Board of Education

5 Minortown Road ~ Woodbury, CT 06798
www.ctreg14.org

Mission: The mission of Connecticut Region 14 Schools is to educate all students to their highest level of academic potential and to teach them the skills and knowledge to become capable, creative, collaborative lifelong learners and responsible members of the world community.

Board of Education Goals:
Academic Performance - The district will strive to improve academic performance for all students on multiple assessment indicators and the staff will be committed to continuous improvement.
Communication - Region 14 will develop partnerships with all stakeholders in the school community to highlight the exemplary programs the district offers
Safety - Region 14 will provide safe and secure facilities equipped with technology, enabling a 21st century learning environment that supports the values of the district
Budget - Region 14 will prepare a budget that meets the needs of every student and communicates the needs and priorities of Region 14 in a clear and concise manner.

Regular Meeting of the Region 14 Board of Education
Monday, November 2, 2026; 6:00 p.m.
Bethlehem Elementary School
Library

I.	Call to Order	Chris Matta
II.	Pledge of Allegiance	Chris Matta
III.	Introductions	Chris Matta
IV.	Approval of minutes (Action Anticipated) A. Regular Meeting, Monday, October 5, 2026 B. Special Meeting, Thursday, October 15, 2026	Chris Matta
V.	Superintendent's Report A. Student Representative Report B. Award Presentation C. Superintendent's District 5-Year Strategic Plan Presentation D. Director of Teaching and Learning Development Plan	

VI. Committee Reports

A. Policy Committee

1. On a recommendation by the Policy Committee to accept/approve the following policy:
   (Second Read, Action Anticipated)
   a. Policy 6146 Graduation Requirements
   b. Policy 6146.1 Weighted Grading Policy
   c. Policy 6146.2 Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations (Statewide Summative Assessments)

2. On a recommendation by the Policy Committee to accept/approve the following policy:
   (First Read, No Action Anticipated)
   a. Policy 6159 Individualized Education Program

B. Finance Committee Update

VII. Board Chair's Comments

VIII. Privilege of the floor
The Board of Education will recognize citizens of Bethlehem and Woodbury, any parent/guardian of a child enrolled in the Region 14 School District, or any current employee of the Region 14 School District who are asked to state their name and town of residence and to please limit comments to three (3) minutes. Up to 21 minutes of statements per topic are allowed. All comments should be addressed to the Board of Education Chair. Decorum will be enforced.

IX. Old Business

X. New Business

XI. Region 14 Community Update

XII. Other Business

XIII. Adjournment

MINUTES
Regular Meeting of the Region 14 Board of Education
Monday, October 5, 2026; 6:00 p.m.
Flanders Room
Mitchell Elementary School

Committee Members Present:
Chris Matta, Chair
Alice Jones, Vice-Chair (via phone)
Carol Ann Brown
Bridget Calabrese
Mike Carbonneau
Jim Crocker
Tim Drakeley
Caren Lipinski

Absent:
n/a

Also Present:
Taryn Fernandez, Acting Superintendent of Schools
Tina Tanguay, Director of Finance and Operations

I. Call to Order

Chris Matta called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Introductions

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and acquaintances were made

III. Approval of Minutes

A. **Regular Meeting, Monday, September 14, 2026**

A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Tim Drakeley to accept/approve the minutes as presented, 6 were in favor, none opposed, Caren Lipinski and Bridget Calabrese abstained; motion carried.

IV. Superintendent's Report

A. Student Representative Report

Acting Superintendent Fernandez introduced the student representatives for this year.

Brynne Michaelis - Elementary School Updates

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- Sophomore joining us from Watertown for our agriscience program. She is the Sophomore Officer Team President, on the Livestock Evaluation CDE Team, and she plans to join Swim and Dive in the winter and track in the spring. Brynne is also in the chorus, is a clarinetist participating in the Berkshire League music festival, and a member of Tri-M, the music honor society.
- While serving as a representative, she is most looking forward to being in the room where it happens; watching how things get done within the school system.

Addison Bushka - High School and Middle School Updates

- Addison is returning as the student representative this year. Addison is a senior and she runs cross country and track. She is also a member of multiple honor societies including the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and Rho Kappa, the National Social Studies Honor Society. She somehow finds time to do all of this while also working at her father's business.
- Addison is interested in possibly pursuing studies in nutrition or psychology after she graduates from Nonnewaug this spring.

Bethlehem Elementary School Update

- Fall benchmark testing is complete with initial results showing a strong foundation
- During the month of September, the students and families celebrated many events, including their annual Scholastic Book Fair, Hot Dog Roast, and a school-wide Doghouse Party which gave classrooms a fun opportunity to build community and celebrate team spirit through shared activities
- October will be another busy month with a Halloween costume sale, pumpkin patch paired with the Halloween Dance and the 100th anniversary celebration.

Mitchell Elementary School Update

- The PTO kicked off the school year with the annual Ice Cream Social
- Early in September they held their first whole school "Town Wide Meeting" where the theme for the year was announced– We all Fit Together Like a Puzzle. Each class participated in creating puzzle pieces which are now displayed in the front hallway serving as a reminder that every member of their community plays an important role in making MES special
- During that meeting they also introduced the first Character Strong trait – Collaboration. Everyone discussed what collaboration means and put their teamwork skills to the test with a fun hula hoop activity.
- During Open House families got to see the amazing work staff and students are doing. In addition, there were many community organizations set up in the cafeteria giving everyone the chance to learn more about the programs, resources and activities available throughout Woodbury.

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Woodbury Middle School

- First Chapter Friday is a new activity this year. On the first Friday of each month a guest reader will read the first chapter of a book to spark interest and encourage more reading at WMS.
- Goodwin University's Mobile Manufacturing Lab visited WMS on September 18th to offer students a hands-on opportunity to explore state-of-the-art equipment used in today's manufacturing industry.
- WMS has partnered with Flanders Nature Center to offer a new club experience, Climate Champions. This club will give students the ability to gain hands-on experience exploring climate on and around the WMS campus. They will meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 1:00pm – 3:00pm.
- Curriculum information night will be held on October 6th. During this presentation ELA, Math and Science curricula will be discussed, along with information regarding in-district assessments.
- WMS sports and clubs are all up and running. Approximately 130 students are participating in the fall sports and students are excited about all of the club offerings.

Nonnewaug High School

- Fall sports are off to a great start with all of the teams having winning records. The football team's first game in the NVL was a success with a 12-6 victory over Oxford.
- Senior Field Day was held on September 25th. In addition, NHS hosted their homecoming games with boys and girls soccer, field hockey and football all securing wins.
- NWEA exams were held on September 30th
- The National Honor Society held their fall blood drive on September 30th
- The annual FFA Car Show was held on Sunday, October 4th
- The Homecoming Dance will be held on October 8th at the Wyndam Hotel in Southbury.
- Nonnewaug will be hosting the League of Women's Voters of Litchfield County on October 13th for a Congressional debate between Jahana Hayes and Chris Shea.
- The 8th Grade Open House will be held on October 15th. All interested Agriscience students should arrive at 5:30pm and those not interested in the program should arrive at 6:30pm.
- Five FFA teams will be competing at Nationals in Indianapolis from October 19th – 24th.
- Trick or Treat Street is scheduled for October 30th from 4:30pm – 6:30pm. This event will be followed by the Jonathan Cheung Fundraiser Football game. All proceeds will be donated to the Cheung family.

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B. Bethlehem Elementary School's 100th Anniversary Celebration
Acting Superintendent Fernandez stated that the 100th Anniversary Celebration will be held on October 20th at 10:00am. This will be a schoolwide celebration, with students dressing up in different decades. In addition, local government officials will be in attendance

C. Technology Usage in Grades K-8
Acting Superintendent Fernandez stated that the district recently performed an audit of school based screen time for grades K-8.

The CSDE has recently released a position statement on purposeful technology use that includes guidance on school-day screen time The audit showed that the district is meeting all components referenced in the CSDE's statement on purposeful usage.

It was noted that the District is still very much paper based in Grades K-8 except for individual learning goals. Students are still reading from books, using paper-based math and practicing their writing skills.

D. Curriculum Nights
Acting Superintendent Fernandez shared the dates for upcoming Curriculum nights. In addition to the informational discussion about the curriculum, parents will experience hands on lessons using the Building Thinking Classroom model.
- Woodbury Middle School – October 6
- Bethlehem Elementary School – October 13
- Mitchell Elementary School – October 14

V. Committee Reports

A. Policy Committee

1. On a recommendation by the Policy Committee to accept/approve the following Policies (Second Read, Action Anticipated):

   a. Policy 5141.3 Health Assessments and Immunizations

   A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Carol Ann Brown to accept/approve the policy as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

   b. Policy 6145.3 Student Clubs

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A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Caren Lipinski to accept/approve the policy as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

2. On a recommendation by the Policy Committee to accept/approve the following policy: (First read, no action anticipated)

   a. Policy 6146 Graduation Requirements
      - This is an existing policy updating the language to memorialize what we are already following.
      - Establishes the 25 credit requirements for graduation from Nonnewaug High School.
      - Establishes the completion of the FAFSA, or waiver, as a graduation requirement
      - Adds a portfolio component of the Vision of a Learner to replace the Mastery Based Learning experience which will be rolled out over the next three years. The class of 2030 will include all of the attributes in their portfolio

   b. Policy 6146.1 Weighted Grading Policy
      - This is an existing policy updated to include dual enrollment and college prep courses.
      - Assigns extra weighting for college preparatory, honors, AP and dual enrollment courses

   c. Policy 6146.2 Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations (Statewide Summative Assessments
      - This is an existing policy updated to specify the types of testing that is offered.
      - Acknowledges the Federal 95% participation requirement
      - Test Results cannot be the sole basis for promotion or graduation
      - Establishes Region 14's requirements for participation in Connecticut statewide testing:
        - Grades 3-8 take Smarter Balance ELA and Math assessments
        - Grades 11 takes state approved college readiness assessment
        - Grades 5, 8 and 11 take the NGSS science assessment

B. Finance Committee

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- Tina Tanguay reviewed the financials through September 30, 2026
- Revenue collected: $11,977,788 (26.76% of budget)
- Expenditures: $11,393,119 (25.46% of expenditures)
- All financial benchmarks are on target
- Agriscience tuition billing expected to go out in October
- Union contracts: the Secretary's Association contract expires June 2027 and is the only one up for negotiation this year; all others run through 2028 or 2029
- Bus contract expires in 2030

VI. Board Chair Comments

Chairman Matta thanked Acting Superintendent Fernandez for her informative report. He also wanted to thank the building administrators for attending. It is not a requirement for them to attend and the Board appreciates that they are present.

VII. Privilege of the Floor

There were no participants for Privilege of the Floor

VIII. Old Business

There was no Old Business brought before the board

IX. New Business

There was no New Business brought before the board

X. Region 14 Community Update

Carol Ann Brown wished to thank this year's student representatives for serving in the role and providing informative updates.

The FFA Alumni Car Show was a huge success with over 300 vehicles. She was pleased to see so many student volunteers for the event.

She reminded everyone about the GradNite Bottle/Can and Clothing Drive scheduled for October 17th.

XI. Other Business

There was no Old Business brought before the board

XII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Jim Crocker to adjourn the

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meeting at 6:41 p.m., all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kimberly Effes
Board Clerk
Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Kimberly Effes, Board Clerk
Minutes created with assistance of Circleback AI"

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MINUTES
Special Meeting of the Region 14 Board of Education
Thursday, October 15, 2026; 5:00 p.m.
Mitchell Elementary School
Flanders Room

Committee Members Present:
Chris Matta, Chair
Alice Jones, Vice-Chair
Carol Ann Brown
Bridget Calabrese
Mike Carbonneau
Jim Crocker
Caren Lipinski

Absent:
Tim Drakeley

Also Present:
Taryn Fernandez, Acting Superintendent of Schools
Tina Tanguay, Director of Finance and Operations
Mark Sommaruga, Pullman & Comley
Shawn Dwyer, Teamsters Local 443
Bill Petruno, Teamsters Local 443

I. Call to Order

Chris Matta called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Hearing

A hearing took place before the Board with respect to a grievance by the Teamsters Local 443 (Region 14's custodial/maintenance employees' union), challenging the termination of one of its members.

The Board heard from Teamsters Local 443 through its representative, Mr. Shawn Dwyer, and from the District Administration. The parties made presentations and offered arguments and evidence with respect to the grievance.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Jim Crocker, that the Board of Education move into executive session for the purpose of deliberations

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concerning the grievance that has been presented today which concerns the dismissal of a Region 14 custodian and further move that Attorney Mark Sommaruga be invited into the executive session; all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

The Board entered executive session at 6:13 p.m.

Public Session

The Board returned to public session at 6:47 p.m.

A motion was made by Chris Matta, seconded by Alice Jones, that the grievance be denied as there has been no violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, as there was just cause for termination; all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Alice Jones, that the Board of Education authorize the Board's attorney to prepare a written Step 3 grievance hearing response in accordance with the Board's decision and the collective bargaining agreement between the Board and the custodial union; all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

III. Adjournment

A motion was made by Chris Matta and seconded by Jim Crocker to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 p.m.; all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Effes
Board Clerk
Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Kimberly Effes, Board Clerk

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GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Instruction

High School Graduation Requirements

I. Vision and General Principles

Graduation from Nonnewaug High School in Region 14 School District signifies that a student has satisfactorily completed the prescribed course of study, demonstrated competency in state and district performance standards, and fulfilled all statutory credit and graduation requirements established by the Connecticut General Statutes and the Board of Education. The Principal and faculty shall apply measures of achievement to provide evidence that each student has met these standards.

The Board is committed to providing flexible, multiple pathways to learning, robust student support services, and personalized learning options—including work-based learning, dual enrollment, and career and technical education—to ensure every graduate is prepared for college, career, and civic life. The Board shall make available to all students, including those who do not successfully complete assessment criteria or who are at risk of dropping out, a course of study or alternative programming enabling them to acquire a high school diploma.

II. Graduation Credit Requirements (Class of 2027 and Thereafter)

Commencing with the graduating class of 2027, and for each class thereafter, students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of twenty-five (25) credits, distributed across subject areas as delineated in the charts below:

	Class of 2027		Class of 2028	
Humanities	**Humanities**	**9 Total Credits**	**Humanities**	**9 Total Credits**
	English	**4 cr**	**English**	**4 cr**
	Social Studies (Including 1 cr. World Civ., 1 cr. US History, & .5 cr. Civics)	**2.5 cr**	**Social Studies (Including 1 cr. World Civ., 1 cr. US History, & .5 cr. Civics)**	**2.5 cr**
	World Language	**1 cr**	**World Language**	**1 cr**
	Fine or Applied Arts	**1 cr**	**Fine or Applied Arts**	**1 cr**
	Humanities Elective	**.5 cr**	**Humanities Elective**	**.5 cr**
STEM	**Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math**	**9 Total Credits**	**Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math**	**9 Total Credits**
	Mathematics	**3 cr**	**Mathematics (Including 1 cr. Algebra 1, 1 cr. Algebra 2)**	**3 cr**
	Science (Including 1 cr. Biology, .5 cr. Chemistry)	**3 cr**	**Science (Including 1 cr. Biology, .5 cr. Chemistry)**	**3 cr**
	Financial Literacy	**.5 cr**	**Financial Literacy**	**.5 cr**
	STEM Electives	**2.5 cr**	**STEM Electives**	**2.5 cr**
Other	**Other Requirements**	**7 Total Credits**	**Other Requirements**	**7 Total Credits**
	PE/Health and Safety/Wellness	**2 cr**	**PE/Health and Safety/Wellness**	**2 cr**

	1 cr. PE (.25cr Wellness 1, .25cr Wellness 2, .5cr 11/12 PE) 1 cr. Health and Safety (.25cr Wellness 1, .25cr Wellness 2, .5cr 11/12 Health)		1 cr. PE (.25cr Wellness 1, .25cr Wellness 2, .5cr 11/12 PE) 1 cr. Health and Safety (.25cr Wellness 1, .25cr Wellness 2, .5cr 11/12 Health)	
	NGSS/SAT Prep Course (required of students who do not meet proficiency benchmark on PSAT and/or a RIT score of 216 on NWEA Science)	.5 cr	**NGSS/SAT Prep Course** (required of students who do not meet proficiency benchmark on PSAT and/or a RIT score of 216 on NWEA Science)	.5 cr
	Open Electives (any courses beyond the required credits listed above)	4.5 or 5 credits	**Open Electives** (any courses beyond the required credits listed above)	4.5 or 5 cr
	Total Credits for Graduation	25 Credits	**Total Credits for Graduation**	25 Credits

- Public Act 23-21 requires all students in the class of 2027 and beyond to earn at least .5 credits in financial literacy. This requirement can be met through a full year of Algebra 2 with financial concepts or financial math or a semester of personal finance.
- .5 Chemistry requirement can be met through one semester of Chemistry: Energy and Matter or a full year of Chemistry or AP Chemistry.

Class of 2029 and Beyond	
Humanities	**9 Total Credits**
English	4 cr
Social Studies (Including 1 cr. World Civ., 1 cr. US History, & .5 cr. Civics)	3 cr
World Language	1 cr
Fine Arts	1 cr
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math	**9 Total Credits**
Mathematics (Including 1 cr. Algebra 1, 1 cr. Algebra 2)	3 credits
Science (Including 1cr. Integrated Science, 1 cr. Biology, .5 cr. Chemistry)	3 credits
Financial Literacy	.5 cr
STEM Electives	2.5 cr
Other Requirements	**7 Total Credits**
PE/Health and Safety/Wellness - 1 cr. PE (.25cr Wellness 1, .25cr Wellness 2, .5cr 11/12 PE); 1 cr. Health and Safety (.25cr Wellness 1, .25cr Wellness 2, .5cr 11/12 Health)	2 cr
NGSS/SAT Prep Course (required of students who do not meet proficiency benchmark on PSAT and/or a RIT score of 216 on NWEA Science)	.5 cr
Open Electives (any courses beyond the required credits listed above)	4.5 or 5 cr
Total Credits for Graduation	**25 Credits**

- Fine Arts requirement can be met through a full year course or combination of two semester courses of any performing arts, media arts, or visual arts course.
- Students may test-out of the Integrated Science requirement with an 825 or higher on their 8th grade NGSS assessment OR no less than 805 on their NGSS assessment AND scoring in the 80th percentile or above on two of the three NWEA assessments (math, reading, and science) on the mid-year or end-of-year assessments with no test below the 70th percentile.

III. Graduation Credit Requirements (Class of 2027 and Thereafter)

A credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of a forty-minute class period for each school day of a school year, except for credits earned through higher education institutions, online coursework, or demonstrated mastery based on competency and performance standards.

Note: Per C.G.S. § 10-221a(f), the determination of eligible credits is at the discretion of the Board, provided the primary focus of the curriculum corresponds directly to the subject matter of the specified course requirements.

IV. Credit Exemptions and Multiple Pathways

1. **Physical Education Medical Exemption and Activity Restriction:**

   A student shall be excused from the physical education requirement upon presentation of a written certificate from a licensed physician, Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN), or Physician Assistant (PA) certifying that participation in physical education is medically contraindicated due to the student's physical condition. The required credit shall be fulfilled through an elective course.

   In accordance with state law, the Board shall not grant physical education credit or waive the physical education requirement based on a student's participation in interscholastic athletics, club sports, or other extracurricular physical activities.

2. **Flexible Learning Pathways:**

   High school credit toward graduation may be earned through non-traditional educational experiences aligned with state content standards, including:

   - Middle school coursework (grades 7–8) corresponding directly to high school courses (World Languages and Algebra 1).
   - Dual enrollment and early college coursework at accredited higher education institutions.
   - Work-based learning, internships, service learning, and student-designed independent studies.

V. Participation in Community Service and Demonstration of Vision of a Learner Attributes

1. Community Service Requirement:

   - Region 14 Schools believes strongly in the value of community service; thus, Nonnewaug High School will require students to perform a minimum of 18 hours of community service.

2. Demonstration of the Vision of a Learner Attributes

   - Students must successfully demonstrate the Vision of a Learner attributes through a portfolio assessment and successful completion of four years of Nonnewaug's Advisory Program.

VI. FAFSA Completion Requirement (Class of 2027 and Thereafter)

Beginning with the graduating class of 2027, each student must satisfy one of the following requirements prior to graduation:

1. Complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); or
2. Complete and submit an official waiver form approved by the District and signed by:
   - The student's parent or guardian;
   - The student, if the student is eighteen (18) years of age or older or an emancipated minor; or

- A school counselor, school principal, or local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth acting in their professional capacity, if the student is an unattached or independent youth.

In executing a waiver, the District shall not require the student, parent, or guardian to state a reason for opting out. FAFSA completion status shall remain confidential educational record data and shall not be publicly displayed or factored into class rank or academic honors.

The District shall not decline to award a diploma to a student, or prevent a student from participating in graduation ceremonies, if the student fails to comply with the FAFSA requirement due to extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control, as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

VII. Communication, Student Success Plans, and Remedial Services

1. **Annual Communication of Requirements:**

   The Principal or designee shall ensure that accurate, up-to-date information concerning graduation standards and diploma requirements is published annually on the District website, included in the student handbook, and distributed to all incoming ninth-grade students and their families during course selection.

2. **Student Success Plans (SSPs):**

   Beginning in grade six (6), the District shall create an individualized Student Success Plan (SSP) for every student. The SSP shall outline academic and career goals, incorporate career exploration in each grade (including manufacturing, STEM, and computer science careers), and support compliance with the District's challenging curriculum policy (Policy 6141.32). The SSP shall be created and reviewed in collaboration with the student and parent/guardian.

3. **Remedial and Alternate Demonstration Options:**

   Beginning in grade seven (7), adequate student support and remedial options shall be provided to ensure students can satisfy graduation standards. Options shall include:

   - Retaking courses during summer school or via approved virtual learning.
   - Enrolling in course options offered through constituent units of the state higher education system.
   - Retaking end-of-year exams or alternate form assessments for students failing end-of-year exams.
   - Utilizing alternate assessments specified in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

VII. Special Populations, Unique Circumstances, and Awarding Diplomas

1. **Special Education Students and Transition Age Limits:**

   Students receiving special education services shall satisfy graduation requirements unless the student's Planning and Placement Team (PPT) determines through the IEP process that modifications or alternate goals are appropriate. In accordance with federal and state law (P.A. 23-137), special education students who have not completed graduation requirements remain eligible for public education services and high school programming through the end of the school year in which the student reaches twenty-two (22) years of age, or until receipt of a regular high school diploma, whichever occurs first.

2. **English Learners / Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy:**

   The Board shall affix the "Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy" to the diploma and transcript of any student demonstrating a high level of proficiency in English and one or more world languages (including ASL and Native American languages) at a level comparable to Intermediate-Mid on the ACTFL scale in accordance with state guidelines.

3. **Connecticut State Seal of Civics Education and Engagement:**

The Board shall affix the "Connecticut State Seal of Civics Education and Engagement" to the diploma and transcript of any student who has achieved a high level of proficiency in civics education and engagement beginning with the graduating Class of 2028. The criteria for earning the seal will be determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee and will meet or exceed the following minimum requirements set by the State Department of Education: 1. successfully complete a history or social science course for at least two school years, including one United States government or civics course; 2. participate in at least one civic engagement project (e.g., community service, student government, or civic organization involvement); and 3. demonstrate proficiency in civics knowledge through a standardized assessment, work portfolio (including civics related essays, projects, or presentations), or other mastery-based assessment or process.

3. **Veterans' Diplomas:**

In accordance with C.G.S. § 10-221a, the Board shall award a high school diploma to any veteran of World War II, the Korean Hostilities, or the Vietnam Era who left high school prior to graduation for active military service. Honorary diplomas may also be granted to individuals who withdrew from school during WWII (December 7, 1941 – December 31, 1946) to work in the war effort and have resided in Connecticut for at least fifty consecutive years.

4. **Students Under Expulsion:**

The Board may permit a student to graduate while under a period of expulsion if the student has satisfactorily completed all necessary credits and requirements.

5. **Delayed Awarding of Diplomas:**

Students who complete all graduation requirements through summer courses comparable to subjects in which they were deficient shall receive a diploma.

(5121 – Examination/Grading/Rating)
(5123 – Promotion/Retention)
(6146.2 – Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes

10-5 State high school diploma; "honors diploma."

10-5c Board examination series pilot program.

10-14n Statewide mastery examination.

10-15c Discrimination in public schools prohibited.

10-16l Graduation exercises and setting dates.

10-76a et seq.: Special education definitions and requirements.

10-221a: High school graduation requirements (as amended by P.A. 17-42, P.A. 17-29, P.A. 19-58, P.A. 21-199, P.A. 23-21, P.A. 23-137, P.A. 23-204, and P.A. 24-45).

10-221q: Instruction in technology and screen time guidelines.

10-233a: Promotion and graduation policies.

Federal Law & Regulations

34 C.F.R. § 300.102: Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) age limits.

A.R. v. Connecticut State Board of Education, 5 F.4th 209 (2d Cir. 2021).

Public Acts

P.A. 23-21: *An Act Concerning Financial Literacy Instruction.*

P.A. 23-137: *An Act Concerning Services for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (Expanding Special Education Eligibility to Age 22).*

P.A. 24-45 (Sections 9 & 10): *An Act Concerning Education Revisions, Graduation Requirements, FAFSA Completion, and Community Service.*

Policy adopted:

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 14
Bethlehem and Woodbury, Connecticut

INSTRUCTION

WEIGHTED GRADING POLICY

It is the policy of the Board of Education that a grade in a college preparatory class, an honors class, an advanced placement class, or a dual enrollment class is given added weight for purposes of calculating grade point average and determining class rank. The administration shall develop and publish a formula for calculation of grade point average and class rank reflecting the weighted grading system. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall ensure that parents are notified of this policy.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 10-220g

Instruction

Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations (Statewide Summative Assessments)

I. General Assessment Requirements

Annually, unless exempted according to federal and/or state criteria, each student enrolled in grades three through eight, inclusive, shall take a statewide mastery examination that measures essential and grade-appropriate skills in reading, writing, and mathematics during the time period specified by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).

Students enrolled in grade eleven shall annually take a nationally recognized college readiness assessment approved by the State Board of Education measuring essential and grade-appropriate skills in reading, writing, and mathematics (Connecticut SAT School Day).

Each student enrolled in grades five, eight, and eleven shall annually take a statewide mastery examination measuring essential and grade-appropriate skills in science (Next Generation Science Standards Assessment).

The State Board of Education shall approve the provision and administration of all mastery examinations. All examinations shall take place during the regular school day.

II. Student Records and Graduation

Student scores on each component of the statewide eleventh-grade assessment [may/shall] be included on the permanent record and transcripts for eleventh-grade students. For each eleventh-grade student who meets or exceeds the statewide mastery goal level on any component of the mastery examination, a certification of such mastery shall be made on the student's permanent record and transcript, and the student shall be provided a certificate of mastery for each such component.

The Board of Education shall not require achievement of a satisfactory score on a mastery examination, or any subsequent retest on a component of such examination, as the sole criterion of promotion or graduation.

III. Students with Disabilities

Students receiving special education and related services shall participate in statewide mastery testing. Out-of-level testing is not permitted under federal law.

Participation in alternate assessments is available only to students with significant cognitive disabilities whose Planning and Placement Team (PPT) determines that standard participation, even with accommodations, is inappropriate:

1. Students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades three through eight and grade eleven shall be assessed with the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CT-AA) in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

2. Students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades five, eight, and eleven shall be assessed with the Connecticut Alternate Science (CT-AS) Assessment.

IV. English Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELs/MLs)

All identified English Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELs/MLs), regardless of the length of time enrolled in school, shall participate in all content area statewide summative assessments (reading/language arts, mathematics, and science). ELs/MLs are entitled to CSDE-designated accommodations and supports.

All students identified as ELs/MLs shall annually take the state-designated English language proficiency assessment (LAS Links).

In accordance with federal regulations and C.G.S. 10-223e:

- Scores on each component of the mastery examination for ELs/MLs who have been enrolled in a school in the United States for fewer than twenty (20) school months shall not be used for calculating the school performance or accountability index.
- Year 1 results serve as a baseline for academic growth in Year 2.
- In Year 3 of enrollment, scores of recently arrived ELs/MLs will be fully included in both academic achievement and academic growth indicators within Connecticut's accountability system.

V. Federal Participation Standards

The Board of Education recognizes that federal law requires full participation of all enrolled students in state summative assessments, establishing a minimum participation rate threshold of 95 percent for all students and for each subgroup of students in each subject area. The Board acknowledges that failure to meet these participation thresholds may result in state accountability sanctions and impacts on district performance ratings.

(cf. 5121 - Examination/Grading/Rating)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records; Confidentiality)

(cf. 6146 - Graduation Requirements)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-14n Statewide mastery examination. Conditions for reexamination. Limitation on use of test results.

10-14o Compensatory education grant.

10-14p Reports by local and regional boards re instructional improvement and student progress.

10-14q Exceptions.

10-223e Statewide education accountability plan. Performance track framework.

Policy adopted:

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 14
Bethlehem and Woodbury, Connecticut

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are essential foundations for providing effective, high-quality special education services. The Board requires that all procedures for implementing an individualized education program be designed to guard the privacy of the student and family.

A parent of a child, teacher or administrator in the district, the State Department of Education, or other state agencies available to the District may initiate a request for an initial evaluation to determine if the child is a child with a disability. Once the district receives a written referral for special education evaluation, it has 45 school days to complete an initial evaluation. The 45-school-day timeline encompasses the entire eligibility determination process, including reviewing the referral, obtaining written parental consent for evaluation, conducting a comprehensive evaluation, determining eligibility, obtaining written parental consent for the provision of special education services, and implementing an IEP if the student is found eligible. The district will conduct a full and individual evaluation that consists of procedures to determine if the child is a child with a disability under 34 C.F.R. §300.301. Further, the evaluation must be sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needed, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified. Assessments for disabled children who are transfer students shall be coordinated expeditiously between the sending or receiving district.

The adult student or his/her parent/guardian will be asked by the District if the student wishes to receive the special education and related services outlined in their individualized education program (IEP) through the end of the school year during which they turn 22 years of age or they graduate with a regular high school diploma, whichever comes first.

In situations in which a student's IEP requires an out-of-district or private placement, the timeline for implementing an IEP must occur within 60 school days of the PPT referral (not including the time it takes to obtain written parental consent).

Any individualized education program (IEP) developed for a student with disabilities shall specify whether the student shall achieve the District's adopted content standards or whether the student shall achieve individualized standards that would indicate the student has met the requirements of his or her IEP. When a child is identified as requiring special education, the district will provide parents/guardians with information and resources from the State Department of Education relating to IEPs.

Information Provided to Parents Regarding Special Education

At the first PPT, when a child receiving special education services reaches 14, the district shall provide information to the child and parent/guardian regarding the full range of decision-making supports, including alternatives to guardianship and conservatorship and the plain-language online resources developed by CSDE regarding decision-making options available when the student reaches 18.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

In addition, information that must be provided to parents/guardians at each PPT meeting shall include plain-language resources developed by CSDE regarding the hearing and appeals process, information regarding free and low-cost legal assistance, and The Parent's Guide to Special Education in Connecticut by CSDE. The district shall annually provide the Guide and rights and resources available to children receiving special education services at the beginning of the school year.

At the beginning of each school year, the district shall provide an informational handout developed by CSDE that explains what it means to have an IEP or Section 504 plan.

Upon request from a parent/guardian, or when there is an apparent need, the district shall provide interpreters and translated documents for students and parents, including translated copies of a child's IEP and any related documents.

The interpreter may be present in person, available by phone, or through an online platform, an Internet website, or other electronic application approved by the State Board of Education.

A parent/guardian of the Board may request mediation through the Mediation Services Coordinator at any time for any matter related to the provision of special education for a child, including, but not limited to, the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or implementation of an IEP. Upon receipt of a request for mediation, the Mediation Services Coordinator shall provide notification to the parties and invite them to participate in voluntary mediation.

Planning and Placement Team or Individualized Education Program Team

The term "Planning and Placement Team" means a group of individuals composed of -

(i) the parents of a child with a disability
(ii) not less than one regular education teacher of such child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment);
(iii) not less than one special education teacher, or where appropriate, not less than one special education provider of such child;
(iv) a representative of the local educational agency who -
    (I) is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;
    (II) is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and
    (III) is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the local educational agency;
(v) an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described in clauses (ii) through (vi);

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

(vi) at the discretion of the parent of the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate;
(vii) the school paraprofessional, if any, assigned to such child, and
(viii) whenever appropriate, the child with a disability.

NOTE: A Planning and Placement Team (PPT) member is not required to attend all or part of an IEP meeting if the parents and District agree that the team member's participation is not necessary because the member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed at the meeting. If the meeting does involve a modification or discussion of the member's area of the curriculum or related services, parents and the District can agree to excuse the member from attending all or part of the meeting if the member submits written input to the parent and the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) prior to the meeting. Parental consent in writing is required in either case.

In addition to the above, the special education specialist, school psychologist, school nurse, school social worker, counselor, or other student service worker who has conducted an assessment of the student shall participate whenever the results or recommendations based on such assessment are significant to the development of the student's individualized education program and placement. Where the student is limited or non-English speaking, a district representative who is fluent in the student's primary language, knowledgeable about the process of second-language acquisition, and competent in the assessment of limited English and non-English speaking individuals should be included.

Any member of the PPT employed by the Board of Education who discusses or makes recommendations concerning the provisions of special education and related services during a PPT meeting shall not be disciplined, suspended, or otherwise punished for such recommendations.

No birth-to-three coordinator or qualified personnel, as defined by C.G.S. 17a-248, who discusses or makes recommendations concerning the provision of special education and/or related services during a PPT meeting or in a transition plan shall be subject to discipline, suspension, termination or other punishment based on such recommendations.

The parent/guardian or surrogate parent shall be given at least five (5) school days' prior notice of any PPT meeting and shall have the right to be present and participate in all portions of such meetings at which an educational program for their child is developed, reviewed, or revised. In addition, parents/guardians or surrogate parents have the right to be present at and participate in all portions of the PPT meeting at which an educational program for their child is developed, reviewed, or revised. In addition, the parent/guardian/surrogate shall have advisors and the child's assigned paraprofessional, if any, and such child's birth-to-three service coordinator, if any, be present at and participate in all portions of the PPT meeting in which the child's educational program is developed, reviewed or revised and have the right to have such recommendation made in such child's birth-to-three individualized transition plan, if any, addressed by the PPT at which an educational program for such child is developed.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

The District shall offer to meet with the student's parents/guardians, upon the request of the parents/guardians, after the student has been assessed for possible placement in special education and before the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meets.

The sole purpose of such meeting is to discuss the PPT process and any concerns the parent/guardian has about the student. The meeting will involve a member of the PPT designated by the District before the referral PPT meeting at which the student's assessments and evaluations will be discussed for the first time. This applies to students under evaluation for possible placement in special education.

Upon request of a parent/guardian, the District will provide the results of the assessments and evaluations used in determining a student's eligibility for special education at least three (3) school days before the referral PPT meeting, at which such results will be discussed for the first time.

Parents/Guardians and the District may agree to conduct IEP meetings, and other meetings, through alternative means, such as including but not limited to, videoconferences or conference calls.

(a) ***General.*** The IEP for each child must include -

(1) An accurate statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance based upon parental provider information, current classroom-based, local, and state assessments and classroom-based observations, including -

(i) How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum; or

(ii) For preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities;

(2) A statement of measurable annual academic and functional goals that aim to improve educational results and functional performance for each child with a disability, related to –

(i) Meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum;

(ii) Meeting each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability; and

(iii) Providing a meaningful opportunity for the child to meet challenging objectives.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

Alternate Assessments

(iv) A statement of "benchmarks or short-term objectives" is required only with respect to students with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards.

If a child will participate in alternate assessments based on either general or alternate achievement standards, the IEP must explain why the child cannot participate in the regular assessment and why the alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the child.

The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) may only recommend appropriate accommodation or use of alternate assessment but may not exempt students with disabilities from the state assessment.

(3) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child -

(i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;

(ii) To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and

(iii) To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and non-disabled children in the activities described in this paragraph.

(4) A school must offer an IEP that is "reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances." The child's educational program must be appropriately ambitious considering his/her circumstances, and every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives. The Planning and Placement Team, in determining whether an IEP is reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress, should consider the child's:

- Previous rate or academic growth,
- Progress towards achieving or exceeding grade-level proficiency,
- Behaviors, if any, interfering with the child's progress, and
- Parent's input and any additional information provided by such parents.

The U.S. Supreme Court, in the *Endrew F* decision stated, "Any review of an IEP must consider whether the IEP is reasonably calculated to ensure such progress, not whether it would be considered ideal. (137S.CT. at 99)

(5) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with non-disabled children in the regular class and in the activities described in paragraph (a) (3) of this section;

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

Alternate Assessments *(continued)*

(6) A statement of any individual modifications in the administration of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed for the child to participate in the assessment; and

(7) The projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications described in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications; and

(8) A statement of:

(i) How the child's progress toward the annual goals described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section will be measured; and

(ii) How the child's parents will be regularly informed (through such means as periodic report cards), at least as often as parents are informed of their non-disabled children's progress, of

(A) Their child's progress toward the annual goals; and

(B) The extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year

(9) Reevaluation of a student's progress may not occur more than once a year unless agreed to by the parents and the District. Reevaluation must occur at least once every three years unless the parent and District agree that it is unnecessary.

Note: To make FAPE available to each eligible child with a disability, the child's IEP must be designed to enable the child to be involved in, and make progress in, the general education curriculum (the same curriculum as for nondisabled children which is based on a State's academic content standards. This alignment must guide and not replace the individualized decision-making required in the IEP process."

(b) ***Transition services.***

The district shall designate a transition coordinator who is responsible for the following:

- Complete a prescribed training program within three years of when the training program commences or within one year of being appointed transition coordinator if appointed after the training program commences;
- Ensure parents receive information about transition resources, services, or public transition programs and know the eligibility requirements and application details; and
- The transition coordinator may be the director of student personnel or another school district employee.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

(b) ***Transition services.*** (continued)

(1) Beginning in the 2024-25 School year, the Board of Education shall distribute a notice of a link to an online listing of transitional resources, transitional services, and public transition programs provided by the Statewide Transition Services Coordinator. This shall be distributed to parents/guardians of children receiving special education services in grades six through 12 at a PPT meeting.

(2) At the first PPT meeting after the student turns 14, the Team will provide a listing to the parent/guardian of each public transition and adult education program for which the student may be eligible after graduation. Upon parent/guardian approval, an identified certified professional member of the PPT will notify the state agency that provides such a program about potential eligibility.

(3) By the PPT meeting, which occurs approximately two years prior to the student's anticipated exit from the district, upon parent/guardian approval, a certified professional member of the PPT shall notify any state agency that provides an adult program for which the student may be eligible about the potential eligibility, invite an agency representative to attend the PPT, and permit and facilitate contract and coordination between the agency and parent. An identified certified professional member of the PPT will assist the parent/guardian in completing an application to any such program.

(4) The IEP must include

(i) For each student beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is fourteen, and younger if the PPT determines it appropriate, and updated annually, thereafter, appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and the transition services, including courses of study, needed to assist the student in reaching those goals.

(ii) For a student no longer eligible for services due to graduation from high school with a regular diploma or for a student who exceeds the age of eligibility under State law, a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance including recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his/her postsecondary goals.

(5) If the Planning and Placement Team determines that services are not needed in one or more of the areas specified in §300.27(c)(1) through (c)(4), the IEP must include a statement to that effect and the basis upon which the determination was made.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

(b) ***Transition services.*** (continued)

(c) ***Transfer of rights.*** Beginning not later than one year before a student reaches the age of majority under State law, the student's IEP must include a statement that the student has been informed of his or her rights under this title, if any, that will transfer to the student on reaching the age of majority, consistent with §615(m)

(d) ***Students with disabilities convicted as adults and incarcerated in adult prisons***. Special rules concerning the content of IEPs for students with disabilities convicted as adults and incarcerated in adult prisons are contained in §612(a)(5)A.

(e) ***Students with disabilities identified as deaf or hearing impaired.*** For a child identified as deaf or hearing impaired, the PPT shall develop an IEP which includes a language and communication plan that shall address;

(i) the child's primary language or mode of communication;

(ii) opportunities for direct communication between the child and his/her peers and professional personnel in the primary child's language or mode of communication;

(iii) educational options available to the child;

(iv) the qualifications of teachers and other professional personnel administering the plan for the child, including their proficiency in the child's primary language or mode of communication;

(v) the accessibility of academic instruction, school services and extracurricular activities to the child;

(vi) Assistive devices and services for the child;

(vii) Communication and physical environment accommodations for the child; and

(viii) An emergency communications plan that includes procedures for alerting the child of an emergency situation and ensuring that the specific needs of the child are met during the emergency situation. Such plan is to be developed for a student identified as deaf, hard of hearing, or both blind or visually impaired and deaf.

(f) ***Students who are children of a member of the armed forces***

If, after the start of a school year, a child of a member of the armed forces:

1. enrolls in a school under the jurisdiction of a local or regional Board of Education, as a result of such member having received military orders directing such member to the state or any other documents from the armed forces indicating the transfer of such member to the state, and

Instruction

Individualized Education Program-(IEP) (continued)

(b) ***Transition services.*** (continued)

2. such child enrolls with an individualized education program or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 from such child's prior school.

The Board shall take necessary steps, including, but not limited to, the transfer of any records and prior evaluations, the performance of any reevaluations and, not later than thirty school days after such child's enrollment, the holding of any planning and placement team meeting or meeting to establish a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for such child, to ensure a minimally disruptive transition to the provision of comparable services.

Transfers

When an individual has been on an IEP in another school district, the PPT shall make an evaluative study of the student and develop an IEP for the student as though the student were newly referred, but the PPT may use the previous IEP (if available) in developing the new one.

If the transfer involves districts within Connecticut, the District will provide services "comparable to those described in the previously held IEP," until the District adopts the previously held IEP or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP. If the student has transferred from another state, the District will provide services "comparable to those described in the previously held IEP," until the District conducts an evaluation, if deemed necessary, and if appropriate, develops a new IEP. If a student who is on an IEP transfers from this district to another, or to a private school, the written IEP and any additional records relating to the student's program and achievement shall be forwarded to the receiving school on the request of the receiving school and the individual's parent or guardian.

Districts receiving out-of-district students requiring special education shall:

a) hold the planning and placement team meeting for each out-of-district student who requires special education and related services and invite representatives from the sending district to participate in such meeting, and
b) ensure that such students receive the services mandated by the student's individualized education program whether such services are provided by the sending district or the receiving district.

Furthermore, in the case of a student with a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, the receiving district shall:

a) ensure that such student receives the services mandated by the student's plan, and
b) pay for the costs of providing such services to such student.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

Transfers (continued)

If the Board of Education receives an out-of-district placement of a student who receives special education services, through an agreement or contract with a sending local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (d) of section 10-76d of the general statutes or section 10-91j, as amended by PA 25-67, the Board shall not transfer such student to any other school or facility unless:

1. upon initiation of the sending local or regional Board of Education or upon the request of a parent or guardian of such student, or such student if such student is eighteen years of age or older or an emancipated minor, such sending local or regional Board of Education holds a planning and placement team meeting for the purpose of determining the appropriateness of such transfer, and
2. the planning and placement team determines that such transfer is more appropriate for the educational needs of such student than the current out-of-district placement.

A representative of the Board of Education shall be invited to attend and participate in such planning and placement team meeting but may not request that such planning and placement team meeting be held.

Prior to the enrollment of a District student in a technical education and career school, the District will convene a PPT in order to address such student's transition to the technical education and career school and ensure that such student's IEP reflects the current supports and services the student requires in order to access a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. A representative from the technical education and career school shall be invited to the PPT meeting.

Independent Educational Assessment

If an independent educational assessment is necessary, it shall be conducted by a Connecticut credentialed or licensed professional examiner who is not employed by and does not routinely provide assessment for the State Department of Education or this District.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-76a Definitions (as amended by PA 06-18)
10-76b State supervision of special education programs and services. Regulations. (as amended by PA 12-173)
10-76d Duties and powers of Boards of Education to provide special education programs and services. (as amended by June Special Session PA 15-5, Sec. 277 and PA 19-49 and PA 21-46 and PA 21-144 and PA 23-137)
10-76ff Procedures for determining if a child requires special education (as amended by PA 06-18)

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes (continued)
10-76g State aid for special education.
10-76h Special education hearing and review procedure.
10-76jj Language and communication plan as part of individualized education program for child identified as deaf or hard of hearing (as amended by PA 19-184)
10-76q Special education at technical education and career schools (as amended by PA 21-144)
SDE Guidance Addressing Timeline for Initial Evaluations, Dec. 21, 2018
State Board of Education Regulations
34 C.F.R. 300 et seq. Assistance to States for Education of Handicapped Children.
300.14 Special education definitions.
300.340-349 Individualized education programs.
300.503 Independent educational assessment.
300.533 Placement procedures.
300.550-556 Least restrictive environment.
P.L. 108-446 The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004
Rowley v. Board of Education, 485 U.S.-176 (1982)
Endrew
F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1, 15-827 U.S. (2017)*A.M. v. N.Y. City Department of Education,* 845F.3d 523, 541 (2d Cir.1997)
Mrs. B., v. Milford Board of Education 103 F. 3d 1114, 1121 (2d Cir. 1997)
A.R. v. Connecticut State Board of Education, 3:16-CV-01197 (CSH D. Conn. June 10, 2020)
Public Act 23-137 An Act Concerning Resources and Support Services for Persons With an Intellectual or Developmental Disability Sections 26-27, 30-31, 32-37, 39, 45, 47, 51, 52
P.A 25-67 An Act Concerning the Quality and Delivery of Special Education Services in Connecticut (Section 10)
P.A 25-143 An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Office of Early Childhood, Department of Education and the Technical Education and Career System and Concerning the Administration of Epinephrine and Glucagon. (Section 10)
Public Act No. 25-15 An Act Concerning Various Measures Recognizing and Honoring the Military Service of Veterans and Members of the Armed Forces in Connecticut (Section 7)

Policy adopted:
rev 2/24
rev 7/25
rev 12/25

Sample policies are distributed for demonstration purposes only. Unless so noted, contents do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The school district shall comply with all state and federal laws concerning the provision of a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities.

Referral

In accordance with the regulations of the State Board of Education, each local and regional board of education shall: (1) Provide special education for school-age children requiring special education; (2) The obligation of the school district under this subsection shall terminate when such child is graduated from high school or at the end of the school year during which such child reaches age twenty-two, whichever occurs first.

All students remain eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) through the end of the school year during which the student turns age 22, or until the student graduates from high school with a regular high school diploma, whichever occurs first. Pursuant to the Connecticut General Statutes §10-259, the school year is defined as July 1 through June 30.

Prior to referring a student for special education, the pre-referral process should be completed. This process ensures that strategies in the regular education classroom have been developed, implemented, and evaluated. If it is determined that the alternative strategies have been attempted and that significant progress towards meeting the student's identified needs has not been made, then the student shall be referred to the Planning and Placement Team to determine whether special education services are necessary.

Each child who has been suspended repeatedly or whose behavior, attendance, or progress in school is considered unsatisfactory or at a marginal level of acceptance and has reviewed academic and/or behavioral support shall be referred to the Planning and Placement Team for consideration of eligibility for special education services.

A parent, physician, social worker, or other outside agency may refer a student directly for special education services. During these situations, the alternative strategies process may be bypassed.

Planning and Placement Team or Individualized Education Program Team

The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) for any identified student shall consist of at least the following:

1. A representative of the District other than the individual's teacher, who is qualified to provide, or supervise, the provision of special education and who is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum and about the availability of resources of the District;

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Planning and Placement Team or Individualized Education Program Team (continued)

2. Not less than one special education teacher of the child, or if appropriate, not less than one special education provider of the child;
3. Not less than one regular education teacher (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment);
4. One or both student's parents, a surrogate parent, and/or a representative chosen by the parent;
5. The student, where appropriate;
6. For a student who is being evaluated for the first time, a member of the assessment team shall be present, and at least one of the persons present shall be knowledgeable about the assessment procedures;
7. The school paraprofessional, if any, assigned to the student, and
8. At the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals with knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate.

In addition to the above, the special education specialist, school psychologist, school nurse, school social worker, counselor, or other student service worker who has conducted an assessment of the student shall participate whenever the results or recommendations based on such assessment are significant to the development of the student's individualized education program and placement.

Where the student is limited or non-English speaking, a district representative who is fluent in the student's primary language and who is knowledgeable about the process of second-language acquisition and competent in the assessment of limited English and non-English speaking individuals should be included.

A Planning and Placement Team member is not required to attend all or part of a PPT meeting if the parents and District agree the team member's participation is not necessary because the member's area of curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed at the meeting.

If the PPT meeting does involve a modification or discussion of the member's area of the curriculum or related services, parents/guardians and the District may agree to excuse the member from attending all or part of the meeting if the member submits written input to the PPT and parent prior to the meeting. Parental consent, in writing, is required in either case.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program-(IEP)

Planning and Placement Team or Individualized Education Program Team (continued)

Transition Services

The district shall designate a transition coordinator who is responsible for the following:

- Complete a prescribed training program within three years of when the training program commences or within one year of being appointed transition coordinator if appointed after the training program commences.
- Ensure parents receive information about transition resources, services, or public transition programs and know the eligibility requirements and application details.
- The transition coordinator may be the director of student personnel or another school district employee.
- Beginning in the 2024-25 School year, the district will distribute a notice of a link to an online listing of transitional resources, services, and public transitional programs provided by the Statewide Transition Services Coordinator. At a PPT meeting, this shall be distributed to parents/guardians of children receiving special education services in grades six through 12.
- At the first PPT meeting after the student turns 14, the Team will provide a listing to the parents/guardians of each public transition and adult education program for which the student may be eligible after graduation. Upon parent/guardian approval, an identified certified professional member of the PPT will notify the state agency that provides such a program about the potential eligibility.
- By the PPT meeting, which occurs approximately two years prior to the student's anticipated exit from the district, upon parent/guardian approval, a certified professional member of the PPT will notify any state agency that provides an adult program for which the student may be eligible about the potential eligibility, invite an agency representative to attend the PPT, and permit and facilitate contact and coordination between the agency and parent. An identified certified professional member of the PPT will assist the parent/guardian in completing an application to any such program.

(Certified professional refers to "certified teacher," which includes a teacher, school psychologist, social worker, or other members of the support staff holding CSDE certification.)

In the event of a meeting to review or revise the individualized education program of a child in an out-of-district or private placement, a representative of the out-of-district or private facility shall also be invited. In addition, a representative of the outside facility shall contribute to the development of the individual educational program.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program

Planning and Placement Team or Individualized Education Program Team (continued)

Parental Participation

The parent/guardian or surrogate parent shall be given at least five (5) school days prior notice of any PPT meeting and shall have the right to be present and participate in all portions of such meetings at which an educational program for their child is developed, reviewed or revised. In addition, parents/guardians or surrogate parents have the right to be present at and participate in all portions of the PPT meeting at which an educational program for their child is developed, reviewed or revised. In addition, the parent/guardian/surrogate shall have advisors and the child's assigned paraprofessional, if any, be present at and participate in all portions of the PPT meeting in which the child's educational program is developed, reviewed or revised.

Upon parental/guardian request, a member of the PPT designated by the District will meet with the parent/guardian after their child has been assessed for possible placement in special education and before the PPT meets. The sole purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the PPT process and any concerns the parent/guardian has about the students. In addition, if requested, by the parent/guardian, the District will provide the results of the assessments and evaluations used in the determination of eligibility for special education of a student at least three (3) school days before the referral PPT meeting at which such results of the assessment and evaluations will be discussed for the first time.

The Board of Education shall take steps to ensure that one or both of the child's parents are afforded the opportunity to participate in each meeting to develop, review or revise the individualized education program for that child. Every effort shall be made to schedule meetings at a mutually agreed-upon time and place. Parents/Guardians and the District may agree to conduct IEP meetings and other meetings through alternative means, such as, including but not limited to, video conferences or conference calls. Steps to ensure parental participation shall be taken in accordance with the following:

1. At the first PPT meeting after a child receiving services reaches age 14, the District will provide information to the child and parent about the full range of decision-making supports, including alternatives to guardianship and conservatorship and the plain-language online resources developed by CSDE regarding decision-making options once the student is 18 years of age.
2. The District will provide interpreters and translated documents for students and parents when necessary or upon request. This includes translated copies of a child's IEP and any related documents. The interpreter may be present in person or available by telephone or through an online technology platform, an Internet website, or other electronic application approved by the State Board of Education.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program-(IEP)

Parental Participation (continued)

3. The District will provide parents/guardians with plain-language resources developed by CSDE regarding the hearing and appeals process, information regarding free and low-cost legal assistance, and the Parent's Guide to Special Education in Connecticut developed by CSDE.
4. At the beginning of each year, the District will provide the student with a handout developed by CSDE explaining what it means to have an IEP or Section 504.
5. The District will provide annually, at the beginning of the school year, the Parent's Guide to Special Education and the rights and resources available to children receiving special education services.
6. The District will inform parents/guardians that the Board or the parent may request mediation through the State's Mediation Services Coordinator at any time for any matter related to the provision of special education for a child, including, but not limited to, the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or implementation of an IEP.
7. The District will provide parents/guardians a procedural safeguards notice, at least annually, except that a copy also shall be given, upon initial referral or parental request for evaluation, upon the first filing of a due process complaint or upon parental request advising them in writing, in their dominant language, of their rights with respect to the provision of a free appropriate education for children with disabilities.
8. The District will place a current copy of the Procedural Safeguards notice on the District Website.
9. Written prior notice to the parents/guardian of a child for which the District is proposing or refusing to initiate or change the identification, evaluation or educational placement of the child, shall also specify the purpose, time and location of the meeting and who has been invited.
10. If neither parent can attend, reasonable efforts shall be made to secure parental participation by other means such as conference calls or home visits.
11. A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the Board of Education is unable to secure parental attendance. In this event, the Board of Education shall have a detailed record of its attempts to arrange parent participation.
12. The parent/guardian of a child with a disability may elect to receive notices under IDEA by electronic mail, if the District makes such an option available.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

Planning and Placement Team Description

The Planning and Placement Team is required to convene in the following situations:

1. to develop an evaluation plan for a student referred for eligibility determination, as well as for students already identified but requiring further evaluation;
2. to review the results of the evaluations and to identify the student as disabled, if indicated;
3. to develop an individualized educational program (IEP), based upon evaluation results and to determine the proper placement;
4. to review the special education program for a child periodically, but not less frequently than annually or more frequently if deemed necessary and to make the necessary IEP modifications, adjustments, or program changes. Parents/guardians and the District may agree not to convene a PPT meeting for the purpose of making such changes and instead may develop a written document to modify the child's current I.E.P.
5. to exit a student from special education and/or related services, if evaluation results warrant.

Evaluations

Each child who has been referred and who may require special education, and related services shall be evaluated in order to determine whether special education is required. Each child receiving special education and related services shall be re-evaluated in accordance with IDEA procedures if the District determines that the education or related service needs including improved academic achievement and functional performance of the child warrant a reevaluation. In addition, a re-evaluation shall be conducted upon the request of the parent or personnel working with the child. A reevaluation shall occur not more frequently than once a year unless the parent and district agrees otherwise, and at least once every three years, unless parent/guardian and District agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary.

A complete evaluation study shall be conducted for each child referred who may require special education and related services. The evaluation study shall include reports concerning the child's educational progress, structured observation, and such psychological, medical, developmental and social evaluations as may be appropriate in determining the nature and scope of the child's exceptionality. Such reports may include information concerning the child's physical condition, socio-cultural background and adaptive behavior in home and in school. All sources of information shall be documented. If the child is dominant in a language other than English, the evaluation study shall also include systematic teacher observation of the specific areas of concern. Detailed information about the child's performance at home and in the community and any prescriptive or diagnostic teaching which has taken place shall be included.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

Evaluations (continued)

The evaluation procedures, instruments, and techniques shall be non-discriminatory and be validated for the specific purpose for which they have been designed. All such evaluation procedures, instruments, and techniques shall be administered by appropriately certified and/or licensed personnel in accordance with procedures recommended by the test publisher.

1. All evaluation procedures, instruments, and techniques shall be administered in the language and form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is not feasible to provide or administer.
2. More than one evaluation measure or assessment shall be used as the basis for placement. The results of standardized or local tests of ability, aptitude, affect, achievement, and aspiration shall not be exclusively used as the basis for placement.
3. Tests shall be selected and administered so as best to ensure that when a test is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills the test results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors which the test purports to measure.)
4. Evaluation procedures, instruments and techniques shall include those designed to assess specific areas of educational need and, where appropriate, language dominance, and shall not be limited to those which are designed to provide a general intelligence quotient.
5. In making a determination of eligibility, a child shall not be determined to be a child with a disability if the dominant factor for such determination is the lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction and/or math and/or limited English proficiency or a student's disciplinary actions or record. Further, the District is not required to take into consideration whether a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability in oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, mathematical calculation, or mathematical reasoning.
6. In determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, the District may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific research-based intervention, as part of the evaluation procedures.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

Independent Evaluation

Parents have the right to obtain an independent evaluation, conducted by an appropriately certified and/or licensed examiner who is not employed by the responsible Board of Education, of their child. The PPT shall provide to parents, on request, information about where an independent evaluation may be obtained.

Parents have the right to an independent evaluation at public expense if the parents disagree with an evaluation obtained by the Board of Education. However, the Board of Education may initiate a due process hearing, to be conducted by the State Department of Education, to show that its evaluation is appropriate. If there is a determination by the State Department of Education Hearing Officer that the evaluation of the school district was appropriate, the parents still have the right to an independent evaluation, but not at public expense. For purposes of this policy, "at public expense" means that the evaluation is provided at no cost to the parents.

If the parents obtain an independent evaluation at private expense, the results of the evaluation must be considered by the PPT in any decision concerning the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child and may be presented as evidence at a due process hearing conducted pursuant to the State Department of Education.

Whenever an independent evaluation is at public expense, the criteria under which the evaluation is obtained, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the examiner, shall be the same as the criteria which the school district uses when it initiates an evaluation.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The individualized education program shall be based upon the diagnostic findings of the evaluation study. The Planning and Placement Team shall base recommendations for any changes in a child's individualized education program upon the child's current individualized education program and any information relating to the child's current educational performance.

Each Planning and Placement Team shall develop, or revise, whichever is appropriate, the individualized education program for each child requiring special education and related services prior to the beginning of each school year. In the case of a student enrolled after the last day of the previous school year, this process shall be completed by October first of the school year.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

The individualized education program shall be a written statement developed by the PPT which shall include the following:

1. A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including, where appropriate, academic achievement, social adaptation, prevocational and vocational skills, psychomotor skills, and self-help skills;
2. A statement of annual educational goals for the school year "reasonably calculated to enable the child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances," under the child's individualized educational program;
3. A statement of how the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured and when periodic reports will be available on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals. (such as using quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) The child's educational program must be appropriately ambitious, considering his/her circumstances, and provide the opportunity to meet challenging objectives.
4. A statement of short-term instructional objectives for students with disabilities who take alternative assessments aligned to alternative achievement standards; (Benchmarks or short-term objectives in addition to annual goals are not required for all other students with disabilities.)
5. A statement of specific educational services needed by the child, including a description of special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, which are needed to meet the needs of the child. Such description shall include the type of transportation necessary and a statement of the recommended instructional settings;
6. The date when those services will begin and length of time the services will be given, with the length of the school day and school year needed to meet the child's special education needs, including criteria to determine when services will no longer be needed;
7. A description of the extent to which the child will be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum, defined as the same curricula for nondisabled children. This shall include a description of how the regular education program will be modified to meet the child's needs;
8. A list of the individuals who shall implement the individualized program; and
9. In the case of a residential placement, whether such placement is being recommended because of the need for services other than educational services.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (continued)

10. If it is determined that the child will take an alternate assessment on a State or District assessment of student achievement, the IEP must contain a statement of why the child cannot participate in the regular assessment and why the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the child.
11. Beginning not later than one year before the student reaches the age of majority (18), a statement informing the student of his/her rights under IDEA.
12. For a child identified as hearing impaired, the IEP, which includes a language and communications plan, shall address:
    - (i) the child's primary language or mode of communication;
    - (ii) opportunities for direct communication between the child and his/her peers and professional personnel in the primary child's language or mode of communication;
    - (iii) educational options available to the child;
    - (iv) the qualifications of teachers and other professional personnel administering the plan for the child, including their proficiency in the child's primary language or mode of communication;
    - (v) the accessibility of academic instruction, school services and extracurricular activities to the child;
    - (vi) Assistive devices and services for the child; and
    - (vii) Communication and physical environment accommodations for the child.

The school district shall use a standardized individualized education program form that shall be subject to the approval of the State Board of Education.

Timelines

Special education and related services shall be provided as soon as possible after the planning and placement team meeting held to review, revise or develop the child's individualized education program, but in any event not later than the following timelines.

In the case of a referral made during the academic year, the timelines shall be as follows:

1. The individualized education program shall be implemented within forty-five school days of referral or notice, exclusive of the time required to obtain parental consent.
2. In the case of a child whose individualized education program calls for out-of-district or private placement, the individualized education program shall be implemented within sixty school days of referral or notice, exclusive of the time required to obtain parental consent. If difficulty of placement is such as to occasion a delay beyond this period, the Board of Education shall submit to the State Board of Education written documentation of its efforts to obtain placement in a timely manner.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program-(IEP)

Timelines (continued)

3. Where necessary, parental consent shall be given within ten school days of the date of notice, or, where appropriate, of the date of the Planning and Placement Team meeting in which the parents participated.
4. A full copy of the individualized education program shall be sent to the parents within five school days after the Planning and Placement Team meeting to develop, review or revise the individualized education program.

In the case of a referral made between school years, the effective date of the referral may be deemed to be the first school day of the next school year.

Placement

Educational placements are made in accordance with the requirements set forth in the IEP of each child requiring special education and related services. The least restrictive environment is considered for each student based on the IEP. In selecting the least restrictive environment, consideration is given to any potentially harmful effect on the child or on the quality of services the child needs. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities, including children in public or private instructions or other care facilities, are educated with their peers in regular education environments.

Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of disabled children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Each child with disabilities shall participate to the maximum extent appropriate with non-disabled age-appropriate peers in non-academic and extra-curricular services and activities, including meals and recess periods.

Interpreting evaluation date and in making placement decisions, the PPT shall:

1. Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including attitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior;
2. Ensure information obtained from all these sources is documented and carefully considered;
3. Ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including the person's knowledge about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options; and
4. Make the placement decision conforming to the least restrictive environment considerations.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program-(IEP)

Placement (continued)

When the PPT meeting determines which placement is most appropriate to deliver education in the least restrictive environment, a continuum of services shall be used to guide the placement selection. This is done at no cost to the child's parents. This continuum shall consider programs ranging from regular education programs with students who are not disabled to special education programs with students who are the most severely disabled. The PPT shall also consider homebound placements, hospitalized instruction, diagnostic placements, and private school placements where such placements are considered necessary by the PPT for a student to receive a free appropriate public education.

Notice

The PPT shall notify parents of students requiring special education and related services five days before proposing to, or refusing to, initiate or change the child's identification, evaluation, or placement. Written notice shall be sent to the parents no later than five days after the date of referral. In addition, written parental consent shall be obtained prior to pre-placement evaluation, initial placement, or private placement of a child who requires or may require special education and related services. If the student is considered an emancipated minor or eighteen years of age or older, such notification shall be to the student.

The notice shall include the following information:

1. The reason of the notice. In the event of a referral, the notice shall include the source and date of the referral;
2. A description of the general evaluation procedure to be used;
3. A statement of parental rights to review and obtain copies of all records used as a basis for the referral, to be fully informed of all evaluation results, and to obtain an independent educational evaluation as part of the evaluation process; and
4. A full explanation of all due process procedures available to parents, upon initial referral or parental request for evaluation, upon the first filing of a due process complaint or upon parental request.

Where parental consent is required, notice shall include the above requirements and the following information:

1. A statement of parental rights to refuse consent and that, if consent is given, it may be revoked at any time;
2. A statement that parental failure to respond, within ten school days from the date of the notice, shall be construed as refusal of consent; and
3. A statement that, if contested, the child's current educational placement will not change until due process procedures have been completed.
4. The District will provide parents/guardians with State Department of Education information and resources relating to IEPs as soon as a child is identified as requiring special education.

Instruction

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-76a Definitions (as amended by PA 06-18)
10-76b State supervision of special education programs and services. Regulations. (as amended by PA 12-173)
10-76d Duties and powers of boards of education to provide special education programs and services. (as amended by June Special Session PA 15-5, Section 277, PA 19-184, PA 21-46, PA 21-144 and PA 23-137)
10-76g State aid for special education.
10-76ff Procedures for determining if a child requires special education (as amended by PA 06-18)
10-76h Special education hearing and review procedure.
10-76jj Language and communication plan as part of individualized education program for child identified as deaf or hard of hearing (as amended by PA 19-184)
10-76q Special education at technical education and career schools (as amended by PA 21-144)
State Board of Education Regulations
34 C.F.R. 300 et seq. Assistance to States for Education of Handicapped Children.
300.14 Special education definitions.
300.340-349 Individualized education programs.
300.503 Independent educational assessment.
300.533 Placement procedures.
300.550-556 Least restrictive environment.
P.L. 108-446 The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004
SDE Guidance Addressing Timeline for Initial Evaluations, Dec. 21, 2018
Rowley v. Board of Education, 485 U.S.-176 (1982)
Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1, 15-827 U.S. (2017)
A.M. v. N.Y. City Department of Education, 845F.3d 523, 541 (2d Cir.1997)
Mrs. B., v. Milford Board of Education 103 F. 3d 1114, 1121 (2d Cir. 1997)
A.R. v. Connecticut State Board of Education, 3:16-CV-01197 (CSH D. Conn. June 10, 2020)
Public Act 23-137 An Act Concerning Resources and Support Services for Persons With an Intellectual or Developmental Disability Sections 26-27, 30-31, 32-37, 39, 45, 47, 51, 52

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