

Education Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, March 23, 2018

11:30 AM in Room 2D of the LOB

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 A.M. by Chairman, Rep. Fleischmann A. 018.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 reconvened the meeting at 12:19 P.M.

The following committee members were present at the meeting:

Senators: Boucher T. S26; Bye B. S05; Linares A. S33; Logan G. S17; Moore M. S22; Slossberg G. S14; Somers H. S18; Winfield G. S10

Representatives: Baker A. 124; Belsito S. 053; Bolinsky M. 106; Candelaria J. 095; Cook M. 065; Currey J. 011; Dunsby A. 135; Ferguson M. 138; Fleischmann A. 018; Genga H. 010; Green R. 055; Hall C. 059; Johnson S. 049; Kokoruda N. 101; Lavielle G. 143; LeGeyt T. 017; Lemar R. 096; Lopes R. 024; McCarthy Vahey C. 133; McCarty K. 038; McGee B. 005; Miller P. 145; Morris B. 140; Pavalock-D'Amato C. 077; Sanchez R. 025; Simanski B. 062; Stokes G. 058

Absent were:

Senators:

Representatives: Rosario C. 128

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there were any comments from the Co-Chairs.

Sen. Boucher, T. S26, acknowledged that this would be the last meeting of the Education Committee for this session, and that it will also be Sen. Slossberg, G. S14's last committee meeting. "We will miss your expertise and example as why so many run for office. She is a part of why this bi-partisan committee is so successful."

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 if she had any remarks; she replied that she did not.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [H.B. No. 5449](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE ALIGNMENT AND MERGING OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAM FUNDING STREAMS, ELIGIBILITY, RATES AND POLICIES.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 offered the motion and it was seconded by Sen. Boucher, T. S26.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for comments or questions, and hearing none he asked the Clerk to please call roll vote:

Total Votes 35: 35 Yea, 0 Nay and 1 Absent. The motion passed.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 announced that the vote will be held open until later in the afternoon.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [S.B. No. 364](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 offered the motion and it was seconded by Rep. Candelaria, J. 95.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for comments.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 commented that she would vote no because in the past her home district was very unhappy with this bill.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 thanked her and acknowledged Sen. Boucher, T. S26.

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 said that she did not think that it should be a mandate. She shared that she believes that some language was removed and will flag it for the floor.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 thanked her and said that a few years ago a similar bill was passed by the House and Senate but vetoed by the Governor. He also indicated that we already have data in our school systems. He stated that he will support this bill.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked the Clerk for a roll call vote.

Total Votes 35: 21 Yea, 14 Nay and 1 Absent. The motion passed.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [H.B. No. 5341](#) (RAISED) AN ACT PROVIDING IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS WHO MAY ADMINISTER MEDICATION TO A STUDENT.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 offered the motion and it was seconded by Rep. Bolinsky, M. 106.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 made a motion to start a Consent Calendar and to add H.B. 5341 to the consent calendar. Hearing no objections, it was added to the consent calendar.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [S.B. No. 455](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 offered a motion and it was seconded by Rep. Sanchez, R. 25.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for comments and gave the floor to Sen. Boucher, T. S26.

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 wanted clarification only that in lines 183-186 that a comprehensive plan that includes a policy statement that the demographics of educators in public schools should reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the population of the state. She wanted clarification that the word “should” would reflect more of a striving to do rather than “shall” or “must”.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 responded that he believes that is the plain English interpretation of the language before the committee. It’s not a mandate, but represents the aspirations of our policy. He then asked for any other question.

Rep. Kokoruda, N. 101 said that in Section 8 she understands that “should” is really meant to say “strive” to represent the ethnic population of the state. She asked why “State” and not “district” is used.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 replied that it was an issue we discussed in screening and what we realized is that we have a diverse state and that there may be some school districts that have greater diversity and some lesser. But all students benefit from a faculty that reflects the demography of our state as a whole. So for instance, if there is a district that has fewer African Americans and Latinos, those students would benefit by having teachers of color in front of the classroom so they start learning about our diverse state. The notion is that every district in our state should, if possible, reflect the diversity of the state as a whole.

Rep. Kokoruda, N. 101 said that she was curious about a part, and totally agrees with what Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 said. She continued that she knows this is a comprehensive plan, but are we saying that if there are two qualified teachers in a district and one would reflect more racial and ethnic diversity- is there some action that happens? Or is this just recognizing part of a plan?

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 replied that the latter part of your question is accurate. It’s recognizing that this is the aspiration of our work in this area. So it’s not prescriptive or mandated as my Co-Chair pointed out. But it does give us goals to shoot for. I think in this area it is probably the fifth year in a row that we have discussed Minority Recruitment Bill. And the first Minority Recruitment Bill was passed over a decade ago and we haven’t made great progress. So let’s assume things get better and we start making better progress. I believe it would be helpful to the state as a whole and to every district to realize our work isn’t done until our core of teachers looks like our state.

Rep. Kokoruda, N. 101 thank Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 and stated that she totally agrees that we’ve been talking about minority recruitment and how important it is for our state and country. I just wanted clarification of what we are actually doing with this legislation.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there were any other questions on this measure before us.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 moved to place on consent calendar and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JF to the floor [H.B. No. 5444](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE STUDENT DATA PRIVACY ACT.

Rep. McCarthy Vahey, C. 133 offered a motion and it was seconded by Sen. Slossberg, G. S14.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 moved to place on consent calendar, and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [S.B. No. 454](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL SECURITY.

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 offered a motion and it was seconded by Rep. Sanchez, R. 25.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there were any questions about the substitute language.

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 asked for clarification that this instructs school districts to send their plan additionally to the Department of Education (DOE), and asked if anywhere in the bill does it require an evaluation by DOE as to the soundness of the plan they sent or the drills as outlined.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 replied that as we discussed, the evaluation of the plans remains at the Department of Public Safety. We're making sure the plans are being submitted to the State Department of Education because across the state when people are looking for the most up to date information on schools and districts, they turn to the State Department, and the state department has not actually managed to keep up to date in this area. So they would essentially maintain a registry of what's submitted to them but the analysis of the plans would rest with those most expert, those at the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP).

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 thanked Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 for that answer and said that in an effort to make sure our school systems don't add more tasks or work that if they were submitted electronically and copy the DOE on this so that both areas are receiving that document and asked if that would that work in his view.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 replied that he reads the legislation the same way as she does. So if the plan was being submitted by email to DESPP and the cc-line was submitted to the State DOE the requirements of the bill before us will be met and the public would start receiving better information than they were receiving.

Rep. Bolinsky, M. 106 stated that he welcomes the submission of the plans and the formalizations of the plans. He continued that we essentially started working on this five years ago, and that we have a high percentage of schools that have never submitted their plans. He asked if there is a protection for these plans, are they FOI-able, are they something kept in confidence exempt from FOI because as you know as a Representative who probably has the most secure schools in the state of Connecticut right now, we don't want anyone to knowing the plans.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 replied that the question about the availability of these plans to the public is one governed by existing statutes. He stated that he believes, if memory serves, when we set up this process we did create some FOI exemptions so that there was a limit to how much the public could find out. He stated that what the public needs to know is: Are drills being held? Are plans being submitted and properly vetted? Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 shared that under our current approach there was misinformation. So, you like many people have the impression that there are a number of districts who have not submitted information, but in fact most districts have been following the law. Superintendents brought to our attention that the problem was largely in reporting, that they have been providing their information on drills and plans to Emergency Services and Public Safety. Members of the public and the media were calling the State DOE and the two registries were not the same. So this bill is really just meant to make sure

that wherever someone from the public calls they are getting proper information. The protections we already have around security plans are maintained under this measure.

Rep. Bolinsky, M. 106 continued to say there is some language in this bill about limiting the amount of school security grant money for private schools. He asked how that compares to what we passed and is already in the statute and is that something that will create future concerns.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 shared that that was something that was discussed in screening in a bi-partisan manner. The fact is that the sum of dollars available to private schools for security grants has historically been smaller than that of public schools. And without any sort of cap on what individual grant to a private school might be there was the problem of funds available for private schools becoming drained very quickly by a small set of schools. With the cap we proposed in the Substitute Language we believe we'll be able to have more schools applying and receiving grants in any given year because the dollars will go farther.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there were any further questions or comments.

Rep. Pavalock-D'Amato, C. 77 asked regarding the cap of \$50,000.00, if that was that something that the committee received feedback on. She was wondering where the committee came up with that number, because then her concern would be that maybe they wouldn't apply if they felt like it wasn't enough, she wasn't sure much some of these plans would cost to implement.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 deferred to Sen. Slossberg, G. S14.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 replied that the feedback that we received was that since there was a very limited pot of money that if one school came in and had significant needs they could swallow up the entire lot and so in this way we are actually providing more resources to more places and many of them are your smaller schools and daycare centers that have received threats. She continued that they still have to come up with the 50% match on this so to the extent that they want to do something beyond that, that's certainly available to them. But, because there is such limited funding it's a more effective way to get it to more schools and more places looking for security measures in this environment.

Rep. McCarthy Vahey, C. 133 asked what the total pot is that we are looking at.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 replied that right now the total pot for the whole school security grant program is \$10 million dollars. She went on to say that \$1 million was to go to privately funded childcare settings, daycare settings that have received threats.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there were any additional questions on the measure before the committee.

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 recommended that this item be put on consent calendar, and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [H.B. No. 5452](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE ON LIFE-THREATENING FOOD ALLERGIES IN SCHOOLS.

Rep. McCarthy Vahey, C. 133 offered a motion and it was seconded by Sen. Bye, B. S05.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for questions or comments.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 moved to place this on the consent calendar.

Sen. Bye, B. S05 asked that before we do I wanted to ask the Chair if he can update us on the S language. She shared that she has heard from some concerned parents and wants to know where this stands right now.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 replied that the substitute language before us essentially takes the measure we heard previously and slims it down a bit by eliminating anything that referenced school busses. He went on to say that the reason we did this was because we have further down on the agenda a measure that has been championed by the Minority Leader of the House that would ensure that all school bus drivers are covered by our Good Samaritan Law. He stated that he has also received some emails and calls and that it's his sense that there are still some issues out there that we haven't fully addressed, like the right to carry Epi Pens as our non-partisan staff has confirmed any child has the right to carry. There is some confusion that the right to carry means that the child has to self-administer. So we are trying to get to the bottom of that question. We are also trying to get to the bottom of questions relating to school busses. What will we need to put in place to assure that kids are safe on these busses if they have allergies and are exposed to allergens? Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 indicated that he doesn't suggest that this language necessarily is the final word on this and is sure we'll have continued dialog to try to find the best solution going forward.

Sen. Bye, B. S05 replied that she will support this going on consent.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 stated that we can go back to the motion to put this item on consent. Hearing no objections, the item is placed on consent.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [S.B. No. 457](#) (RAISED)
AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF AN ALTERNATE ROUTE TO
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 offered a motion and it was seconded by Sen. Boucher, T. S26.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there any questions or comments on the bill.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 suggested that this item be placed on the consent calendar, and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [H.B. No. 5445](#) (RAISED)
AN ACT CONCERNING ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR
EXPELLED STUDENTS.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 offered a motion and it was seconded by Sen. Boucher, T. S26.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there are there any questions or comments on the bill.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 moved to place the item on consent, and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [S.B. No. 363](#) (RAISED)
AN ACT CONCERNING IMMUNIZATION RECORDS, THE DEFINITION OF CHRONIC
ABSENTEEISM AND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
CONCERNING TRUANTS.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 offered a motion and it was seconded by Sen. Boucher, T. S26.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there are there any questions or comments on the bill?

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 stated that this seems very likely to be a good bill to place on consent and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [H.B. No. 5170](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS' RIGHT TO PRIVACY IN THEIR MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

Rep. Sanchez, R. 25 offered a motion and it was seconded by Rep. Johnson, S. 49.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there are there any questions or comments on the measure before us.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 motioned to place it on consent, and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [S.B. No. 453](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING CLASSROOM SAFETY AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR.

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 offered a motion and it was seconded by Rep. Bolinsky, M. 106.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there are there any questions or comments on the bill.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 motion to place this on consent and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [H.B. No. 5447](#) (RAISED) AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AUDITORS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS CONCERNING PRIVATE PROVIDERS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION.

Rep. Sanchez, R. 25 offered a motion and it was seconded by Sen. Slossberg, G. S14.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there are there any questions or comments.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 moved to place item on consent, and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [S.B. No. 458](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 offered a motion and it was seconded by Rep. Lemar, R. 96.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked if there are there any questions or comments.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 moved to place item on consent, and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JFS to the floor [H.B. No. 5446](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.

Sen. Slossberg, G. S14 offered a motion and it was seconded by Rep. Sanchez, R. 25

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for comments or questions.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 moved to place item on consent, and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for a motion to JF to the floor [S.B. No. 184](#) (RAISED)
AN ACT CONCERNING AUTHORIZATION OF STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR
SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS.

Sen. Boucher, T. S26 offered a motion and it was seconded by Rep. Lavielle, G. 143.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked for comments or questions.

Rep. Lavielle, G. 143 stated that she is simply delighted to move this item to consent,
and it was.

Rep. Fleischmann, A. 18 asked the Clerk to call the consent calendar. A roll call vote
was completed by the Clerk.

Those voting Yea: 35, Those voting Nay: 0, Those absent 1.

The meeting was recessed at 1:09, adjourning at 4:30 p.m.

Leslie Navarrete
Committee Clerk