



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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To: Superintendents of Schools

From: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

Date: July 10, 2026

Subject: Summary of Education-Related Legislation Enacted in the 2026 Regular Session

The Connecticut General Assembly has adjourned its 2026 Regular Session. The Connecticut 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 2026 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 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 Public Act 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 K-12 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.

2026 Public Acts Affecting Education

Public Act Number Bill Number	Public Act Title	Page(s)
PA 26-3 HB 5044	An Act Establishing Connecticut Vaccine Standards	4
PA 26-12 HB 5003	An Act Concerning Workforce Development and Working Conditions in the State	4-7
PA 26-13 HB 5514	An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes	7
PA 26-14 SB 397	An Act Concerning Democracy and Government Accountability and the Use and Retention of Data Derived from Automated License Plate Reader Systems	8-9
PA 26-15 SB 5	An Act Concerning Online Safety	9
PA 26-18 SB 427	An Act Concerning Dual Enrollment Programs	9
PA 26-37 HB 5468	An Act Concerning the Provision of Parent-Managed Learning	9-11
PA 26-38 HB 5515	An Act Concerning the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' Recommendations Regarding Access to Opioid Overdose Reversal Medication and Various Revisions To Mental Health And Addiction Statutes	11-12
PA 26-62 HB 5447	An Act Implementing Recommendations of the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee	12
PA 26-63 HB 5464	An Act Implementing Recommendations from the Department of Transportation and Concerning Vegetation Management Guidelines, Transportation Network Companies and Rider Safety, Traffic Signal Modernization Grant Program, Encampments, Marine Pilot License Fees, Motor Vehicle Mechanical Equipment, Distracted Driving, a Task Force to Study Access to Parking For Home Health Agencies and a Working Group to Study Use of Alternative Fuels and Technologies in School Bus Fleets	13-14
PA 26-68 SB 1	An Act Making Adjustments to the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027, Making Deficiency Appropriations for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026, Authorizing and Adjusting Bonds of the State and Concerning Provisions	14

	Relating to Revenue, School Construction and Other Items to Implement the State Budget	
PA 26-76 SB 477	An Act Concerning the Failure to File for Certain Grand List Exemptions, A Municipal Option to Abate Delinquent Property Taxes on Certain Parcels of Land, Allocations of Certain State Funds and Items Implementing the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027	14-15
PA 26-105 SB 137	An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Office of Early Childhood	15
PA 26-106 SB 138	An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Department of Education	15-16
PA 26-116 SB 375	An Act Concerning School Mapping Data Services	16
PA 26-125 HB 5259	An Act Concerning the Education of Homeless Children and Youth	16-17
PA 26-130 HB 5563	An Act Concerning Various Criminal Law and Criminal Justice Proposals, Certificates of Approval for Airports, Heliports, Vertiports, Restricted Landing Areas and Other Air Navigation Facilities, Police Collaboration with Social Workers, Surveillance Pricing, Education Cost Sharing and Withholding of Taxes from Lump Sum Payments	17
PA 26-139 HB 5352	An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Education Statutes	17-19
PA 26-149 SB 220	An Act Concerning Student Literacy, Aspiring Educators, American Sign Language as Part of the World Languages Curriculum and the Paraeducator Health Benefit Plan Subsidy Program	19
PA 26-151 PA 26-151	An Act Concerning a Plan to Revise the Definition of Intellectual Disability and The Establishment of Working Groups on American Sign Language Education and Nonemergency Medical Transportation Reimbursement	19-20

PA 26-3 An Act Establishing Connecticut Vaccine Standards

The Commissioner of Public Health must establish an expanded immunization standard of care, which includes recommended immunization schedules for both children and adults. The Connecticut Vaccine Program must provide all childhood vaccines recommended under the State's standard of care.

The Connecticut Religious Freedom Restoration Act does not apply to school immunization requirements for (1) public and private schools, including higher education institutions; and (2) child care centers and group and family day care homes.

PA 26-12 An Act Concerning Workforce Development and Working Conditions in the State

Enhanced Workers' Compensation Benefits for Health Care Providers and Teachers Assaulted at Work

This Act allows certain teachers, health care providers, and related employees to receive enhanced workers' compensation benefits if they are unable to work due to being assaulted at work.

More specifically, the Act requires these teachers, health care providers, and employees to receive a workers' compensation benefit that equals 100 percent of their average weekly earnings as of the date of the injury (calculated using the same process that applies to other workers' compensation claimants), with no cap on the benefit amount, plus their expenses reasonably incurred for medical or other services needed due to the assault, and any lost wages due to an absence for a court appearance connected to the assault.

Under prior law, an injured employee's workers' compensation benefit generally equaled 75 percent of their after-tax average weekly earnings, subject to a cap set at the average weekly earnings of all workers in the state (CGS §§ 31-307(a) & 31-309). Prior benefits covered related medical expenses, but not other out-of-pocket expenses or lost wages for court appearances.

Under the Act, a teacher, health care provider, or employee must continue to be paid their salary or contracted wage if they miss work due to an injury sustained during an assault or for a court appearance connected to the assault. However, workers' compensation benefits may be deducted from these wages during the absence. In addition, the absence cannot be charged against the provider's or employee's sick leave, vacation time, or personal leave.

Under prior law, if a teacher, board member, or other employee of a school district or certain state institutions or agencies was assaulted while performing their duties and suffers a financial loss or expense, then the employer generally had to cover those losses and expenses. These included reasonable medical or other service expenses the injured person incurred that were not covered by insurance, workers' compensation, or another outside source. The Act correspondingly repeals this prior law.

Disclosure of Wage Ranges and Benefits in Public and Internal Job Advertisements

The Act requires an employer to include a position's wage or wage range, and a general description of the position's benefits, in public and internal job advertisements.

The Act defines benefits as (1) health insurance; (2) retirement; (3) fringe; (4) paid leave; and (5) any other compensation, other than wages, offered with a position. Under the Act, an employer is required to set a wage range for a position in good faith, instead of setting the range the employer anticipates relying on.

Teacher Terminations

The Act sets a standard of review for when a tenured public school teacher is terminated. It also changes who makes the final decision when a tenured teacher is under consideration for termination and requests a hearing, and changes the court's review standards for appeals of tenured teacher termination decisions. (§ 8)

Prior law did not specify a standard of review for these terminations. The Act requires the standard of review to be the same standard applied in other disciplinary actions under the teacher's collective bargaining agreement. This permits the standard to be determined through the collective bargaining process.

The Act also changes who makes the final decision when a tenured teacher is under consideration for termination and requests a hearing. Prior law generally allowed such a teacher to request a hearing before either a board of education (BOE) subcommittee or an impartial hearing officer. The Act eliminates the option for the hearing before a BOE subcommittee. Under prior law, the subcommittee or hearing officer was required to submit its findings and a recommendation to the BOE, which then made a final decision on the termination. The Act instead requires the hearing officer to make the final disposition, and makes it binding on the parties.

Prior law allowed teachers aggrieved by a BOE's termination decision to appeal to the Superior Court, and required the court to review the proceedings under the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act's (UAPA) standards for reviewing appeals of agency decisions. The Act instead allows tenured teachers or BOEs aggrieved by a hearing officer's decision to apply to the court to confirm, vacate, or modify the decision under the laws for court consideration of arbitration awards.

Prior law generally required a court considering an appeal of a teacher's termination under the UAPA standards to affirm the decision unless it found that substantial rights of the teacher were prejudiced because the findings, inferences, conclusions, or decisions (1) violated constitutional or statutory provisions; (2) exceeded statutory authority; or (3) were (a) made using an unlawful procedure, (b) affected by another error of law, (c) clearly erroneous, or (d) arbitrary or capricious. The Act instead requires a court to consider an appeal from either a tenured teacher or the BOE under the statutory standards for appeals of arbitration awards. Under these standards, a court must confirm an award unless it vacates or modifies it. The court generally

must vacate an award if (1) it was made through corruption, fraud or undue means; (2) it was evident the arbitrator was partial or corrupt; (3) the arbitrator was guilty of misconduct by refusing to postpone the hearing or in refusing to hear pertinent and material evidence; or (4) the arbitrator exceeded his or her powers, or so imperfectly executed them that a mutual, final, and definite award was not made.

Under these same standards, a court must modify an award if (1) there was an evident material miscalculation of figures or an evident material mistake in the description of something referred to in the award; (2) the arbitrator awarded for a matter not submitted for arbitration, unless it does not affect the merits of the decision; or (3) the award is imperfect in matter of form not affecting the merits of the controversy.

Prior law prohibited a court from awarding costs to a teacher appealing his or her termination unless it found that the BOE acted with gross negligence, in bad faith, or with malice in its original decision. The Act removes this limitation for tenured teachers, and the arbitration standards used under the Act do not explicitly allow costs to be awarded to either party.

Public School Teacher Payroll Deduction of Union Dues

The Act conforms the State's collective bargaining law for public school teachers to Federal case law by removing provisions that could require teachers who were covered by a collective bargaining agreement (CBA), but not dues paying members of the union, to pay other fees instead of union dues.

RESC And CTECS Report on Work-Based Learning Programs

The Act requires each Regional Education Service Center (RESC) and the Connecticut Technical Education and Career Center (CTECS) executive director, in consultation with the CSDE, to annually report on their high school work-based learning programs. This report is required to be sent to the Education and Labor Committees of the General Assembly.

Private Sector Externships

The Act requires the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to create a two-year pilot program for educator externships with private sector employers to align classroom instruction with current industry standards and workforce needs.

CSDE Study of Co-Instruction Teaching Models

The Act creates a working group to study the effectiveness and benefits of co-instruction teaching models used by public schools.

Paycheck Transparency

The Act requires certain employers (including the State and municipalities) to create a guide for employees on pay codes for overtime and commonly used pay differentials.

“Reasonable Assurance” of Returning to Work for Paraeducators

Under State and Federal law, employees who work at an educational institution are ineligible to receive unemployment benefits for a school break (for example, between two successive academic years, between two regular terms, or during a customary vacation or holiday recess) if they have a “reasonable assurance” to work for any educational institution once courses resume (in the next academic year or term or period after the vacation or recess).

The Act requires school districts, at least ten (10) days before the last day of regular school sessions, to give the Department of Labor (DOL) lists of their paraeducators who have and do not have reasonable assurance of returning to work for them once courses resume. More specifically, the requirement applies to each local or regional board of education, regional educational service center, governing authority for a state charter school, or an endowed or incorporated academy approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE) (collectively referred to as “school districts”).

The Act allows the DOL to consider the information on these lists when making reasonable assurance determinations, however specifies that unless it is accompanied by additional evidence, it cannot be conclusive evidence of reasonable assurance in any case.

Repealer

The Act repeals a law that generally required school boards to indemnify teachers, board members, or other school employees if they are assaulted while performing their duties and suffered a financial loss or expense.

PA 26-13 An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes

Generally, it requires public high school students, before playing interscholastic sports, to have an annual athletics health assessment to screen for serious cardiac conditions. (§§15-17)

Athletic Health Assessments for High School Athletes

Starting in the 2027-28 school year, the Act generally requires public high school students, before participating in interscholastic sports, to have an annual athletics health assessment by a health professional. This must include a physical exam that screens for serious cardiac conditions that could lead to sudden death. Among other things, the assessment form must include information on relevant patient or family history and whether the provider referred the student for additional cardiac screening or treatment.

As with other student health assessments under existing law, the Act requires schools to (1) provide the assessment for free if the student is eligible for free or reduced-price meals; and (2) record the assessment results in the student’s health record.

The Act extends to these athletic health assessments certain other provisions that apply to student health assessments under existing law, including those shielding the records from public inspection and requiring a religious exemption.

School Safety Plans

The Act regulates the review and sharing of certain minors' "safety plans" (written documents health care providers and patients create collaboratively, outlining coping strategies, activities, and support networks the patient can use to prevent or manage a potential mental health crisis).

Starting April 1, 2027, the Act requires each health care provider that prepares a safety plan for a minor patient who received at least twelve (12) consecutive days of inpatient behavioral health care treatment to (1) review it with the minor, if medically appropriate; and (2) ask whether the minor or the minor's parent or legally authorized representative consents to sharing the safety plan with the minor's school. If this consent is given, the provider must (1) get written consent from the minor's parent or legally authorized representative (or the minor if they are at least age sixteen (16)); and (2) send the plan to the minor's school or school district using a secure messaging system or in a way that complies with the Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Relatedly, the Act also requires:

1. school districts and schools to sign up for an organizational account on a secure messaging system and give at least one designated employee (such as a school nurse, social worker, or psychologist) access to the account;
2. local and regional education boards to give the State Department of Education (CSDE) commissioner each school's and school district's secure messaging system address to make available to health care providers; and
3. local and regional education boards to give new designated employees CSDE-developed guidance on how to use the secure messaging system.

Additionally, the Act makes it a goal of the Statewide Health Information Exchange ("Connie") to give, within available appropriations, schools and school districts a secure messaging system organizational account that designated employees may access to receive these safety plans.

PA 26-14 An Act Concerning Democracy and Government Accountability and the Use and Retention of Data Derived from Automated License Plate Reader Systems

The Act prohibits peace officers from taking someone into custody on the basis of a civil offense in a state or municipal facility or certain other locations such as schools, hospitals, and houses of worship ("protected areas") without a judicial warrant for the person. The Act applies the definition of "civil offense" to the existing restrictions on taking people into custody on courthouse grounds.

The Act allows someone aggrieved by a violation of the ban to bring a civil action in Superior Court, and an action seeking damages is triable by jury. The court may award a plaintiff appropriate legal and equitable relief, such as a temporary or permanent injunction, punitive damages, and attorney's fees and court costs.

PA 26-15 An Act Concerning Online Safety

Computer Science Education and Workforce Development Account

The existing “computer science education account” is renamed the “computer science education and workforce development account.” The CSDE can now use the account to support workforce development initiatives, in coordination with the Office of Workforce Strategy and the Board of Regents for Higher Education.

**To date, the General Assembly has not allocated any funds for this purpose.

Teacher Certification Preparation Program

Teacher certification preparation programs may include instruction in topics such as the responsible use of emerging technologies as part of required computer science instruction.

Computer Science in Public School Curriculum

Computer science is added to the State's required program of instruction for public schools. This instruction must cover artificial intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies.

PA 26-18 An Act Concerning Dual Enrollment Programs

The Act requires the CSDE to appoint a dual and concurrent enrollment course coordinator by January 1, 2027, to track establishment of these courses and student outcomes, such as completion rates and grades, by school district. Dual and concurrent enrollment courses are a type of advanced course or program offered by high schools in collaboration with higher education institutions.

Higher education institutions are now eligible to apply for reimbursement for fee waivers given to high-needs students in advanced classes or programs. Families cannot be charged enrollment costs if such institutions receive reimbursement grants.

PA 26-37 An Act Concerning the Provision of Parent-Managed Learning

Intent To Educate Form

Submission Requirement

Starting with the 2028-29 school year, the bill requires certain parents to annually complete (or cause to be completed) an intent to educate form indicating whether their child will (1) enroll in

a public school; (2) attend a nonpublic school; or (3) be instructed through parent-managed learning. It applies to parents of children:

1. enrolled in public school;
2. attending nonpublic school;
3. instructed through parent-managed learning (a) that are newly eligible for kindergarten (by turning five before September 1 of the school year); or (b) for whom an intent to educate or a withdrawal form was submitted the prior school year;
4. for whom an option form was signed (the parent opted to defer their five- or six-year-old from starting school, as allowed under existing law and the bill); and
5. who move to a different school district within the State of Connecticut or withdraw from a nonpublic school during the school year.

The requirement to submit the intent to educate form does not apply to parents of children currently being instructed through parent-managed learning unless they move into a new school district.

Under the bill, a parent is deemed in compliance with the requirement to submit the intent to educate form if the (1) child attends a public school; or (2) nonpublic school the child attends files the annual attendance report it must submit under existing law.

Submission Procedure

Under the bill, intent to educate forms must be completed and submitted electronically submitted by October 1, to the school district office for the town where the parent resides. Parents who move into a district have 14 days to submit the form.

Nonpublic Schools

The bill requires parents of children who will attend a nonpublic school to submit evidence of that fact (for example, an acceptance letter). If the student withdraws from the nonpublic school, the parent or guardian shall complete an updated intent to educate form to indicate whether the child will enroll in a public school, attend a different nonpublic school (including evidence of such enrollment), or be instructed through parent-managed learning.

Procedure When Forms Are Not Submitted

Under the bill, if a school board does not receive an intent to educate form from a parent required to submit by November 1 (and the parent is not deemed compliant as described above), the board must make at least three attempts to contact the parent to tell them they must submit the form. If the board cannot make contact by November 1, the bill requires the school board to notify the CSDE that it has not received the form.

Withdrawals from Public School

Starting with the 2027-28 school year, the bill requires parents who withdraw a child from public school to go, in person, to the school district's office and sign a withdrawal form.

Withdrawals for Nonpublic School

If a parent/guardian is withdrawing a child to attend a nonpublic school, the parent/guardian must show evidence that the child will attend the school. The child's withdrawal is effective when the school district receives this evidence.

Withdrawals for Parent-Managed Learning

If a parent/guardian is withdrawing a child for parent-managed learning, the withdrawal is not effective until the superintendent completes a records check with DCF. The bill specifies that this check does not constitute a report of suspected child abuse or neglect. Under the bill, within two days after receiving a withdrawal form, the superintendent (or his or her designee) must conduct a records check with DCF for each person ages 18 or older who lives with the child. The bill specifically allows DCF to release information from its records to school boards in order to complete the bill's requirement.

The records check must identify whether any of the adults living with the child are (1) on the state child abuse and neglect registry; or (2) currently under DCF investigation for child abuse or neglect. If so, the child may not be withdrawn. Within five days after starting the records check, the superintendent must notify the parent whether the withdrawal is effective. If it is not, the superintendent must tell the parent (1) the reason the withdrawal is not effective; and (2) how he or she may challenge the records check findings, including appropriate DCF contact information.

[PA 26-38 An Act Concerning the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' Recommendations Regarding Access to Opioid Overdose Reversal Medication and Various Revisions to Mental Health and Addiction Statutes](#)

Opioid Antagonist in Schools

Under current law, only school nurses or, in their absence, a qualified school employee who has completed a training program may administer an opioid antagonist to students who do not have prior written authorization from a parent, guardian, or qualified medical professional.

Non-legend

The bill allows any person to administer a non-legend opioid antagonist to a student experiencing an opioid drug overdose. It gives a person who administers a non-legend opioid antagonist immunity from civil liability for any injuries that may result from actions that are considered ordinary negligence. However, this immunity does not apply to acts or omissions that constitute gross, willful, or wanton negligence.

Under current law, the CSDE must consult with the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) to develop guidelines on storing and administering opioid antagonists in schools. The bill also requires CSDE to consult with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and limits these guidelines to non-legend opioid antagonists.

Legend

The bill generally extends current law's requirements to the administration of legend opioid antagonists, while expanding the circumstances in which they may be administered. It allows a qualified school employee to administer the medication to a student experiencing an opioid drug overdose at any time, regardless of any prior approvals. It also removes the option for a student's parent or guardian to request that the student not be given an opioid antagonist.

Under current law, the training program that nurses and qualified employees must complete is one developed by the CSDE, DPH, and the DCP. The bill instead allows the program to be approved or developed by these departments, along with DMHAS.

Deploying Behavioral Health Professionals After Mass Shootings

The bill requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) commissioner to coordinate with the DMHAS commissioner, in addition to the DPH commissioner as under current law, when deploying grief counselors and mental health professionals to provide mental health services to mass shooting victims' family members and other people with a close association to them. By law, these deployments must be made to (1) local community outreach groups in and around the impacted geographic location; and (2) any school or higher education institution where a mass shooting victim or perpetrator was enrolled.

PA 26-62 An Act Implementing Recommendations of the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee

School Based Health Centers

On and after January 1, 2027, each school-based health center shall (1) use an evidence-based screening tool for early identification of disordered eating behaviors, as a supplement to existing methods used to diagnose disordered eating behaviors; and (2) provide such screening tool to each patient who is in grades six to twelve, inclusive, during such patient's annual health assessment, including, but not limited to, the health assessments conducted pursuant to section 10-206 of the general statutes. (§4)

PA 26-63 An Act Implementing Recommendations from the Department of Transportation and Concerning Vegetation Management Guidelines, Transportation Network Companies and Rider Safety, Traffic Signal Modernization Grant Program, Encampments, Marine Pilot License Fees, Motor Vehicle Mechanical Equipment, Distracted Driving, a Task Force to Study Access to Parking For Home Health Agencies and a Working Group to Study Use of Alternative Fuels and Technologies in School Bus Fleets

Zero-Emission School Buses

Requires 90 percent, rather than 100 percent, of school buses to be zero-emission by 2040 and sets an interim deadline for distressed municipalities; eliminates the requirement that environmental justice communities fully transition to zero-emission school buses by 2030; requires municipalities to submit plans outlining how they will meet the zero-emission requirements; modifies zero-emission school bus grant program requirements, including broadening its purposes beyond providing matching funds for federal grant applications; requires schools to implement safety plans before using a zero-emission school bus. (§§ 24 & 38)

Requirement for Environmental Justice Communities and Distressed Municipalities

Current law sets an earlier deadline for some school districts, requiring that 100 percent of buses providing transportation for school districts located in or containing at least one environmental justice community (as of July 1, 2022) be zero-emission by January 1, 2030. By law, an environmental justice community is (1) any U.S. census block group, as determined by the most recent census, for which at least 30 percent of the population consists of low-income people who are not institutionalized and have an income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level; or (2) a distressed municipality (CGS § 22a-20a).

The bill eliminates this requirement and instead sets an interim deadline for school buses in municipalities that were distressed municipalities on July 1, 2026. Because the definition of environmental justice community includes distressed municipalities, this change effectively reduces the number of municipalities that must meet earlier deadlines for transitioning to zero-emission school buses.

Under the bill, buses providing transportation for each school district in a distressed municipality must be 50 percent zero-emission by July 1, 2035. Like all school districts under the bill, the school buses in a distressed municipality must also be 90 percent zero-emission by July 1, 2040.

Transition Plans

The bill requires municipalities to submit plans and schedules outlining how they will comply with the bill's requirements to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner. Distressed municipalities must submit their plans by July 1, 2029, and all other municipalities must do so by July 1, 2035.

Changes to Grant Program

Current law requires DEEP to administer a grant program to give matching funds to municipalities, school districts, and bus operators who apply for federal grants to purchase zero-emission school buses and related charging infrastructure in order to maximize federal funding.

The bill makes several changes to this program. First, it broadens the purposes for which grants can be awarded by eliminating the requirement that the program provide matching funds for federal grants and instead requires that it provide a portion of funds necessary to maximize federal, state, or other sources of funding or financing. It also requires DEEP to (1) administer the program in consultation with the Connecticut Green Bank; and (2) give preference to grant applications for school buses that will operate in a distressed municipality rather than an environmental justice community, conforming with the change to the zero-emission school bus transition requirements.

Safety Plans

The bill requires local and regional school boards, before purchasing or using a zero-emission school bus, to develop and implement safety plans that (1) consider the ages and developmental needs of students transported on zero-emission school buses; and (2) include fire evacuation procedures.

[PA 26-68 An Act Making Adjustments to the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027, Making Deficiency Appropriations for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026, Authorizing and Adjusting Bonds of the State and Concerning Provisions Relating to Revenue, School Construction and Other Items to Implement the State Budget](#)

**To read the budget bill in its entirety, please use link above. Please click here for the Office of Fiscal Analysis report on the bill: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2026/BA/PDF/2026SB-00001-R01-BA.PDF>.

[PA 26-76 An Act Concerning the Failure to File for Certain Grand List Exemptions, A Municipal Option to Abate Delinquent Property Taxes on Certain Parcels of Land, Allocations of Certain State Funds and Items Implementing the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027](#)

**This bill made several adjustments to PA 26-68. Most of Public Act 26-76 is unrelated to education. The sections which address education issues are as follows: Section 11 provides grants to the Stamford Public Education Foundation for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2026, and June 30, 2027, in the amounts of \$210,000 and \$220,000, respectively. Section 12 provides grants to the State Education Resource Center in the amount of \$500,000 for disconnected youth programming for each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 2026, and June 30, 2027. Section 45 provides that an application for a grant commitment from the state for a school building project for the Suffield Middle School may be filed by July 1, 2027, and increases the reimbursement percentage by ten points. Section 67 provides a grant to the Bridgeport Public Schools Debate League.

Free Bus Pass Program for Students (§64)

The bill requires the DOT to administer a program to give local or regional boards of education (“school boards”) grants for (1) purchasing passes for state-owned or -controlled public buses (CTtransit buses); and (2) distributing them without cost to their public school students in grades 9-12. (§7)

The bill authorizes the DOT to develop guidelines and grant criteria needed to administer the program, including setting the application process. Each school board that receives a grant must submit to DOT any reports and financial statements the department requires. If CSDE finds that a grant is being used for purposes not allowed by the bill, the department may require the school board to repay the state.

The bill requires the DOT, starting by July 1, 2027, to annually report on the program to the Education and Transportation committees, including on the number of grants it awarded during the prior year and the program’s impact on student outcomes. (§64)

**To read the bill in its entirety, please use the link above. Please click here for the Office of Fiscal Analysis report on the bill: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2026/BA/PDF/2026SB-00477-R01-BA.PDF>.

PA 26-105 An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Office of Early Childhood

Smart Start Grant Rate Increase

Increases the maximum per child and per classroom grant a school board can receive under the Smart Start program. (§2)

By law, Office of Early Childhood (OEC), in consultation with the CSDE, administers the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program to give school boards grants for capital and operating expenses to establish or expand preschool programs. Under the program, school boards may receive (1) a one-time capital expenses grant up to \$75,000 per classroom; and (2) an annual operating expenses grant in an amount based on either the number of children or preschool classrooms in the program.

The bill increases the maximum annual operating expenses grant from \$5,000 to \$6,500 per child and from \$75,000 to \$97,500 per preschool classroom.

Public Act 26-106 An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Department of Education

Charter School Approval Process

Current law requires the SBE to annually review all new charter school applications and grant initial certificates of approval for local and state charter schools. The bill eliminates the requirement that SBE do so annually.

Starting with the biennium beginning July 1, 2027, the bill requires the CSDE commissioner to ensure that the timing for granting initial certificates of approval for charters coincides with the preparation of the state budget for that biennium.

By law, a new school's initial certificate of approval only takes effect as a full charter when the legislature appropriates funds to the CSDE for its operation (specifically, July 1 in the fiscal year for which the funds are appropriated). State law allows non-profit organizations; boards of education, either alone or jointly with another board; and institutions of higher education, among others, to submit applications to start a new charter school.

Transportation Grants to Certain RESCs

The CSDE provides transportation grants to RESC-operated magnet schools that help the state meet its obligations under Sheff. These grants must cover a RESC's reasonable transportation costs, subject to a comprehensive financial review.

State law requires paying an amount equal to 50 percent of the estimated transportation costs by October 31 of the fiscal year and, unchanged by the bill, sets targets for covering all other eligible transportation costs (generally by paying most of the remaining amount by June 30 of that fiscal year). The bill instead requires the CSDE to pay up to one half of the estimated transportation costs by October 31, while maintaining the existing framework for the remainder of the costs.

PA 26-116 An Act Concerning School Mapping Data Services

Beginning with FY 27, the Act allows the DESPP to, annually and within available appropriations, administer a program to provide grants to municipalities and municipal police departments for services to provide school mapping data for school(s) within the municipality subject to the Act's requirements.

By October 1, 2026, the DESPP must create eligibility criteria for the grants, develop application forms and deadlines, and post a description of the grant program on the website of the DESPP.

The Act also requires the DESPP, starting by January 1, 2028, to annually report on the program to the General Assembly's Public Safety and Security Committee as specified in the Act.

PA 26-125 An Act Concerning the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

Existing state law specifically requires boards of education to provide educational services to homeless children and youths in conformity with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This Act maintains that requirement but clarifies that Connecticut's statutory reference to McKinney-Vento is tied to the federal law as it existed on December 23, 2022. The effect of this provision is to preserve existing district obligations under McKinney-Vento while

ensuring that future federal amendments do not automatically change Connecticut law unless adopted by the General Assembly.

PA 26-130 An Act Concerning Various Criminal Law and Criminal Justice Proposals, Certificates of Approval for Airports, Heliports, Vertiports, Restricted Landing Areas and Other Air Navigation Facilities, Police Collaboration with Social Workers, Surveillance Pricing, Education Cost Sharing and Withholding of Taxes from Lump Sum Payments

Sections 12-15 of the Act clarify the permissible uses of supplemental education assistance grant funds received through the state budget. As articulated in earlier guidance from the State's Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the legislation includes a provision that allows municipalities and regional boards of education that adopted their budgets prior to the passage of the State budget to amend such budgets to account for the additional state aid within certain parameters. Municipalities and regional boards of education that increased their local share in the adopted FY 2027 budget over the amount budgeted in FY 2026, may take the steps outlined in the Act to amend such budget and reduce all or a portion of the budgeted increase in the local share if they receive supplemental education assistance.

PA 26-139 An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Education Statutes

Armed Security Guards

Allows retired parole officers to provide armed security services in public schools; prohibits police and parole officers who left employment during an investigation or following termination due to disciplinary action from providing armed security services in schools. (§1)

School Administrator Mentorship Program

Requires the Advisory Council for School Administrator Professional Standards to create a new school administrator mentorship pilot program for implementation in certain school districts beginning in the 2027-28 school year. (§2)

Academic Standards for Interscholastic Athletics

Beginning July 1, 2027, prohibits schools from requiring students in grades 9-12 who participate in interscholastic athletics to meet academic eligibility standards that are higher than those set by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC). (§3)

Therapeutic Arts Program Grants

Requires the CSDE to create a grant program, within available appropriations, for a therapeutic arts program in public schools starting in the 2027-28 school year. (§4)

Temporary Placement of Bridgeport Military Academy Students

Allows the CSDE commissioner to authorize the temporary placement of students enrolled in the Bridgeport Military Academy in available classroom space at the Fairchild Wheeler Interdistrict Magnet Campus to facilitate construction of a permanent facility for the Bridgeport Military Academy. (§5)

Repeal of Educator Preparation Regulations

Delays the effective date of the repeal of various educator preparation regulations from July 1, 2026, to July 1, 2027. (§6)

Broad Assessment Reduction Incentive Program

By July 1, 2027, within available appropriations, establishes an incentive program for school districts that limits broad assessments, integrates state-provided interim and formative assessment tools, and increases teacher competency in the assessment process. Incentives under the program may include public recognition, financial awards and enhanced autonomy or operational flexibility for school districts. The term “broad assessments” is defined in the law to mean an assessment that measures what students should have learned during a semester or school year; it does not include the statewide mastery examinations or any other student assessments required by state or federal law. (§7)

Reducing Discretionary Local Student Assessment Guidance

By June 1, 2027, the Act requires the CSDE to develop and give guidance to school boards on reducing discretionary local student assessments. The guidance may include eliminating fall and spring broad assessments (as defined in § 7, above) or substituting certain end-of-unit classroom summative assessments with state-provided interim and formative assessment tools. (§8)

CSDE Request to Amend State Plan Under ESSA

Allows the Commissioner of Education, after consulting with a working group established pursuant to Public Act 24-45, to submit a request to the U.S. Department of Education to amend the state’s approved plan submitted pursuant to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). (§9)

Mathematics Pathways, Instruction, and Specialist Guidance

By January 1, 2027, requires the CSDE to redesign the state’s high school mathematics pathways to prepare students for relevant postsecondary careers. The CSDE further must develop a list of professional development providers for high-quality mathematics instruction, and explore the feasibility of launching MathConn, a professional learning series for educators. In consultation with the Connecticut Educator Preparation and Certification Board, the Commissioner must develop guidelines for the role of mathematics specialists in supporting mathematics interventions in schools. (§10)

Misconduct-Related Information Disclosure During Prospective School Employee Hiring Process

Expands the scope of misconduct-related information school employers must solicit regarding prospective employees during the hiring process, to include certain pending matters or criminal investigations. (§§11-13)

PA 26-149 An Act Concerning Student Literacy, Aspiring Educators, American Sign Language as Part of the World Languages Curriculum and the Paraeducator Health Benefit Plan Subsidy Program

Requires the CSDE to develop and disseminate guidance to local and regional boards of education regarding the implementation of multitiered systems of support or response to intervention frameworks for students who are identified as struggling in reading. Such guidance shall be based on data collected from the results of approved reading assessments, as described in section 10-14t of the general statutes. (§1)

Aspiring Educator Scholarship

The Act makes “aspiring educators,” rather than “diverse students,” eligible for the existing scholarship program potentially broadening the pool of eligible candidates. The term “aspiring educator” is defined to mean an individual who is in a population subgroup that is underrepresented in the teaching profession in this state and for which the population subgroup has been identified as a teacher shortage area by the Commissioner. (§§2 & 3)

Paraeducators Health Care Subsidy

The Act makes permanent two health care subsidy programs for paraeducators employed by local or regional boards of education and expands the programs to include paraeducators at charter schools. (§§6 & 7)

PA 26-151 An Act Concerning a Plan to Revise the Definition of Intellectual Disability and The Establishment of Working Groups on American Sign Language Education and Nonemergency Medical Transportation Reimbursement

Plan Regarding Intellectual Disability Definition

The Act requires the Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to produce a plan with recommendations on developing a standard definition for intellectual disability that originates before age 18 and is characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, including conceptual, social, and practical skills. The definition must be consistent with generally acceptable standards, including those recognized by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. As part of the plan, the DDS Commissioner must ensure that no single test score or single measure would determine intellectual disability and that the definition is based on the totality of relevant clinical, educational, and functional evidence, including:

1. standardized assessments when valid and appropriate;
2. adaptive behavior measures;
3. developmental history;
4. medical evidence; and
5. other reliable information.

The plan must include:

1. a recommended timeline to transition to a new intellectual disability definition;
2. any required federal approvals; and
3. estimates of one-time costs to transition and recurring costs of using the new definition for DDS, other state agencies, and school districts impacted by the change.

American Sign Language Working Group

Effective January 1, 2027, the Act requires the CSDE to establish the American Sign Language education working group with membership from specified state agencies and organizations. The working group must provide recommendations to the CSDE including in the follow areas: curriculum guidance for American Sign Language instruction; teacher certification standards; and guidance to educator preparation programs regarding American Sign Language programming and other matters. (§2)