



Agency Legislative Proposal – 2025 Session

Document Name: Updating Staffing Methodology for Teachers of the Visually Impaired

Document Name	Updating Staffing Methodology for Teachers of the Visually Impaired
----------------------	---

Legislative Liaison	Jennifer Proto, ADS Legislative & Administrative Advisor
Division Requesting This Proposal	ADS – Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind
Drafter	Jennifer Proto, ADS Legislative & Administrative Advisor

Title of Proposal	Updating Staffing Methodology for Teachers of the Visually Impaired within BESB’s Children’s Services Program
Statutory Reference, if any	CGS § 17a-812(b)
Brief Summary and Statement of Purpose	Updates teacher caseload management determination process to align with current practice.
How does this proposal relate to the agency’s mission?	Considering multiple factors relevant to the unique needs of students with blindness or visual impairments, including any requirements of an individualized education plan or service plan, allows for a more realistic determination of teacher workload and to efficiently utilize teacher capacity to effectively serve as many students as possible. Matching sufficient instructional time to student needs is directly tied to our mission of maximizing opportunities for the independence and well-being of people with disabilities and older adults in Connecticut.



Agency Legislative Proposal – 2025 Session

Document Name: Updating Staffing Methodology for Teachers of the Visually Impaired

SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY

Summarize sections in groups where appropriate

Section 1 eliminates reference to an outdated teacher caseload management formula that credits 6 points for each child learning braille and 1 point for each child who is not learning braille, with one full-time certified teacher who instructs students who are visually impaired assigned for every 25 points credited. It instead aligns with current BESB practice by requiring the ADS commissioner to consider the instruction levels established in the student's individualized education plan or service plan, the student's geographical location, and other relevant caseload management factors to determine the number of teachers needed to serve the school districts.

BACKGROUND

Origin of Proposal

☒ New Proposal

☐ Resubmission

--

Please consider the following, if applicable:

Have there been changes in federal/state laws or regulations that make this legislation necessary?	N/A
Has this proposal or a	



Agency Legislative Proposal – 2025 Session

Document Name: Updating Staffing Methodology for Teachers of the Visually Impaired

similar proposal been implemented in other states? If yes, to what result?	BESB is not aware of any states that base caseloads entirely on whether a student is learning braille or not. Considering multiple factors, especially the requirements of an IEP, is standard practice.
Have certain constituencies called for this proposal?	N/A

INTERAGENCY IMPACT

List each affected agency. Copy the table as needed.

[X] Check here if this proposal does NOT impact other agencies

1. Agency Name	
Agency Contact (name, title)	
Date Contacted	
Status	[] Approved [] Talks Ongoing
Open Issues, if any	



Agency Legislative Proposal – 2025 Session

Document Name: Updating Staffing Methodology for Teachers of the Visually Impaired

FISCAL IMPACT

Include the section number(s) responsible for the fiscal impact and the anticipated impact

[X] Check here if this proposal does NOT have a fiscal impact

State	N/A
Municipal (Include any municipal mandate that can be found within legislation)	N/A
Federal	N/A
Additional notes	N/A

MONITORING & EVALUATION PLAN

If applicable, please describe the anticipated measurable outcomes and the data that will be used to track those outcomes. Include the section number(s) responsible for those outcomes

[X] Check here if this proposal does NOT lead to any measurable outcomes

As this aligns with current practice, there should be no measurable change.



Agency Legislative Proposal – 2025 Session

Document Name: Updating Staffing Methodology for Teachers of the Visually Impaired

ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD KNOW?

N/A

INSERT FULLY DRAFTED BILL HERE

Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 17a-812 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(b) The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services shall expend funds for the services made available pursuant to subsection (a) of this section from the educational aid for children who are blind or visually impaired account in accordance with the provisions of this subsection. The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services may adopt, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, such regulations as the commissioner deems necessary to carry out the purpose and intent of this subsection.

(1) The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services shall provide, upon written request from any interested school district, the services of teachers who instruct students who are visually impaired, based on the levels established in the individualized education or service plan. The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services shall also make available resources, including, but not limited to, the braille and large print library, to all teachers of public and nonpublic school children. The commissioner may also provide vision-related professional development and training to all school districts and cover the actual cost for paraprofessionals from school districts to participate in agency-sponsored braille training programs. The commissioner shall utilize education consultant positions, funded by moneys appropriated from the General Fund, to supplement new staffing that will be made available through the educational aid for children who are blind or visually impaired account, which shall be governed by formal written policies established by the commissioner.

(2) The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services may use funds appropriated to said account to provide specialized books, materials, equipment, supplies, adaptive technology services and devices, specialist examinations and aids, preschool programs and vision-related



Agency Legislative Proposal – 2025 Session

Document Name: Updating Staffing Methodology for Teachers of the Visually Impaired

independent living services, excluding primary educational placement, for eligible children.

(3) The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services may, within available appropriations, employ certified teachers who instruct students who are visually impaired in sufficient numbers to meet the requests for services received from school districts. In responding to such requests, the commissioner shall consider factors including, but not limited to, the instruction levels established in the student's individualized education plan or service plan, the student's geographical location, and other relevant caseload management factors to [utilize a formula for] determine[ing] the number of teachers needed to serve the school districts[, crediting six points for each child learning braille and one point for each other child, with one full-time certified teacher who instructs students who are visually impaired assigned for every twenty-five points credited]. The commissioner shall exercise due diligence to employ the needed number of certified teachers who instruct students who are visually impaired, but shall not be liable for lack of resources. Funds appropriated to said account may also be utilized to employ additional staff in numbers sufficient to provide compensatory skills, evaluations and training to children who are blind or visually impaired, special assistants and other support staff necessary to ensure the efficient operation of service delivery. Not later than October first of each year, the Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services shall determine the number of teachers needed based on the formula provided in this subdivision. Based on such determination, the Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services shall estimate the funding needed to pay such teachers' salaries and related expenses.

(4) In any fiscal year, when funds appropriated to cover the combined costs associated with providing the services set forth in subdivisions (2) and (3) of this subsection are projected to be insufficient, the Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services may collect revenue from all school districts that have requested such services on a per student pro rata basis, in the sums necessary to cover the projected portion of these services for which there are insufficient appropriations.