



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6557

January Session, 2021



AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) For the school year
2 commencing July 1, 2021, and each school year thereafter, each local and
3 regional board of education shall administer a universal mental health
4 and resiliency screening to all students for the purpose of identifying
5 students in need of interventions and support, provided for the school
6 years commencing July 1, 2021, and July 1, 2022, such screening shall
7 include a stress and trauma assessment related to the COVID-19
8 pandemic.

9 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) For the school year
10 commencing July 1, 2021, and each school year thereafter, each local and
11 regional board of education shall, within available resources, maintain
12 the following staffing ratios for mental health and social-emotional
13 support staff for the school district: (1) At least one school counselor for
14 every two hundred fifty students in the school district, (2) at least one
15 school social worker for every two hundred fifty students in the school
16 district, (3) at least one family therapist for every two hundred fifty
17 students in the school district, (4) at least one school psychologist for
18 every five hundred students in the school district, and (5) a
19 paraeducator to student ratio recommended by a nationally recognized

20 organization with expertise in paraeducator effectiveness.

21 (b) If the Commissioner of Education determines that (1) any of the
22 ratios described in subsection (a) of this section are inadequate to
23 properly address the number of students requiring the mental health,
24 social-emotional, behavioral support or special education programs and
25 services provided by school counselors, school social workers, school
26 psychologists, family therapists or paraeducators, or (2) a local or
27 regional board of education does not have sufficient resources to
28 maintain any of the ratios described in subsection (a) of this section, then
29 the commissioner may require a local or regional board of education to
30 adjust any such ratio for the school district.

31 (c) A local or regional board of education that is required to increase
32 the number of school counselors, school social workers, school
33 psychologists, family therapists or paraeducators pursuant to this
34 section may apply to the Department of Education for a grant to assist
35 in the hiring of additional mental health and social-emotional support
36 staff.

37 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) The Department of Education,
38 in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction
39 Services, the Department of Children and Families, the Office of Early
40 Childhood and the Department of Public Health, shall establish a state-
41 wide social-emotional support program that provides support and
42 assistance to local and regional boards of education for mental health,
43 social-emotional, behavioral support, trauma support and special
44 education programs and services. Such support and assistance shall
45 include, but need not be limited to, (1) training and recruiting mental
46 health and social-emotional support staff and deploying them to school
47 districts, (2) providing grants to school districts for the hiring of mental
48 health and social-emotional support staff, pursuant to subsection (c) of
49 section 2 of this act, (3) assisting boards in the development and
50 implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs, in
51 accordance with the guidelines adopted pursuant to section 10-203c of
52 the general statutes, (4) building on existing school and community

53 collaborations that support student mental health and well-being, such
54 as community school models, family resource centers, health clinics,
55 child care that is available from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and year-round
56 use of school facilities, (5) developing or enhancing state, regional and
57 local support networks for mental health and trauma support services
58 through interagency agreements, local action plans and model
59 programs, (6) improving the knowledge and skill of educators and other
60 school personnel in order to develop social-emotional learning and
61 restorative practices competencies and capacities, (7) creating
62 opportunities for educators to collaborate, share support and problem
63 solve through team planning time and professional learning
64 communities, (8) providing resources for state-wide and local efforts to
65 engage parents and families to support the development of student
66 social and emotional growth at home and in the community, and (9)
67 providing opportunities for families to discuss topics relating to social-
68 emotional learning, restorative practices, resiliency and ways to ensure
69 racial equity in schools.

70 (b) The Department of Education may collaborate with the Social
71 Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative,
72 established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, and the
73 national Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning to
74 implement the provisions of this section.

75 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Each local and regional board of
76 education shall develop and implement a comprehensive school
77 counseling program for the school district. Such program shall be
78 developed in accordance with the guidelines adopted pursuant to
79 section 10-203c of the general statutes and provide proactive social-
80 emotional instruction to develop student competencies in self-
81 awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, relationship skills and
82 decision-making skills.

83 Sec. 5. (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Not later than October 1, 2021, the
84 Department of Education shall develop student social-emotional
85 learning standards for grades four to twelve, inclusive. Such standards

86 shall be designed for a multitiered system of support that is culturally
87 relevant and responsive, emphasizes school connectedness and includes
88 restorative practices. Such standards shall be made available on the
89 department's Internet web site.

90 Sec. 6. Subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of section 10-223e of the
91 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
92 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

93 (3) For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year
94 thereafter, the Department of Education shall prepare a state-wide
95 performance management and support plan, consistent with federal law
96 and regulation. Such plan shall (A) identify districts in need of
97 improvement, (B) classify schools as category one, two, three, four or
98 five schools based on the accountability index, and (C) identify focus
99 schools. On and after July 1, 2021, the state-wide performance
100 management and support plan shall include provisions related to social-
101 emotional learning.

102 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1, 2022,
103 the Social Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory
104 Collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general
105 statutes, shall convene a working group to (1) review sections 10-222d
106 to 10-222p, inclusive, of the general statutes relating to bullying and safe
107 school climate plans, (2) make recommendations concerning (A)
108 amendments to said sections 10-222d to 10-222p, inclusive, (B) the
109 inclusion of restorative practices in safe school climate plans, and (C)
110 state-wide adoption of the National School Climate Standards, and (3)
111 provide technical assistance and support to local and regional boards of
112 education in adopting and implementing the Connecticut Model School
113 Climate Policy, policy number 5131.914.

114 Sec. 8. Section 10-233m of the general statutes is repealed and the
115 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

116 Each local or regional board of education that assigns a school

117 resource officer to any school under the jurisdiction of such board shall
118 enter into a memorandum of understanding with a local law
119 enforcement agency regarding the role and responsibility of such school
120 resource officer. Such memorandum of understanding shall include
121 provisions addressing daily interactions between students and school
122 personnel with school resource officers and shall include a graduated
123 response model for student discipline. On and after July 1, 2021, each
124 such memorandum of understanding shall include a provision that
125 requires school resource officers to complete the same social-emotional
126 learning and restorative practices training provided to teachers and
127 administrators of the school. For the purposes of this section, "school
128 resource officer" means a sworn police officer of a local law enforcement
129 agency who has been assigned to a school pursuant to an agreement
130 between the local or regional board of education and the chief of police
131 of a local law enforcement agency.

132 Sec. 9. Subsection (a) of section 10-148a of the general statutes is
133 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
134 *2021*):

135 (a) For the school year commencing July 1, [2019] 2021, and each
136 school year thereafter, each certified employee shall participate in a
137 program of professional development. Each local and regional board of
138 education shall make available, annually, at no cost to its certified
139 employees, a program of professional development that is not fewer
140 than eighteen hours in length, of which a preponderance is in a small
141 group or individual instructional setting. Such program of professional
142 development shall (1) be a comprehensive, sustained and intensive
143 approach to improving teacher and administrator effectiveness in
144 increasing student knowledge achievement, (2) focus on refining and
145 improving various effective teaching methods that are shared between
146 and among educators, (3) foster collective responsibility for improved
147 student performance, (4) be comprised of professional learning that (A)
148 is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards,
149 (B) is conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by

150 principals, coaches, mentors, distinguished educators, as described in
151 section 10-145s, or other appropriate teachers, (C) occurs frequently on
152 an individual basis or among groups of teachers in a job-embedded
153 process of continuous improvement, and (D) includes a repository of
154 best practices for teaching methods developed by educators within each
155 school that is continuously available to such educators for comment and
156 updating, and (5) include training in culturally responsive pedagogy
157 and practice. Each program of professional development shall include
158 professional development activities in accordance with the provisions
159 of subsection (b) of this section. The principles and practices of social-
160 emotional learning and restorative practices shall be integrated
161 throughout the components of such program of professional
162 development described in subdivisions (1) to (5), inclusive, of this
163 subsection.

164 Sec. 10. Subsection (b) of section 10-220a of the general statutes is
165 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
166 *2021*):

167 (b) Not later than a date prescribed by the commissioner, each local
168 and regional board of education shall establish a professional
169 development and evaluation committee. Such professional
170 development and evaluation committee shall consist of (1) at least one
171 teacher, as defined in subsection (a) of section 10-144d, selected by the
172 exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees chosen
173 pursuant to section 10-153b, (2) at least one administrator, as defined in
174 subsection (a) of section 10-144e, selected by the exclusive bargaining
175 representative for certified employees chosen pursuant to section 10-
176 153b, and (3) such other school personnel as the board deems
177 appropriate. The duties of such committees shall include, but not be
178 limited to, participation in the development or adoption of a teacher
179 evaluation and support program for the district, pursuant to section 10-
180 151b, and the development, evaluation and annual updating of a
181 comprehensive local professional development plan for certified
182 employees of the district. Such plan shall: (A) Be directly related to the

183 educational goals prepared by the local or regional board of education
184 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220, as amended by this act, (B)
185 on and after July 1, [2011] 2021, be developed with full consideration of
186 the priorities and needs related to student social-emotional learning and
187 restorative practices, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-
188 148a, as amended by this act, and student academic outcomes as
189 determined by the State Board of Education, [and] (C) provide for the
190 ongoing and systematic assessment and improvement of both teacher
191 evaluation and professional development of the professional staff
192 members of each such board, including personnel management and
193 evaluation training or experience for administrators, [shall] and (D) be
194 related to regular and special student needs and may include provisions
195 concerning career incentives and parent involvement. The State Board
196 of Education shall develop guidelines to assist local and regional boards
197 of education in determining the objectives of the plans and in
198 coordinating staff development activities with student needs and school
199 programs.

200 Sec. 11. Subsection (b) of section 10-220 of the general statutes is
201 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
202 *2021*):

203 (b) The board of education of each local or regional school district
204 shall, with the participation of parents, students, school administrators,
205 teachers, citizens, local elected officials and any other individuals or
206 groups such board shall deem appropriate, prepare a statement of
207 educational goals for such local or regional school district. The
208 statement of goals shall be consistent with state-wide goals pursuant to
209 subsection (c) of section 10-4 and include goals for the integration of
210 principles and practices of social-emotional learning and restorative
211 practices in the program of professional development for the school
212 district, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-148a, as
213 amended by this act, and career placement for students who do not
214 pursue an advanced degree immediately after graduation. Each local or
215 regional board of education shall annually establish student objectives

216 for the school year which relate directly to the statement of educational
217 goals prepared pursuant to this subsection and which identify specific
218 expectations for students in terms of skills, knowledge and competence.

219 Sec. 12. Section 10-155k of the general statutes is repealed and the
220 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

221 On and after July 1, 2013, the Commissioner of Education shall
222 establish a School Paraprofessional Advisory Council, which on and
223 after July 1, 2020, shall be known as the School Paraeducator Advisory
224 Council, consisting of (1) one school paraprofessional from each state-
225 wide bargaining representative organization that represents school
226 paraprofessionals with instructional responsibilities, (2) one
227 representative from each of the exclusive bargaining units for certified
228 employees, chosen pursuant to section 10-153b, (3) the most recent
229 recipient of the Connecticut Paraprofessional of the Year Award, (4) two
230 representatives from the regional educational service centers, appointed
231 by the Commissioner of Education, and (5) a school administrator,
232 appointed by the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators. The
233 council shall hold quarterly meetings and advise, at least quarterly, the
234 Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee, of the
235 needs for (A) professional development and the training of
236 paraprofessionals and the effectiveness of the content and the delivery
237 of existing training for such paraprofessionals, (B) appropriate staffing
238 strategies for paraprofessionals, and (C) other relevant issues relating to
239 paraprofessionals. The council shall report, annually, in accordance
240 with the provisions of section 11-4a, on the recommendations given to
241 the commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, pursuant to the
242 provisions of this section, to the joint standing committee of the General
243 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education.

244 Sec. 13. (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than January 1, 2022, the
245 School Paraeducator Advisory Council, established pursuant to section
246 10-155k of the general statutes, as amended by this act, shall conduct a
247 study concerning the following: (1) Appropriate minimum employment
248 standards, including pay rates, health care coverage, retirement benefits

249 and professional development opportunities for paraeducators that
250 focus on maximizing the success of paraeducators in the classroom; (2)
251 safety issues relating to paraeducators who work with students who
252 have behavioral issues, including the availability of appropriate safety
253 equipment for paraeducators at each school; (3) issues relating to the
254 assignment of substitute teaching duties to paraeducators, including
255 emergency situations when a paraeducator is asked to serve as a
256 substitute teacher; and (4) issues relating to the duties of paraeducators
257 who work with students who have individualized education programs.

258 (b) Not later than January 1, 2022, the council shall develop proposals
259 for the creation of a pathway for continued career and professional
260 development, including, but not limited to, (1) paraeducator certificate
261 and apprenticeship programs that offer course credits that apply to
262 transferrable associate degree programs; (2) associate degree programs
263 that (A) build upon and do not duplicate the courses and competencies
264 of paraeducator certificate programs, (B) incorporate field experiences,
265 (C) are aligned with the standards and competencies for teachers, and
266 (D) are transferrable to a bachelor's degree in education and teacher
267 certification programs; and (3) bachelor's degree programs that lead to
268 teacher certification that build upon and do not duplicate the courses
269 and competencies of transferrable associate degrees.

270 (c) The council shall submit the study described in subsection (a) of
271 this section and the proposals described in subsection (b) of this section,
272 and any recommendations for legislation to the joint standing
273 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
274 relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a
275 of the general statutes.

276 Sec. 14. Subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of section 10-222k of the
277 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
278 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

279 (c) (1) For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school
280 year thereafter, the principal of each school shall establish a committee

281 or designate at least one existing committee in the school to be
282 responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and
283 addressing issues relating to bullying in the school. Such committee
284 shall include at least one parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the
285 school appointed by the school principal, and for the school year
286 commencing July 1, 2021, and each school year thereafter, such
287 committee shall also include school personnel, including, but not
288 limited to, at least one teacher selected by the exclusive bargaining
289 representative for certified employees chosen pursuant to section 1-
290 153b, and medical and mental health personnel assigned to such school.

291 Sec. 15. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Not later than January 1, 2022,
292 the State Board of Education, in collaboration with the Social Emotional
293 Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, established
294 pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, shall develop or
295 adopt model curricular units integrating strategies that promote social-
296 emotional learning. Such curricular units shall include culturally
297 responsive pedagogy and promote strategies to address the needs of
298 students who have experienced trauma. The state board shall
299 disseminate such curricular units to local and regional boards of
300 education and make such curricular units available on its Internet web
301 site.

302 Sec. 16. (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) The sum of ten million dollars is
303 appropriated to the Department of Education, from the General Fund,
304 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, for the purpose of implementing
305 the state-wide social-emotional support program established pursuant
306 to section 3 of this act.

307 (b) The sum of ten million dollars is appropriated to the Department
308 of Education, from the General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30,
309 2023, for the purpose of implementing the state-wide social-emotional
310 support program established pursuant to section 3 of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-223e(b)(3)
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-233m
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-148a(a)
Sec. 10	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-220a(b)
Sec. 11	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-220(b)
Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-155k
Sec. 13	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 14	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-222k(c)(1)
Sec. 15	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 16	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section

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Joint Favorable Subst. C/R

APP