



Connecticut Association of Boards of Education

Jody I Goeler, Senior Staff Associate for Policy Service

PRESENTS POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

May 31, 2024

2024 Legislative Acts Impacting Board Policies

The recent legislative session yielded a broad range of new and updated laws, some of which will impact Board of Education policies. While you'll have an opportunity to review *CABE's 2024 Education Law Summaries* in July, this Policy Highlight provides a glimpse into the legislative acts that will require updating policy language. CABE's policy department will work on these policy changes over the summer and share updated model policies in July for subscribers of the *Policy Update*.

PA 24-41 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION, TEACHERS, PARAEDUCATORS AND MANDATED REPORTER REQUIREMENTS.

This bill makes numerous changes to the education laws related to educator certification and educator preparation programs:

§ 18 — FMLA FOR NONCERTIFIED SCHOOL BOARD EMPLOYEES Reduces the number of work hours, from 1,250 to 950, that noncertified school employees need to qualify for unpaid family and medical leave benefits.

§§ 20-38 — CHANGES TERM TO “PARAEDUCATOR” Changes the terms “school paraprofessional,” “paraprofessional,” and “paraprofessional teacher aide” to “paraeducator” in various education-related statutes.

§ 23 — NOTICE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE SPECIAL EDUCATION PLANNING AND PLACEMENT MEETINGS Requires the notice school boards must give parents, guardians, or students before a special education planning and placement team meeting to include the rights the law provides them at these meetings.

§§ 40 & 48 — PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES BY MANDATED REPORTERS Specifies that (1) the mandated reporter law does not prohibit mandated reporters from making a preliminary inquiry to determine if reasonable cause exists for a report and (2) this inquiry is not an abuse or neglect investigation by a school.

§ 41 — IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY Extends immunity from criminal or civil liability to persons, institutions, and agencies that, in good faith, do not make a report.

§ 43 — FAILURE TO REPORT Requires the DCF commissioner to assess mandated reporters' failure to report within timeframes required by law, rather than investigate delayed reports as current law requires.

§ 46 — EMPLOYMENT HISTORY REVIEWS Excludes, from the information that must be disclosed by school employment applicants' previous employers, information about a substantiated abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct allegation if the substantiation was reversed in an appeal to DCF.

PA 24-45 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION MANDATE RELIEF, SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND DISCONNECTED YOUTH. This bill:

§§ 9 & 10 — HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS Delays the FAFSA completion requirement to the graduating class of 2027 and exempts certain international students at endowed academies from the requirement; eliminates the option for school boards to require students to complete a one-credit mastery-based diploma assessment; eliminates the ban on partisan political activities counting as community service; adds physician assistants to the list of practitioners who may certify that a student should not participate in physical education.

§§ 9, 11 & 12 — STUDENT SUCCESS PLANS Requires that student success plans consider enrollment opportunities in the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System.

§ 13 — IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS Reduces the maximum number of consecutive days for in-school suspensions from 10 to five.

§ 14 — STANDARD FOR EARLY GRADES OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION Changes the standard for out-of-school suspensions in early grades and shortens the maximum out-of-school suspension for these grades from 10 to five days.

§ 15 — SRO REPORTS Clarifies to whom SROs must give investigation and intervention reports.

§§ 16 & 17 — SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEYS AND CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT PLANS Requires the development of a (1) school climate survey standard and (2) model school climate improvement plan.

§§ 18 & 19 — LOCAL SCHOOL CLIMATE STEPS Requires school climate surveys to meet or use the state school climate survey standards; allows a local school climate specialist to incorporate the model school climate plan into his or her school climate plan.

§ 25 — CREDIT RECOVERY PROGRAMS Requires school boards with a credit recovery program as part of their alternative education to allow certain students enrolled in a traditional school program to simultaneously enroll in the credit recovery program.

PA 24-74 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL RESOURCES. This bill:

§ 7 — HVAC INSPECTION AND EVALUATION

Extends the deadline for school boards to complete an inspection and evaluation of their HVAC systems from January 1, 2025, to June 30, 2031.

PA 24-78 AN ACT ASSISTING SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES, IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND CAREER SYSTEM AND ESTABLISHING EARLY START CT. This bill:

§§ 12-16 — TRANSITION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Modifies the statutory definition of “transition service”; transfers responsibility for developing and maintaining an accessible online listing of transition resources and services from SERC to SDE’s transition services coordinator; makes minor and conforming changes.

PA 24-93 AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS AND ASSORTED REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES. The bill:

§ 11 — PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR CAUSING DISRUPTION OR HARM AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION MEETING Creates two new parental notifications related to student behavior.

§ 12 — EXPULSION HEARING NOTICE

Requires that the five-day notice period for an expulsion hearing not include the day of the hearing in the five days.

HB 5524 AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE AND CONCERNING PROVISIONS RELATED TO STATE AND MUNICIPAL TAX ADMINISTRATION, GENERAL GOVERNMENT AND SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS. This bill:

§ 131 — BAN ON DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO SCHEDULE THANKSGIVING DAY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAMES Bans school boards from delegating authority to schedule high school football games on Thanksgiving Day to another entity; prohibits school boards from adopting a policy that prohibits Thanksgiving Day football games.