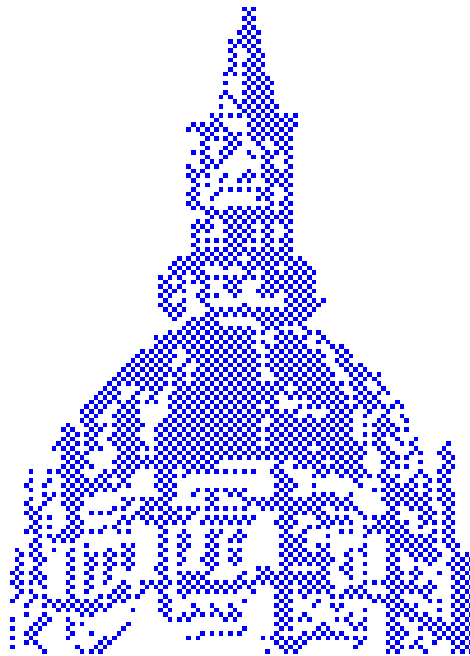




## **ACTS AFFECTING EDUCATION**



2014-R-0153

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## NOTICE TO READERS

This report provides highlights of new laws (public and special acts) affecting education enacted during the 2014 regular session. In each summary, we indicate the public act (PA) or special act (SA) number.

Not all provisions of the acts are included here. Complete summaries of all 2014 public acts are available on OLR's webpage:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/olrsums.asp>.

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, the House Clerk's Office, or the General Assembly's website: <http://www.cga.ct.gov>.

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## **ACCOUNTABILITY AND ACHIEVEMENT**

### ***Public School Mastery Test Dates***

Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, the implementer act allows students enrolled in grades three through eight and 10 or 11 to take an annual mastery examination in reading, writing, and mathematics during any month of the school year. Prior law allowed such annual testing only in March or April ([PA 14-217](#), § 115, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Special Master Title Change (VETOED)***

The act changes the title of a person assigned by the State Board of Education (SBE) to perform certain functions in a low-performing district and work collaboratively with the district's board from "special master" to "district improvement officer" ([PA 14-230](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Educational Information of Children in DCF Custody***

The legislature enacted a law requiring the superintendent of each school district that educates a neglected or abused child in the Department of Children and Families's (DCF) custody to provide certain education-related information to (1) DCF, (2) the student's foster parent, and (3) the student's attorney.

This law also requires DCF and the Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division (CSSD) to promptly determine if any child or youth

entering their facility or school program is eligible for special education and related services ([PA 14-99](#), effective October 1, 2014).

### ***New Haven Probate Court Truancy Clinic***

A new law allows the probate court administrator to establish, within appropriations, a pilot truancy clinic in the New Haven regional children's probate court, in addition to his existing authority to establish a truancy clinic in the Waterbury probate court.

The administrator must report on both clinics and the report deadline is extended to January 1, 2016 ([PA 14-103](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Erasing Student Expulsion Records***

A new law makes it easier, even in cases involving firearms and deadly weapons, to erase a student's expulsion record. It sets one set of criteria for students expelled in kindergarten through grade eight and another for students expelled in grades nine through 12 ([PA 14-229](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***National Exam as Part of Substitute for Standard Graduation Requirements (VETOED)***

Prior law required the State Department of Education (SDE) to establish a program that allows boards of education to permit 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to substitute certain evidence of academic achievement for

existing high school graduation requirements in order to receive a high school diploma. One of three required pieces is a passing score on a national examination that SDE determines. A new law changes this to a nationally recognized exam that SBE approves ([PA 14-230](#), § 7, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Summer Learning Programs (VETOED)***

A new law authorizes SDE, within available appropriations, to establish a new summer learning grant program along with the necessary program details, such as the grant application process, and program evaluation. SDE can award grants to boards of education, municipalities and not-for-profit organizations for summer programs providing at least 240 hours of educational, enrichment, and recreational activities ([PA 14-230](#), § 13, effective July 1, 2014).

## **CHARTER SCHOOLS**

### ***Changes to Local Charter School Funding Law***

The legislature enacted a law that changes the formula for determining how much funding a local or regional board of education must provide to a local charter school it sponsors. Under prior law, the funding support from the board was the product of the number of students and the per-pupil cost for the prior year minus the state reimbursement for special education excess costs. The act changes the

formula in two ways. First, it bases the per pupil cost on the prior two years, rather than one. Second, it does not subtract the reimbursement received under the special education excess cost grant.

It also changes the definition of per-pupil cost for the local or regional board from net current expenditure divided by average daily student membership to current program expenditures divided by number of resident students.

(Currently, there are no local charter schools in Connecticut but one has been approved to open in New Haven in fall 2014.) ([PA 14-217](#), § 112, effective upon passage.)

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

### ***Creating the Office of Early Childhood***

This law creates the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) as the lead agency for the early care and education of young children. It makes OEC responsible for administering the early childhood programs previously administered by the departments of Education, Social Services, and Public Health. Previously, this office existed under the 2013 budget act and Executive Order No. 35. The new law creates the office in statute with all the necessary powers and authority of a state department.



The new law assigns to OEC the following major programs and duties, most of which were already OEC's responsibility under the executive order:

1. school readiness;
2. the Children's Trust Fund;
3. Connecticut Charts-a-Course;
4. state and federally funded child day care subsidies;
5. child day care services management, evaluation, and professional development;
6. child day care facilities licensing and inspection, and
7. youth camp oversight.

The law also:

1. requires OEC to make more frequent unannounced visits to all licensed day care centers, group day care homes, and family day care homes;
2. gives OEC more authority over school readiness staff qualification requirements; and
3. changes the organization and membership of certain councils, committees, and cabinets ([PA 14-39](#), effective upon passage for the creation of OEC, and July 1, 2014 for the transfer of programs.

### **School Readiness**

The legislature passed a law that requires OEC to create a new school readiness grant to enable towns and regional school readiness councils to (1) start up new school readiness classrooms and (2) provide spaces to

eligible children in school readiness programs that are accredited or seeking accreditation. The budget funds 1,020 new spaces for this grant in FY 15 ([PA 14-39, § 85](#), effective July 1, 2014; [PA 14-47](#)).

### **Smart Start**

The legislature created the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program, which OEC will design and administer in consultation with SDE, to reimburse boards of education for capital and operating expenses related to establishing or expanding a preschool program. Under the new law, boards may receive (1) a capital grant of up to \$75,000 per classroom to renovate an existing public school to accommodate or expand a preschool program and (2) an annual operating grant, either in an amount up to: (a) \$5,000 per child served by the program or (b) \$75,000 per classroom, for a period of five years, as long as the program continues to meet OEC-established standards.

The OEC commissioner must review Smart Start applications and award grants to boards that (1) demonstrate the greatest need for preschool establishment or expansion and (2) allocate spaces to children from low income families or are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches.

Two other new laws fund Smart Start using \$10 million per year from the Tobacco Settlement Fund for

operating grants and \$105 million in bond authorizations for capital grants over 10 years ([PA 14-41](#), [PA 14-217, § 138](#) and [PA 14-98, §§ 24 & 25](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Preschool for Children in DCF Custody***

A new law requires the DCF commissioner to take steps to maximize preschool enrollment for children placed in out-of-home care. By January 1, 2015 it requires the commissioner, in consultation with OEC, to:

1. adopt policies and procedures that maximize the enrollment of eligible preschool-aged children in eligible preschool programs and
2. submit to the Children's, Human Services, Education, and Appropriations committees (a) the policies and procedures and (b) a report on different categories of eligible preschool-aged children and available preschool spaces and costs ([PA 14-217](#), §§ 132 & 133, effective July 1, 2014 for the adoption of policies and procedures; upon passage for the report).

### ***Two-Generational School Readiness Plan***

The General Assembly enacted new legislation requiring the Commission on Children to establish a two-generational school readiness plan, within available appropriations, and by December 1, 2014 report on the plan to the Children's, Education, Higher

Education and Employment Advancement, and Appropriations committees. The plan must address intergenerational barriers to school and workforce readiness using (1) high-quality preschool, (2) intensified workforce training, (3) targeted education, and (4) related support services ([PA 14-217](#), § 198, effective upon passage).

### ***Grants for Social and Emotional Well-Being in Alliance Districts***

A new law allows OEC to provide competitive grants for up to three low performing (alliance) school districts to develop and implement a strategy to promote the health and social and emotional well-being of children from age three to third grade. OEC must collaborate with SDE, if the grant is offered ([PA 14-172](#), effective July 1, 2014).

## **GRANTS AND FUNDING**

### ***Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Grants to Towns***

The budget act overrides the statutory formula for calculating ECS grants and instead lists each town's specific grant for FY 14 and FY 15. It eliminates the prior law's phase-in for grant increases for FY 14 and FY 15.

It also requires SDE to provide additional grants for educational purposes to Bridgeport in the amount of (1) \$1,200,000 for FY 14 and (2) \$700,000 for FY 15 ([PA 14-47](#), §§ 18 & 27, effective upon passage).

### **State Transportation Grant Cap**

The implementer act extends a cap on state transportation formula grants to school districts and regional education service centers (RESCs) for two fiscal years, through June 30, 2015. The cap requires grants to be proportionately reduced when the state budget appropriations do not cover the full amounts required by the statutory formula ([PA 14-217](#), § 108, effective upon passage).

### **Priority School District Supplemental Grants**

Priority school districts (PSD) are districts with high student poverty and low standardized test scores. By law, they are eligible for additional state aid. A new law updates two existing provisions for supplemental PSD grants.

Under prior law, there was an SBE allocation of \$2,929,364 for FY 13. The act establishes an allocation of \$2,925,481 for FY 14 (the current year) and \$2,882,368 for FY 15. As under existing law, the SBE must allocate a share of these supplemental funds to each priority district in proportion to its regular PSD grant. The money is in addition to all other PSD grants each district receives ([PA 14-217](#), § 109, effective upon passage).

### **Alliance District Funds: Nonsupplant Provision**

The act explicitly requires state education aid for an alliance district to be expended for educational purposes only on the authorization of the local board of education in accordance with the law authorizing alliance district funding. This “nonsupplant” provision prevents education funds from being diverted for noneducation purposes ([PA 14-217](#), § 113, effective upon passage).

### **Per-Student Grant and Tuition for Regional Ag-Science Centers**

The implementer act increases, from \$2,750 to \$3,200, the per-student state grant for regional agricultural science and technology centers. For FY 15, as was the case for the previous year, it allows a board of education that operates a center to spend the increased state grant even if it exceeds the total amount budgeted for education.

The act also lowers, from 62.47% to 59.2%, the maximum percentage of the state’s per-student foundation aid that is used to determine the tuition charged to the districts sending students to a center. This lowers the maximum amount of tuition that can be charged from \$7,199.67 to \$6,822.80. Table 1 displays how the decreasing the percentage lowers the tuition maximum.

**Table 1: Maximum Tuition for Regional Ag-  
Science Centers**

	<i>Current Law</i>	<i>Act</i>
Percentage of Foundation	62.47%	59.2%
Foundation	\$11,525	\$11,525
Maximum Tuition (% of foundation multiplied by foundation amount)	\$7,199.67	\$6,822.80

([PA 14-217](#), §§ 118 & 119, effective July 1, 2014)

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### ***Safe School Climate Plans***

A new law requires SDE to approve or reject a local or regional board of education’s safe school climate plan (each board’s anti-bullying policy) within 30 days of receiving it and, in the event it is rejected, requires the board to revise and resubmit the plan for approval. The new law specifies other related steps that SDE and the local or regional board must take whether the plan is approved or rejected. Under the law, only boards that have not previously had plans approved must submit them.

The act expands the type of data board must collect in school climate assessment surveys ([PA 14-232](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Student Safety Hotline Feasibility Study***

The legislature enacted a law requiring the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to study the

feasibility of establishing a student safety hotline and submit the results to the Education Committee by January 1, 2015 ([PA 14-232](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Addressing Bullying Complaints***

A new law changes part of the process school districts must abide by in handling complaints about student bullying. It requires that the bully's parents or guardians be invited to a meeting, separate from the one held with the victim's parents or guardians, to discuss specific interventions to prevent further bullying ([PA 14-172](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***EpiPen Storage and Administration***

A new law requires schools to designate and train nonmedical staff to administer emergency epinephrine in cartridge injectors (“EpiPens”) to students having allergic reactions who were not previously known to have serious allergies. It authorizes the emergency use of EpiPens by nonmedical staff only if (1) the school nurse is not present or available and (2) certain conditions are met ([PA 14-176](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Concussion Education Plan and Informed Consent Form***

Starting with the 2015-2016 school year, a new law sets conditions that must be met before a student athlete can participate in intramural or

interscholastic athletics, including requiring parents to sign an informed consent form regarding concussions.

It also requires SBE, in consultation with the Public Health commissioner and other stakeholders, to develop or approve the concussion plan, which must address specific items, including recognizing concussion symptoms ([PA 14-66](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Concussion Notification***

The legislature enacted a new law that requires teachers, principals, coaches, athletic trainers, and others, when a student athlete is removed from an athletic event for a concussion or suspected concussion, to notify the student's parent or legal guardian that the student has a concussion or shows signs, or symptoms of one. The employee must (1) provide the notice within 24 hours after removing the student and (2) make a reasonable effort to immediately give notice ([PA 14-66](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***School District and SBE Concussion Reporting Requirements***

A new law requires SBE, starting with the 2014-2015 school year, to annually require school districts to collect and report to it all concussion occurrences.

SBE, starting with the 2015-2016 school year, must annually send a concussion report to the Department

of Public Health (DPH) containing all the reported school district concussion information. DPH, starting by October 1, 2015, must annually send the SBE concussion report's findings to the Children's and Public Health committees ([PA 14-66](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Child Abuse Investigations and School Employees***

The legislature enacted a law that (1) expands the circumstances in which DCF must provide a school superintendent and the education commissioner with the results of an investigation into a report that a school employee abused or neglected a child, (2) narrows the circumstances in which the superintendent must suspend the employee, and (3) broadens the category of school employees who may be suspended to include any school employee, not just those with SBE-issued credentials who take care of children ([PA 14-186](#), effective October 1, 2014).

### ***Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Boards of Education***

A new law requires local and regional boards of education, as well as SDE, to address teen dating violence in schools the same way existing law requires them to address bullying. This includes requiring board of education to make teen dating violence part of (1) their safe school climate plan and (2) the prevention

and intervention strategy required under the plan ([PA 14-234](#), effective October 1, 2014).

### ***Statewide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program***

A new law requires, by July 1, 2015, DCF, together with the SDE and Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc., or a similar organization, to identify or develop a statewide sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program. Local and regional school boards must implement the program by October 1, 2015 ([PA 14-196](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Retired Police as Armed School Security Guards***

An act expands who a municipality or board of education can hire or contract with to provide armed school security services to include those who are retired or separated in good standing federal law enforcement agents or officers from an out-of-state police department ([PA 14-212](#), § 19, effective upon passage; identical provision in [PA 14-217](#), § 254).

### ***Notice to Superintendents When Sex Offender Changes Address***

The legislature enacted a new law that requires DESPP to notify the superintendent of the school district where a registered sex offender notifies DESPP of an address change and resides or plans to reside in the district. By law, DESPP already provides this notice and information to

superintendents when registered sex offenders are released into the community ([PA 14-213](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Education***

New legislation requires SBE, for the school year starting July 1, 2015, and each year afterwards, to develop or approve a sudden cardiac arrest awareness education program for use by local and regional school boards. SBE must do so in consultation with specified partners, including the public health commissioner ([PA 14- 93](#), effective October 1, 2014).

### ***School Nurse Access to Immunization Registry***

A new law gives school nurses access to DPH's childhood immunization registry, to allow the nurses to (1) determine which children in their jurisdiction are overdue for immunizations and (2) provide outreach to help get them vaccinated. It grants access to school nurses who are required to verify students' immunization status in both public and private schools ([PA 14-231](#), § 4, effective October 1, 2014).

### ***Nutritional Drink Standards in Schools (VETOED)***

The act changes the standards for allowable nutritional drinks in schools. The changes include:



1. for milk: bans whole milk, allows low-fat unflavored milk or fat-free flavored or unflavored milk; and bans nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols, and added sodium;
2. for nondairy milks (soy or rice milk): bans nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols or added sodium; keeps the artificial sweeteners ban, sugar limit, and limit on calories from fat; and
3. for water, fruit and vegetable combinations, juices, and waters: bans sugar alcohols and added sodium; keeps the added sugars and sweeteners ban ([PA 14-230](#), § 8, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Vision, Hearing and Postural Screenings (VETOED)***

A new law reduces the number of mandatory annual vision, hearing, and postural screenings for public school students ([PA 14-230](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### **INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS**

#### ***Limits on Magnet School Grants for Enrollment Increases After October 1***

For FY 15, an act permits SDE to limit payment to a interdistrict magnet school to an amount the school was eligible to receive based on its enrollment level on October 1, 2013. It permits funding for additional students enrolling after October 1 based on priorities the act establishes. This means student enrollment

increases after October 1 will not automatically increase student funding.

The act specifies that SDE must prioritize additional magnet school funding based on a number of factors, including enrollment increases (1) necessary to ensure compliance with state requirements for racial and economic diversity or (2) for adding planned new grades in a magnet school ([PA 14-217](#), §89, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Magnet Schools Diversity Requirements***

A new law extends an existing exception that keeps magnet schools eligible for state magnet grants even though they do not comply with the state racial minority enrollment requirements because of changes in the federal racial and ethnic reporting requirements.

It also extends, from January 1, 2013 to January 1, 2015, the deadline for SDE to submit a report to the Education Committee recommending legislation to amend the racial minority enrollment requirements for magnet schools to conform with changes in federal law ([PA 14-217](#), § 116, effective upon passage).

### ***Magnet School Enrollment Notification (VETOED)***

A new law requires the parents or guardian of a student (1) who enrolls in a magnet school or (2) on a waiting list for a magnet school to notify the

student's home school district of the upcoming enrollment or waiting list status. This must be done within two weeks after the enrollment lottery for the magnet school (which are usually held in March or April). By law and unchanged by the bill, a magnet school operator must, by May 15 annually, notify a student's home district that the student is enrolled in the magnet school for the coming school year and what the tuition will be ([PA 14-230](#), § 10, effective July 1, 2014).

## **INSTRUCTION AND CURRICULUM**

### ***Early Literacy Pilot Extension***

[PA 11-85](#) authorized the education commissioner to (1) conduct a pilot study to promote best practices in early literacy and closing academic achievement gaps and (2) identify schools to participate in the study.

The implementer act extends the pilot through the school year starting July 1, 2015 and delays the commissioner's reporting deadline to October 1, 2016 ([PA 14-217](#), § 117, effective upon passage).

### ***Financial Literacy Instruction***

A new law allows SDE, Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR), and UConn Board of Trustees (BOT), in consultation with the Department of Banking, to develop a plan to provide financial literacy instruction, including the impact of using credit and debit cards, to students in public high

schools and state higher education institutions ([PA 14-217](#), § 199, effective July 1, 2014).

## **REGIONALIZATION**

### ***Delay in Uniform Regional Calendar***

A new law delays for one year, from the school year starting July 1, 2015 to the year starting July 1, 2016, the requirement that each local or regional board of education adopt a RESC-approved uniform regional school calendar.

The law also gives a school board an additional year to implement the uniform calendar if it has an existing employee contract that prevents it from doing so ([PA 14-38](#), effective upon passage).

## **SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION**

### ***Projects Authorized and Reauthorized***

The legislature (1) authorized \$180.7 million in grant commitments for 21 new school construction projects, (2) reauthorized and changed grant commitments for nine previously authorized projects with significant changes in cost and scope for an additional \$196.5 million in grant commitments, and (3) exempted specified school construction projects from various statutory and regulatory requirements to allow them to qualify for state grants (resulting in a \$145.0 million cost to the state) ([PA 14-90](#), §§ 1, 14-53, upon passage).



### ***School Security Infrastructure Grant Program***

A new law expands the competitive school security grant program and increases its bond authorization from \$15 million to \$37 million. It expands the program to include (1) RESCs, state charter schools, technical high schools, private schools, and endowed academies (i.e., Gilbert School, Norwich Free Academy, and Woodstock Academy) and (2) previously ineligible security infrastructure for reimbursement ([PA 14-98](#), effective upon passage, except for the bond authorization, which is effective July 1, 2014).

### ***School Safety Infrastructure Standards Waiver***

The legislature authorized the administrative services (DAS) commissioner to waive, under certain conditions, the requirement that a school construction project meet the school safety infrastructure standards (SSIS). He can do this only if the applicant makes a good-faith effort to meet the standards.

The same law authorized him to require towns and regional boards of education to perform security assessments on proposed school construction projects ([PA 14-90](#), §§ 3 & 4, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***School Safety Infrastructure Council Membership***

A new law expands the membership of the School Safety Infrastructure Council by adding one member who must be a licensed building official ([PA 14-90](#), § 2, effective upon passage).

### ***School Building Projects Advisory Council Membership***

Two new laws add three members to the School Building Projects Advisory Council. One law adds the education commissioner and the other adds two more members to the council, both of whom are appointed by the governor (one new member must have school safety experience and the other must have State Building Code administration experience). Together the acts increase the size of the council from five to eight ([PA 14-217](#), § 56 upon passage; [PA 14-90](#), § 13, upon passage).

## **SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND BOARDS OF EDUCATION**

### ***Excused Absences for Children of Active Duty Military***

A new law requires any child age five to 18 enrolled in a public school be granted 10 days of excused absences in any school year if his or her parent or legal guardian is an active-duty U.S. armed forces member who (1) has been called for, (2) is on leave from, or (3) has immediately returned from

deployment in a combat zone or combat support posting. It also allows local or regional boards of education to grant additional excused absences for such visits.

Under the new law, the student and parent or legal guardian are responsible for getting assignments from the teacher before leaving ([PA 14-198](#), July 1, 2014).

### ***Indemnity for Teacher Mentors or Reviewers (VETOED)***

The act extends the legal indemnity currently given to teachers, administrators, school board members, and others to teacher mentors and teacher reviewers employed by local or regional boards of education, the governing council of a charter school, SBE, the Board of Regents for Higher Education or the board of trustees of each state institution of higher education, and state agencies ([PA 14-230](#), § 5, effective upon passage).

### **SHEFF V. O'NEILL – 2013 STIPULATION**

The implementer act contains numerous provisions intended to carry out the newest phase of *Sheff v. O'Neill*, the ongoing Hartford school desegregation court case. In December 2013, the state and the *Sheff* plaintiffs reached a new agreement on additional efforts to integrate Hartford schools that the court approved as a stipulation and

order. The new stipulation covers the period from December 13, 2013 to June 30, 2015.

### ***Revised Definition of Racial Diversity***

The act revises the definition of racial diversity under the interdistrict magnet school law as it applies to *Sheff* magnet schools. The new definition counts Asians, Native Americans, and others as nonminorities, thus making it somewhat easier to reach the goal of having *Sheff* magnet schools have no more than 75% minority students.

The act requires a magnet school governing authority to use the new definition to restrict the number of magnet school students from a participating district in order to meet the racial diversity standard ([PA 14-217](#), § 89, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Special Magnet School Per-Student Operating Grant***

The act reduces the per-student grant for some students at a school, the Thomas Edison Magnet Middle School in Meriden, that receives \$8,180 for each student. By law, most magnet schools run by RESCs that (1) do not help implement the *Sheff* settlement and (2) enroll 55% or more of their students from a single town receive a state grant of \$3,000 annually for each student from that town.

The act creates two tiers of magnet school payments depending upon whether the number of students is above the October 1, 2013 enrollment count (see Table 2 below).

**Table 2: Edison Magnet Middle School Grant Changes**

<i>Residency of Students</i>	<i>Students at or below the Enrollment Count of October 1, 2013</i>	<i>Students above the Enrollment Count of October 1, 2013</i>
Inside the district	\$8,180	\$3,000
Outside the district	\$8,180	\$7,085

([PA 14-217](#), §89, effective July 1, 2014)

**Payment Schedule for Goodwin College Senior Academy Magnet School**

The act makes a magnet school that uses a trimester school calendar and is operated by a an independent college or university eligible for the same per-student state magnet school grant, \$10,443, as other *Sheff* magnets (the Goodwin College Senior Academy magnet school appears to be the only one affected). To receive the grant for an individual student, that student must be enrolled for at least two of the three trimesters for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 ([PA 14-217](#), §89, effective July 1, 2014).

**Renzulli Gifted and Talented Academy**

The implementer act requires SDE, within available appropriations, to award a grant of up to \$250,000 to the Hartford school district for developing and expanding programs at the Dr. Joseph S. Renzulli Gifted and Talented Academy to assist the state in meeting the *Sheff* 2013 stipulation goals. The grant is available for FY 15 and each following year.

It permits any student accepted into Renzulli, based on the Renzulli’s selective admissions policy, to be considered part of Open Choice, regardless of race ([PA 14-217](#), §90, effective July 1, 2014).

**Sheff Lighthouse School**

The act creates an annual grant for the Hartford school district to convert an existing neighborhood school into a *Sheff* lighthouse school. SDE must, within available appropriations, award an annual grant of \$750,000 to Hartford for FY 15 through FY 18 to assist in the development of curricula and staff training for the *Sheff* lighthouse school.

The act defines lighthouse schools as schools designated for additional assistance to improve educational outcomes while serving neighborhood or citywide populations ([PA 14-217](#), § 91, effective July 1, 2014).

***Sheff School Construction Reimbursement Rate Changes and Authorization for SDE to Pay CREC's Local Construction Share***

The implementer act authorizes SDE to pay 100% of the reimbursable construction costs for three new *Sheff* magnet schools. The schools are Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts Elementary Magnet School, Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts Middle Magnet School, and the Two Rivers Magnet High School. They are all Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) schools that are moving to new facilities ([PA 14-217](#), §§ 101-104, effective upon passage, except for the authorization regarding the local share of school construction costs, which is effective July 1, 2014).

***Capital Startup Grant Liens or Repayments***

The act exempts CREC from lien or repayment of capital startup cost grants of up to \$17 million in one previous school construction project authorization and up to \$7.5 million in another.

Both grant authorizations were to purchase buildings or portable classrooms, lease space, and purchase equipment, including, computers and classroom furniture ([PA 14-217](#), §§ 106 & 107, upon passage).

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

***Dyslexia Added to IEP Forms and Teacher Prep***

The legislature enacted a law that requires (1) dyslexia be added to the special education individualized education program (IEP) form as a separate category and (2) instruction in dyslexia be added to teacher preparation programs leading to professional teacher certification ([PA 14-39, §1& 2](#), effective July 1, 2014).

***Notice of Parental Right to Delay Kindergarten Entrance of a Special Education Child***

A new law requires boards of education to notify parents or guardians of preschool special education students who reach age five or age six of their legal right to hold the child back from entering kindergarten for a year ([PA 14-39, §3](#), effective July 1, 2014).

***Interpreters for Deaf Plan***

A new law requires the rehabilitation services and education commissioners to develop a plan to ensure that an adequate number of qualified interpreters are available to assist students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The plan is due to the human services and education committees by December 31, 2014 ([SA 14-15](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Eliminating Unified School District #3***

The legislature enacted a law that eliminates Unified School District #3 and makes conforming statutory changes, to reflect the planned closure of the district. Unified School District #3 oversaw the Birth to Three System's Early Connections program, the state-run Birth to Three provider. All Birth to Three services will be provided by private agencies under contract with the Department of Developmental Services ([PA 14-231](#), §§ 62-65, 72, effective July 1, 2014).

### **STATE BOARD AND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

#### ***Legal Status and Structure of the State Education Resource Center (SERC)***

A new law reconstitutes the State Education Resource Center (SERC) as a quasi-public agency, thus clarifying its legal status in relation to SDE. The new law (1) vests SERC's powers in a 13-member board of directors and (2) subjects SERC to existing laws governing state quasi-public agencies ([PA 14-212](#), effective upon passage).

### **TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND OTHER SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

#### ***Teacher Pension Income Tax Exemption***

The budget act exempts a portion of state teachers' retirement system (TRS) income from the state income tax. It does so by allowing taxpayers, when calculating Connecticut adjusted

gross income for state income tax purposes, to deduct 10% of TRS income for the 2015 tax year, 25% for the 2016 tax year, and 50% for 2017 and subsequent tax years ([PA 14-47](#), § 50, July 1, 2015, and applicable to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2015).

#### ***Union Representatives on Local Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (VETOED)***

A new law specifies that the union representation on a school district's professional development and evaluation committee include at least one representative each from the teachers' and administrators' unions ([PA 14-230](#), § 12, effective July 1, 2014).

#### ***Appointments to the Advisory Council for School Administrator Professional Standards (VETOED)***

A new law extends, from two to four years, the terms of all appointments to the Advisory Council for School Administrators that take place on or after the act's passage ([PA 14-230](#), § 6, effective upon passage).

#### ***Teacher Evaluation Status Report Due Dates (VETOED)***

Under prior law, school superintendents had to annually report on (1) the status of teacher evaluations to the local school board by June 1 and (2) the status of teacher evaluation and supports programs and other required

information to the education commissioner by June 30. A new law changes the due date of both reporting requirements to September 15 ([PA 14-230](#), § 14, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Certification for Administrators (VETOED)***

The legislature enacted a new law that adds additional criteria that SDE must consider for proposed administrator alternative route to certification (ARC) programs submitted by universities, boards of education, or administrator training organizations. By law, SDE can only approve such programs with specific criteria for accepting applicants, including a minimum amount of teaching experience. The new law specifies that such applicants must have less than 10 months teaching experience in a public school in another state, but also requires that such participants make up no more than 10% of the participants in the proposed ARC program ([PA 14-230](#), § 15, effective July 1, 2014).

## **TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS, AG-SCIENCE CENTERS & VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

### ***Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund***

A new law establishes the Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund, which among other things can be used for supporting education and training programs that help meet

anticipated manufacturing workforce development demands ([PA 14-98](#), §§ 47-49, effective upon passage).

### ***Use of Agricultural Science Center Equipment (VETOED)***

Under a new law, any facility or equipment at a regional agricultural science (ag-science) center that receives a state grant must be used exclusively by the ag-science center. These centers are hosted by local school districts, but serve many districts that make up a region ([PA 14-230](#), § 9, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Ag-Science Internship Immunity (VETOED)***

A new law makes agricultural science and technology center internship sponsors immune from civil liability for student interns' personal injuries, unless the injuries are caused by providers' gross, reckless, willful, or wanton misconduct. The law applies to sponsors that are individuals, as well as businesses, clubs, and other organizations that contract with the ag-science centers to provide internships ([PA 14-230](#), § 11, effective July 1, 2014).

## **HIGHER EDUCATION**

### ***UConn Agency Leases***

The act allows UConn to lease, finance, or lease-finance, through another state agency or quasi-public agency, any land or building outside the Storrs campus that costs more than \$50,000 per year. Previously, the



law prohibited UConn from entering into such leases and lease-finance agreements under the UConn 2000 infrastructure program ([PA 14-5](#), effective on passage).

### ***Campus Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence***

The legislature expanded an existing law that requires Connecticut's public and private colleges and universities to (1) adopt and disclose policies on sexual assault and intimate partner violence and (2) offer related prevention and awareness campaigns. The act requires nonprofits to also comply with these requirements and extends them to (1) encompass stalking and (2) protect victims employed by higher education institutions.

The act requires all higher education institutions to establish a campus resource team to review their policies and recommend protocols for providing support services to student and employee victims. It establishes the team's membership requirements; state and local police training requirements for campus incident response; and education requirements for the institution's Title IX coordinator and special police force, campus police force, or campus safety personnel.

It also requires all institutions to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with at least one community-based (1) sexual assault crisis service center and (2) domestic violence agency. The MOU must

establish a partnership with the center and agency and ensure that victims can access counseling and advocacy services.

A related act exempts Charter Oak State College from the requirements related to (1) programming and campaigns, (2) Higher Education Committee reporting, (3) campus resource teams, (4) Title IX coordinator and security personnel training, and (5) MOUs ([PA 14-11](#) and [PA 14-217](#), §§ 163-164, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***English Language Learner Educator Incentive Program***

The act redesigns the Office of Higher Education's (OHE) teacher loan reimbursement program by making it an incentive grant and loan reimbursement program for college students studying to become bilingual education teachers or English teachers for students who speak other languages.

The act redesigns the program by, among other things, (1) targeting it to undergraduates rather than certified teachers and (2) removing the participant cap and employment commitment requirements ([PA 14-21](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Planning Commission on Higher Education***

The act changes the requirements for reporting on the implementation of Connecticut's strategic master plan for higher education. Among other things,

it changes the deadline, from October 1, 2016 to January 1, 2016, by which the commission must submit its first annual report on implementation status and goal progress to the governor. It also removes the requirement that BOR prepare the annual report on behalf of the commission ([PA 14-65](#), § 13, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Conforming and Technical Changes to Higher Education Laws***

The act changes higher education statutes to conform with name and definition changes enacted in 2013 and makes several technical changes to higher education statutes ([PA 14-65](#), §§ 1-12, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Military Occupational Specialties and Academic Credit***

A new law requires colleges and universities to award academic credit for military occupational specialty training to enrolled service members.

By July 1, 2016, BOR and BOT must develop and adopt guidelines for awarding such credit using course equivalency recommendations adopted by the American Council on Education and other organizations ([PA 14-131](#), § 11, effective July 1, 2014).

Related new laws allow BOR, BOT, and OHE to inquire about applicants' service member status only when military training or experience is relevant and could be applied to a credential or credit under their authority.

By July 1, 2016 and annually thereafter, BOR and BOT must report to the Veterans' Affairs Committee on the number of service members who applied for an educational credit and were approved, among other things ([PA 14-131](#), § 14, and [PA 14-65](#), § 14, effective on passage).

### ***Uniform Academic Degree Standards***

A new law specifies that, when approving academic programs, (1) UConn's BOT must follow certain statutory requirements already required of BOR and (2) both BOT and BOR must follow regulations promulgated by OHE. These statutory and regulatory requirements concern administration, finance, faculty, curricula, library, student admission and graduation, plant and equipment, records, catalogs, program announcements, and other pertinent criteria.

The act also eliminates BOR's authority to impose penalties on public state universities and community colleges for violating program approval and licensure and accreditation requirements. It makes other technical changes ([PA 14-91](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) 2020 Program***

The legislature authorized \$103.5 million in new bonding under the CSCU 2020 program (formerly the Connecticut State University System



2020 infrastructure program), expanded it to include community colleges and Charter Oak State College, and extended the program by one year to FY 19.

It also allows BOR to submit a revised allocation request to the governor if the legislature increases the bond authorization for a year in which the governor already approved an authorization. BOR can also revise CSCU 2020 project amounts without legislative approval if the revision reallocates unspent funds from a completed project. BOR must report biannually to the legislature on how it allocated project funds among the state universities and community colleges ([PA 14-98](#), §§ 50-57, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Cooperative Purchasing Plans***

A new law allows the chief executive officer (CEO) of UConn, CSUS, regional community-technical colleges, and Charter Oak State College to join with federal agencies, other states, Connecticut political subdivisions, or private or nonprofit organizations in cooperative purchasing plans when it is in the state's best interests.

It also allows the state, through such CEOs, to purchase equipment, supplies, materials, and services from vendors with existing sales contracts with other states, Connecticut political subdivisions, nonprofit organizations, or private or public consortia ([PA 14-106](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***BOR Vice President Appointments***

The act requires BOR to appoint two vice presidents upon the BOR president's recommendation, one for CSUS and one for regional community-technical colleges, which conforms law to current practice ([PA 14-117](#), § 1, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Board for State Academic Awards (BSAA)***

The act eliminates remaining statutory references to BSAA and replaces them with references to BOR or Charter Oak State College, as appropriate. BOR, acting as BSAA, has governed Charter Oak since January 1, 2012, after the legislature transferred BSAA's powers and duties to BOR ([PA 14-117](#), §§ 2-13, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Faculty Representation on the Board of Regents***

A new law requires BOR's faculty advisory committee (FAC) vice-chairperson to serve as an ex-officio, nonvoting BOR member for a two-year term but excludes the vice-chairperson from BOR executive sessions. It also makes technical changes ([PA 14-208](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Reporting on CSUS Initiatives***

The act requires BOR to appear before and report to the Higher Education and Appropriations committees on four CSUS initiatives related to developmental education

(i.e., remedial academic support), the Go Back to Get Ahead program, the early college/dual enrollment program, and the CSUS transformation ([PA 14-217](#), § 68, effective on passage).

### ***Go Back to Get Ahead***

The act establishes this BOR-administered program to encourage individuals to return to higher education and earn a degree. Connecticut residents may receive up to three free three-credit courses from a BOR institution towards an associate's or bachelor's degree if they (1) dropped out of a program or completed an associate's program over 18 months ago and (2) enroll in an eligible degree program by September 30, 2016 ([PA 14-217](#), § 176, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Statewide Plan for Emerging Industries***

The act requires the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC) to develop a statewide plan and funding proposal to implement, expand, or improve upon (1) contextualized learning programs, (2) career certificate programs, (3) middle college programs, and (4) early college high school programs.

CETC must report to the Higher Education committee about the plan by January 1, 2015 and about the status of these four programs by

September 1, 2015 and annually thereafter ([PA 14-217](#), § 197, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Remedial Support for Higher Education Students***

The legislature increased the remedial support that CSUS institutions and community colleges must offer to make students college-ready. Among other things, it required them to offer a three-tiered remediation system to eligible students using support and programs that are both embedded in and independent of required coursework. Tiers consist of embedded, intensive, and transitional support.

The act also delays, from fall 2014 to fall 2015, the requirement that community colleges provide embedded remedial support in entry-level classes. It requires both CSUS institutions and community colleges to provide intensive and transitional remedial support beginning fall 2015.

The act allows BOR and SDE to enter into an MOU to deliver a transitional college readiness program that enables adult to enroll directly in a college or university ([PA 14-217](#), § 209, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Career Readiness and Manufacturing Apprenticeships***

By January 1, 2015, the technical high school system must develop a plan to use its high schools' manufacturing centers after school hours and on weekends for (1) career-

readiness programs for high school and college students and adults seeking to reenter the workforce and (2) offering manufacturing apprenticeship training instruction.

The act requires the education commissioner to report on the plan to the Education, Labor, and Higher Education committees by January 1, 2015 ([SA 14-19](#), effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Tuition Raffles***

A new law allows various groups and organizations that hold special tuition raffles to offer prizes of full or partial student loan payments for student recipients designated by the raffle winners. The Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) commissioner must adopt regulations to (1) allow any organization permitted to conduct a special tuition raffle to pay all or part of a student recipient's student loan each year for up to four years and (2) provide that the tuition prize be paid directly to the financial institution holding the loan ([PA 14-28](#), effective October 1, 2014).

### ***UConn and UCHC Police***

The legislature enacted a new law that makes members of the UConn and UConn Health Center (UCHC) Police Departments unclassified, instead of classified, state employees and specifies requirements for doing so ([PA 14-217](#), § 221, effective on passage).

### ***Centers of Excellence***

State law allows UConn, the state universities, and the regional community-technical colleges (CTCs) to create "centers of excellence," which are distinctive instructional, research, or public service programs. A new law requires BOR to examine the potential of expanding the manufacturing technology center model to create additional centers of excellence for other high-demand career areas as part of an academic and facilities master plan. By July 1, 2015, BOR must report on the master plan results to the Higher Education and Labor committees ([PA 14-225](#), § 5, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Plus 50 Initiative***

A new law requires BOR to implement the "Plus 50 Initiative" within available resources throughout the regional CTC system, which invests in community colleges to create or expand programs that engage learners age 50 and older, with a focus on workforce training and preparing for new careers. By July 1, 2015, BOR must report on the implementation status to the Higher Education and Labor committees ([PA 14-225](#), § 5, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Noncredit Vocational Courses and Programs***

A new law requires BOR to establish consistent parameters for noncredit vocational courses and programs to be recognized by each

constituent unit of the state public higher education system by January 1, 2015. Constituent units are UConn, the state universities, regional CTCs, and Charter Oak State College ([PA 14-225](#), § 6, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Higher Education Coordinating Council (HECC) Accountability Measures***

A new law requires HECC to consider additional factors when developing accountability measures used to assess each higher education institution's progress towards meeting efficiency, economic development, academic, access, and affordability goals. HECC must now also consider (1) data on graduates according to academic and noncredit vocational course and program, including their ages and (2) goals adopted by the Planning Commission for Higher Education.

The new law also requires HECC's periodic reports, produced with the Labor Department, to be able to be sorted by student age and include information on job retention of students enrolled in academic and noncredit vocational courses and programs ([PA 14-225](#), § 7, effective July 1, 2014).

### ***Cost and Financial Aid Trend Report***

By law, the BOR president and OHE must report every two years on national, state, and northeast regional cost trends at public and private colleges and universities and private

occupational schools. A new law requires this report to be given to the Higher Education Committee, rather than Education, and specifies that it must address, among other things, utilization of all forms of financial aid for academic and noncredit vocational courses. ([PA 14-225](#), § 8, effective October 1, 2014)

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