



General Assembly

January Session, 2021

**Raised Bill No. 6556**

LCO No. 4302



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:  
(ED)

**AN ACT ADDRESSING ISSUES CREATED BY THE COVID-19  
PANDEMIC ON PUBLIC EDUCATION IN CONNECTICUT.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section:

2 (1) "Learning loss" means any specific or general loss of knowledge  
3 and skills, or to reversals in academic progress due to extended gaps or  
4 discontinuities in a student's education related to the COVID-19  
5 pandemic; and

6 (2) "COVID-19" means the respiratory disease designated by the  
7 World Health Organization on February 11, 2020, as coronavirus 2019,  
8 and any related mutation thereof recognized by the World Health  
9 Organization as a communicable respiratory disease.

10 (b) For the school years commencing July 1, 2020, to July 1, 2022,  
11 inclusive, the Department of Education shall collect and evaluate  
12 student performance data on the state-wide mastery examination,  
13 administered pursuant to section 10-14n of the general statutes, for the  
14 purpose of identifying and measuring the existence and severity of

15 learning loss and student disengagement in public schools as a result of  
16 the COVID-19 pandemic. Such evaluation shall include an examination  
17 of which students are most impacted by learning loss and student  
18 disengagement, where such students are attending school, and the  
19 nature and severity of the learning loss.

20 (c) Not later than October 1, 2021, the department shall develop  
21 learning loss and student disengagement mitigation strategies for use  
22 by local and regional boards of education. Such strategies shall include,  
23 but need not be limited to, in-school interventions and opportunities for  
24 small group instruction, tutoring services for individual or small groups  
25 of students, expanded afterschool and summer academic instruction  
26 and enrichment programs, and community-based learning pods. Any  
27 such strategy shall include periodic assessments to track student  
28 academic progress and to make any necessary changes to the provision  
29 of such strategy based on the results of such periodic assessments.

30 (d) The department shall provide resources and technical assistance  
31 to local and regional boards of education to extend the school day or  
32 school year for the purpose of increasing student learning time and  
33 addressing the immediate academic needs of students who have  
34 experienced learning loss. Such resources shall include, but need not be  
35 limited to, technical support to analyze and determine how to  
36 restructure the school day or school year, matching funds for additional  
37 school personnel, and partnering with the exclusive bargaining  
38 representative for certified teachers chosen pursuant to section 10-153b  
39 of the general statutes to negotiate the parameters of such extended  
40 school day or school year.

41 (e) Not later than July 1, 2021, the department shall define "student  
42 engagement" for purposes of mitigating learning loss and student  
43 disengagement and improving academic growth and school  
44 connectedness.

45 (f) Not later than January 1, 2022, and annually thereafter until  
46 January 1, 2024, the department shall submit a state-wide learning loss

47 and student disengagement report to the joint standing committee of the  
48 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education,  
49 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

50 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 10-151b of the general statutes is  
51 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
52 *passage*):

53 (a) The superintendent of each local or regional board of education  
54 shall annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher, and for  
55 the school year commencing July 1, 2013, and each school year  
56 thereafter, such annual evaluations shall be the teacher evaluation and  
57 support program adopted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. The  
58 superintendent may conduct additional formative evaluations toward  
59 producing an annual summative evaluation. An evaluation pursuant to  
60 this subsection shall include, but need not be limited to, strengths, areas  
61 needing improvement, strategies for improvement and multiple  
62 indicators of student academic growth, except for the school years  
63 commencing July 1, 2020, to July 1, 2022, inclusive, an evaluation  
64 pursuant to this subsection shall not include the use of multiple  
65 indicators of student academic growth. Claims of failure to follow the  
66 established procedures of such teacher evaluation and support program  
67 shall be subject to the grievance procedure in collective bargaining  
68 agreements negotiated subsequent to July 1, 2004. In the event that a  
69 teacher does not receive a summative evaluation during the school year,  
70 such teacher shall receive a "not rated" designation for such school year.  
71 The superintendent shall report (1) the status of teacher evaluations to  
72 the local or regional board of education on or before June first of each  
73 year, and (2) the status of the implementation of the teacher evaluation  
74 and support program, including the frequency of evaluations, aggregate  
75 evaluation ratings, the number of teachers who have not been evaluated  
76 and other requirements as determined by the Department of Education,  
77 to the Commissioner of Education on or before September fifteenth of  
78 each year. For purposes of this section, the term "teacher" shall include  
79 each professional employee of a board of education, below the rank of  
80 superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State

81 Board of Education.

82 Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2022,  
83 and June 30, 2023, each local or regional board of education for an  
84 alliance district, as defined in section 10-262u of the general statutes,  
85 shall offer the summer learning program described in section 4 of this  
86 act in order to mitigate student learning loss, as defined in section 1 of  
87 this act, and student disengagement.

88 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Department of  
89 Education, in consultation with the after school committee established  
90 pursuant to section 10-16v of the general statutes, may, within available  
91 appropriations, administer a grant program to provide grants to local  
92 and regional boards of education, municipalities and not-for-profit  
93 organizations that are exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of  
94 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding  
95 internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to  
96 time, for summer learning programs that provide direct services and for  
97 entities that provide support to summer learning programs. For  
98 purposes of this section, "summer learning program" means a program  
99 that (1) provides a minimum of two hundred forty hours of educational,  
100 enrichment and recreational activities during the summer recess period  
101 for public schools and includes small group instruction in literacy and  
102 math for children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, and (2)  
103 has a parental involvement component.

104 (b) (1) Applications for grants pursuant to subsection (a) of this  
105 section shall be filed biennially with the Commissioner of Education at  
106 such time and in such manner as the commissioner prescribes. As part  
107 of the application, an applicant shall submit a plan for the expenditure  
108 of grant funds.

109 (2) Eligibility for grants pursuant to this section shall be determined  
110 for a two-year period and shall be based on the applicant's plan for  
111 expenditure of grant funds. Prior to the payment of funds to the grant  
112 recipient for the second year of the grant, the grant recipient shall report

113 to the Department of Education on performance outcomes of the  
114 program and file an expenditure report pursuant to subsection (f) of this  
115 section. The report concerning performance outcomes shall include, but  
116 need not be limited to, measurements of the impact on student  
117 achievement, including grade-level reading ability and the behavior of  
118 student participants.

119 (c) The Department of Education and the after school committee  
120 established pursuant to section 10-16v of the general statutes shall  
121 develop and apply an appropriate evaluation process to measure the  
122 effectiveness of the grant program established pursuant to this section.

123 (d) For purposes of carrying out the provisions of this section, the  
124 Department of Education may accept funds from private sources and  
125 from any state agency that is a member of the after school committee  
126 established pursuant to section 10-16v of the general statutes.

127 (e) The Department of Education shall, in collaboration with regional  
128 educational service centers, support grant recipients by (1) monitoring  
129 and evaluating programs and activities, (2) conducting a comprehensive  
130 evaluation of the effectiveness of programs and implementing risk  
131 assessments, (3) providing technical assistance and training to eligible  
132 applicants, and (4) ensuring program activities are aligned with state  
133 academic standards. The department may retain up to seven and one-  
134 half per cent of the amount appropriated for the grant program for  
135 purposes of this subsection.

136 (f) Grant recipients shall file expenditure reports with the  
137 Commissioner of Education in accordance with subdivision (2) of  
138 subsection (b) of this section and at such other times and in such manner  
139 as the commissioner prescribes. Grant recipients shall refund (1) any  
140 unexpended amounts at the close of the program for which the grant  
141 was awarded, and (2) any amounts not expended in accordance with  
142 the approved grant application. Any unexpended funds appropriated  
143 for purposes of this section shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year  
144 but shall be available for expenditure under this section during the next

145 succeeding fiscal year.

146 (g) Not later than March 15, 2023, and biennially thereafter, the  
147 Department of Education shall report, in accordance with the provisions  
148 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee  
149 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
150 education on performance outcomes of recipients of grants under this  
151 section. The report shall include, but need not be limited to,  
152 measurements of the impact on student achievement, including grade-  
153 level reading ability, the social-emotional learning and behavior of  
154 student participants, and the mitigation of learning loss, as defined in  
155 section 1 of this act.

156 Sec. 5. Subsection (e) of section 10-16x of the general statutes is  
157 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
158 *passage*):

159 (e) [The Department of Education shall provide grant recipients with  
160 technical assistance, evaluation, program monitoring, professional  
161 development and accreditation support.] The Department of Education  
162 shall, in collaboration with regional educational service centers, support  
163 grant recipients by (1) monitoring and evaluating programs and  
164 activities, (2) conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the  
165 effectiveness of programs and implementing risk assessments, (3)  
166 providing technical assistance and training to eligible applicants, and (4)  
167 ensuring program activities are aligned with state academic standards.  
168 The department may retain up to [four] seven and one-half per cent of  
169 the amount appropriated for the grant program for purposes of this  
170 subsection.

171 Sec. 6. Subsection (a) of section 10-145 of the general statutes is  
172 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
173 *passage*):

174 (a) No teacher, supervisor, administrator, special service staff  
175 member or school superintendent, except as provided for in section 10-  
176 157, shall be employed in any of the schools of any local or regional

177 board of education unless such person possesses an appropriate state  
 178 certificate, nor shall any such person be entitled to any salary unless  
 179 such person can produce such certificate dated prior to or on the first  
 180 day of employment, except as provided for in section 10-157; provided  
 181 nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the board of  
 182 education from prescribing qualifications additional to those prescribed  
 183 by the regulations of the State Board of Education and provided nothing  
 184 in this subsection shall be construed to prevent any local or regional  
 185 board of education from contracting with a licensed drivers' school  
 186 approved by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for the behind-the-  
 187 wheel instruction of a driver instruction course, to be given by driving  
 188 instructors licensed by the Department of Motor Vehicles. No person  
 189 shall be employed in any of the schools of any local or regional board of  
 190 education as a substitute teacher unless such person (1) holds a  
 191 bachelor's degree, provided the Commissioner of Education may waive  
 192 such requirement for good cause upon the request of a superintendent  
 193 of schools, except for the school years commencing July 1, 2020, and July  
 194 1, 2021, (A) holds at least an associate degree if such person will be in  
 195 the same assignment for more than ten school days, or (B) has obtained  
 196 a high school diploma or its equivalent if such person will be in the same  
 197 assignment for ten or fewer school days, and (2) is on a list maintained  
 198 by the local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (f) of  
 199 section 10-222c.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	10-151b(a)
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	10-16x(e)
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	10-145(a)

**Statement of Purpose:**

To address issues arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic on the provision of public education in the state by requiring the identification and mitigation of student learning loss and student disengagement, prohibiting the use of student performance data in teacher performance evaluations for three school years, requiring the offering of summer learning programs in alliance districts, creating a summer learning program grant, and providing flexibility in the hiring of substitute teachers during the pandemic.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*