




**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



Series: 2022-2023  
Circular Letter: C-1

**TO:** Superintendents of Schools

**FROM:** Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education 

**DATE:** June 15, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Summary of Education-Related Legislation Enacted in the 2022 Regular Session

The Connecticut General Assembly has adjourned its 2022 Regular Session. The State Department of Education (CSDE) is hereby providing you with a summary of the public acts passed during the regular session, and signed by the Governor, that appear to be of applicability and interest to school districts.

In reviewing this summary, please keep the following in mind:

1. This document does not describe every 2022 public act affecting the operation of a school district or provide every detail of the summarized acts. This is a summary of new legislation that was being tracked by the Department. Therefore, each superintendent or designated district leader should review the actual text of any act that may affect their district.
2. If you are viewing this document electronically, clicking the title of the act in the table of contents page will bring you to that section of the document; clicking the title appearing above each summary in the body of this report will allow you to view the full language of that act.
3. The summaries are organized by bill number.
4. Following the table of contents is a summary of each enacted bill. In some cases where only portions of a public act relate to education, only those sections of the act have been included in this summary.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura J. Stefon, Chief of Staff and Legislative Liaison, at 860-713-6493 or [laura.stefon@ct.gov](mailto:laura.stefon@ct.gov).

**2021 Public Acts Affecting Education**

<b>Public Act Number Bill Number</b>	<b>Public Act Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
SB 1 PA 22-80	<a href="#"><u>An Act Concerning Childhood Mental and Physical Health Services in Schools</u></a>	3-6
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HB 5243 PA 22-87	<a href="#"><u>An Act Concerning the Identification and Prevention of and Response to Adult Sexual Misconduct Against Children</u></a>	17-18
HB 5372 PA 22-144	<a href="#"><u>An Act Concerning Periodic Behavioral Health Assessments, Police Officer Recruitment, School Resource Officers, Reporting of Violations to the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, Investigations by the Inspector General, Minimum Standards and Practices for the Administration, Management and Operation of Law Enforcement Units and the Correction Advisory Committee</u></a>	19
HB 5466 PA 22-116	<a href="#"><u>An Act Concerning Assorted Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes</u></a>	19-21

[SB 1, An Act Concerning Childhood Mental and Physical Health Services in Schools](#)  
(Selected sections, use link for full Public Act)

**§ 3 — SURVEY ON SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, COUNSELORS, AND NURSES**

The section requires the State Department of Education (CSDE), by July 1, 2023, and within available appropriations, to develop and distribute a survey to local and regional school boards to determine how many school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, and school nurses they employ. The survey must also include information on: (1) the number of each of these four types of professionals employed by the board of education; (2) the number of each professional assigned to each school, including whether any are assigned to more than one school; (3) the geographic area covered by any such professional who provides services to more than one local or regional board of education; and (4) an annual estimate of the number of students receiving direct services from each of the four types of professionals during the five-year period before the survey is completed. Annually beginning with the 2023-24 school year, the bill requires each school district to complete the CSDE survey and submit the completed survey to the education commissioner when and how the commissioner requires. Following the receipt of a completed school district survey, the bill requires the education commissioner to annually calculate the student-to-worker ratio for each of the four types of professionals listed above for each school and each district. Annually beginning by January 1, 2024, the commissioner must submit a report on the results of the survey and the student-to-worker ratios for each of the four types of professionals included in the survey to the Education and Children’s committees.<sup>1</sup>

**§§ 4 & 5 — NEW GRANT PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, COUNSELORS, AND NURSES**

The bill requires CSDE to administer a program, for FYs 23 to 25, to provide grants for school districts to hire and retain more school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, and nurses. The bill requires grant applications to be filed with the education commissioner when and how the commissioner decides. As part of the application, an applicant must submit a (1) grant expenditure plan and (2) copy of the completed survey required by the bill. The plan must include, at a minimum: (1) the number of additional school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, or school nurses to be hired; (2) the number of each of the four types of professionals being retained who were previously hired with the assistance of these grant funds; and (3) whether each of the four types of professionals will conduct student assessments or provide services to students based on assessment results, and the type of those services. In determining whether to award a grant to an applicant, the bill requires the commissioner to give priority to those school districts (1) with large student-to-worker ratios for any of the four types of professionals listed above or (2) that have a high volume of students using mental health services.<sup>2</sup>

**§ 6 — HUMAN SERVICES PERMIT**

The bill requires CSDE to study the feasibility of creating a temporary human services permit to allow individuals who have specialized training, experience, or expertise in social work, human services,

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<sup>1</sup> § 6 of PA 22-116 adds licensed marriage and family therapists employed by local and regional boards of education to the survey

<sup>2</sup> §§ 7 & 8 of PA 22-116 add licensed marriage and family therapists employed by local and regional boards of education to the grant program

psychology, or sociology, but do not meet the certification requirements to be a school social worker, school psychologist, or other professional under teacher certification law, to work in a public school in order to respond to a school district's emergency need. The study must include: 1. an analysis of the need for individuals with human services credentials to provide services to students in school districts, 2. an assessment of the appropriate qualifications for individuals to be issued the permit in relation to the need of school districts for staff to provide services to students, 3. a comparison of the services that would be provided by an individual who is issued a human services permit to the services provided by individuals who are certified under state law, and 4. an analysis of whether the permit is necessary based on the initial results of the grant program provided in the bill. In conducting the study, CSDE must consult with institutions of higher education, support services associations, superintendents, principals, support services staff, community providers, and families. Under the bill, CSDE must submit the report with recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2024.

### **§§ 7-9 — OPIOID ANTAGONISTS IN SCHOOLS**

School Nurse and Qualified Employee Authorization (§ 7) - The bill authorizes a school nurse, or in the absence of a school nurse, a qualified school employee, to maintain opioid antagonists to administer emergency first aid to a student who is experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose, but who does not have prior written authorization from a parent or guardian or prior order from a qualified medical professional to receive this medication. The section also requires CSDE to develop guidelines for local and regional school boards on storing and administering opioid antagonists in schools. CSDE must do this by October 1, 2022, and in consultation with the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) and the Department of Public Health (DPH). No school nurse or qualified school employee may administer an opioid antagonist under this section unless they have completed a training program developed by the CSDE, DPH, and DCP or under an agreement entered into pursuant to C.G.S. Section 21-286 as amended.

Opioid Antagonist Distribution Agreements (§ 8) – The bill authorizes prescribers or pharmacists certified to prescribe an opioid antagonist to enter into an agreement with local or regional school boards on the distribution and administration of opioid antagonists. Existing law already allows prescribers and pharmacists to make these agreements with law enforcement agencies, emergency medical service providers, government agencies, and community health organizations. As under existing law, the bill requires the agreement to address the school boards' opioid antagonist storage, handling, labeling, recalls, and record keeping. The prescriber or pharmacist must train the people who will distribute or administer opioid antagonists under the agreement. Additionally, people who will distribute or administer opioid antagonists must be trained first.

Information on Opioid Antagonist Acquisition (§ 9) – For the school year commencing July 1, 2022, the bill requires DPH, in collaboration with CSDE, to provide information to local and regional school boards on where boards can acquire opioid antagonists. The information must include the name and contact information of any opioid antagonist manufacturers that provide the medication at no cost to school districts.

### **§ 12 — SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER GRANT EXPANSION PROGRAM**

The bill requires Department of Public Health (DPH) to administer a school-based health center (SBHC) grant expansion program in FY 23 to provide grants to certain SBHC operators to expand the centers and services they provide. Under the bill, applicants are eligible for a program grant if they operate a SBHC for any of the (1) 36 sites recommended for expanded mental health services in the School-Based Health

Center Expansion Working Group’s final report or (2) 124 schools recommended for expanded SBHC medical and mental health services in the final report. When awarding grants, the bill requires DPH to give priority to SBHC operators that will provide services after regular school hours. Operators must apply to DPH (1) in a time and manner the department prescribes and (2) in collaboration with the local or regional school board for the district where the SBHC is located.

**§ 13 — LEARNER ENGAGEMENT AND ATTENDANCE PROGRAM (LEAP)**

Requires CSDE to provide, within available appropriations, assistance, and support for FY 23 to the school districts participating in the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP).

**§ 14 — MINIMUM DUTY-FREE LUNCH PERIODS FOR TEACHERS**

Under existing law, all professional certified employees (e.g., teachers, administrators, school social workers, and school counselors) of a school district who work directly with children must have a guaranteed, duty-free period for lunch. The bill requires that the period be uninterrupted, and the length of the period be the greater of 30 minutes or the amount of time prescribed in the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.

**§ 15 — MINORITY TEACHER CANDIDATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

The bill requires CSDE to administer a new minority teacher candidate scholarship program. It defines minority as anyone whose race is defined as other than white, or whose ethnicity is defined as Hispanic or Latino by the federal Office of Management and Budget for use by the Census Bureau.

Under the bill, the program must provide an annual scholarship to minority students who (1) graduated from a public high school in a priority school district, as defined in C.G.S. Section 10-266p, and (2) are enrolled in a teacher preparation program at any four-year higher education institution. Maximum grants cannot exceed \$20,000 per year.

By law, a priority school district is a district that receives additional state grants based on a formula that considers high populations or concentrations of students (1) on temporary family assistance and (2) performing poorly on statewide mastery exams (CGS § 10-266p). There are currently 15 priority school districts.

Under the bill, CSDE must, in consultation with the Education Committee chairpersons, develop a policy for administering the scholarships by January 1, 2023. The policy must address (1) any additional eligibility criteria, (2) scholarship payment and distribution, and (3) notifying high school students in priority school districts of the scholarship program.

**§§ 16-22 — MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT**

The bill renames the minority teacher recruitment (MTR) task force and requires it to conduct a study of existing recruitment and retention programs. Under the bill, the newly named “Task Force to Diversify the Educator Workforce” maintains the same membership and mission as outlined in existing law. Under the bill, the new task force study must (1) review prior legislation relating to minority teacher recruitment and retention, (2) evaluate the implementation of minority teacher recruitment and retention programs, and (3) analyze their effectiveness. The bill allows the task force to consult with

CSDE, Minority Teacher Recruitment Policy Oversight Council, and Education Committee co-chairpersons while conducting the study, which it must submit along with recommendations for legislation to the Education Committee by January 1, 2023.

### **§ 23 — TEACHER CERTIFICATION LAW REVIEW**

The bill requires CSDE to review the state’s teacher certification statutes and regulations. The review must (1) identify obsolete provisions; (2) evaluate the existing requirements’ effectiveness; and (3) analyze whether any of the laws create a barrier to entry or undue hardship for (a) teacher candidate recruitment or retention, including state reciprocity (including Puerto Rico) or (b) addressing student academic needs. The bill allows CSDE to seek input from stakeholder groups while conducting its review. CSDE must report its findings and recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2023.

### **§ 24 — CAREER AND TECHNICAL PATHWAYS INSTRUCTOR PERMIT**

The bill authorizes the State Board of Education (SBE) to issue career and technical pathways instructor permits if requested by a local or regional board of education or regional educational service center (RESC). Under the bill, these permits allow individuals who meet specified criteria to teach part-time in a specialized field (e.g., manufacturing, allied health, computer technology, engineering, or the construction trades) for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. The statute also requires supervision of the instructor and a program to assist the instructor developed by the board of education or regional educational service center in consultation with the CSDE.

### **§ 25 — REMOTE LEARNING**

The bill permits local or regional boards of education to authorize remote learning for students in grades kindergarten to 12 beginning with the 2024-25 school year under the conditions stated in the statute. Under current law, boards have the option to provide remote learning only for grades 9 through 12 beginning in the 2022-23 school year, in accordance with standards developed by the CSDE. The board of education must prohibit, as a part of remote learning, the provision of dual instruction, i.e., the simultaneous instruction by a teacher to students in-person in the classroom and engaged in remote learning.

### **§ 31 — RAISING THE SPECIAL EDUCATION AGE LIMIT**

The bill requires school districts to provide special education services to qualifying students until they reach age 22, rather than 21.

### **§§ 32 & 33 — ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDIES**

Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, the bill (1) requires all local and regional boards of education to include Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) studies in their social studies curriculum and (2) adds AAPI studies to the state’s existing required program of instruction for public schools as part of the social studies curriculum. As with other required subject matter areas under existing law, the bill requires SBE to make AAPI curriculum materials available to help boards develop their instructional programs.

**[SB 2 - An Act Expanding Preschool and Mental and Behavioral Services for Children](#)**  
(Selected sections, use link for full Public Act)

**§ 1 — DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES (DMHAS) MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES**

The bill requires, for FY 23 and each year after, DMHAS to make mobile crisis response services available to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**§ 3 & 4 — MENTAL HEALTH PLAN FOR STUDENT ATHLETES**

Under the bill, CSDE must establish a mental health plan for student athletes in collaboration with the intramural and interscholastic athletics governing authority. The plan must be made available to local and regional boards of education to raise awareness about available mental health resources for student athletes, and all boards of education must implement it beginning in the 2023-24 school year. CSDE must also post the plan on its website and provide technical assistance to boards of education implementing the plan.

**§ 5 — PIPELINE FOR CONNECTICUT'S FUTURE PROGRAM**

Current law allows local or regional boards of education to set up a “Pipeline for Connecticut’s Future” program with local business to create onsite student training opportunities for course credit. The bill instead requires CSDE, in collaboration with The Department of Labor (DOL), to administer this program.

Under the bill, CSDE must help boards of education enhance existing partnerships or make new ones with childcare providers, early childhood education programs, or mental health services as well as partnerships with additional fields, such as manufacturing, computer programming, or culinary arts, and one or more local businesses, to offer a pathways program which assists students in a number of ways with respect to employment.

**§ 6 — UCONN STUDY – SOCIAL MEDIA AND TELEPHONE IMPACT**

The bill requires UConn’s Neag School of Education to (1) study and evaluate the impact of social media and mobile telephone usage on a student’s mental health from kindergarten through grade 12, and (2) by January 1, 2024, report its findings and any recommendations to the Children and Public Health committees. Under the bill, the study must include how it impacts the student’s educational experience and the school’s climate.

**§ 8 — FAMILY CARE COORDINATORS**

The bill requires, beginning in the 2022-23 school year and for each subsequent school year, each local and regional board of education to hire or designate an existing employee to serve as the district’s family care coordinator. The family care coordinator must work with school social workers, school psychologists, and school counselors under the board’s jurisdiction and serve as the school system’s liaison with mental health service providers to (1) provide students with access to mental health resources in the community and (2) bring mental health services to students in school.

## **§ 9 — WITHHOLDING RECESS AS A FORM OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Each school year, starting with the 2022-23 school year, the bill requires each local and regional board of education to adopt a policy it deems appropriate concerning the circumstances when, as a form of discipline, a school employee may prevent or otherwise restrict a student from participating in the entire time devoted to physical exercise (i.e., recess) in the regular school day.

Under the bill, the policy must allow school employees to prevent or restrict recess when:

1. a student poses a danger to the health or safety of other students or school personnel; or
2. it is limited to the shorter recess period if there are two or more recess periods in the school day, so long as the student is allowed to participate in at least 20 minutes of physical activity during the school day.

The policy may allow recess prevention or restriction only once during a school week unless the student is a danger to the health or safety of other students or school personnel. Additionally, the policy must not (1) include provisions that are unreasonably restrictive or punitive, as determined by the board, or (2) allow recess prevention or restriction if a student does not complete their work on time or for the student's academic performance.

## **§§ 10 & 11 — CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH DAY**

The bill requires the governor to proclaim May 26 of each year to be "Get Outside and Play for Children's Mental Health Day" to raise awareness about children's mental health and the positive effect that being outdoors has on children's mental health and wellness. Under the bill, suitable exercises must be held in the State Capitol and in the public schools on that day or, if that day is not a school day, on the previous school day, or on any day the local or regional school board prescribes.

The bill also requires the CSDE, starting with the 2022-2023 school year, to provide annual notice to local and regional school boards about the designated day, including any suggestions or materials for suitable exercises that may be held to observe it.

## **§ 24 — TASK FORCE TO STUDY CHILDREN'S NEEDS**

PA 21-46 (§ 30) established a 25-member task force to study the (1) comprehensive needs of children in the state and (2) extent to which the needs are being met by educators, community members, and local and state agencies. The task force submitted its findings to the Children's Committee in December 2021 and terminated on January 1, 2022.

The bill reconvenes the task force to continue to study children's needs and tasks them with the same responsibilities as before, and additionally requires the task force to provide recommendations to meet the demand for infant and toddler care in the state by (1) increasing access to and enrollment in childcare centers, group childcare homes, and family childcare homes; and (2) identifying resources to assist childcare facilities in meeting demand.



The bill additionally requires the task force to study the feasibility of adjusting school start times to improve students' mental and physical well-being.

**SB 206, An Act Concerning the Department of Children and Families' Recommendations for Revisions to the Statutes Concerning Children**

This bill expands the entities to whom the Department of Children and Families (DCF) must disclose certain records without the subject's consent. With certain exceptions, existing law generally requires the department to obtain consent from the subject of a record before disclosing information created or obtained in connection with its child protection activities, activities of a child while in DCF care or custody, or the department's abuse and neglect registry. The bill creates additional exceptions for disclosures to the following entities:

1. the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to determine a person's suitability to (a) care for children in an OEC-licensed youth camp or (b) provide childcare services to a child and to receive a childcare subsidy (i.e., Care 4 Kids);
2. any DCF-licensed child placing agency to determine a person's suitability (a) for employment or (b) to adopt and provide foster care; and
3. the Department of Administrative Services to determine whether an applicant for state employment, who would have contact with children in the course of his or her employment, is on the child abuse or neglect registry.

The bill also limits the powers and duties of the education unit DCF was required to establish pursuant to PA 21-174. The act required DCF to create and implement a plan for an educational unit within the department to educate children who are incarcerated or in a juvenile justice facility. The bill instead requires DCF to establish an administrative unit to oversee these children's education, rather than directly provide it. It makes conforming changes by, among other things, eliminating the commissioner's power to employ and dismiss teachers, or contract with local or regional boards of education or educational service providers to provide educational services to these children. As under existing law, the DCF commissioner must administer, coordinate, and control the unit's operations, and may employ and dismiss staff as needed.

**SB 226, An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Department of Education**

§§ 1-3 – extends the term of validity for three levels of public school teaching certification (i.e., initial, provisional, and professional).

§§ 4-5 - establishes new reporting requirements and deadlines for CSDE and the State Education Resource Center's (SERC's) collaborative effort to create a model curriculum for grades kindergarten to eight from January 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024.

§§ 6 & 7 – Allow the Commissioner of Education to temporarily waive provisions or modify requirements in state statutes in response to changes to federal statutes or regulations pertaining to child nutrition programs.

**SB 228, An Act Concerning the Pipeline for Connecticut's Future Program and the Provision of Information About the Availability of Technical Education and Career Schools and Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Education Centers**

This bill requires local and regional boards of education to require that their school counselors provide information to middle and high school students and their parents on the availability of (1) vocational, technical, technological, and postsecondary education and training at technical education and career schools and (2) agricultural science and technology education at regional agricultural science and technology education centers. It also requires school boards to publish this information on their websites. Under current law, school boards must simply inform these students and parents about the availability of this education and training.

The bill also requires the CSDE, by July 1, 2023, to develop best practices that school boards may use when setting up a Pipeline for Connecticut's Future program (i.e., a pathways program), which involves boards partnering with local businesses to offer students on-site training and course credit (see CGS § 10-21k). In doing so, CSDE must collaborate with stakeholders and school boards that have successfully implemented a pathways program. Additionally, CSDE must make these best practices available to school boards upon request.

Lastly, the bill requires the CSDE Commissioner to review existing state laws and regulations related to school boards setting up pathways programs and identify any obstacles or prohibitions that may limit a board's ability to build partnerships with local businesses towards creating a successful program. Under the bill, the review may include laws governing attendance, course credit for schoolwork performed outside the classroom or in an apprenticeship setting, and educator certification. By January 1, 2023, the Commissioner must submit recommendations for legislation to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance over matters related to education and employee advancement.

**SB 350, An Act Establishing Juneteenth Independence Day as a Legal Holiday**

This bill establishes a new legal state holiday on June 19 known as Juneteenth Independence Day.

The State Personnel Act mandates that each full-time permanent state employee receives paid time off for legal holidays (CGS § 5-254). To the extent it is considered a change in working conditions, an additional paid day off may have to be negotiated with public employee collective bargaining units.

By law, state holidays are also bank and credit union holidays, during which time bank and credit union transactions are generally suspended (CGS § 36a-23).

The decision to close public schools on Juneteenth Independence Day is to be made by each local school district. By law, each local and regional board of education that remains open on a state holiday must hold a suitable educational program in observance of such holiday.

[HB 5001, An Act Concerning Children's Mental Health](#)  
(Selected sections, use link for full Public Act)

**§ 12 — STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST EMPLOYMENT SURVEY**

Beginning by July 1, 2023, the bill requires the CSDE Commissioner to develop and distribute an annual survey to each local and regional board of education, within available appropriations, about their employment of student mental health specialists. Under the bill, these specialists include school social workers, school psychologists, trauma specialists, behavior technicians, board-certified behavior analysts, school counselors, licensed professional counselors, and licensed marriage and family therapists.

The bill requires the survey to include at least the following:

1. the total number of student mental health specialists for each district as a whole and for each individual school in the district;
2. a disaggregation of the total number of school social workers, school psychologists, trauma specialists, behavior technicians, board-certified behavior analysts, school counselors, licensed professional counselors, and licensed marriage and family therapists in each district and in each school in the district, and whether such individuals are assigned to multiple schools;
3. the geographic area covered by any student mental health specialist who provides services to more than one board of education;
4. an estimate of the annual number of students who have received direct services from each individual student mental health specialist during the five years prior to the survey's completion; and
5. data, if any, about school-based behavioral health services provided for a school board contractually by a private provider, including (a) types of services; (b) schools, grade levels, and number of students receiving these services; and (c) total board expenditures for these services under the contract during the previous school year.

Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, each board of education must complete the survey and submit it to the Commissioner in the time and manner the Commissioner determines. After receiving a completed survey, the Commissioner must annually calculate the student-to-school school mental health specialist ratios for the board and each school under the board's jurisdiction.

The Commissioner must annually report the survey results and ratios to the Education and Children's Committees starting by January 1, 2024.

**§ 13 — GRANT FOR STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST HIRING**

The bill requires CSDE to administer a program to provide grants in FYs 23-25 to local and regional boards of education for hiring student mental health specialists. It allows CSDE to accept the following

funding sources to support the program's administration: private source or state agency funds and gifts; grants; and donations, including in-kind donations.

Under the bill, boards may file grant applications with the CSDE Commissioner beginning on January 1, 2023, in a form and manner she determines. Boards applying before July 1, 2023, must submit the minimum information required by the bill for the student mental health specialist employment survey. Those boards applying on or after July 1, 2023, must submit a copy of their completed student mental health specialist employment survey (see § 12 above).

Additionally, all boards must submit a plan for grant fund spending, regardless of their application date. This plan must include at least the following information:

1. the numbers of (a) additional specialists to be hired and (b) specialists being retained who were previously hired with the assistance of these grant funds;
2. whether these specialists will be conducting student assessments or providing student services based on the assessment's results; and
3. the type of services that the specialists will provide.

#### **§ 14 — GRANT FOR DELIVERY OF STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The bill requires CSDE to administer a program to provide grants in FYs 23-25 to boards of education, youth camps, and other summer program operators for delivery of student mental health services. It allows CSDE to accept the following funding sources to support the program's administration: private source or state agency funds and gifts; grants; and donations, including in-kind donations.

Beginning January 1, 2023, applicants may file grant applications with the CSDE Commissioner in the time and manner she determines. Boards of education applying before July 1, 2023, must submit the minimum information required by the bill for the student mental health specialist employment survey. Those applying on or after July 1, 2023, must submit a copy of their completed student mental health specialist employment survey (see § 12 above). Additionally, all applicants must submit a plan for grant fund spending, regardless of their application date.

The bill authorizes the Commissioner to determine (1) whether to award grants to applicants and (2) the amount of a recipient's initial grant award based on its submitted plan. It establishes the following grant amounts for the commissioner to award for the duration of the grant program: (1) for FY 23, a commissioner-determined amount; (2) for FY 24, the same amount awarded in FY 23; and (3) for FY 25, 70% of the amount awarded in FY 24.

Under the bill, grant recipients must file expenditure reports with CSDE, as the Commissioner directs. The bill limits grant recipients' expenditures to those consistent with the grant spending plan submitted as part of their application. It also prohibits them from using grant funds on operating expenses that existed before they received these funds. Additionally, the bill requires grant recipients to refund to the department (1) any unspent grant amount at the end of the fiscal year when it was awarded and (2) any grant amount that was not spent in accordance with the plan submitted in the grant application.

The bill requires each grant recipient to work with the department to develop metrics to annually track and calculate the grant program's utilization rate, which will measure the program's success. Grant recipients must submit these metrics and the utilization rate to CSDE each year.

### **§§ 16 & 21 — STUDENT TRUANCY AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS**

Existing law requires each school district to adopt and implement policies or procedures related to truant students and specifies various requirements such policies or procedures must include.

The bill adds three new requirements. First, it requires school districts to provide notice to a truant child's parent or guardian about the availability of the 2-1-1 Infoline program and other pediatric mental and behavioral health screening services and tools.

The bill also requires that, beginning July 1, 2023, an appropriate student mental health specialist (as defined in § 12) evaluate each child who is a truant to determine if more behavioral health interventions are necessary for the child's well-being.

Finally, the bill requires each school district, by September 1, 2023, to adopt and implement (1) an CSDE-developed truancy intervention model that accounts for mental and behavioral health or (2) a truancy intervention plan that meets the CSDE truancy model requirements. This is the same deadline by which CSDE must develop the model (see below).

The bill requires CSDE to (1) develop a truancy intervention model that accounts for mental and behavioral health and (2) make the model available for school districts' implementation by September 1, 2023. Existing law requires the CSDE to have an intervention model available for school districts it identifies as having a disproportionately high level of truancy (CGS § 10-198a(b)(5)).

The bill requires CSDE to collaborate with DCF to issue guidance to boards of education by September 1, 2023, on (1) best practices for behavioral health interventions and (2) when to call the 2-1-1 Infoline program or use alternative interventions.

### **§§ 17 & 18 — REGIONAL STUDENT TRAUMA COORDINATORS**

The bill requires, for FYs 23 and 24, each regional educational service center (RESC) to hire an individual to serve as the RESC's regional trauma coordinator (i.e., "coordinator"). The bill makes each coordinator responsible for, among other duties, developing and implementing a trauma-informed care training program as required under the bill and providing technical assistance in implementing the program with the boards of education that are the RESC's member boards. Each coordinator must have significant trauma-informed experience and have completed professional training focused on trauma.

Specifically, the bill requires the RESC coordinators to jointly develop and implement the training program with a training model enabling student mental health specialists to deliver trauma-informed care training for all teachers, administrators, and other school staff and coaches when they complete the program. In developing the training program, the regional trauma coordinators may collaborate with nonprofit organizations in the state that focus on child health and development and trauma-informed care for children.

The bill requires the coordinators to offer this training at no cost to student mental health specialists or the RESC member boards of education that employ the specialists. Any student mental health specialist who has participated in the trauma-informed care program must be the one providing this training to teachers, administrators, and other school staff and coaches under the bill.

The bill requires the regional trauma coordinators to design the training so that it can be included as part of a school district's required in-service training. It permits a board of education to enter into an agreement with the RESC trauma coordinator to provide the trauma-informed care training program as part of the school district's in-service training program.

The bill requires each coordinator to (1) develop a progress report and a final report on the training program's implementation, (2) submit the progress report to the Children and Education committees by January 1, 2024, and (3) submit the final report to the same committees by January 1, 2025.

Under the bill, the progress report must cover the training program's implementation in FY 23, including an analysis of its effectiveness and results. The final report must cover the program's implementation in FYs 23 and 24 and include (1) an analysis of the program's effectiveness and results and (2) recommendations on whether it should be extended and funded for FYs 25 and 26.

#### **§ 19 — BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION MEETINGS**

Beginning in the 2022-23 school year, the bill allows any classroom teacher to request a behavior intervention meeting with the school's crisis intervention team for any student whose behavior has caused (1) a serious disruption to other students' instruction or (2) self-harm or physical harm to the teacher, another student, or staff in the teacher's classroom. By law, the school's crisis intervention team responds to incidents where physical restraint or seclusion may be necessary to prevent immediate or imminent injury to a student or others. The school principal designates the team members, consisting of a teacher, administrator, and school paraprofessional or other school employee who has direct contact with students (CGS § 10-236b(o)(2)).

The crisis intervention team must hold the meeting, and its participants must identify resources and supports to address the social, emotional, and instructional needs of the student of concern.

#### **§ 20 — STUDENT TRAUMA ASSESSMENT ADDED TO THE STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE**

Existing law requires each school district superintendent to annually submit to CSDE a strategic school profile that, among other things, provides information on measures of student needs. The bill requires boards to include, as part of this category, a needs assessment that identifies resources necessary to (1) address student trauma impacting students and staff in each school and (2) adequately respond to students with mental, emotional, or behavioral health needs.

The strategic school profile includes data on student performance, school resources, special education, and other items. The law requires each superintendent to submit data for the superintendent's entire district and each school individually for the strategic school profile.

## **§ 28 — MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

The bill requires each local and regional board of education, beginning in the 2023-24 school year, to include the 9-8-8 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number on the student identification card distributed to students in grades 6-12. If the 9-8-8 number has not been operational for more than one year before the 2023-24 school year begins, then the bill postpones the requirement that the number be included on student ID cards until a future school year immediately after the number has been operational for 366 days.

## **§§ 34-36 — PEER-TO-PEER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT PROGRAM**

The bill requires DCF, in collaboration with CSDE, to create a peer-to-peer mental health support program available to (1) local or regional boards of education, (2) local and district health departments, (3) youth service bureaus, (4) municipal social service agencies, and (5) other DCF-approved youth-serving organizations. The bill requires the departments to:

1. develop a peer-to-peer mental health support program, by January 1, 2023, that provides services to help students in grades 6 through 12 with problem solving, decision making, conflict resolution, and stress management; and
2. provide training, beginning January 1, 2023, on the program's implementation and student instruction, guidance, and supervision to designated staff members and employees of the organizations described above.

In developing the program, DCF must use best practices and may use any existing peer-to-peer counseling models.

Under the bill, beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, local and regional boards of education, as well as the entities described above, may begin administering the program to participating students in grades 6-12. The superintendent for each district administering the program must select at least one "designated staff member" to complete the DCF-CSDE training (i.e., a teacher, school administrator, guidance or school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, or school paraeducator (1) employed by a local or regional board of education or (2) working in a public middle or high school). The other entities administering the program must select at least one employee to do so as well.

## **§ 38 — CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIST GRANT PROGRAM**

The bill requires DPH, by January 1, 2023, to establish and administer a grant program to incentivize employers of child and adolescent psychiatrists to recruit and hire new child and adolescent psychiatrists and retain those whom they employ. It requires the DPH commissioner to establish (1) eligibility requirements; (2) priority categories, including nonhospital employers; (3) funding limitations; and (4) the application process. The DPH commissioner, in consultation with Office of Health Strategies, must distribute grant funds equitably with regard to the type and location of employers.

Starting by January 1, 2024, the DPH commissioner must annually report to the Public Health Committee on (1) the number and demographics of the employers who applied for and received incentive grants under the program, (2) the recipients' use of grant funds, and (3) any other information the commissioner considers pertinent.

### **§ 39 — DMHAS ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN**

The bill requires DMHAS, by January 1, 2023, and in collaboration with DCF, to design, plan, and implement a multiyear, statewide advertising campaign (1) promoting the availability of all mental health, behavioral health, and substance use disorder services in the state, including the difference between 9-1-1, 9-8-8, and 2-1-1, and (2) informing residents how to obtain these services. The campaign must at least include television, radio, and online advertising.

DMHAS, by this same date and in collaboration with DCF, must also establish and regularly update a website connected with this advertising campaign that includes a comprehensive listing of in-state providers of these services.

The bill requires the DMHAS commissioner to solicit cooperation and participation from these providers in this advertising campaign, including soliciting any available funds. It allows the commissioner to hire consultants with advertising expertise to assist in implementing these provisions.

### **§§ 60 & 61 — YOUTH SERVICE CORPS (YSC) PROGRAM AND GRANTS**

The bill establishes a YSC grant program to provide grants to municipalities with priority school districts (PSD) to establish programs that provide paid, community-based service learning and academic and workforce development programs to eligible Connecticut youth and young adults (i.e., local YSC programs). By law, a priority school districts is a district that receives additional state grants based on a formula that considers high populations or concentrations of students (1) on temporary family assistance and (2) performing poorly on statewide mastery exams (CGS § 10-266p).

Under the bill, the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) administers the grant program, and its commissioner must develop the application process and selection criteria by October 1, 2022. Also, applications must be submitted in a form and manner the DECD commissioner prescribes. In addition to having a PSD, to be eligible for a YSC program grant, a municipality must operate, establish, or demonstrate plans to establish a local YSC program. The bill requires the local program to conform to parameters the bill sets.

By January 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the DECD commissioner must award grants to municipalities selected to participate in the amount of \$10,000 per participating youth or young adult plus 15% of the amount for program administration expenses. Under the bill, the municipalities may use the grants to (1) administer the local YSC program and (2) award a subgrant of no more than \$10,000 to any program participant to support or subsidize participation in program activities.

Relatedly, the bill creates a “youth service corps grant program account” as a separate, nonlapsing account within the General Fund. The account must contain any moneys that the law requires to be deposited in it. The DECD commissioner must spend account funds on the YSC program.

### **§ 67 — SPECIAL EDUCATION DISABILITY TERMINOLOGY**

Beginning July 1, 2022, the bill requires CSDE and local and regional boards of education to use the term “emotional disability” instead of “emotional disturbance” when administering and providing special education. It specifies that the change in terminology maintains the same meaning as found in federal



law. (Neither term appears in state education statutes, but “emotional disturbance” does appear in CSDE publications.)

**[HB 5243, An Act Concerning the Identification and Prevention of and Response to Adult Sexual Misconduct Against Children](#)**

**§§ 1-3 — CONNECTICUT SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY**

The bill requires DPH, starting with the 2022-23 school year, to biennially administer the Connecticut School Health Survey to students in grades nine through 12, if the department receives funding from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for it. Under the bill, the survey must be (1) based on the CDC’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey and (2) administered in the high schools the CDC randomly selects.

**§ 4 — MANDATED REPORTERS**

The law generally imposes a legal responsibility on a specified class of individuals and entities (e.g., doctors, social workers, and school employees) to report to the appropriate authorities any reasonable suspicion or belief that a child is being abused or neglected (“mandated reporters”).

The bill expands the list of mandated reporters to include paid youth camp staff members age 21 or older. Under existing law, paid youth camp directors and paid assistant directors are already mandated reporters.

By law, failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect is a class A misdemeanor if a mandated reporter fails to report within the prescribed time period. But it is a class E felony if the (1) violation is a subsequent violation; (2) violation is willful, intentional, or due to gross negligence; or (3) mandated reporter had actual knowledge that a child was abused or neglected, or a student was the victim of sexual assault.

**§ 5 — BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES ON REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

By law, each board of education must adopt a written policy for the mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect by school employees. (School employee has the same meaning as under § 6 above.)

Under existing law, the policy must be distributed annually to all school employees employed by the board. The bill requires that this annual distribution be done electronically.

Starting with the 2022-23 school year, the bill requires each local and regional school board to distribute a copy of the guidelines on identifying and reporting child sexual abuse developed by the Governor’s task force on justice for abused children. It must be distributed electronically to all school employees, board members, and the parents and guardians of students enrolled in the schools under the board’s jurisdiction.

Starting with the 2023-24 school year, the bill requires each board of education to distribute electronically to all school employees, board members, and the parents and guardians of enrolled students, information on DCF’s sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program (see § 6).

On or after July 1, 2023, each school employee must complete (1) training regarding prevention and identification of and response to child sexual abuse and assault, (2) bystander training program, and (3) appropriate interaction with children training program (see § 6). Each school employee must repeat these trainings at least once every three years.

#### **§ 6 — STATE-WIDE SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION PROGRAM**

By law, DCF, in collaboration with CSDE and Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, or a similar entity, must identify or develop a statewide sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program for use by boards of education. The bill delays the deadline for DCF to develop the program until July 1, 2023, and correspondingly delays the deadline for school boards to implement the program until the 2023-24 school year.

Under current law, the program must include instructional modules for teachers that may include:

1. training on preventing, identifying, and responding to child sexual abuse and assault and
2. resources to further student, teacher, and parental awareness about child sexual abuse and assault and their prevention.

Under the bill, starting July 1, 2023, these instructional modules (1) must be for all school employees, not only teachers, and (2) may include a bystander training program and an appropriate interaction with children training program.

Under the bill, a “school employee” is:

1. a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional, or coach (a) employed by a board of education or a private elementary, middle, or high school or (b) working in a public or private elementary, middle, or high school; or
2. anyone who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public or private elementary, middle, or high school, under a contract with the board of education or private school’s supervisory agent.

#### **§ 7 — DCF MATERIALS TO CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS**

Starting July 1, 2023, the bill requires DCF to make available, upon request of a youth-serving organization or religious organization, any materials relating to the training regarding the (1) preventing, identifying, and responding to child sexual abuse and assault; (2) bystander training program; and (3) appropriate interaction with children training program.

[HB 5372, An Act Concerning Periodic Behavioral Health Assessments, Police Officer Recruitment, School Resource Officers, Reporting of Violations to the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, Investigations by the Inspector General, Minimum Standards and Practices for the Administration, Management and Operation of Law Enforcement Units and the Correction Advisory Committee](#)

**§ 3 — SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER STUDY**

The bill requires, within 30 days after its passage, the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to select a public higher education institution to study the role and impact of school resource officers on students with disabilities.

Under the bill, the selected institution must do the following:

1. determine the number of school resource officers employed in the state and located in each school district;
2. detail the funding mechanisms each district uses to employ these officers;
3. develop metrics for assessing the officers' efficacy, particularly in the context of interacting with students with disabilities;
4. determine the chain of command structure when students with disabilities experience crises in school, including who responds and when;
5. determine the process for entering into memoranda of understanding between school districts, boards of education, and school resource officers, and the public's accessibility to this process; and
6. explore other issues the institution deems relevant.

The bill requires the selected institution to report its findings to the Judiciary Committee by December 1, 2022.

[HB 5466, An Act Concerning Assorted Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes](#)  
(Selected sections, use link for full Public Act)

**§ 1 – RECOVERY SCHOOLS**

Requires the Connecticut Prevention Network to develop a report concerning recovery schools, provided the network is available and willing to develop such report. The report will include (1) an examination of how other states have implemented and integrated recovery high schools into their public school system and (2) recommendations regarding the establishment and implementation of one or more recovery high schools in the state. The network may consult with the regional behavioral health action organizations while developing the report. A report is due not later than January 1, 2024, to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Department of Education and the Education Committee of the General Assembly. For purposes of this section, "recovery high school" means a high school designed specifically for students in recovery from substance use disorder or co-occurring disorders.

## **§ 2 – CLASS RANK**

Current law allows any minor student’s parent or legal guardian to obtain access to educational, medical, or similar records maintained in the student’s record, so long as the information is not privileged under state law. This bill adds access to the student’s class rank. By law and unchanged by the bill, parents or guardians must submit a written request for this student information to the board of education.

## **§ 3 – SPECIAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

Extends the deadline for a report from the task force to study issues relating to the provision and funding of special education in the state from January 1, 2022, to January 1, 2024.

The study will include:

1. the provision of special education and related services, including whether local and regional boards of education are providing such services directly or partnering with regional educational service centers, contracting with a private provider of special education services, as defined in section 10-91g of the general statutes, or as part of a cooperative arrangement pursuant to section 10-158a of the general statutes;
2. the cost of providing special education and related services, the total aggregate amount per school district per year and the annual percentage increase or decrease per school district of such cost;
3. the effect that the cost of special education has on a board of education's minimum budget requirement;
4. the level of state reimbursement to boards of education for special education, including the total amount for reimbursement submitted by each school district per year and the total amount received by such school district per year, and the percentage increase or decrease per year of the difference of the total amount submitted and the total amount received for each school district; and
5. the criteria and manner by which school districts are identifying students who require special education and related services, including whether school districts are overidentifying or underidentifying such students and the causes and reasons for such overidentification and underidentification.

## **§ 4 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

Requires the executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, or the executive director's designee, to convene a working group to examine and make recommendations concerning the consolidation or elimination of unnecessary, obsolete, or redundant professional development and in-service training requirements, provided the executive director is available and willing to convene such working group.

## **§ 9 – PLANNING AND PLACEMENT TEAM MEETINGS**

Requires that prior to any planning and placement team meeting in which a student’s educational program is developed, reviewed, or revised, if the parent, guardian, pupil or surrogate parent has requested that the school paraprofessional assigned to the child attend the meeting, then the local or regional board of education must provide:

1. adequate notice of the meeting to the paraprofessional so that the paraprofessional may adequately prepare for the meeting; and
2. training, upon the request of the paraprofessional, on the role of the paraprofessional at the meeting.

This bill also allows the paraprofessional, after the completion of the meeting, to view the educational program in order to be able to provide special education or related services to the child in accordance with the educational program.

## **§ 10 – SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS GRANT & FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID**

This bill modifies the requirements of the program administered by the CSDE for providing grants to boards of education for the purpose of hiring additional school mental health specialists, originally passed through section 13 of House Bill 5001. This new bill now requires any school counselor hired under the grant program to provide one-on-one consultations with each student in grades eleven and twelve on the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). If a board can provide evidence to the Commissioner of Education that the student completion rate of the FAFSA for the school district has increased by at least five per cent, the board will receive an additional grant in the amount of ten per cent of the amount of the grant received under the program for the fiscal year in which the board provided evidence of the increased FAFSA completion rate.