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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

**HB 6997 (as amended by House "A")\***

### ***AN ACT REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES AND RESOURCES TO STUDENTS, PARENTS AND GUARDIANS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Judicial Branch's Office of Victim Services (OVS), in consultation with the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, to (1) compile information on domestic violence victim services and resources and (2) provide the information to the State Department of Education (SDE) by December 1, 2019.

The bill requires SDE to publish the information it receives from OVS on its website by January 1, 2020. It also requires (1) OVS to review the information annually and inform SDE of any necessary revisions and (2) SDE to revise the information on that basis.

Under the bill, SDE must also disseminate the above information to local and regional school boards each school year starting with the 2020-2021 school year. Each school board must in turn require that the information be provided to any (1) student or student's parent or guardian who expresses to a school employee that the student, parent, guardian, or a person residing in the home does not feel safe because of domestic violence and (2) student's parent or guardian who authorizes the transfer of his or her education records to another school.

\*House Amendment "A" makes OVS responsible for compiling and annually reviewing the information that SDE must publish on its website in the underlying bill.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

#### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM SERVICES AND RESOURCES**

The information OVS provides to SDE under the bill must include:

1. available referrals to counseling and supportive services, including the secretary of the state's Safe at Home Program, shelter and medical services, domestic abuse hotlines, legal counseling and advocacy, mental health care, and financial assistance, and
2. procedures to voluntarily and confidentially identify referral eligibility for such counseling and services.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***School Employee***

By law, a "school employee" is:

1. a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator or superintendent, guidance or school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional, or coach employed by a local or regional school board or working in a public elementary, middle, or high school or
2. any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle, or high school pursuant to a contract with the local or regional school board (CGS § 10-222d).

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

### Committee on Children

Joint Favorable

Yea 14 Nay 0 (03/07/2019)

### Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 32 Nay 0 (04/08/2019)