

# Education Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5180

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT  
**Title:** OF EDUCATION.

**Vote Date:** 3/6/2024

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 2/21/2024

**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Education Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This bill implements various recommendations of the Department of Education (SDE). Sect. 1 broadens access to the State Seal of Biliteracy which allows students that receive diplomas from "alternative" paths to receive the seal. Sects. 2 and 3 add Goodwin University Magnet Schools (GUMS) to the group of existing entities that may charge tuition and authorizes GUMS to charge tuition to boards of education for enrolled students. Sects. 4 and 5 extends the dates for compliance with the magnet school enrollment standards in accordance with Sheff v. O'Neill stipulations. Sect. 6 changes SDE's responsibilities under the farm to school program from arranging interactions with farmers to providing technical assistance and support for interactions with farmers. Sects. 7 through 11 make several technical revisions, including changing the definition of "transition service" to make it more consistent with the Individual's with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) definition; removing "public" from the definition of "public transition program;" and changes "program for adults" to "program for adult services."

## **SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:**

The substitute language of this bill removes Sect. 2 regarding adult education credits, changes "2021" to "2025" in lines 246 and 247 to extend SDE's authority to impose penalties on magnet schools that don't meet the magnet enrollment standards. It also removes the definition of "transition program" and removes the word "public" from existing law's term: "public transition program." Finally, it leaves "unannounced" in the existing law related to SDE site visits to private special education providers.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

### [State Department of Education \(SDE\), Commissioner, Charlene Russell-Tucker:](#)

expresses support for this bill and provides several proposed revisions. They propose C.G.S. 10-69 (b)(1) be revised to state the number of adult education credits required for graduation increase from twenty (20) to twenty-five (25) for students graduating on or after July 1, 2024. They request for the language in line 276 to be amended to reflect the following: "For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2018, to June 30, [2021] 2025..". They also request that in lines 360-372, the definition of "Transition Service" be made consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) definition. Additionally, in line 386, they request the word "public" be removed from the definition of "Transition Coordinator." Lastly, they request that in line 507, "adult" is changed to "adult services." They state these revisions reflect the role of the Department's new Transition Coordinator in collaborating with other agency liaisons to ensure effective implementation of the new requirements as outlined.

*\*The substitute language of this bill addresses these proposed revisions.*

## NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[ConnCAN, Executive Director, Steven Hernández:](#) expresses support for this bill, highlighting the provision that seeks to modernize the Seal of Biliteracy. They state this is an important first step and that more systemic support for Multilingual Learners can be achieved in the coming years as a result.

[ConnCAN, State Grassroots Manager, Luis Ortiz:](#) expresses support for this bill and asks the committee to adopt a model for a Seal of Biliteracy similar to Massachusetts' model, which would recognize academic achievement, enhance career prospects, and address the State's shortage of Certified Translators.

## NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

## NATURE AND SOURCES OF GENERAL COMMENT:

### [Special Education Equity for Kids \(SEEK\), Legislative Chair, Andrew Feinstein:](#)

expresses concern with lines 388 to 395, stating the language limits transition services only to those special education students who meet the academic requirement to graduate from high school. They suggest the committee establish standards for when transitional services are available to students with IEPs who have met the academic requirements for graduation. Additionally, they state concern with DDS' rule that unless a student is placed under an IEP in a residential program for one full year prior to aging out, they will not be considered for residential placement. They suggest reversing this policy. Moreover, they state that the Legislature should make it clear that the licensing of all residential facilities for students through the time they age out at the end of the school year in which they turn 22 needs to be done by the State Department of Education (SDE). Lastly, they state opposition to the SDE's recommendation to eliminate the requirement that it conduct unannounced on-site visits in randomly selected school districts.

**The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), Advocacy Manager, Lindsay Seti:**

states Section 8 of this bill requires a local or regional Board of Education to provide significantly expanded transition services to special education students including supporting employment, vocational education, and continuing and adult education through local transition coordinators.

**Reported by: James Magson**

**Date: 3/22/24**