

TESTIMONY
H.B. No. 5559 AN ACT CONCERNING A UNIFORM SCHOOL CALENDAR
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The CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) which represents the superintendents of schools in CT along with over a hundred school system central office administrators supports the enactment H.B. No 5559 AN ACT CONCERNING A UNIFORM SCHOOL CALENDAR.

For as long as anyone can remember, CT's school districts have operated on a calendar that has been determined by that district's board of education. As a result, structures and practices such as contracts for student transportation have been aligned with the calendar of the individual district.

Now, CT is transitioning from this situation to one in which school districts will operate in accordance with calendars that have been established by the regional education service centers (RESCs) in which the districts are located. This transition, if implemented well, has the potential of resulting in the following good things.

- Contracts for services such as student transportation could be established on a regional basis thus opening up the potential for financial savings due to economies of scale.
- More important, regional calendars would foster personalized learning because it would be easier to allow children for whom it would be worthwhile to enroll in programs outside of the districts in which they reside if all the districts in a given area of the state are operating on the same calendar.

Under present legislation, the transition to regional calendars is to take place with the 2015-16 school year.

To assist with this transition, the Uniform Regional School Calendar Task Force was formed. This body which is composed of representatives of those who will have to make the transition to regional calendars work has worked diligently since its inception and has reached two conclusions.

1. The transition to regional calendars statewide needs to be postponed to the 2016-17 school year.
2. If there are individual districts that have student transportation contracts that presently include school year 2016-17, those districts should have the option of beginning their participation in a regional calendar in school year 2017-18.

Both of these conclusions make sense. Taking an extra year to transition to regional calendars so as to do it right is wise. Not compelling school districts to revise existing student transportation contracts is also wise.

Since H.B. No. 5559, enacts these conclusions into statute, CAPSS urges the legislature to enact H.B. No. 5559.