

Education Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-173

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FRAMEWORK FOR

Title: ASSESSING THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN CONNECTICUT.

Vote Date: 3/9/2020

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/6/2020

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill will require the State Department of Education to develop a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of school districts programs and policies that are intended to address disparities in academic achievement among racial and socio-economic lines.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Miguel Cardona, Commissioner, State Department of Education

The Commissioner fully supports bill SB 173. The bill encompasses many aspects important to assessing the provision of public education in the state: teacher effectiveness, fiscal health, curriculum quality, etc. He recognizes how important it is to assess these things in order to assure that schools are providing the best education possible for students.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, CABE

The association provides testimony in support of SB 173 and offers their resources for use in developing the framework. CABE has developed a "School Governance Statement" and professional development training for board of education members in the past they have been utilized to create and maintain healthy practices and management of districts by the local board of education.

Robert M. Goodrich, Co-Founder, Radical Advocates for Cross-Cultural Education, RACCE

Robert testifies in support of SB 173 and its use to create a framework to promote racial equity in the education system. They recognize that this legislation is created with acknowledgement to the "achievement, performance, and discipline gaps," in the state. They specify their support to create system that would assess the efficacy of governance in school districts by the board of education, equity in school administration, and increasing the availability of school academic achievement data for racial equity purposes.

Subira Gordon, Executive Director, ConnCAN

Subira writes testimony in support of SB173 as it addresses the opportunity gap in the state. She recognizes that this legislation would support a framework to address why the achievement gap exists in the state between students of color and white students regardless of other demographic factors. This is an important step to identify why this gap exists and how to close it. They find this legislation partnered with SB 313 which would create an Educational Opportunity Gap Taskforce will be essential parts of the next step for the state.

Anne Manusky, First Vice President, Connecticut Republican Assembly

Anne writes in support of SB 173 as it relates to the Common Core curriculum standards. She seeks to inform the committee about the failings of Common Core in the education system and instead allowing for districts to create their own curriculum.

Shannon Marimón, Executive Director, ReadyCT

Shannon offers testimony in support of SB 173 to address the achievement gap in the Connecticut education system. She cites that Connecticut can be identified as having one of the top three largest achievement gaps in the nation. Shannon highlights specific language of the bill that would create better access for educators to academic achievement data to help identify factors causing this disparity, "measure educator access to time-relevant and appropriate student academic achievement data for purposes of quantifying and analyzing disparities among and between various student demographic." This they conclude would help educators make decisions that will make a difference in both academic and non-academic aspects of student's lives. They also look forward to seeing the results of a study regarding teacher support spending.

Jeff Leake, President, Connecticut Education Association

Jeff submits testimony in support of SB 173 with language recommendations. One suggestion made would be to change the standards for success in education by including all subject matter (the arts, civics, science, etc.), rather than standardized testing in math or language. They would like to see this legislation linked to the federal ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act, which would create flexibility accountability systems which puts less stress on standardized test results. The ability for schools to shift some focus towards life skills and social emotional learning will be a new, innovative way to prepare students for their future.

They address the importance of addressing the achievement gaps between socio-economic and racial demographics, but it should be broader than what is outlined in SB 173 language currently. It is important to study the effectiveness of these equity frameworks in addressing the gaps in the system. Male students also underperform compared to female students regardless of other demographic factors and including this comparison in a framework is important.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed.

Reported by: Lauren Riley,
Asst. Comm Clerk

Date: March 16, 2020