
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5321

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCHOOL PARAEDUCATOR ADVISORY COUNCIL.

SUMMARY

As defined by the State Department of Education, a paraeducator (also known as a “paraprofessional”) is an employee who helps teachers or other professional educators or therapists deliver instructional and related services to students. This bill makes the following changes in the education laws relating to paraeducators:

1. requires local and regional boards of education to give notice and, upon request, training to any paraeducator invited to a special education planning and placement team (PPT) meeting;
2. allows paraeducators to view their students’ individualized education programs (IEPs) to be able to give them appropriate special education or related services; and
3. adds data about paraeducators to the annual strategic school profile report that boards of education must submit to the education commissioner.

The bill also makes boards’ annual strategic school profile reporting on topics required under current law and the bill subject to available resources.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

§ 1 — PPT NOTICE AND TRAINING

By law, local and regional boards of education must hold PPT meetings to (1) develop an initial IEP for a student who is eligible for special education based on assessment and evaluation results and (2) annually update the student’s IEP. The bill requires the boards to give

adequate notice of these meetings to any paraprofessional assigned to this student if the parent, guardian, student, or surrogate parent requests that the paraprofessional attend. The boards must give this notice so that the paraprofessional may (1) adequately prepare for the meeting and (2) request training from the board on his or her role at the meeting.

§ 2 — STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE REPORTING

By law, local and regional boards of education must annually submit to the education commissioner a strategic school profile report for (1) each school and alternative education school or program under its jurisdiction and (2) the district as a whole. This report contains information about, among other things, student needs and performance; resources and their equitable allocation among schools; and special education.

The bill requires that the reports additionally include the following information about paraeducators:

1. the number employed in each school and the entire district and
2. their individual (a) job titles and hourly pay rates; (b) total hours and days worked; (c) health care contributions (expressed as a salary percentage); and (d) annual salary, calculated by multiplying their hourly pay rate by number of hours worked.

BACKGROUND

School Paraeducator Advisory Council

This six-member council meets quarterly to advise the education commissioner about paraprofessional training and professional development needs, staffing strategies, and other relevant issues. It also reports annually to the Education Committee about its recommendations to the commissioner (CGS § 10-155k).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference - APP

Yea 39 Nay 0 (03/25/2022)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 50 Nay 0 (04/07/2022)