
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5466

AN ACT CONCERNING ASSORTED REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.

SUMMARY

This bill makes the following changes in the education statutes:

1. requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to report to the Education Committee about the creation of recovery high schools (§ 1);
2. allows parents and guardians to access the class rank of their minor student (i.e., a student under age 18) (§ 2);
3. requires the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) to convene a working group to study throat guards' effectiveness in preventing catastrophic neck injuries in ice hockey (§ 3);
4. extends the special education services and funding task force's report due date by two years, from January 1, 2022, to January 1, 2024 (see BACKGROUND) (§ 4); and
5. requires SDE to study the funding process for incorporated or endowed high schools or academies (§ 5).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022, except the provisions about the throat guard working group and special education task force take effect upon passage.

§ 1 — RECOVERY HIGH SCHOOLS

The bill requires SDE to develop a report about recovery high schools, which are designed specifically for students in recovery from substance use disorder or co-occurring disorders. This report must address at least the following topics: (1) an examination of how other states have

implemented and integrated recovery high schools into their public school system and (2) the implementation of these schools in Connecticut. SDE must submit its findings and recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2023.

§ 2 — ACCESS TO STUDENT CLASS RANK

Current law allows any minor student's parent or legal guardian to request access to educational, medical, or similar records maintained in the student's record, so long as the information is not privileged under state law. This bill adds access to the student's class rank. By law and unchanged by the bill, parents or guardians must submit a written request for this student information to the board of education.

§ 3 — ICE HOCKEY NECK INJURIES WORKING GROUP

The bill requires CIAC to convene a working group to study throat guards' effectiveness in preventing catastrophic neck injuries to ice hockey athletes playing at the interscholastic, intramural, and youth levels.

Under the bill, the working group may include members from organizations representing the following interests: Connecticut athletic trainers, sports medicine physicians, athlete safety and sudden death prevention researchers, and youth hockey or independent interscholastic athletic league authorities. Any member of the legislature may also participate in the working group.

The bill requires the study to include at least a review of current policies issued by national sport governing bodies on the use of throat guards in hockey and an analysis of relevant studies on the following topics:

1. the prevalence of catastrophic throat injuries in interscholastic, intramural, and youth ice hockey;
2. the effectiveness of throat guards in preventing these injuries; and
3. any concerns associated with throat guard use by these ice

hockey athletes.

The working group must report its findings and safety recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2023. The bill requires the group to end on the date it submits the report or January 1, 2023, whichever is later.

§ 5 — INCORPORATED OR ENDOWED HIGH SCHOOLS OR ACADEMIES FUNDING STUDY

The bill requires SDE to study the funding process for incorporated or endowed high schools or academies. It allows the department to consult with any of these high schools or academies in doing so.

Under the bill, SDE must report the study's results and any legislation recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2023.

BACKGROUND

Special Education Services and Funding Task Force

Existing law requires this task force to study, among other things, (1) the cost of providing special education and related services per school district, along with its annual percentage increase or decrease; (2) state reimbursement levels to districts for these costs; and (3) whether boards of education are providing services directly or partnering with regional education service centers, private providers, or as part of cooperative arrangements with other districts (PA 21-95, § 3).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference - APP
Yea 39 Nay 0 (03/25/2022)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 50 Nay 0 (04/07/2022)