

November 13, 2023
Model Student Work Release Policy Pursuant to PA 22-50

To: Senator Hartley, Chair, Commerce Committee
Representative Meskers, Chair, Commerce Committee
Senator Rahman, Vice Chair, Commerce Committee
Representative Fazzino, Vice Chair, Commerce Committee
Senator Martin, Ranking Member, Commerce Committee
Representative Harrison, Ranking Member, Commerce Committee
Senator McCrory, Chair, Education Committee
Representative Currey, Chair, Education Committee
Senator Winfield, Vice Chair, Education Committee
Representative Leeper, Vice Chair, Education Committee
Senator Berthel, Ranking Member, Education Committee
Representative McCarty, Ranking Member, Education Committee
Senator Kushner, Chair, Labor and Public Employees Committee
Senator Cabrera, Vice Chair, Labor and Public Employees Committee
Representative Wilson, Vice Chair, Labor and Public Employees Committee
Senator Sampson, Ranking Member, Labor and Public Employees Committee
Representative Ackert, Ranking Member, Labor and Public Employees Committee

From: Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Chief Workforce Officer

In accordance with [PA 22-50](#), I hereby submit to the Commerce Committee, the Model Student Work Release Policy.

The policy was created by the Office of Workforce Strategy, in collaboration with the State Department of Education, the Department of Labor (CTDOL), the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS), and ReadyCT, a nonprofit that is focused on ensuring every student has access to high-quality academics together with career-connected learning.

Designees of each of aforementioned agencies /organizations formed a working group, which met on a regular (~biweekly basis) from March 28 – June 20, 2023, and engaged in the following activities to inform our efforts:

Reviewed the CTECS Work-Based Learning Program. CTECS has robust guidance for its schools for work-based learning, which, while far broader than a student work release policy, provided the foundation for understanding the requirements that the model student work release policy would need to include.

Reviewed other state and district policies. The working group reached out to the National Governor's Association and requested student work release policies from other states and districts. We received and reviewed three, including Fort Benton School District (MO), Great Valley School District (PA), and Park City School District (UT). We also independently reviewed Dubois Area School District (PA).

Survey of Superintendents. Working with Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director, CT Association of Public School Superintendents, we surveyed state superintendents on the appropriate requirements of a student work release policy. Fifty (50) of the 167 superintendents, or 30%, responded to the survey.

Working Group members:

- Brent McCartney, Education Consultant, Connecticut Technical Education and Career System
- Marcy Reed, Education Consultant, Connecticut State Department of Education
- Matthew Venhorst, Staff Attorney, Connecticut State Department of Education
- Todd Berch, State Apprenticeship Director, Connecticut State Department of Labor
- Thomas Wydra, Director, Wage & Workplace Standards Division, Connecticut State Department of Labor
- Malia Sieve, Director of Career Pathways, Eastern Connecticut Region, ReadyCT
- Grace Suh, Chief of Staff, Office of Workforce Strategy

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CONNECTICUT STUDENT WORK RELEASE POLICY

1. Purpose Statement

The Connecticut Student Work Release Policy sets forth the minimum requirements for student release during school hours to work for an employer. Students may want to participate in work release for any number of reasons, including but not limited to financial, educational, or experiential.

2. Work Release

Student work release is designed for eligible high school students to be able to be released from school to work for an employer during regular school hours. The student's course schedule and graduation requirements take first priority.

Note: If student work release is defined as a pre-apprenticeship program, it must be established by a partnership comprised of a Registered Apprenticeship Employer, a school, and the CTDOL Office of Apprenticeship, pursuant to CGS 31-22m to 31-22q.

3. Eligibility Requirements

- Student work release may be provided to any student of not less than sixteen (16) years of age, who is enrolled in school, consistent with state labor laws.
- The grade level of the student to participate in work release is at the discretion of the school.
- Students should be in good standing academically and on track to graduate within four years, as determined by the Principal or their designee.
- Students should not be chronically absent as defined by C.G.S. Section 10-198c.
- Students must be able to comply with both school and workplace expectations regarding attendance and behavior.
- Students may earn eligible credits at the discretion of the local or regional board of education, in accordance with C.G.S. Section 10-221a, provided the primary focus of the curriculum of eligible credits corresponds directly to the subject matter of the specified course requirements.
- The Principal or their designee, in collaboration with School Counselors, will determine the maximum number of work hours for each student.
- Students must receive approval for work release from the Principal or their designee.
- The student must obtain written consent from his/her parent and/or legal guardian.
- Students must obtain a Promise of Employment letter from the prospective employer, apply for and be issued working papers.
- Students must show proof of employment, reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Principal or their designee.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

a. Student

- The student shall obtain written consent from his/her parent and/or legal guardian.
- The student is responsible for maintaining good academic standing, attendance and behavior as outlined in the Eligibility Requirements.
- The student is responsible for transportation to and from the job site.

b. School

- The school principal or their designee is responsible for ensuring that student work release

is operated in accordance with Connecticut's Student Work Release Policy, including but not limited to:

- Discussing the student work release policy with each student;
- Verifying eligibility and reviewing on a quarterly basis with the student; and
- Adhering to all applicable laws, including the Guidelines and Procedures for the Employment of Minors in Connecticut.

5. Legal References

- Statutory Reference: [4-124ll](#)