



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 663**

February Session, 2014

Substitute Senate Bill No. 203

*Senate, April 24, 2014*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through SEN. BYE of the 5th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS PROGRAM.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2014*) (a) Not later than January 1,  
2 2015, the Department of Children and Families, in collaboration with  
3 the Departments of Education and Social Services and Connecticut  
4 Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc., or a similar entity, shall identify or  
5 develop a state-wide sexual abuse and assault awareness program for  
6 use by local and regional boards of education. Such program shall be  
7 implemented in each public school and shall include:

8 (1) Instructional modules for all teachers to include training  
9 regarding the prevention and identification of, and response to, child  
10 sexual abuse and assault;

11 (2) Age-appropriate educational materials for students in grades  
12 two to five, inclusive, regarding child sexual abuse and assault that  
13 may include, but not be limited to, (A) warning signs that a child

14 victim of sexual abuse or assault may display, and (B) resources to  
15 further student, teacher and parental education and outreach, which  
16 materials the Department of Education shall make available on its  
17 Internet web site; and

18 (3) A uniform child sexual abuse and assault response policy and  
19 reporting procedure that may include, but not be limited to, (A)  
20 actions that child victims of sexual abuse and assault may take to  
21 obtain assistance, (B) intervention and counseling options for child  
22 victims of sexual abuse and assault, (C) access to educational resources  
23 to enable child victims of sexual abuse and assault to succeed in  
24 school, and (D) uniform procedures for reporting instances of child  
25 sexual abuse and assault to school staff members.

26 (b) Not later than July 1, 2015, the State Board of Education shall  
27 implement the sexual abuse and assault awareness program identified  
28 or developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

29 (c) No student in grades two to five, inclusive, shall be required by  
30 any local or regional board of education to participate in the sexual  
31 abuse and assault awareness program offered within the public  
32 schools. A written notification to the local or regional board by the  
33 student's parent or legal guardian shall be sufficient to exempt the  
34 student from such program in its entirety or from any portion thereof  
35 so specified by the parent or legal guardian.

36 (d) If a student is exempted from the sexual abuse and assault  
37 awareness program pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the local  
38 or regional board of education shall provide, during the period of time  
39 in which the student would otherwise be participating in such  
40 program, an opportunity for other study or academic work.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2014	New section

**APP**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

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**OFA Fiscal Note****State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None**Explanation**

There is no fiscal impact to the Department of Children and Families to identify, over a six month period, a state-wide sexual abuse and assault awareness program in collaboration with the Departments of Education and Social Services, as tools, curricula and programs designed to raise awareness and reduce risk factors related to child sexual abuse are available through federal, state and community resources.

Additionally, there is no cost to local or regional school districts or the State Department of Education to make available on its Internet web site, age appropriate education materials for grades two through five, and may include (1) warning signs a child victim might exhibit and (2) resources to further student, teacher, and parental education and outreach.

**The Out Years****State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 203*****AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS PROGRAM.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires, by January 1, 2015, the Department of Children and Families, together with the departments of Education and Social Services and Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc., or a similar organization, to identify or develop a statewide sexual abuse and assault awareness program for use by regional and local school boards. The State Board of Education must implement the program in each public school by July 1, 2015.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

**SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS PROGRAM**

The program must include:

1. instructional modules for teachers;
2. age-appropriate educational materials for grades two through five, which the Department of Education (SDE) must make available on its website; and
3. a uniform child sexual abuse and assault response policy and reporting procedure.

Under the bill, the instructional modules must include training on preventing, identifying, and responding to child sexual abuse and assault. The age-appropriate materials for students in grades two through five may include (1) warning signs a child victim might exhibit and (2) resources to further student, teacher, and parental education and outreach.

The response policy and reporting procedure may include:

1. actions child victims may take to get help,
2. intervention and counseling options for child victims,
3. access to educational resources to help child victims succeed in school, and
4. uniform procedures for reporting instances of child sexual abuse and assault to school staff.

### ***Exemptions from Program***

The bill allows students in grades two through five to opt out of the awareness program or any part of it if the student's parent or legal guardian so notifies the school board in writing. School boards must provide exempt students with opportunities for study or schoolwork when the student would otherwise be participating in the program.

### ***Legislative History***

The Senate referred the bill (File 38) to the Education Committee which favorably reported it. The Senate then referred the bill to the Appropriations Committee, which favorably reported a substitute bill requiring SDE to make available on its website the age appropriate educational materials for students in grades two through five.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 12 Nay 0 (03/04/2014)

Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 28 Nay 0 (04/02/2014)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 44 Nay 0 (04/15/2014)