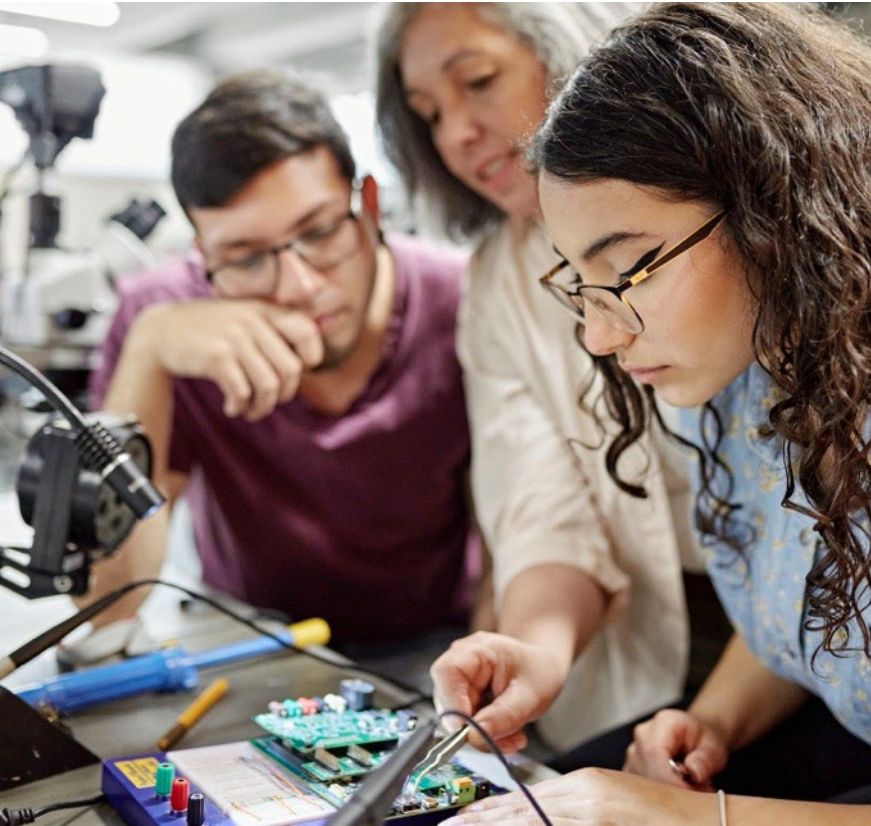


The Act makes various changes to the laws regarding transition services and programs, as follows:

- Replaces the statutory definition of “transition services” with the more detailed federal definition.
- Removes the requirement that site visits by the CSDE’s Transition Coordinator be unannounced. However, the Coordinator or CSDE may still conduct unannounced site visits when necessary.

CTECS and Transition Services

Public Act No. 24-78, Section 23



- Existing law requires CTECS to provide an appropriate educational program for students requiring special education.
- The new law now explicitly requires CTECS to provide and fund transition programs.
- The new law also explicitly requires CTECS, rather than the LEA, to convene a PPT meeting for home-schooled students requiring special education before they enroll in a CTECs school.

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**Statutory Changes Affecting
School District Operation**

HVAC Inspection and Evaluation

Staggered Inspection and Evaluation Schedule

Public Act No. 24-74, Sections 7 and 8



- State law required that, **by January 1, 2025**, BOEs conduct HVAC inspections and evaluations:
 1. within each of their school buildings,
 2. every 5 years, and
 3. in accordance with statutory standards.
- The new law establishes a staggered schedule for such inspections and evaluations. For each year commencing **July 1, 2026 and up until June 30, 2031**, BOEs must conduct a uniform inspection of **at least 20%** of school buildings under their jurisdiction (until each building is inspected) and **every 5 years** thereafter.

HVAC Inspection and Evaluation

Waiver for Inspection Requirements

Public Act No. 24-74, Sections 7 and 8

- The new law also provides a waiver process of up to **1 year** from the **5-year deadline** and **20% inspection** requirements, if the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) finds that:



1. there is an insufficient number of certified individuals or engineers to perform the inspection and evaluation, or
2. the BOE has scheduled the inspection and evaluation for a date in the subsequent year.

Reserve Funds

Public Act No. 24-45, Sections 7 and 8



- Under prior law, a town board of finance, board of selectman, or other appropriating authority for a school district was authorized to deposit unexpended education funds into a nonlapsing account, provided that:
 - the deposited amount did not exceed 2% of the budgeted appropriation for education for the prior fiscal year and
 - expenditures were authorized by the BOE and made only for educational purposes.

Reserve Funds

Public Act No. 24-45, Sections 7 and 8



- New legislation authorizes the BOE, rather than the town, to make these deposits, provided the same conditions are met.
- The new law permits **regional BOEs** to create a reserve fund for educational expenditures more generally, and not only for reserve funds for capital and nonrecurring expenditures, as under prior law.

Distribution of Paraeducator Professional Development Funding

Public Act No. 24-81, Section 123



- Directs the CSDE to distribute funding from the American Rescue Plan Act for paraeducator professional development.
- Distributions must be made by **September 1, 2024** and must be proportionate to the number of paraeducators employed by each BOE.

Ban on Delegating Authority to Schedule Thanksgiving Day High School Football Games

Public Act No. 24-151, Section 131



- Prohibits BOEs from delegating the authority to schedule interscholastic football games on Thanksgiving Day to any nonprofit organization or other entity that is responsible for governing interscholastic athletics in Connecticut.
- Prohibits BOEs from adopting a policy or prohibition against the scheduling of an interscholastic football game on Thanksgiving Day.

Title IX Compliance Toolkit for School Districts

Public Act No. 24-126, Sections 11 and 12



- Last year, the General Assembly required the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity to convene and lead a working group to identify or develop a Title IX compliance toolkit for BOEs, students, and parents and guardians.
- New legislation extends the deadline for the working group to submit the toolkit to the General Assembly from **July 1, 2024** to **January 1, 2025**.

The Act also delays CSDE distribution of the toolkit to BOEs from October 1, 2024 to **April 1, 2025**.

Federal Update: 2024 Title IX Final Rule



- Final Rule significantly changes **the scope** of sex-based harassment and the procedural requirements
- Gives schools **more flexibility** in **how to handle the grievance process**

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- Issued April 19, 2024
- Effective August 1, 2024
 - Applies to incidents occurring on or after August 1, 2024
 - Incidents occurring before August 1, 2024 must be resolved using the old regulations

Major Highlights - 2024 Federal Regulations

Significantly expands definition of sex discrimination and sexual harassment, now termed “sex-based harassment,” and what must be investigated.

One grievance process for K-12, including sex-based discrimination.

Generally eliminates the litigation-type investigation requirements in K-12, but Title IX jurisdiction expands.

Expands coverage to include LGBTQ+ but does not address athletics

Scope of Title IX

- Discrimination on the basis of sex includes discrimination on the basis of
 - ✓ sex stereotypes,
 - ✓ sex characteristics,
 - ✓ pregnancy or related conditions,
 - ✓ sexual orientation, and
 - ✓ gender identity.

Definition of Sex-Based Harassment

- “Sex-based harassment,” not “sexual harassment”
- Quid Pro Quo
- Hostile Environment
- Specific Offenses
 - Sexual Assault
 - Dating Violence
 - Domestic Violence
 - Stalking

NOTE:
*Terms are defined in the
Final Regulations –
no cross reference to other
federal laws.*

What Final Regulations Mean for K-12 Schools

One uniform grievance procedure for sex discrimination (including sex-based harassment), rather than a separate procedure for sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

- This includes complaints regarding sex discrimination in athletics; pregnant and parenting students; different treatment based on sex; retaliation; and LGBTQI+.

More conduct potentially covered under Title IX due to expansion of definition of “sex discrimination,” including “hostile environment”

What Final Regulations Mean for K-12 Schools

Covers off-campus conduct if the school has “disciplinary authority.”

- See authority under Connecticut bullying law and board of education’s Student Discipline policy.

One person can serve almost all roles in the grievance process. No longer need multiple employees to be involved in every Title IX matter.

Federal Update: 2024 Title IX Final Rule

Training: New *annual* training requirements for all employees and more expansive *annual* training requirements for Title IX Coordinator; investigators, decisionmakers and other persons responsible for implementing the grievance procedure; and informal resolution facilitators.

Policy: BOEs will need to update their Title IX policies and administrative regulations to reflect the new law.



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**Miscellaneous
Statutory Changes
Affecting Schools**

School Playground Design Requirements

Public Act No. 24-93, Section 18



Requires any playgrounds designed on or after **July 1, 2025**, to conform with the “**principles of universal design**,” to maximize usability and access without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

At minimum, each new playground must include:

1. spaces that appeal to various senses and allow multiple forms of play,
2. terrain designed to encourage unstructured play,
3. multiple ways to access play spaces and equipment that allow for varying levels of ability, and
4. sensory-engaging materials and use of trees and other plantings.

School Bus Seatbelt Program

Public Act No. 24-20, Section 40



- Reestablishes and makes permanent a program to provide funding to support the purchase of school buses equipped with three-point lap and shoulder seat safety belts.
- Beginning October 1, 2025, school districts may submit an application for the program to the DMV. Applications must include a proposed agreement between the district and a private school bus company. The partnering company must provide 1-50 school buses equipped with three-point lap and shoulder safety belts.

The agreement must also include a request by the company for a 50% sales tax refund for buses purchased on or after October 1, 2025 and must be contingent upon the approval of the application and the payment of the sales tax refund by DMV.

Illegally Passing a School Bus

Public Act No. 24-107, Sections 1 through 4



- Prior law permitted municipalities and BOEs to install, operate, and maintain monitoring systems within school buses to record cars illegally passing buses when they are displaying red flashing lights.
- The law prohibits municipalities and BOEs *from commencing* the operation of such a system on or after July 1, 2024.
- The new law also **requires** municipalities and BOEs *that are operating* such systems (prior to July 1, 2024) to cease operations no later than **July 1, 2026**.

Illegally Passing a School Bus

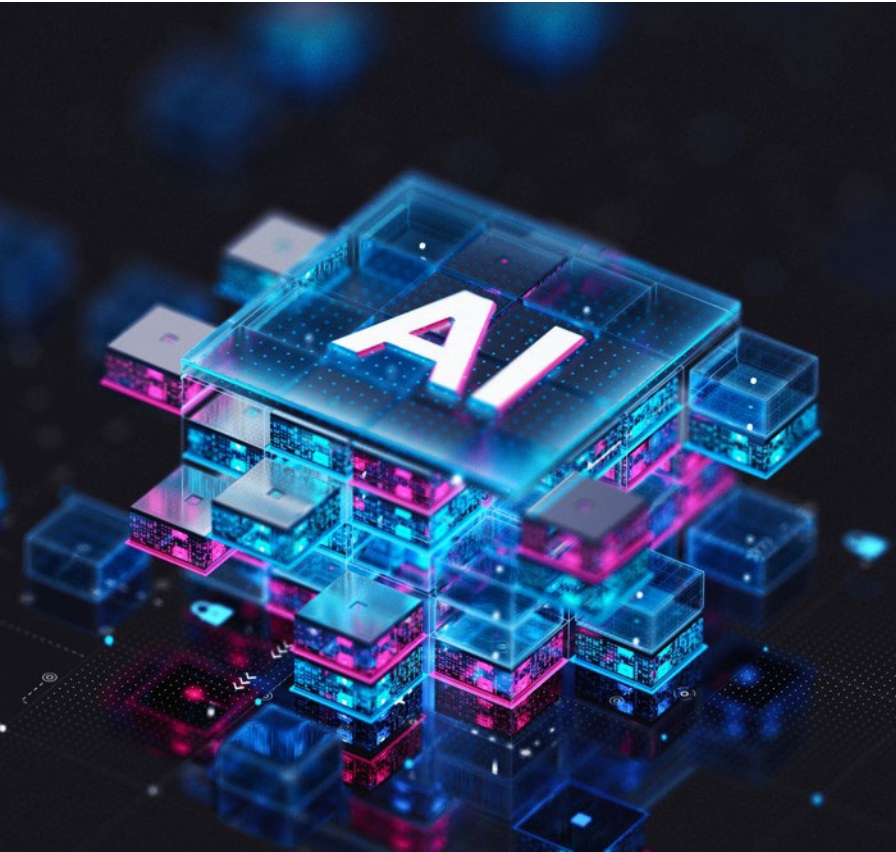
Public Act No. 24-107, Sections 1 through 4



- The Act permits municipalities to **adopt an ordinance** authorizing the use of a municipal bus violation enforcement system, under certain conditions.
- If a municipality adopts such an ordinance, school buses with operational monitoring systems are required to display a warning sign of the system on the bus.

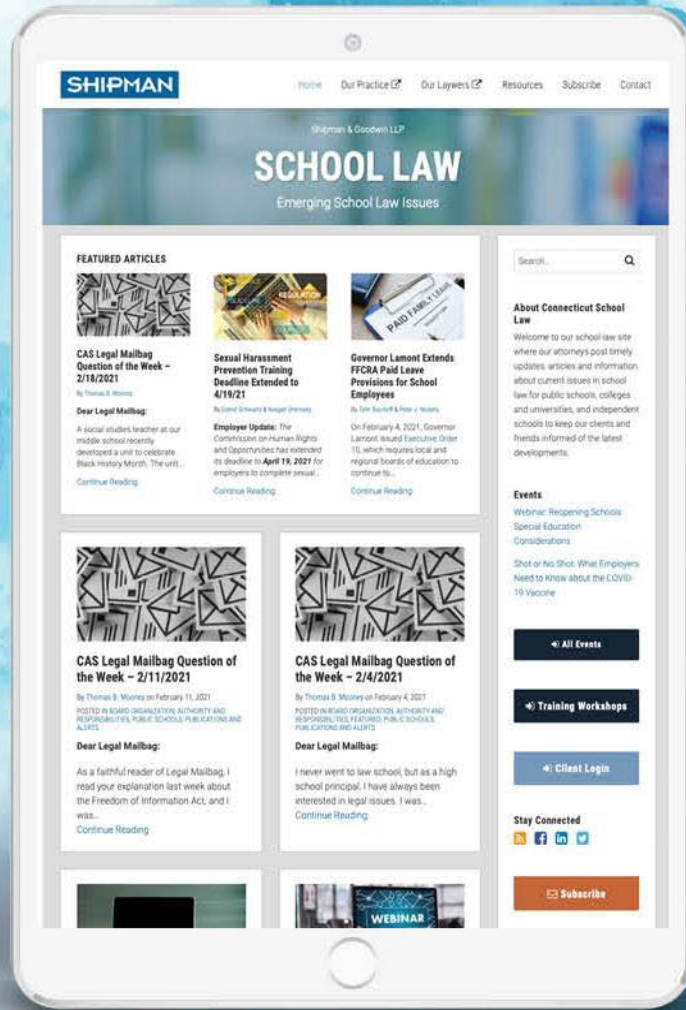
Artificial Intelligence Education Tool Pilot Program

Public Act No. 24-151, Sections 143 and 144



- Directs the CSDE to administer an AI education tool pilot program.
- CSDE must provide professional development for educators in participating BOEs which must include training on:
 - properly and safely using the selected AI tool as part of classroom instruction;
 - how the selected AI tool may benefit (a) educators in classroom instruction and (b) student learning, academic achievement, and workforce development; and
 - the laws governing AI use and the protection of student data and privacy, including FERPA.

CSDE will select **5 BOEs** to participate in the pilot program, including a rural, suburban, and urban school district.



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