



PA 24-41—sHB 5436

Education Committee

**AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION, TEACHERS,
PARAEDUCATORS AND MANDATED REPORTER REQUIREMENTS**

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§ 51 — REPEALED REGULATIONS

Repeals numerous educator preparation program and certification regulations, effective July 1, 2026

SUMMARY: This act makes numerous changes to the laws on educator certification, teacher subject endorsements, paraeducator training and development, and mandated reporter requirements and training, as described in the section-by-section analysis below.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024, unless otherwise noted below.

§§ 1 & 6 — CHANGES TO EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

Simplifies the steps required to receive an initial educator certification for those in an ARC program; reduces the number of teacher certification levels from three to two by eliminating the provisional level and making the initial certification valid for 10 years; establishes new criteria for a professional educator certificate (the highest level) including allowing an alternate pathway to professional licensure instead of the master's degree requirement

Paths to Initial Certification

The act simplifies the steps required to receive an initial educator certificate for those in an alternate route to certification (ARC) program. It requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to issue an initial educator certificate to a candidate with a bachelor's or advanced degree from an accredited higher education institution who:

1. successfully completed an SBE-approved educator preparation program,
2. successfully completed an ARC program under state law, or
3. is an educator from another state and meets one of a list of requirements in Connecticut law (see below).

An out-of-state teacher may be issued an initial certificate if he or she:

1. graduated from a teacher preparation program at an accredited institution in another state or an SBE-approved ARC program, but has not successfully completed the Connecticut teacher assessments;
2. has taught in another state with an appropriate certificate for at least two years and meets the Connecticut certification requirements except for successful completion of the teacher assessments;
3. was hired by a charter school after July 1 in any school year for a teaching position, so long as the person could reasonably be expected to complete the requirements in the 90-day temporary certification law (see *Background — Temporary 90-Day Certificate*);
4. received a satisfactory score on the appropriate educator subject area assessment or exam in another state, if SBE approves the assessments or exams as being at least equivalent with Connecticut's;
5. taught in a state that participates in the enhanced educator reciprocity agreement with Connecticut; or
6. holds a military spouse permit.

The ARC pathway can be successfully completed by one of four types of ARC program authorized in law:

1. for school administrators (CGS § 10-145p);
2. for school support staff (CGS § 10-145t);
3. for persons from alternate professions (e.g., paraeducators, veterans, professors employed or previously employed at a higher education institution) (CGS § 10-145w); and
4. summer and weekend and evening ARC program (for target groups including teachers in shortage areas and former teachers with expired certification who want to return to the profession) (CGS § 10-155d).

Prior law allowed teacher certification through ARC programs but required these candidates to also satisfy the requirements of a temporary 90-day certificate or a resident teacher certificate (see *Background — Temporary 90-Day Certificate*). The act eliminates this requirement.

The act also authorizes SBE to issue an initial certificate to candidates who have not completed one of the three pathways but who present a combination of education and experience that the state board determines equals the education and experience required under the act.

Certificate Levels

Under prior law, Connecticut had three main levels of teacher certification: (1) initial (generally valid for three years), (2) provisional (generally valid for eight years), and (3) professional (generally valid for 10 years). Generally, to continue teaching, initial certificate holders had to qualify for and receive a provisional certificate within the validity period of the initial certificate, and then provisional certificate holders had to qualify and receive a professional certificate within the validity period of the provisional certificate.

The act replaces this with a two-level structure by eliminating the provisional certificate level, extending the validity period for the initial certificate to 10 years, and allowing initial certificate holders to apply for a professional certificate. It also modifies the criteria for a professional certificate.

Initial Certificate Validity. The act extends existing initial educator certificates that are unexpired on July 1, 2025, for a period of 10 years from their issue date, and makes any new certificates issued on or after July 1, 2025, valid for 10 years. By law, the commissioner may extend initial certifications for an additional year at a superintendent's or local assessment team's request. The act prohibits the commissioner from granting this extension more than three times to any person.

Provisional Certificate Elimination. Beginning July 1, 2025, the act eliminates SBE's and the education commissioner's authority to issue and reissue provisional certificates and allows those holding initial certificates (or those with existing provisional certificates) to apply for a professional certificate rather than a provisional certificate. Under the act, anyone holding a provisional certificate who is not eligible to advance to the professional certificate is eligible for an initial certificate.

New Criteria for Professional Certificate. The act modifies the qualification requirements for a professional certificate. Beginning July 1, 2025, upon receipt of a proper application, SBE must issue a professional educator certificate to any person who satisfies the following qualifications:

1. completed at least 50 school months (five years) of successful teaching for one or more boards of education or approved nonpublic schools in Connecticut while holding an initial educator or provisional educator certificate;
2. satisfactorily completed the teacher education and mentoring program, as required under state law; and
3. either (a) holds a master's degree or higher in an appropriate subject matter area or (b) completed an alternate pathway to professional licensure jointly approved by SBE and the Educator Preparation and Certification Board (see § 10) (but SBE may waive this requirement for good cause).

Generally, the act's changes modify the teaching experience requirement to account for the elimination of the provisional certificate level and provide a way for a teacher to receive professional certification without a master's degree. Under prior law, to qualify for a professional certificate a candidate had to have (1) a provisional educator certificate; (2) at least 30 school months' teaching experience under the provisional educator certificate; and (3) a master's degree in an

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appropriate subject matter area, as determined by SBE, related to the teacher's certification endorsement area. To qualify for a provisional certificate, prior law required a candidate to have either taught for (1) one year in a public school and completed the beginning educator program or (2) at least three years within the last 10 years in a public school in another state or for a private school in any state, including Connecticut, that meets certain qualifications.

The act eliminates language that permits granting provisional certifications for certain teachers who have taught in another state or in private schools in Connecticut and meet certain conditions. Instead, these teachers may be issued an initial certificate (see above).

The act makes other minor and conforming changes including removing obsolete provisions.

Background — Temporary 90-Day Certificate

Those seeking a temporary 90-day certificate must (1) hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with a major either in, or closely related to, the endorsement area being sought or have at least the required number of subject credit hours; (2) pass the appropriate teacher assessment; and (3) successfully complete a state-approved ARC program.

In addition, the (1) local board must submit a request to the State Department of Education (SDE) with a plan to supervise the 90-day certificate holder and (2) applicant must have an overall GPA of at least a B and present evidence of experience working with children. The law allows the education commissioner to waive the last two requirements for good cause.

§§ 2 & 4 — BROADENING GRADES COVERED BY CERTAIN TEACHING ENDORSEMENTS

Makes elementary educator endorsements valid for teaching preschool and kindergarten and broadens the grades covered by certain subject matter endorsements from 7 through 12 to 4 through 12

The act broadens the scope of elementary educator endorsements to cover preschool and kindergarten. Under prior law, elementary endorsements were generally valid for either kindergarten through grade six or grades one through six, depending on various factors including when they were issued. Under the act, any elementary endorsement SBE issues on or after July 1, 2025, will be valid for grades prekindergarten through six, as will endorsements issued before that date to teach grades one through six or grades kindergarten through six.

The act also makes the following endorsements for grades 7 to 12 valid for grades 4 to 12, regardless of when they were issued: biology, business, chemistry, earth science, English, French, German, general science, history and social studies, Italian, Latin and classical humanities, Mandarin Chinese, mathematics, Portuguese, physics, Russian, Spanish, and any other world language.

Revised Endorsements Do Not Require Applications (§ 4)

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The act specifies that any holder of an initial, provisional, or professional educator certificate whose endorsement has been revised as described above (§ 2) does not have to apply for a revised endorsement and will be allowed to teach under the revised endorsement.

Beginning July 1, 2026, SBE must assign the revised endorsement when an educator's certificate is issued or reissued, as appropriate.

§ 3 — ELEMENTARY EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Beginning July 1, 2025, requires that elementary education teacher preparation programs be aligned with NAEYC standards and competencies for early childhood educators

Beginning July 1, 2025, the act requires that any elementary education teacher preparation program leading to certification be aligned with the professional standards and competencies for early childhood educators developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

§ 5 — SUBJECT AREA ASSESSMENTS AND CROSS ENDORSEMENTS

Simplifies the process for certified teachers to gain an additional endorsement (i.e., "cross endorsement")

Starting July 1, 2024, the act requires SDE to issue a cross endorsement to any person who holds an initial, provisional, or professional educator certificate and scores a satisfactory evaluation on the appropriate SBE-approved subject area assessment. The act specifies that this provision does not apply to the endorsement areas of special education, teaching English to speakers of other languages, bilingual, remedial reading and remedial language arts, or school library media specialist.

Under prior law, SDE only had to do so for endorsement areas corresponding to a teacher shortage area.

§ 7 — ARC PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Allows SDE to approve ARC programs that partner with an accredited university to provide a dual degree-plus-certification program for participants who hold an associate degree

As part of the existing law authorizing approval of ARC programs for people employed as school support staff, the act allows SDE to approve programs that partner with a higher education institution that is regionally accredited or has an equivalent accreditation, to offer a dual degree-plus-certification program for participants with associate degrees. Under prior law, SDE could only approve programs that accepted only those who already have a bachelor's degree.

When deciding whether to approve these programs, the act also requires SDE to give priority to the programs that give participants flexibility to remain in their school support staff positions while pursuing an initial educator certificate, other than when they are completing the one-year residency requirement (i.e., serving

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under supervision in a position requiring professional certification).

By law, school support staff are people employed by a school board as a behavior analyst, an assistant behavior analyst, an athletic coach, or a paraeducator.

§ 8 — ARC PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY EXPANDED

Expands who may participate in an existing ARC program for people in alternate professions to include someone with at least five years of work experience requiring discretion and independent judgment in the field related to the teaching endorsement area

The act expands the definition of who may participate in an existing ARC program for people in alternate professions. Under existing law, the following people qualify to participate in the program: (1) paraeducators, (2) veterans, (3) holders of SBE issued charter school educator permits, and (4) currently or previously employed professors at accredited higher education institutions. The act expands this list to include someone with at least five years of work experience requiring the consistent exercise of discretion and independent judgment in the field related to the person's chosen teaching endorsement area. As under existing law, all participants must hold a bachelor's degree.

§ 9 — ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Requires the council to advise and report annually to the SDE commissioner, rather than the governor and SBE; adds to the subjects for which the council must provide advice (e.g., equitable distribution of teachers); eliminates a requirement that the council advise on teacher preparation and certification and review and comment on certain regulations and standards

The act makes several changes affecting the Connecticut Advisory Council for Teacher Professional Standards. It eliminates a requirement that the council advise and report annually to the governor and SBE and instead requires it to do so for the SDE commissioner. Under existing law, unchanged by the act, it must also advise and report annually to the Education Committee.

Under existing law, the council must advise on teacher recruitment, retention, professional development, assessment and evaluation, and professional discipline. The act additionally requires it to advise on the equitable distribution of teachers, diversity of the teaching workforce, special education, testing and assessment of students, school safety, and social-emotional learning. It eliminates requirements that the council (1) advise on teacher preparation and certification and (2) review and comment on regulations and other standards on approving teacher preparation programs and teacher certification.

The act also requires the council to (1) share perspectives on the impact of proposed policies and initiatives on classroom practice with the commissioner and Education Committee and (2) provide suggestions and feedback on guidance to be sent to school districts related to implementing these policies and initiatives with the commissioner.

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§ 10 — CREATION OF THE CONNECTICUT EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION BOARD

Creates the new 16-member CEPCB and charges it with modernizing and aligning educator preparation and certification to attract and retain diverse teachers, and developing proposals for regulations or legislation on educator preparation and certification; requires the board to submit its first annual report to the Education Committee by January 1, 2026

The act creates the Connecticut Educator Preparation and Certification Board (CEPCB) and makes it responsible for modernizing and aligning educator preparation and certification to ensure that policies attract and retain effective and diverse professionals to work in Connecticut’s public schools.

The board must develop standards and proposals for educator preparation and certification regulations or legislation that reflect the profession and respond to emerging understandings of effective, evidence-based practices. (The act also repeals numerous educator preparation and certification regulations (see § 51).)

Additionally, these standards and proposals must address these objectives:

1. building streamlined, flexible pathways in the educator profession that are grounded in educator effectiveness;
2. enabling educators to broaden their practice to meet more students’ needs;
3. ensuring educator preparation programs are accountable for candidates’ quality training and outcomes;
4. creating a system to help educators continuously improve their practice that supports and rewards educator mastery;
5. supporting improved data transparency regarding the state’s distribution of educators and educator vacancies and accountability for remedying observed inequities; and
6. treating educators as professionals and lifelong learners who need access to high-quality professional learning and mentorships throughout their careers.

Board Members and Appointing Authorities

Under the act, the board has 16 members. In addition to the 13 appointed members shown in the table below, the board includes the following officials or their designees: the education commissioner, the early childhood commissioner, and the Technical Education and Career System superintendent.

**Connecticut Educator Preparation and Certification Board
Appointed Members**

Member Type	Appointing Authority	Qualification
Public school teachers who are classroom teachers throughout their term	Connecticut Education Association	Two appointees: one kindergarten through grade six teacher and one high school teacher
	American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut	One appointee who is a special education teacher

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Member Type	Appointing Authority	Qualification
	Connecticut Teacher of the Year Council	One appointee
SBE-approved educator preparation program representatives	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Connecticut Chapter	One appointee who represents a public higher education institution's educator preparation program
	Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges	One appointee
	Education commissioner	One ARC program representative
Administrators employed by a school board	Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents	One school superintendent for an urban district
	Connecticut Association of Schools	One rural district representative
	Connecticut Federation of School Administrators	One suburban district representative
Additional appointees	Connecticut Association of Boards of Education	One appointee
	Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA)	One CBIA education and workforce affiliation representative
	Increasing Educator Diversity Policy Oversight Council	One Increasing Educator Diversity Policy Oversight Council representative

Initial Appointments, Vacancies, Bylaws, Board Chair, and Staff

All initial board appointments must be made by August 1, 2024. The appropriate appointing authority must fill any vacancy within 10 days. Members serve three-year terms. The board must establish its operation and management bylaws.

The board chairperson and vice chairperson must be elected from among the board's voting members. The act requires the education commissioner to designate an SDE employee to serve as the board's administrator (see § 19 below).

Annual Report to the Education Committee

The board must develop an annual report that includes a detailed summary of the substance and disposition of any standards and proposals for regulations or legislation the board or SBE develops under the act (see § 11) and submit the report to the Education Committee. The first report is due January 1, 2026.

§ 11 — CEPCB AND SBE CONSIDER EACH OTHER'S PROPOSALS

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Authorizes CEPCB and SBE to each develop standards and proposals for regulations and legislation on educator preparation and certification; requires each board to consider the other board's proposals

The act authorizes CEPCB and SBE to each develop standards and proposals (i.e., “proposals”) for regulations and legislation on educator preparation and certification. The act creates a process where the boards exchange their proposals to be either approved or rejected within 60 days after receiving them (e.g., CEPCB sends its proposals to SBE, and SBE sends its proposals to CEPCB).

If both boards approve a proposal, then for a proposal that:

1. requires regulations, SBE must adopt regulations consistent with the approved proposal and
2. requires legislation, the proposal will be submitted to the Education Committee for consideration.

§§ 12-14 — CEPCB DUTIES, PROPOSALS, AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Requires CEPCB to (1) develop proposals for regulations and legislation related to educator preparation and certification, including a review of obsolete and conflicting provisions; (2) review how SDE assesses certification candidates' content knowledge in their endorsement area; and (3) develop approval criteria for reviewing educator preparation and ARC programs

Regulatory and Legislative Proposals (§ 12)

By July 1, 2025, the act requires CEPCB to develop proposals for regulations and legislation on the following specific matters:

1. criteria for assessing school boards', regional educational service centers', and other entities' proposals for alternative pathways for educators to (a) progress from initial certificate to professional certificate or (b) receive a cross endorsement that will allow them to teach in content areas or grades beyond their initial certification endorsement areas;
2. how well degrees from SBE-approved educator preparation programs will align with the revised endorsement areas under § 2;
3. the adequacy and relevance of current subject endorsement areas for educator certification;
4. implementing the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation standards for educator preparation programs;
5. the need for the temporary 90-day certificate; and
6. the design and development of a statewide data dashboard that enables longitudinal monitoring of educator workforce data.

Annual Data Collection, Evaluation, and Proposals (§ 12)

The act also requires the board to annually do the following, beginning by July 1, 2026:

1. collect and review (a) state-specific data, including qualitative data on stakeholders' experiences and quantitative data from SDE on educator

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- vacancies, shortage areas, and the educator preparation program dashboard, and (b) data on applicable national policy developments on educator preparation, certification, and employment;
2. evaluate whether any changes are needed to the educator preparation and certification frameworks; and
 3. develop, as necessary, evidence-based standards and proposals for regulations and legislation to strengthen existing systems.

Other Review and Recommendation Requirements (§ 13)

The act requires CEPCB to:

1. look for obsolete or conflicting provisions in educator preparation and certification regulations and statutes,
2. review the state's approach to assessing educator certification candidates' content knowledge within their endorsement areas as required by state law, and
3. develop recommendations for alternatives for certification candidates to show content knowledge.

The board must submit its findings and any legislative recommendations to SBE and the Education Committee by January 31, 2025.

Also, the act requires CEPCB to:

1. review certification endorsement areas to develop standards on endorsement area adequacy and relevance, including whether to expand grade ranges for endorsement areas;
2. explore alternative pathways for receiving cross endorsements; and
3. consider whether to give ARC program providers authority over candidate admission criteria for their programs.

The board must submit a report on its findings and any legislative recommendations to SBE and the Education Committee by July 1, 2025.

Standards for Reviewing Educator Preparation Programs (§ 14)

The act requires CEPCB to develop standards for criteria to use when reviewing new or continuing educator preparation programs and ARC programs for approval. The standards must require that the (1) programs obtain program approval every seven years and (2) approval methodology be (a) based on final accreditation decisions of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation and (b) classified in approval, provisional, probationary, or denial of approval categories. The board must complete the standards by July 1, 2026.

§ 15 — EDTPA

Beginning July 1, 2024, bans SBE from (1) using the results of edTPA to deny an initial educator certificate or (2) requiring teacher preparation programs to use edTPA as a program requirement; as of the same date, bans teacher preparation programs from using edTPA scores to prevent a student from completing their program

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Beginning July 1, 2024, the act prohibits SBE from requiring an SDE-approved teacher preparation program to use edTPA, a preservice performance assessment, as a (1) requirement for students to complete their programs and (2) program preservice performance assessment. In doing so, it overrides a 2016 SBE resolution that required all teacher preparation programs in the state to require satisfactory completion of edTPA (see *Background — edTPA*) by all teacher candidates in order to complete a teacher preparation program.

The act also prohibits SBE from using edTPA results to deny an application for an initial educator certificate.

Also, beginning July 1, 2024, the act bans teacher preparation programs at higher education institutions from using edTPA results to deny a candidate completion of their program. But the act permits these institutions to use the results as a diagnostic tool to provide necessary remedial instruction to a candidate while enrolled in their program.

Background — edTPA

The Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity created edTPA, and Pearson Assessments, Inc., scores and administers it across the country.

§§ 16 & 17 — TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL AND TRADE OCCUPATIONS EDUCATOR CERTIFICATIONS

Creates and specifies requirements for new occupational subject and trade and industrial occupations educator certifications; allows for interim certifications under certain conditions

The act creates two new statutory occupational initial educator certifications (similar versions of these certifications exist in regulations). One enables the holder to teach an occupational subject in the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) (formerly known as the technical high schools) and the other to teach trade and industrial occupations in comprehensive high schools.

Occupational Subject Certification (§ 16)

Under the act, a CTECS “occupational subject” at least includes automobile servicing, carpentry, plumbing, culinary arts, electronics, cosmetology, and public safety. (CTECS high schools offer a wide range of occupational programs that, in addition to the areas mentioned above, also include architecture; information technology; manufacturing; marketing and sales; and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning.)

The act authorizes SBE to issue an initial educator certificate for occupational subjects to an applicant who has:

1. a high school diploma or its equivalent;
2. five years of experience in the field for which the certificate is sought, which may include up to two years in a registered apprenticeship, work-based learning program, or specialized schooling;
3. completed at least six semester hours of credit teaching vocational and

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- industrial education; and
4. completed at least three semester hours of special education study, including (a) understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including children with a disability, gifted and talented children, and children who may require special education, and (b) methods for identifying, planning for, and working effectively with special needs children in the regular classroom.

Trade and Industrial Occupations Certification (§ 17)

For the comprehensive high schools, “trade and industrial occupations” at least include food service, automotive servicing, machine tool and operation, building maintenance and repairs, welding, appliance repair, and public safety.

The act authorizes SBE to issue an initial educator certificate for trade and industrial occupations in comprehensive high schools to an applicant who has:

1. submitted a written request from a school board;
2. a high school diploma or its equivalent;
3. completed at least three years of approved successful work experience appropriate to the field for which the certificate is sought, which may include up to two years of specialized appropriate schooling;
4. completed at least six semester hours of credit in professional education in areas such as (a) teaching vocational and industrial education or (b) foundations of education, educational or adolescent psychology, psychology of learning, curriculum and methods of teaching, classroom instruction and management, multicultural diversity, or equity issues in education; and
5. completed at least three semester hours of special education study, including (a) understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including children with a disability, gifted and talented children, and children who may require special education, and (b) methods for identifying, planning for, and working effectively with special needs children in the regular classroom.

The act authorizes the holder of an initial educator certificate for trade and industrial occupations to teach in a comprehensive high school trade and industrial program in grades 6 to 12, but it is not valid to teach at CTECS.

Interim Educator Certificates

The act offers a way for applicants to receive an interim educator certificate for either an occupational subject at CTECS or trade and industrial occupations at comprehensive high schools when they do not meet the special education course requirements but are otherwise eligible for a certificate. In these cases, SDE may issue an interim educator certificate. The certificate is initially valid for one year, but the commissioner may reissue the certificate for a second year.

If the holder of an interim educator certificate fails to meet the course requirements when the certificate expires, the commissioner must prevent the

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holder from serving in a position covered by the initial educator certificate for occupational subjects at CTECS or for trade and industrial occupations at comprehensive high schools. However, the act allows the applicant's deficient course work to be deferred for one additional year for good cause.

§ 18 — FMLA FOR NONCERTIFIED SCHOOL BOARD EMPLOYEES

Reduces, from 1,250 to 950, the number of hours that noncertified school employees must have worked in the previous 12 months to qualify for unpaid family and medical leave from work

The act reduces the number of work hours noncertified school employees need to qualify for unpaid family and medical leave from work.

Under federal law, all municipal employees, including all public school employees, qualify for unpaid leave and job reinstatement under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) if they have been employed by the municipality or school district for at least 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12 months. The act requires boards of education to give noncertified employees benefits equal to those provided by the federal FMLA if they have (1) been employed by the board for at least 12 months and (2) worked at least 950 hours for the board during the 12 months before taking the benefit. (Connecticut's FMLA law does not cover municipal employees.)

The act similarly reduces the work requirement, from 1,250 to 950 hours in the previous 12 months, for noncertified employees to request leave to serve as an organ or bone marrow donor.

Noncertified employees are board of education employees, such as cafeteria workers, janitorial staff, administrative support staff, and security staff, who do not need a professional education certificate like other school professions (e.g., teachers or school social workers). Existing law already allows school paraprofessionals (who are also noncertified employees) to qualify for the leave, including for organ or bone marrow donation, after working 950 hours.

The act also makes technical changes.

§ 19 — CEPCB ADMINISTRATOR

Requires, for FY 25, OPM to reclassify one unfilled, authorized SDE position to hire an administrator for CEPCB

The act requires, for FY 25, the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary, in consultation with the education commissioner, to reclassify one unfilled, authorized position at SDE to hire a CEPCB administrator. SDE must use funds appropriated to the department's personal services account to fill the reclassified position.

§§ 20-38 — CHANGES TERM TO "PARAEDUCATOR"

Changes the terms "school paraprofessional," "paraprofessional," and "paraprofessional teacher aide" to "paraeducator" in various education-related statutes

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The act changes the terms “school paraprofessional,” “paraprofessional,” and “paraprofessional teacher aide” to “paraeducator” in various education-related statutes to conform with other sections of education law.

§ 23 — NOTICE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE SPECIAL EDUCATION PLANNING AND PLACEMENT MEETINGS

Requires the notice that school boards must give parents, guardians, or students before a special education planning and placement team meeting to include their legal rights at these meetings

By law, school boards must give a parent or guardian (or student if he or she is emancipated or over 18 years old) at least five days’ notice before any planning and placement meeting for students eligible or being evaluated for special education and related services. The act requires this notice to state the rights of the parents, guardians, and students at these meetings.

These include the right to (1) be present at and participate in the entire meeting where the student’s educational program is developed, reviewed, or revised and (2) have advisors of the person’s own choosing, the paraeducator assigned to the student, the birth-to-three coordinator, if any, and a language interpreter, if needed.

§ 39 — GOVERNOR’S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

Adds a certified teacher to the council’s membership

The act adds a certified teacher to the Governor’s Workforce Council’s membership. The teacher must be appointed by the governor and employed by a local or regional board of education.

By law, the council consists of stakeholders, legislators, and government agency representatives that advise the governor on workforce development matters. Its statutory duties include, among other things, convening state agencies, educational institutions, business leaders, and others to (1) inform state workforce development policy, (2) help state agencies and educational institutions align with employers’ needs, and (3) help businesses understand how to contribute to the state’s workforce efforts (CGS § 31-3h).

§§ 40 & 48 — PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES BY MANDATED REPORTERS

Specifies that (1) the mandated reporter law does not prohibit mandated reporters from making a preliminary inquiry to determine if reasonable cause exists for a report and (2) this inquiry is not an abuse or neglect investigation by a school board

The law designates certain professionals (e.g., school employees, health professionals, and coaches) as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. Generally, they must report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or law enforcement within prescribed timeframes when, in the ordinary course of their employment or profession, they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child (1) has been abused or neglected, (2) has an injury that is at

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variance with its given history, or (3) is at imminent risk of physical harm.

Under existing law, a mandated reporter's suspicion or belief does not require certainty or probable cause and may be based on, among other things, allegations, observations, facts, or statements by a child, victim, or third party. The act specifies that (1) the mandated reporter law does not prohibit mandated reporters from making a preliminary inquiry to determine if reasonable cause exists for a report and (2) this inquiry is not an abuse or neglect investigation by a school board. (Generally, the law requires school boards to investigate abuse and neglect allegations but requires them to allow and give priority to any investigation by DCF or a law enforcement agency.) The act also requires DCF to develop training on how to conduct preliminary inquiries (see § 49 — DCF TRAINING).

§§ 40, 42-45 & 47 — MANDATED REPORTERS MINOR AND TECHNICAL CHANGES

Adds students in nonpublic schools to the list of students for whom the school employee-specific mandated reporter provisions apply; makes technical and conforming changes

The law requires a school employee (see *Background — School Employees*) to report to DCF if he or she, in the ordinary course of his or her employment or profession, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student enrolled in a technical high school or a school under the local or regional board of education's jurisdiction (other than an adult education program) is a victim of any of the following crimes committed by a school employee: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th degree sexual assault; 1st degree aggravated sexual assault; or 3rd degree sexual assault with a firearm.

The act extends this requirement to situations where the alleged victim is a student in a nonpublic school. (Private school employees are mandated reporters under existing law.) It also makes technical and conforming changes (e.g., updating internal references).

Under prior law and the act, failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect is a class A misdemeanor if a mandated reporter fails to report within the prescribed time period (see [Table on Penalties](#)). It is a class E felony if the (1) violation is a subsequent violation; (2) violation is willful, intentional, or due to gross negligence; or (3) mandated reporter had actual knowledge that a child was abused or neglected, or a student was the victim of sexual assault.

Background — School Employees

The law defines a "school employee" as follows:

1. a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional, or coach (a) employed by a board of education or a private elementary, middle, or high school or (b) working in a public or private elementary, middle, or high school; or
2. anyone who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a

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public or private elementary, middle, or high school under a contract with the board of education or private school's supervisory agent (CGS § 53a-65).

§ 41 — IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY

Extends immunity from criminal or civil liability to persons, institutions, and agencies that, in good faith, do not make a report

Existing law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to persons, institutions, and agencies that, in good faith, report suspected child abuse or neglect or alleged sexual assault of a student to DCF or law enforcement as required or permitted by law. The act extends this immunity to persons, institutions, and agencies that, in good faith, do not make such a report.

§ 43 — FAILURE TO REPORT

Requires the DCF commissioner to assess mandated reporters' failure to report within timeframes required by law, rather than investigate delayed reports as prior law required

Prior law required the DCF commissioner to investigate delayed reports by mandated reporters following a department-developed policy. The act instead requires the commissioner, following the department's policy, to assess mandated reporters' failure to make reports within the time period prescribed by law. It also makes conforming changes (e.g., the department's policy must cover assessments instead of investigations).

Relatedly, the act requires DCF to make a record of mandated reporters' failure to report within the required timeframe, rather than a record of a delayed report as prior law required. It also expands this requirement to cover all mandated reporters, rather than only those employed by a school board as prior law required.

By law, mandated reporters must make oral or electronic reports to DCF or a law enforcement agency as soon as practicable but no later than 12 hours after the reporter has reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect and, for oral reports, must follow up with a written report within 48 hours (CGS §§ 17a-101b & -101c).

§ 46 — EMPLOYMENT HISTORY REVIEWS

Excludes, from the information that must be disclosed by school employment applicants' previous employers, information about a substantiated abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct allegation if the substantiation was reversed in an appeal to DCF

The law requires school boards, charter school governing councils, magnet school operators, and supervisory agents of nonpublic schools to review an applicant's employment history before offering employment (including contract employment) if the applicant would have direct student contact. As part of this review, these entities must send the applicants' previous employers an SDE-developed form that asks, among other things, if the employer has knowledge of the following:

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1. a substantiated allegation against the applicant of abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct;
2. whether the applicant resigned, was asked to resign, otherwise separated from employment, or was disciplined because of a substantiated allegation of these acts; or
3. whether the applicant surrendered a professional or occupational license, certificate, authorization, or permit, or had it suspended or revoked, because of a substantiated allegation of these acts.

The act narrows the scope of this review to exclude substantiated allegations that were reversed in an appeal to DCF (i.e., appeals of a DCF determination that an individual should be placed on the state's child abuse and neglect registry).

§ 49 — DCF TRAINING

Requires DCF to update its training program and refresher training for school employees

The law requires DCF to develop a training program and refresher training for mandated reporters on accurately and promptly identifying and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect. The act requires DCF, by October 1, 2024, to update the training and refresher programs to include training for school employees on (1) properly conducting a preliminary inquiry (see above) and (2) DCF's Careline and investigations by the department and school boards.

Under existing law, school employees hired by a school board must be required to complete the training program. They must then complete the refresher training every three years (CGS § 17a-101i(g)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 50 — ASPIRING EDUCATORS DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Makes the scholarship available to students who graduate from public high schools in alliance districts, rather than public high schools in priority school districts

The law requires SDE to administer an aspiring educators diversity scholarship program for students who graduate from public high schools in certain school districts and are enrolled in a teacher preparation program at a four-year higher education institution. The act broadens the scholarship's availability by making it available to students who graduate from public high schools in alliance districts, rather than public high schools in priority school districts as prior law required. Under existing law, the state has 15 priority school districts and 36 alliance districts.

§ 51 — REPEALED REGULATIONS

Repeals numerous educator preparation program and certification regulations, effective July 1, 2026

Effective July 1, 2026, the act repeals the SBE educator preparation program and certification regulations shown in the table below.

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**SBE Educator Preparation and Certification Regulations Repealed,
by Citation and Topic**

<i>Regulation Citation</i>	<i>Topic</i>
10-145d-9(b) to -145d-9(e)	Procedures for educator preparation program approval
10-145d-9(g)(1), 10-145d-9(i)	SBE authority to approve or deny request for continuing approval; just cause authority to change approval status
10-145d-10(a) to -145d-10(b)(9), 10-145d-10(c) to -145d-10(g), 10-145d-11	Educator preparation program standards and approval criteria, including student admission standards
10-145d-400a(a) to -145d-400a(d)	Code of professional responsibility for teachers
10-145d-401(a), 10-145d-401(c)	Personnel certification requirements (selected provisions)
10-145d-402	Application forms
10-145d-403(b), 10-145d-403(g)	Application documentation and materials required (selected provisions)
10-145d-404 to -145d-406	Assessment requirements, exceptions; acceptability of course work
10-145d-407(a), 10-145d-407(b), 10-145d-407(d), 10-145d-407(f), 10-145d-407(h), 10-145d-407(i)	Responsibilities of employing agents of school boards (selected provisions)
10-145d-409 to -145d-415	Validity of certificates issued before July 1, 1989; certification types; certificate of eligibility; initial, interim, 90-day temporary, and provisional educator certificates
10-145d-417	Professional educator certificate
10-145d-419	Limited extended authorization for early childhood
10-145d-420(f)	Waiver of requirement that substitute teacher have a bachelor's degree
10-145d-421(b), 10-145d-422	Requirements of a durational shortage area permit; durational shortage area permit reissue
10-145d-423(a)	Coaching permits (obsolete provision)
10-145d-426	Adult education authorization
10-145d-427	Reissuance and extension of certificates
10-145d-434, 10-145d-435(b)	Validity of certificates specific to elementary grades and kindergarten
10-145d-436 to -145d-438	Elementary level: Initial, provisional, and professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-441 to -145d-443	Foreign languages pre-K through grade eight: Initial, provisional, and professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-444 to -145d-448	Middle grades (grades four through six or five and six depending on school grade structure): Initial, provisional, and professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-449 to -145d-453	Secondary grades (grades 7-12): Initial, provisional, and

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<i>Regulation Citation</i>	<i>Topic</i>
	professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-472 to -145d-474	Teaching English to speakers of other languages: Initial, provisional, and professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-476 to -145d-479	Bilingual education: Initial, provisional, and professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-481, 10-145d-482(c), 10-145d-482(d), 10-145d-483, 10-145d-484	Remedial reading and remedial language arts: Validity of certificates; initial educator certification requirements (selected provisions); provisional and professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-535 to -145d-537	Special education - Blind, partially sighted, or hearing impaired: Initial, provisional, and professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-539 to -145d-542	Comprehensive special education: Validity of certificates; initial, provisional, and professional educator certification requirements
10-145d-608 and 10-145d-609	Discontinued endorsements (previously issued, but no longer available)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026