Education Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7352
AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE
Title: EDUCATION STATUTES.
Vote Date: 3/25/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/18/2019
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

Minor revisions and additions to education statutes needed to mandate climate change beginning in elementary school and through secondary level, social emotional learning added to SDE curriculum material and must be made available to school districts, repeals provision that allowed teacher or administrator who earned tenure in one district to be awarded tenure at a priority school district after teaching for one year, working group required to study issues related to implementation of edTPA, changed the name of a council from “Paraprofessional” to “Paraeducators”, and required the Council to conduct a study of (1) safety issues, (2) assigning substitute teaching duties to paraeducators, and (3) issues relating to working with students who have IEPs.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE LCO NO. 6574:

Removes requirement that climate change education begin in elementary school and continue through the secondary level, substitute language of Sec. 4 replaces the previous Secs. 4 and 5 that required SDE to cease implementing the edTPA program across the state and instead required individual intuition’s of higher education to develop their own pre-service performance assessments, and language added the magnet school provision in sec. 8.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner, State Department of Education: Opposes Section 3 which would negatively impact the ability of Priority School Districts to recruit educators.
They do not support the removal of edTPA as pre-performance assessment in Section 4. In 2017, the General Assembly passed legislation that requires the Department to report annually on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs and removing edTPA would be in direct conflict with the intent of that legislation. SDE has fiscal concerns with administering the pilot program outlined in Section 8 and would not be able to develop, implement and sustain a program beyond a pilot.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Representative Christine Palm, 36th District: In support of teaching climate change beginning in elementary school through the secondary level.

Cheryl MacDonald, External Affairs Division, Judicial Branch: In support of their request for Section 1 of the bill that changes a specific statutory reference that clarifies when local boards of education are responsible for paying the cost of educating children served in the juvenile justice system. This change reflects current practice.

Matthew Conway, Superintendent of Derby Public Schools & Co-Chair of CAPSS Legislative Committee: CAPSS supports intention of mandating the teaching of climate change, CAPSS supports decision of curriculum and specific curricular mandates be maintained through authority of local boards of education to make curricular determinations. Several recommendations to mandate specific topics don’t discuss what topics would need to be removed to allow time to focus on specific recommendations. Is there a repository of content for each mandate or are teachers supposed to find this information on their own? In support of removal of Section 3. D. because 10 months is not enough time to provide the level of support for a teacher be proficient with regards to making decisions about tenures. Supports reference change of paraprofessional to paraeducator, study to be conducted by the Paraeducator Advisory Council concerning safety issues, establishment of principal pilot program.

Kate Field & Michele Ridolfi O’Neill, CEA: In support of Section 2 for inclusion of social-emotional learning in the curriculum and that climate change will be taught from elementary school through high school. In support of Section 3 that would lengthen the period from 10 to 20 months for teachers who have received tenure in one school district to achieve tenure in a priority school district. In support of Section 4 because edTPA is a costly and burdensome system that doesn’t adequately help pre-service teachers improve their potential quality of teaching. In support of Section 7 for a statewide study of safety issues related to work performed by public school paraprofessionals. In support of Section 8, the concept of principal induction, there is great potential to address principal turnover and enhance the effectiveness of school leadership.

Cynthia Ross Zweig, SEIU Local 2001, CSEA: In support of better wages, asking legislators to take an active role in improving the working conditions of the Paraeducators and the Paraeducators Advisory Council conducting studies as specified in Section 7.

Marlene Bucci, Co-Chair of the CT State Paraprofessional Advisory Council & President of Newtown Paraeducators Association: In support of Sections 6 and 7 that would enhance duties of the Council and the council can conduct a study and make
recommendations on safety issues, issues for Paraeducators assigned to students with IEPs and the use of Paraeducators as substitute teachers.

**Shellye Davis, AFT:** In support of sections 6 & 7, she stated “paras are among our schools hardest worked and lowest paid employees. It is past time to recognize the important work of paras and to take legislative action that will address issues around career development, training, qualifications, requirements, classroom safety, and pay.”

**Zak Leavy, AFSCME Council 4:** In support of sections 6 & 7 as the role and responsibilities of paraeducators have expanded significantly over the years.

**Shannon Marimon—Executive Director, CCER:** In strong support of a pilot principal induction program of supporting school principals statewide, she doesn’t support Sections 4 and 5 because it would be premature and unhelpful to state’s efforts to improve the quality of the educator preparation programs.

**Connecticut League of Conservation Voters:** In strong support of climate change education taught to even the youngest students and urges an amendment “to mandate climate change education in Connecticut’s statewide curriculum.”

David Anderson, Henry Auer, Shawnee Baldwin, Herster Barres, Terri Cain, Bill Carlson, Jane Cavanaugh, Heather Chrissos, Shannon Clarkson, Laura Copland, Marta Daniels, Sarah Ficca, Joel Gorines, Kim Hughes, Janet Jacobs, Dean Jacques, Lynne Jacques, Kim Kaminsky, Sue Kautz, Ed & Elizabeth Kiernan, Leah Raechel Killeen, Cheryl Koda, Adelheid Koepfer, Moki R. Kokoris, Nancy Leckerling, Linda Levene, Janet Luongo, Robert Mark, Claire Matthews, Kimberly Megrath, Dennis Mema, Caroline Miller, Carole Osborn, Jane Piro, Beverly Propen, Christine Rogers, Raisa Roginsky, Frank Santoro, Albert Saubermann, Marge Schneider, Karli Spinella, John Weikart, Meg Zelickson-Smith: In support of climate change as a required topic to be included with science as a formal subject in the early grades curriculum beginning in elementary school and through the secondary level.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Bob Hannafin, Dean of Education School, Fairfield University:** Strongly opposed to eliminating edTPA as a required assessment for initial teacher certification. EdTPA has been extensively field tested and proven to be valid and reliable. He stated: “In sum, it is unwise and impossible to change direction at this time. There is not an affordable, credible alternative, nor is there time or capacity to develop one.”

Jason Werblow, PhD., Associate Professor, CCSU, Aram Ayalon, Ph.D., Professor, CCSU, David L. Stoloff, Ph.D., Professor, ECSU, Jose Corchado, student, CCSU, Judith Puglisi, educator and retired NHPS Principal, Ann Policelli Cronin, Educator and Retired Curriculum Leader for English Language Arts, Drew Michael McWeeney, Pre-K3 Special Education Teacher, Theresa Bouley, Ph.D., Professor, ECSU, Violet Jimenez Sims, Ed.D., Assistant Principal, Woody Exley, Alma Exley Scholarship Program: In opposition to controversial edTPA, as recommended by EPAC committee primarily made up of superintendents. It is a performance assessment that is a new
requirement by the State of CT. It is a costly test of $300. for the student (currently waived until Fall of 2019). They stated: edPTA further increases the economic burden on students, is neither “evidence-based” nor a model of “best practice”, Most states do not use it for teacher certification, it further deprofessionalizes teacher education programs, harms world language (especially Spanish) students and is a test made to fail. They strongly encourage the Education Committee to take 6 actions as outlined in their testimony.

**Sharon Challenger:** In opposition to teaching climate change, is concerned that only one viewpoint will be taught and it should be called “indoctrination” not education.

Reported by: Kathy K. Shea  
Date: April 8, 2019