



# THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

## Testimony of the Connecticut Association of Schools SB 183- AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HB 5170- AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS' RIGHT TO PRIVACY IN THEIR MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES

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AFFILIATED WITH:

- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- Association for Middle Level Education
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- New England League of Middle Schools
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February 26, 2018

My name is Dr. Karissa Niehoff. I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS). Our association provides extensive professional development to school leaders in approximately 900 member schools- traditional public, technical, vo-ag, parochial, charter and magnet- Pre-K through grade 12. CAS includes the CT Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) which is the governing body for high school athletics and student activities; and the CT Student Activities Conference (CSAC) which oversees the State Student Advisory Council, statewide National Honor Societies and student councils, and a multitude of leadership development experiences.

### CAS SUPPORTS SB 183 AA IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

We appreciate that Section 4(a)(3) and (5) clarify that an "exclusionary time out" is NOT included in the terms "Physical restraint" or "Seclusion". There are a multitude of situations for which temporarily separating a student from the main body of the class or main activity is an appropriate behavioral intervention.

A brief time out offers an opportunity for the supervising adult to engage in one-on-one conversation with a disruptive student. The time out may assist in diffusion of conflict, invite expression of feelings, and encourage reflection on behavior choices. Section 4(s) requiring boards of education to establish a policy regarding exclusionary time outs helps to define the context of a time out and its place in a student's overall behavior intervention strategies. Prior to the language being inserted in this bill, there was some confusion among teachers and administrators as to whether or not exclusionary time outs were prohibited or considered to be a form of physical restraint or inappropriate seclusion.

CAS strongly supports Section 6(f) defining elementary endorsement as K-6 as Kindergarten programs and instruction are strongly aligned with teaching and learning experiences in grades 1-6. Elementary educator endorsement should include Kindergarten.

CAS also supports Section 7(c) defining a three-year temporary permit. This option will assist in addressing the multiple teacher shortage areas that exist and in bringing fresh talent into Connecticut's educator ranks.

Serving schools  
and their leaders





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**SB 183**

**HB 5170**

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CAS recognizes that Connecticut's current fiscal crisis demands extensive budget cuts across state agencies resulting in elimination or altering of programs. Section 9 suggests changes to the implementation of the teacher education and mentoring program and funding process. We understand the reasons behind these suggested changes but remain hopeful that restoration of funding to support a more robust mentoring program- for both teachers and administrators- will remain a priority of our Legislature.

**CAS SUPPORTS HB 5170 - AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS' RIGHT TO PRIVACY IN THEIR MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

Section 1(b) defines the circumstances during which a school employee make take custody of a student's mobile device and requires the device to be given immediately to a school administrator. CAS agrees that only school administrators should conduct searches of student devices. Taking possession of mobile device is a serious action; thus, CAS agrees that a written report should be submitted as to why a device was taken.

**CAS requests one change to the language in Section 1(e)- that the language "*principal shall notify...*" be changed to "*principal or other school administrator should the principal be unavailable shall notify...*"** This change acknowledges that a principal may be out of the building or be otherwise unavailable for any number of reasons during the 24-hour period immediately following the taking of a student's mobile device.

It is school leaders who are chiefly responsible for implementation of educational policy, the performance of educators and students, and the overall management of the day-to-day operation of our schools. As the voice of school leaders CAS stands ready to assist the Education Committee throughout the session and at any time during the year.

Thank-you for considering my testimony.

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