



PA 22-38—SB 226
Education Committee

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

SUMMARY: This act makes the following changes in the education statutes:

1. extends the term of validity for three levels of public school teaching certification (i.e., initial, provisional, and professional) under certain circumstances (§§ 1-3);
2. establishes new reporting requirements and deadlines for the State Department of Education (SDE) and the State Education Resource Center's (SERC's) collaborative effort to create a model curriculum for grades kindergarten to eight (K-8) (see BACKGROUND) (§§ 4 & 5); and
3. allows the education commissioner to temporarily waive provisions or modify requirements in state laws about school meal programs in response to changes in federal law or waivers issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) (§§ 6 & 7).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022, except the provisions on school meal programs (§§ 6 & 7) take effect upon passage.

§§ 1-3 — TEACHING CERTIFICATION

The act extends the term of validity for each of the three levels of public school teaching certification: initial (entry-level), provisional (mid-level) and professional (top level).

Initial Certificate

By law, an initial certificate is valid for three years, with some exceptions allowing for extensions. The act adds a new exception that allows the education commissioner, upon application, to reissue the initial certificate to anyone who holds the certificate but has not taught under it. The certificate holder must show that he or she satisfied the preparation and eligibility requirements that were in place when it was originally issued (see BACKGROUND).

Provisional Certificate

By law, a provisional certificate is valid for eight years (CGS § 10-145b(h)(1)). Prior law contained no renewal option for this certificate, but the act allows the education commissioner to reissue it if the holder can show that he or she meets the preparation and eligibility requirements that were in place when it was originally issued (see BACKGROUND).

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Professional Certificate

Under prior law, a professional certificate was valid for five years and renewable for subsequent five-year periods. The act increases its validity and renewability to 10 year periods.

§§ 4 & 5 — MODEL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Progress Report

The act requires SDE, in consultation with SERC, to submit a progress report to the Education Committee about the K-8 model curriculum's development by January 1, 2023.

Final Development and Description Deadlines

The act delays by one year, from 2023 to 2024, the deadlines for SDE and SERC to:

1. develop a K-8 model curriculum, due January 1, and
2. submit to the Education Committee (a) a description of the K-8 model curriculum, including the scope and sequence and course objective, and (b) a report on the development and review of this course, by January 15.

§§ 6 & 7 — SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

School Breakfast Program

The act allows the education commissioner to temporarily waive any provision or change any requirements in state law about eligibility for the federal school breakfast grant program. The commissioner can issue these waivers or modifications to ensure that local and regional boards of education can continue to receive the federal grants in response to any changes in federal law or USDA-issued waivers.

Payment of State Matching Grants

State law authorizes the State Board of Education (SBE) to pay boards of education and operators of public choice schools, each fiscal year within available appropriations, (1) a matching state grant under federal law's requirements for school meal programs (i.e., breakfast and lunch programs) and (2) 10 cents per lunch served in the prior school year. State law allows SBE to direct how boards and operators must apply for these grants, determine applicants' eligibility, adopt implementing regulations, and set a procedure for monitoring grant recipients' expenditures.

The act allows the education commissioner to temporarily waive or modify the above provisions, along with any requirements in state laws governing the

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following: (1) lunches, breakfasts, and other meal programs for public school children and employees; (2) private school and nonprofit agency participation in meal programs; (3) nutrition standards for food that is outside of the lunch or breakfast program; and (4) certification of food nutrition standards. The act allows the commissioner to issue these waivers or modifications to ensure that local and regional boards of education may continue to receive the matching and per-lunch state funds in response to (1) any changes in federal law or (2) USDA-issued waivers.

BACKGROUND

Model Curriculum

Once completed, local and regional boards of education may use this curriculum to instruct students in grades K-8. Its content must be rigorous, age-appropriate, aligned with SBE-approved curriculum guidelines, and in accordance with SBE-adopted statewide subject matter content standards (CGS § 10-25b).

Initial Certificate Preparation and Eligibility Requirements

Under existing law, candidates for initial teaching certification must meet requirements relating to bachelor's degree attainment and teacher preparation or alternate route to certification program completion. Since July 1, 2018, candidates also must fulfill subject area major requirements, with some exceptions (CGS § 10-145b(a)). Additionally, since July 1, 2019, candidates must fulfill special education coursework requirements (CGS § 10-145b(d)(1)).

Provisional Certificate Preparation and Eligibility Requirements

By law, candidates for provisional teaching certification must meet requirements relating to teacher preparation program completion, prior classroom teaching experience, and initial certificate preparation and eligibility (CGS § 10-145b(e)). Additionally, since July 1, 2016, candidates must fulfill special education coursework requirements (CGS § 10-145b(d)(2)).