



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Series: 2014-15
Circular Letter: C-2

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education

DATE: July 14, 2014

SUBJECT: Summary of Legislation Enacted in the 2014 Regular Session of the Connecticut General Assembly

The Connecticut General Assembly recently adjourned its 2014 Regular Session. The State Department of Education (SDE) is hereby providing you with a comprehensive summary of the public acts passed during the regular session that appear to be of applicability and interest to school districts.

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

1. We recognize that with so many pieces of legislation this is a lengthy document. We would especially draw your attention to the following public acts: 14-38 (*An Act Concerning The Recommendations Of The Uniform Regional School Calendar Task Force, Licensure Exemptions For Certain After School Programs And Expanding Opportunities Under The Subsidized Training And Employment Program*), 14-39 (*An Act Establishing The Office Of Early Childhood, Expanding Opportunities For Early Childhood Education And Concerning Dyslexia And Special Education*), 14-172 (*An Act Concerning Improving Employment Opportunities Through Education And Ensuring Safe School Climates*), 14-176 (*An Act Concerning The Storage And Administration Of Epinephrine At Public Schools*), 14-196 (*An Act Concerning A State-Wide Sexual Abuse And Assault Awareness Program*), 14-198 (*An Act Concerning Excused Absences From School For Children Of Service Members*) and 14-232 (*An Act Concerning The Review And Approval Of Safe School Climate Plans By The Department Of Education And A Student Safety Hotline Feasibility Study*). The index page may help you to prioritize the reading of acts affecting your district.
2. This document does not describe every 2014 public act affecting the operation of a school district or provide every detail of the summarized acts. Since this is only a summary of new legislation, each superintendent or designated district leader should

review the actual text of any act that may impact his or her district. If you are viewing this document electronically, clicking the title on the index page will allow you to view the full act.

3. The summaries are organized in two parts. The first part contains those newly enacted laws that primarily concern education. The second part contains those newly enacted laws that concern the budget and bond-related public acts affecting education.
4. Following the legislation index is a summary of each enacted bill, including the effective date. 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 Sarah Hemingway, Legislative Liaison, at 860-713-6493 or sarah.hemingway@ct.gov.

Public Acts Affecting Education

Public Act Number	Public Act Title	Page
Public Act 14-21	<u><i>An Act Concerning The English Language Learner Educator Incentive Program</i></u>	1
Public Act 14-38	<u><i>An Act Concerning The Recommendations Of The Uniform Regional School Calendar Task Force, Licensure Exemptions For Certain After School Programs And Expanding Opportunities Under The Subsidized Training And Employment Program</i></u>	1
Public Act 14-39	<u><i>An Act Establishing The Office Of Early Childhood, Expanding Opportunities For Early Childhood Education And Concerning Dyslexia And Special Education</i></u>	1-2
Public Act 14-41	<u><i>An Act Establishing The Connecticut Smart Start Program</i></u>	3
Public Act 14-59	<u><i>An Act Implementing The Recommendations Of The Legislative Program Review And Investigations Committee On The Reemployment Of Older Workers Concerning The Technical High School System</i></u>	3
Public Act 14-65	<u><i>An Act Concerning Revisions To The Higher Education Statutes And Military Occupational Licensing Data</i></u>	3
Public Act 14-66	<u><i>An Act Concerning Youth Athletics And Concussions</i></u>	3-4
Public Act 14-93	<u><i>An Act Concerning Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention</i></u>	4-5
Public Act 14-99	<u><i>An Act Concerning The Department Of Children And Families And The Education Of Children</i></u>	5
Public Act 14-113	<u><i>An Act Concerning Recommendations By The Legislative Commissioners For Technical Revisions To The Education Statutes</i></u>	5
Public Act 14-172	<u><i>An Act Concerning Improving Employment Opportunities Through Education And Ensuring Safe School Climates</i></u>	5-6
Public Act 14-176	<u><i>An Act Concerning The Storage And Administration Of Epinephrine At Public Schools</i></u>	6-7

Public Act 14-186	<u>An Act Concerning The Department Of Children And Families And The Protection Of Children</u>	7
Public Act 14-187	<u>An Act Eliminating Unnecessary Government Regulation</u>	7-8
Public Act 14-196	<u>An Act Concerning A State-Wide Sexual Abuse And Assault Awareness Program</u>	8
Public Act 14-198	<u>An Act Concerning Excused Absences From School For Children Of Service Members</u>	8
Public Act 14-212	<u>An Act Concerning The State Education Resource Center</u>	8-9
Public Act 14-213	<u>An Act Concerning Notice To The Superintendent Of Schools Or Chief Executive Officer Of A Municipality Upon Release Or Relocation Of A Registered Sexual Offender Into The School District Or Municipality</u>	9
Public Act 14-229	<u>An Act Concerning the Expungement Of A Pupil's Cumulative Education Record For Certain Expulsions</u>	9-10
Public Act 14-231	<u>An Act Concerning The Department Of Public Health's Recommendations Regarding Various Revisions To The Public Health Statutes</u>	9
Public Act 14-232	<u>An Act Concerning The Review And Approval Of Safe School Climate Plans By The Department Of Education And A Student Safety Hotline Feasibility Study</u>	10-11
Public Act 14-234	<u>An Act Concerning Domestic Violence And Sexual Assault</u>	11
Special Act 14-15	<u>An Act Concerning Interpreter Qualifications</u>	12
Special Act 14-19	<u>An Act Concerning A Plan For Career Readiness And Manufacturing Apprenticeship Preparation Programs At The Technical High Schools</u>	12
Special Act 14-22	<u>An Act Concerning Access To Preschool Programs For Children In The Care And Custody Of The Department Of Children And Families</u>	12

Budget and Bond-Related Public Acts Affecting Education

Public Act 14-47	<u><i>An Act Making Adjustments To State Expenditures And Revenues For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015</i></u>	13
Public Act 14-90	<u><i>An Act Concerning Authorization Of State Grant Commitments For School Building Projects And Concerning Changes To The Statutes Concerning School Building Projects</i></u>	13-14
Public Act 14-98	<u><i>An Act Authorizing And Adjusting Bonds Of The State For Capital Improvements, Transportation And Other Purposes</i></u>	14-15
Public Act 14-217	<u><i>An Act Implementing Provisions Of The State Budget For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015</i></u>	15-17

Public Acts Affecting Education

PA 14-21: An Act Concerning the English Language Learner Educator Incentive Program *(Effective July 1, 2014)*

- This public act redesigns an existing teachers' loan reimbursement program administered by the Office of Higher Education (OHE) as an incentive grant and loan reimbursement program for college and university students who are studying to be teachers and are pursuing an endorsement in bilingual education or teaching English to speakers of other languages upon graduation.
 - It allows eligible students to receive a grant of \$5,000 per year, for up to two years of schooling. Upon graduation, students become eligible for a loan reimbursement of \$2,500 per year for up to four years of teaching. The FY 14 and FY 15 biennial budget contain \$95,000 for this program.

PA 14-38: An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Uniform Regional School Calendar Task Force, Licensure Exemptions for Certain After School Programs and Expanding Opportunities under the Subsidized Training and Employment Program *(Effective July 1, 2014)*

- Section 1 extends the option for local and regional boards of education to choose to adopt the uniform regional school calendar developed and approved by their regional education service center (RESC) to the school year commencing July 1, 2014 or July 1, 2015.
- Section 1 requires local and regional boards of education to adopt this calendar for the school year beginning July 1, 2016, unless an existing employee contract makes that impossible, in which case the board must adopt the calendar for the school year commencing July 1, 2017.
- Section 2 exempts child day care services administered by a public school system or municipal agency or department from licensing requirements, even if they are not located in a public school.
- Section 3 allows eligible small businesses or small manufacturers to apply to the DOL for a grant to subsidize on-the-job training for a new apprentice (defined as a student at a public or private high school, preparatory school or institution of higher education), and specifies the grant amount based on the apprentice's days of employment. This is part of the Labor Department's Subsidized Training and Employment program.

PA 14-39: An Act Establishing the Office of Early Childhood, Expanding Opportunities for Early Childhood Education and Concerning Dyslexia and Special Education *(Effective upon passage unless otherwise noted)*

- Section 1 requires that, not later than January 1, 2015, SDE to add “SLD-Dyslexia” under “Specific Learning Disability” on the individualized education program (IEP) form.
- Section 2 (*effective July 1, 2014*) requires that after July 1, 2015, teacher preparation programs leading to professional certification include instruction on the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based interventions for, students with dyslexia.
- Section 3 requires boards of education to notify parents or guardians of preschool special education students who reach age five or age six of their legal right to hold the child back from entering kindergarten, in accordance with CGS 10-184.
- Remaining sections of the bill establish the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), which shall be responsible for the delivery of services to young children and their families to ensure optimal health, safety and learning for each young child. Specific provisions related to local boards of education include:
 - The OEC developing and implementing the early childhood information system;
 - The development of a plan, in consultation with SDE, to change the date that a child must reach five years of age to be eligible to enroll in kindergarten from January first of any school year to October first of any school year, and to create spaces in school readiness, public, and private prekindergarten programs for children not eligible to enroll in kindergarten;
 - The development of a state-wide kindergarten assessment tool that measure’s a child’s preparedness for kindergarten;
 - The expansion of the school readiness program in two ways by expanding the competitive grant for school readiness spaces under current law, and creating a new school readiness grant to enable eligible towns and regional school readiness councils to start up new school readiness classrooms and provide spaces to eligible children in school readiness programs that are accredited or seeking accreditation;
 - In consultation with SDE, the development of a preschool experience survey that may be included in kindergarten registration materials; and
 - The addition of OEC to the list of employers, schools under OEC to the definition of “public schools” and OEC professional staff to the definition of “teacher” under the Teachers’ Retirement System (TRS).

School readiness programs, which were previously under SDE, are now under the purview of OEC. For questions on this, or any other OEC initiatives, please contact OEC at (860) 713-6410.

PA 14-41: An Act Establishing the Connecticut Smart Start Program (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- The public act requires OEC, in consultation with SDE, to design and administer the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program. The program reimburses local and regional boards of education for capital and operating grants for expenses related to establishing or expanding a preschool program under the board's jurisdiction. Boards must apply to OEC for the grants. Additional information about this program will be forthcoming from the OEC.

PA 14-59: An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee on the Reemployment of Older Workers Concerning the Technical High School System (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- In addition to current requirements, Section 1 requires the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) superintendent, in collaboration with the Labor Commissioner, to collect employment information and report on demographics, course and program enrollment and completion, and wage information, for typical and adult students who graduate or complete an approved program of study, when reporting to the general assembly annually.

PA 14-65: An Act Concerning Revisions to the Higher Education Statutes and Military Occupational Licensing Data (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- Section 13 moves the deadline for the Planning Commission for Higher Education's implementation and progress report on the strategic master plan from October 1, 2016 to January 1, 2016.

PA 14-66: An Act Concerning Youth Athletics and Concussions (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- Section 1 clarifies that any coach who has completed the initial training course regarding concussions must annually review current and relevant information regarding concussions.
- It also requires SDE to consult with DPH and other stakeholders to develop or approve a training course regarding concussions. By October 1, 2014, and annually thereafter, the group must also develop or approve annual review materials.
- It further requires SDE to consult with DPH and other stakeholders to develop a refresher course regarding concussions, including current best practices, and, for football coaches, current best practices around the frequency of games and full contact practices and scrimmages.

- It also requires that, by January 1, 2015, the State Board of Education (SBE) in consultation with DPH and other stakeholders develop a concussion education plan to be used by local and regional boards of education. Boards of education will be responsible for implementing such plan using written materials, online training or videos, or in person training. The content of the training to be implemented by boards of education is described in the statute.
- For the school year beginning July 1, 2015, local boards of education must prohibit a student athlete from participating in intramural or interscholastic athletic activities unless the student athlete and a parent or guardian have read written materials, viewed online training or videos, or attended in person training regarding the concussion education plan. A student athlete's parent or legal guardian must also return a signed informed consent, which must include a summary of the concussion education plan, and a summary of the local board's policies regarding concussions. The form is to be developed by SDE, DPH, and other stakeholders.
- Section 2 requires a qualified school employee to notify the parents or guardian of a student athlete who has been removed from an athletic activity due to signs, symptoms, behaviors, or diagnosis of a concussion not later than 24 hours of such removal, but to make a reasonable effort to provide such notification immediately after such removal. Qualified school employee is defined as a principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by a school district, coach or school paraprofessional.
- Section 3 provides that the SBE require all local and regional school districts to collect and report all occurrences of concussions, including the nature and extent of the concussion and the circumstances in which the student sustained the concussion, if known to the SBE which shall then send a concussion report to the DPH containing all information.
- Section 4 establishes a task force to study occurrences of concussions in youth athletics and make recommendations for possible legislative initiatives to address such concussions. Appointments to the task force are to be made by the Governor and various legislative leaders from various organizations and the task force is also to include the Commissioners of Education, Public Health and Children and Families or their designees.

PA 14-93: An Act Concerning Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention (*Effective October 1, 2014*)

- Section 1 requires the State Board of Education (SBE), in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health, the governing authority for intramural and interscholastic athletics, an appropriate organization representing licensed athletic trainers, and an organization representing national, state or local medical associations, to

develop or approve a sudden cardiac arrest awareness education program for use by local or regional boards of education. The program must be published on the SDE website by July 1, 2015.

- It also requires that, by July 1, 2015, the SBE, with these stakeholders, develop and approve an informed consent form to distribute to parents and guardians, regarding sudden cardiac arrest. This form must include, at a minimum, a summary of the sudden cardiac arrest awareness program, and a summary of the school district's policies regarding sudden cardiac arrests.
- Sections 2 and 3 require that any person who holds or is issued a coaching permit by the SBE annually review the sudden cardiac arrest program prior to commencing the coaching assignment. The law also provides that the SBE may revoke a coaching permit if any coach is found not to have reviewed the sudden cardiac arrest program on an annual basis prior to the commencement of the coaching assignment.
- Section 4 states that coaches are immune from suit and liability, both personally and in an official capacity, for any actions or omissions associated with this act, unless the actions or omissions constitute willful misconduct, gross negligence or recklessness.

PA 14-99: An Act Concerning the Department of Children and Families and the Education of Children (*Effective October 1, 2014*)

- This public act requires that the superintendent of each school district providing education to a child or youth under DCF custody provide to DCF, the foster parent, and the attorney for such child or youth, a description of child's or youth's education status and academic progress. Such description shall include information regarding current levels of educational performance, including absenteeism and grade level performance, test results, report cards, individual success plans, and discipline reports.
- The public act also requires DCF and Court Support Services Division (CSSD) to promptly review any educational files upon entry into any facility or school program run or contracted by DCF or CSSD to determine if such child may be eligible for special education.

PA 14-113: An Act Concerning Recommendations by the Legislative Commissioners for Technical Revisions to the Education Statutes (*Effective from passage*)

- The act makes technical corrections and conforming changes within the education statutes.

PA 14-172: An Act Concerning Improving Employment Opportunities through Education and Ensuring Safe School Climates (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- Section 1 permits recipients of temporary family assistance to take education courses as part of the requirements of the recipient’s employability plan. Education courses that may be approved include high school graduate equivalency degree or basic education programs.
- The remainder of the public act amends the school climate statutes in a number of ways:
 - Section 2, within the safe school climate plan,
 - Specifies that students and parents or guardians should be notified at the beginning of each school year, rather than annually, of the process to anonymously report acts of bullying;
 - Requires that parents or guardians of the student alleged to have committed an act or acts of bullying, as well as the parents or guardians of the student who was bullied, receive prompt notice that an investigation has commenced; and
 - Specifies two separate meetings with parents or guardians – one with the parent or guardian of the student who was bullied to discuss measures taken by the school, including the policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts, and one with the parents or guardians of a student who commits a verified act of bullying to discuss specific interventions undertaken to prevent further acts.
 - Section 3 includes in the “prevention and intervention strategy” (defined in C.G.S. 10-222g) a new aspect of culturally competent school-based curriculum focusing on social-emotional learning, self- awareness and self-regulation. The act specifies that funding may originate from public, private, federal, or philanthropic funds for this purpose. SDE will issue further information regarding possible opportunities for districts wishing to pursue work in this area.
 - Section 3 also clarifies that "interventions with the bullied child" as one of the options for a prevention and intervention strategy includes referrals to a school counselor, psychologist or other appropriate social or mental health service, and periodic follow-up by the safe school climate specialist with the bullied child.
 - Section 4 establishes a competitive grant, administered by OEC in collaboration with SDE, for up to three alliance school districts to develop and implement a strategy to promote the social and emotional well-being and health of children age three to third grade. More information will be forthcoming on this initiative.

PA 14-176: An Act Concerning the Storage and Administration of Epinephrine at Public Schools (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- This Public Act requires the SBE to adopt regulations concerning the conditions and procedures for the storage of, and administration of epinephrine by school personnel to,

students for the purpose of emergency first aid to students who experience allergic reactions and do not have prior written authorization for administration of epinephrine.

- It further requires schools to designate and train qualified school employees to administer emergency epinephrine in cartridge injectors (epipens) to students having a first time allergic reaction and who do not have prior parental authorization or a written order of a qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine. Qualified school employees are defined as principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainers, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by the district, coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics, and school paraprofessional. There shall be at least one such qualified school employee on school grounds during their regular school hours in the absence of a school nurse.
- The school nurse or principal must select the qualified school employees to administer epinephrine in the absence of a school nurse, and may only do so if they have undergone training. Such training must be developed by SDE and DPH, in conjunction with the School Nurse Advisory Council, by December 31, 2014.
- A parent or guardian may submit, in writing, to the school nurse and school medical advisor, if any, that epinephrine shall not be administered to such student.

PA 14-186: An Act Concerning the Department of Children and Families and the Protection of Children (*Effective October 1, 2014 unless otherwise noted*)

- Section 1 (*effective from passage*) amends the situations when the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is required to disclose records in their possession, without consent of the person who is the subject in the record, in various respects, including notification to the superintendent of a public school when DCF places an individual employed by the school district on the child abuse and neglect registry.
- Section 6 adds any person who holds or is issued a coaching permit by the State Board of Education, is a coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics and is eighteen years of age or older and other persons to the list of mandated reporters.
- Section 7 requires that, not later than five working days after an investigation of child abuse or neglect by a school employee has been completed, DCF notify the school superintendent and SDE of the results of such investigation. This also clarifies that if DCF has reasonable cause, and recommends the employee be placed on the registry, the superintendent shall suspend such employee.

PA 14-187: An Act Eliminating Unnecessary Government Regulation (*Effective from passage*)

- Section 42 eliminates the statutory provisions, and associated regulations, around the fee associated with competency examinations administered by the State Board of Education (SBE). Repealing this outdated regulation makes statute conform to current practice.
- Section 54 repeals the regulations 10-295-10(c) to 10-295-10(f), inclusive. These regulations concern local board of education reimbursement procedures for certified teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs).

PA 14-196: An Act Concerning A State-wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- The act requires the DCF to collaborate with SDE and the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc., or a similar entity, to identify or develop a state-wide sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program for use by local boards of education, by July 1, 2015.
- The program will include modules for teachers, age-appropriate materials for students in kindergarten through grade 12, and a uniform sexual abuse and assault response policy.
- The act requires that, by October 1, 2015, each local and regional board of education implement the program. It also specifies that no student shall be required to participate in the program, and that a student shall be exempt upon written notification from a parent or guardian.

PA 14-198: An Act Concerning Excused Absences from School for Children of Service Members (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- Requires any public or private school to grant ten days of excused absences, and additional days at the discretion of the local or regional boards of education, to a child aged five to eighteen whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the armed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, when such absence is for the purpose of visiting such child's parent or legal guardian with respect to such leave or deployment.
- The act specifies that such child and the parent or legal guardian shall be responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teacher prior to any period of excused absence, and ensuring that such assignments are completed prior to returning to school.

PA 14-212: An Act Concerning the State Education Resource Center (*Effective from passage*)

- Section 1 defines the State Education Resource Center (SERC) as a quasi-public agency, which will be governed by a Board of Directors.
- Section 2 defines the purpose of SERC as assisting the SBE in the provision of programs and activities that will promote educational equity and excellence, and lists specific activities associated with this work.
- Section 19 expands the definition of retired police officer, allowing for additional officers to provide security services in public schools. The expanded definition adds sworn federal law enforcement agents who retired or separated in good standing and sworn officers of an organized police department in another state to those eligible to offer security services, as long as they meet or exceed the standards of the Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council for certification in Connecticut.

PA 14-213: An Act Concerning Notice To The Superintendent Of Schools Or Chief Executive Officer Of A Municipality Upon Release Or Relocation Of A Registered Sexual Offender Into The School District Or Municipality (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- The act requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to notify the superintendent of the school district when someone required to register as a sex offender notifies DESPP of a change of address in the municipality. DESPP must email this notice and provide the Superintendent with the same registry information that DESPP will post publicly on the Internet about the registrant the registrant resides or plans to reside when a registered sex offender notifies DESPP of an address change. By law, DESPP already provides this notice and information to school superintendents when registered sex offenders are released into the community.

PA 14-229: An Act Concerning the Expungement of a Pupil's Cumulative Education Record for Certain Expulsions (*Effective July 1, 2014*)

- Section 1 amends current law to specify that a local or regional board of education cannot shorten or waive the expulsion for a pupil expelled for the first time if the expulsions results from possession of a firearm or deadly weapon.
- Section 2 allows a local or regional board of education to expunge the expulsion from a pupil's cumulative educational record , except for notice of an expulsion of a pupil in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, based on possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, as follows:
 - Upon graduation from high school;
 - Before graduation from high school for a pupil whose length of expulsion is shortened or the expulsion is waived, at the time such pupil completes the board-specified program and meets any other conditions set forth by the board; or

- Before graduation from high school for a pupil who has demonstrated conduct and behavior in the years following such expulsion which warrants an expungement, as determined by the local or regional board of education (which may consider evidence of subsequent disciplinary problems that have led to removal from the classroom, suspension, or expulsion).

PA 14-231: An Act Concerning the Department Of Public Health's Recommendations Regarding Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes *(Effective October 1, 2014)*

- Section 4 provides that school nurses shall be provided with sufficient information on children who live in the nurse's jurisdiction and who are listed on the Department of Public Health (DPH) childhood immunization registry, to allow the nurses to determine which children in their jurisdiction are overdue for scheduled immunizations and provide outreach to help get them vaccinated. The bill grants this access to school nurses who are required to verify students' immunization status in public and private schools, grades pre-K through 12.

PA 14-232: An Act the Review and Approval of Safe School Climate Plans by the Department of Education and a Student Safety Hotline Feasibility Study *(Effective from passage)*

- Section 1 requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to study the feasibility of establishing a student safety hotline. They must submit such study to the General Assembly's Education Committee by January 1, 2015.
- Section 2 requires that any district that has not had a safe school climate plan previously reviewed and approved by SDE submit it by September 1, 2014. Not later than 30 days after Department approval, such plan shall be available on the local or regional board of education's and each individual school's website, and included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.
- Section 3 requires that SDE receive each school climate plan and review it for compliance with [CGS 10-222d](#).
 - Within 30 days, SDE must approve or reject such plan. If rejected, the district has 30 days to resubmit to SDE, which must approve or reject within 30 days. If the resubmission is rejected, the local or regional board of education must adopt an appropriate model plan, developed or recommended by SDE.
 - SDE must make available on its website:
 - Each safe school climate plan that has been approved;
 - A list of districts that have an approved plan; and

- A list of districts whose plans have been rejected and are in the process of resubmitting.
- Section 4 requires SDE to develop or recommend model safe school climate plans. It also requires that the school climate assessment instruments, used by schools to collect information to monitor bullying prevention efforts over time and compare district's progress to state trends, contain uniform grade-level appropriate questions that collect information about students' perspective and opinions about the school climate, and allow students to submit such survey anonymously. More information will be forthcoming on this issue.

PA 14-234: An Act Concerning Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (*Effective October 1, 2014*)

- Section 3 adds a definition of teen dating violence to the school climate statutes. Per this definition, teen dating violence means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening, that occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in a dating relationship.
- It further requires that the local and regional safe school climate plan now address teen dating violence, in addition to bullying.
- Section 4 adds teen dating violence to several sections of the term "prevention and intervention strategy":
 - Positive behavioral interventions and supports process to prevent such actions;
 - School rules prohibiting these actions;
 - Adequate adult supervision in areas these behaviors are likely to occur; and
 - Inclusion of grade-appropriate education and prevention curricula.
- Section 5 requires SDE to consult with stakeholders, including the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, to establish a resource network for the identification, prevention and education of school bullying and teen dating violence, and make such information available to schools.
- Section 6 requires annual training for school employees, except those who hold professional certification, unless the employee holding professional certification is the safe school climate coordinator, safe school climate specialist, or member of the safe school climate committee, on the prevention, identification and response to teen dating violence, similar to the training required around bullying.
- Section 7 grants the same protections to school employees, students, parents, and boards of education for teen dating violence reporting and investigations that are granted for reporting, investigating and responding to bullying.
- SDE will offer further guidance to districts to carry out the provisions of this act.

SA 14-15: An Act Concerning Interpreter Qualifications *(Effective July 1, 2014)*

- The act requires the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services, in consultation with stakeholders, and with the Commissioner of Education, to develop a plan to ensure that an adequate number of qualified interpreters are available to assist students who are deaf or hard of hearing, and to submit a report, with recommendations as to standards to ensure an adequate number of interpreters, a fee structure, and methods to monitor compliance with standards, by December 31, 2014.

SA 14-19: An Act Requiring a Technical High School and Community-Technical College Cooperative *(Effective July 1, 2014)*

- Requires the CTHSS, in collaboration with the Department of Labor (DOL), SDE, Boards of Regents for Higher Education (BOR), and industry and business representatives to develop a plan to utilize the manufacturing centers at the technical high schools after regular school hours and on weekends for career-readiness programs and apprenticeship preparation for students of Connecticut high schools or institutions of higher education or adults seeking to reenter the workforce. The plan is due to the legislature by January 1, 2015.

SA 14-22: An Act Concerning Access to Preschool Programs for Children in the Care and Custody of the Department of Children and Families *(Effective July 1, 2014)*

- Section 1 requires the OEC and DCF to adopt policies and procedures that maximize the enrollment of children placed in out-of-home care by the Commissioner of DCF in eligible pre-school programs. Eligible programs are defined as school readiness, programs offered by local or regional boards of education, NAEYC accredited programs, Head Start, or any other program the DCF Commissioner deems suitable to meet the needs of the child.
- Section 2 requires that by January 1, 2015, DCF and OEC must submit a report to the legislature concerning the number of eligible children, analysis of available spaces, cost, and a plan to provide priority to these children.

Budget and Bond-Related Public Acts Affecting Education

PA 14-47: An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures and Revenues for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015 *(Effective July 1, 2014 unless otherwise noted)*

- Section 17 makes several transfers and adjustments to OEC accounts.
- Section 18 allocates equalization aid grants to towns for the 2014-15 school year.
- Section 20 allocates up to \$100,000 of the After School Program line item at SDE to Plainville (up to \$50,000), Thompson (up to \$25,000) and Montville (up to \$25,000).
- Section 21 transfers \$1,000,000 from the Tobacco Settlement Fund to the After School Program line item at SDE for grants to the following programs: Waterbury (up to \$143,000); Meriden (up to \$71,000); Bridgeport, for the Lighthouse Program (up to \$164,000); Stamford (up to \$123,000); New Britain (up to \$87,000); East Hartford (up to \$65,000); Hartford (up to \$172,000); New Haven (up to \$149,000); and Windham (up to \$26,000).
- Section 27 *(effective upon passage)* authorizes SDE to provide \$1,200,000 in grant-in-aid to the city of Bridgeport for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014 and \$700,000 to the city of Bridgeport for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015.
- Section 41 allocates \$10.4 million for the magnet account for the current fiscal year.

PA 14-90: An Act Concerning Authorization of State Grant Commitments for School Building Projects and Concerning Changes to the Statutes Concerning School Building Projects *(Various effective dates)*

- Section 1 authorizes bonds for grant commitments for various school building projects. *(Effective from passage)*
- Section 2 adds a licensed building official to the School Safety Infrastructure Council. *(Effective from passage)*
- Section 3 allows the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to waive any of the provisions of the school safety infrastructure standards if the commissioner determines the application has made a good faith effort to address such standards and compliance would be infeasible, unreasonable, or excessively expensive. *(Effective July 1, 2014)*
- Section 4 allows the Commissioner of DAS to require any town or board of education applying for a grant for a school building project to conduct a safety assessment of the project to determine compliance with the school safety infrastructure standards. *(Effective July 1, 2014)*
- Section 5 through 12 make conforming changes regarding the transfer of the Bureau of School Facilities from SDE to DAS. *(Effective July 1, 2014)*

- Section 13 adds the Education Commissioner, or his designee, to the School Building Projects Advisory Council. *(Effective from passage)*
- Sections 14 through 53 *(Effective from passage)* offer relief to miscellaneous school construction projects, making otherwise ineligible project costs eligible for reimbursement. Among these sections,
 - Section 37 enables the New London school district to expand the number of interdistrict magnet schools for which it may seek the maximum 80% school building project reimbursement rate under CGS 10-264h. New London has until June 30, 2017 to enroll at least fifteen percent of its district-wide enrollment from other districts in order keep the higher rate;
 - Section 38 enables a school building project subsidy for the New London Magnet School for Visual and Performing Arts, which is to have a governance agreement between the New London Public Schools, The Garde Arts Center, and the Commissioners of Education and Administrative Services, under a future memorandum of understanding. This project is to receive a ninety-five percent reimbursement rate for eligible construction project costs that are not to exceed \$31 million.

PA 14-98: An Act Authorizing and Adjusting Bonds of the State for Capital Improvements, Transportation and Other Purposes *(Effective July 1, 2014 unless otherwise noted)*

- Section 9 authorizes \$10 million for grants-in-aid for alterations, repairs, improvements, technology, equipment, and capital start-up costs to expand the availability of high-quality school models and to assist in implementing common core state standards and assessments, in accordance with procedures the SDE commissioner establishes. Additional information about the availability of these funds will be forthcoming.
- Sections 24 *(effective upon passage)* and 25 authorize \$10 million per year to the OEC to administer the Smart Start Program.
- Sections 67, 72, 75 and 91 make changes to the supervision of bond funds associated with several programs now under the OEC purview.
- Sections 73 *(effective upon passage)* and 74 expand the school security infrastructure program to include regional educational service centers, state charter schools, the technical high school system, incorporated or endowed high schools or academies approved by the SBE, and nonpublic schools. To be eligible for reimbursement, an applicant must demonstrate that it has developed and periodically practices an emergency plan, and provide for a uniform assessment of the schools, including security infrastructure using the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities' Safe Schools Facilities Checklist. \$37 million (\$22 million of which is new) is allocated for these

provisions. Applications will be available in a time and manner prescribed by the DESPP Commissioner.

- Section 82 authorizes \$3.5 million for CTHSS to establish a pilot program to provide expanded educational opportunities by extending hours at technical high school in Hamden, Hartford, New Britain and Waterbury for academic enrichment and training in trades for secondary and adult students.
- Section 90 authorizes \$17.4 million for capital costs associated with meeting the goals of the current *Sheff* stipulated agreement.

PA 14-217: An Act Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015 (*Effective from passage unless otherwise noted*)

- Section 56 adds two members to the School Building Projects Advisory Council, one of whom has experience with school safety, and one of whom has experience with the State Building Code. Both are to be appointed by the Governor.
- Section 79 creates a Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee, which shall evaluate policies related to the juvenile justice system and its expanded jurisdiction to 16 and 17 year old youths. Among the members on the Committee are the Commissioner or his designee, two child or youth advocates, and two parents or parent advocates. The Committee will issue reports to the legislature by January 1, 2015 and July 1, 2015 regarding policies, laws and goals related to the juvenile justice system and its expanded jurisdiction.
- Sections 89 through 107 implement the provisions of the 2013 *Sheff* stipulated agreement. Section 89 adds a provision (*effective July 1, 2014*) which permits the SDE to limit the magnet school grant payment to an interdistrict magnet operator to an amount equal to the grant such operator was eligible to receive based on the enrollment level on October 1, 2013. Approval of funding above such level shall be prioritized by the Department as follows:
 - Increases in enrollment in a program that is adding planned new grades;
 - Increases in enrollment in program moving into a permanent facility for the school year commencing July 1, 2014;
 - Increases in a program to ensure compliance; and
 - New enrollment in a program commencing operations on or after July 1, 2014 pursuant to the 2013 *Sheff* stipulated agreement.
- Section 108 extends the period the SDE may reduce the transportation grants to local and regional boards of education proportionately based on available appropriations through June 30, 2015.
- Section 109 allows SDE to pay the remaining amount of the priority school district grant for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, as well as the amount for the fiscal year ending

June 30, 2015. It further permits districts to carry forward any priority school district funds allocated after May 1, 2014 into the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015.

- Sections 110 and 111 make minor corrections to definitions in statute.
- Section 112 redefines, clarifies and lowers the town contribution for local charter funding. It also makes minor date change corrections to align to current practice.
- Sections 113 and 114 make clarifying changes to alliance district funding:
 - Section 113 and 114 clarify that alliance district funding can only be used to supplant local funding for educational purposes if such supplanting is part of an alliance district plan approved by the Commissioner and clarify that the recipient town must distribute all such funding to the local or regional board of education; and
 - Section 114 authorizes the Commissioner to permit a local or regional board of education to use a portion of their alliance district funds for paying tuition to interdistrict magnet schools.
- Section 115 (*effective July 1, 2014*) allows mastery examinations to take place any time, rather than limiting the testing window to March and April.
- Section 116 allows the SDE to provide operating grants to magnet schools that are not in compliance with racial minority requirements, due to changes in the federal racial reporting requirements, for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years, as long as such program submits a compliance plan to the Commissioner, and the Commissioner approves such plan. By January 1, 2015, the SDE must submit a report to the legislature recommending changes to the racial minority enrollment requirements for interdistrict magnet schools to conform to federal law.
- Section 117 requires the SDE to submit a report on the pilot study for early literacy to both the Appropriations and Education committees of the general assembly by October 1, 2016.
- Section 118 and 119 (*effective July 1, 2014*) makes changes to vo-ag funding. Section 118 increases the per pupil grant to districts operating an agricultural science and technology education centers from \$2,750 to \$3,200 per student. Note that the \$1.5 Million dollar increase in appropriation is not enough to cover the increase in the per student amount from \$2,750 to \$3,200, so SDE is paying approximately 98.6% (\$3,155). Section 118 also lowers the amount a district can charge in tuition from 62.47% of the foundation level set in CGS section 10-262f, to 59.2% of the foundation level. Currently, the foundation level is set at \$11,525. Section 119 makes minor technical changes to vo-ag funding.
- Sections 132 and 133 require the same study and reporting on DCF children receiving pre-school experiences as those required under SA 14-22.
- Section 138 (*effective July 1, 2014*) disburses \$10 million from the Tobacco Settlement Fund to the Smart Start competitive grant program, for the fiscal years ending June 30,

2016 through June 30, 2025, for grants-in-aid to towns establishing or expanding preschool programs under the jurisdiction of the town's board of education.

- Section 197 (*effective July 1, 2014*) requires the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, of which the Commissioner is a member, to develop a state-wide plan for implementing, expanding or improving upon contextualized learning programs, career certificate programs, middle college programs and early college high school programs. Such plan must be submitted to the general assembly by January 1, 2015.
- Section 198 requires the Commission on Children to establish a two-generational school readiness plan to promote long-term learning and economic success for low-income families by addressing intergenerational barriers to school readiness and workforce readiness. The Commission must submit the plan to the general assembly by December 1, 2014.
- Section 199 (*effective July 1, 2014*) allows SDE, in collaboration with the BOR, University of Connecticut, and the Department of Banking, to develop a plan to provide each student in public high school instruction in financial literacy. Such instruction may take place in a student's final year of high school. By January 1, 2015, the involved agencies must report to the general assembly on the status of such plan.
- Section 209 (*effective July 1, 2014*) allows the BOR to enter into a memorandum of understanding with SDE for the purpose of delivering a transitional college readiness program that will enable adults to enroll directly in a program of higher learning. Such partnership will be through Adult Education.
- Section 250 (*effective July 1, 2014*) permits the Comptroller, upon certification of the Commissioner of Education, to pay the education equalization aid grants due to the town of Winchester for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2015 and June 30, 2016 as follows: fifty percent in October, twenty-five percent in January, and twenty-five percent in April.
- Section 254 (*effective July 1, 2014*) amends the definition of retired police officer, in the same way as section 19 of PA 14-212.
- Section 255 is an additional school construction project, allowing renovations and alterations at Torrington's Southeast School to be on the priority list.