



Substitute House Bill No. 5437

Public Act No. 24-45

AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION MANDATE RELIEF, SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND DISCONNECTED YOUTH.

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

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) (a) There is established the Education Mandate Review Advisory Council. The council shall advise and provide annual reports to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education on the cost and implementation of existing education mandates on local and regional boards of education, as well as the impact of any proposals relating to additions or revisions to such education mandates. Such annual reports may include, but need not be limited to, (1) a review of education mandates on local and regional boards of education in the general statutes and the regulations of Connecticut state agencies for the purpose of identifying those mandates that may be burdensome or have the effect of limiting or restricting the provision of instruction or services to students, including a detailed analysis of each such mandate so identified, the specific statutory or regulation citation for such mandate and how such mandate is imposed on a board of education, and (2) any recommendations regarding the repeal of or amendment to any such sections of the general statutes or regulations of Connecticut state agencies.

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(b) The council shall consist of the following members:

(1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education;

(2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents;

(3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut Association of Schools;

(4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials;

(5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a member of a local or regional board of education;

(6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators;

(7) One appointed by the House chairperson of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, who shall be a paraeducator in a public school in this state;

(8) One appointed by the Senate chairperson of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, who shall be a teacher in a public school in this state;

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(9) One appointed by the House ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, who shall be a paraeducator in a public school in this state; and

(10) One appointed by the Senate ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, who shall be a teacher in a public school in this state.

(c) All initial appointments to the council shall be made not later than August 1, 2024. The initial terms for the members appointed shall terminate on January 31, 2029. Terms following the initial terms shall be for five years. Any member of the council may serve more than one term. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the council from among the members of the council. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the council, which shall be held not later than October 1, 2024.

(e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education shall serve as administrative staff of the council.

(f) Not later than January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the council shall develop and submit an annual report on its review of the implementation and cost of statutory and regulatory education mandates on local and regional boards of education. Such annual report shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) a review of all existing education mandates required by state law, (2) the costs incurred by local and regional boards of education resulting from the implementation of such education mandates, and (3) how such education mandates are

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

being implemented by local and regional boards of education, including, but not limited to, the manner in which and how often such education mandate is being implemented. The council shall submit such report, and any recommendations for legislation, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education and the Commissioner of Education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 10-220a of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) Each local or regional board of education shall provide an in-service training program for its teachers, administrators and pupil personnel who hold the initial educator, provisional educator or professional educator certificate. Such program shall provide such teachers, administrators and pupil personnel with information on (1) the nature and the relationship of alcohol and drugs, as defined in section 21a-240, to health and personality development, and procedures for discouraging their abuse, (2) health and mental health risk reduction education that includes, but need not be limited to, the prevention of risk-taking behavior by children and the relationship of such behavior to substance abuse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-infection and AIDS, as defined in section 19a-581, violence, teen dating violence, domestic violence and child abuse, (3) school violence prevention, conflict resolution [,] and the prevention of and response to youth suicide, [and the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, as defined in subsection (a) of section 10-222d, except that (A) those boards of education that implement any evidence-based model approach that is approved by the Department of Education and is consistent with subsection (c) of section 10-145a, sections 10-222d, 10-222g and 10-222h, subsection (g) of section 10-233c and sections 1 and 3 of public act 08-160, shall not be required to provide in-service training

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

on the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, and (B)] provided such school violence prevention training shall be in a manner prescribed in a school security and safety plan, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-222n, (4) cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency life saving procedures, (5) the requirements and obligations of a mandated reporter, (6) the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in section 10-3d, [(7) culturally responsive pedagogy and practice, including, but not limited to, the video training module relating to implicit bias and anti-bias in the hiring process in accordance with the provisions of section 10-156hh, (8) the principles and practices of social-emotional learning and restorative practices, (9)] (7) the laws governing the implementation of planning and placement team meetings and concerning plans pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, [(10)] (8) an annual update of the new state and federal policies concerning special education, recommendations and best practices, and [(11)] (9) emergency response to students who experience a seizure in a school, including, but not limited to, the recognition of the signs and symptoms of seizures, the appropriate steps for seizure first aid, information about seizure action plans for students and, for those authorized to administer medication under section 10-212a, the administration of seizure rescue medication or prescribed electrical stimulation using a Vagus Nerve Stimulator magnet. The manner and frequency of the provision of the information described in subdivisions (1) to (9), inclusive, of this subsection shall be determined by the professional development and evaluation committee, established pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, provided such information is provided at least once every five years. Each local or regional board of education shall allow any [school] paraeducator or noncertified employee to participate, on a voluntary basis, in any in-service training program provided pursuant to this section.

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 10-220a of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes, as amended by section 60 of public act 23-167, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(a) Each local or regional board of education shall provide an in-service training program for its teachers, administrators and pupil personnel who hold the initial educator, provisional educator or professional educator certificate. Such program shall provide such teachers, administrators and pupil personnel with information on (1) the nature and the relationship of alcohol and drugs, as defined in [subdivision (17) of] section 21a-240, to health and personality development, and procedures for discouraging their abuse, (2) health and mental health risk reduction education that includes, but need not be limited to, the prevention of risk-taking behavior by children and the relationship of such behavior to substance abuse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-infection and AIDS, as defined in section 19a-581, violence, teen dating violence, domestic violence and child abuse, (3) school violence prevention, conflict resolution [,] and the prevention of and response to youth suicide, [and the identification and prevention of and response to bullying, as defined in section 10-222aa, except that those boards of education that implement any evidence-based model approach that is approved by the Department of Education and is consistent with subsection (c) of section 10-145a, subsection (g) of section 10-233c and sections 1 and 3 of public act 08-160, shall not be required to provide in-service training on the identification and prevention of and response to bullying] provided such school violence prevention training shall be in a manner prescribed in a school security and safety plan, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-222n, (4) cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency life saving procedures, (5) the requirements and obligations of a mandated reporter, (6) the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

in section 10-3d, (7) [culturally responsive pedagogy and practice, including, but not limited to, the video training module relating to implicit bias and anti-bias in the hiring process in accordance with the provisions of section 10-156hh, and (8) the principles and practices of social-emotional learning and restorative practices] the laws governing the implementation of planning and placement team meetings and concerning plans pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, (8) an annual update of the new state and federal policies concerning special education, recommendations and best practices, and (9) emergency response to students who experience a seizure in a school, including, but not limited to, the recognition of the signs and symptoms of seizures, the appropriate steps for seizure first aid, information about seizure action plans for students and, for those authorized to administer medication under section 10-212a, the administration of seizure rescue medication or prescribed electrical stimulation using a Vagus Nerve Stimulator magnet. The manner and frequency of the provision of the information described in subdivisions (1) to (9), inclusive, of this subsection shall be determined by the professional development and evaluation committee, established pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, provided such information is provided at least once every five years. Each local or regional board of education may allow any [paraprofessional] paraeducator or noncertified employee to participate, on a voluntary basis, in any in-service training program provided pursuant to this section.

Sec. 4. Subsection (b) of section 10-222d of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(b) Each local and regional board of education shall develop and implement a safe school climate plan to address the existence of bullying and teen dating violence in its schools. Such plan shall: (1) Enable

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

students to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees and require students and the parents or guardians of students to be notified at the beginning of each school year of the process by which students may make such reports, (2) enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying, (3) require school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying to orally notify the safe school climate specialist, described in section 10-222k, or another school administrator if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report, (4) require the safe school climate specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports made under this section and that the parents or guardians of the student alleged to have committed an act or acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such alleged act or acts were directed receive prompt notice that such investigation has commenced, (5) require the safe school climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report, (6) include a prevention and intervention strategy, as defined by section 10-222g, for school employees to deal with bullying and teen dating violence, (7) provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying, (8) require each school to notify the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation described in subdivision (4) of this subsection (A) of the results of such investigation, and (B) verbally and by electronic mail, if such parents' or guardians' electronic mail addresses are known, that such parents or guardians may refer to the plain language explanation of the rights and remedies available under sections 10-4a and 10-4b published on the Internet web site of the local

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

or regional board of education pursuant to section 10-222r, (9) require each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed and policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying, (10) require each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying to a meeting, separate and distinct from the meeting required in subdivision (9) of this subsection, to discuss specific interventions undertaken by the school to prevent further acts of bullying, (11) establish a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection, and annually report such number to the Department of Education, and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, (12) direct the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline, (13) prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying, (14) direct the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that address safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying, (15) require the principal of a school, or the principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such principal, or the principal's designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct, (16) prohibit bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education, and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, or (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school, (17) require, at the beginning of each school year, each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan, and (18) require that all school employees annually complete the training described in [section 10-220a or] section 10-222j. The notification required pursuant to subdivision (8) of this subsection and the invitation required pursuant to subdivision (9) of this subsection shall include a description of the response of school employees to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying.

Sec. 5. Section 10-233m of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

Each local or regional board of education that assigns a school resource officer to any school under the jurisdiction of such board shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with a local law enforcement agency regarding the role and responsibility of such school resource officer. Such memorandum of understanding shall (1) be maintained in a central location in the school district and posted on the Internet web site of the school district and each school in which such school resource officer is assigned, (2) include provisions addressing daily interactions between students and school personnel with school resource officers, and (3) include a graduated response model for student discipline. Any such memorandum of understanding entered into, extended, updated or amended (A) on or after July 1, 2021, shall include a provision that requires all school resource officers to complete,

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

while in the performance of their duties as school resource officers and during periods when such school resource officers are assigned to be at the school, any separate training specifically related to social-emotional learning and restorative practices provided to certified employees of the school pursuant to [sections] section 10-148a, [and 10-220a,] and (B) on or after July 1, 2023, shall include provisions specifying a school resource officer's duties concerning, and procedures for, the restraint of students, use of firearms, school-based arrests and reporting of any investigations and behavioral interventions of challenging behavior or conflict that escalates to violence or constitutes a crime, pursuant to the provisions of section 10-233p, as amended by this act, provided such provisions are in accordance with any laws or policies concerning the duties of police officers. For the purposes of this section, "school resource officer" means a sworn police officer of a local law enforcement agency who has been assigned to a school pursuant to an agreement between the local or regional board of education and the chief of police of a local law enforcement agency.

Sec. 6. Subsection (a) of section 22a-226e of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) (1) On and after January 1, 2014, each commercial food wholesaler or distributor, industrial food manufacturer or processor, supermarket, resort or conference center that is located not more than twenty miles from an authorized source-separated organic material composting facility and that generates an average projected volume of not less than one hundred four tons per year of source-separated organic materials shall: (A) Separate such source-separated organic materials from other solid waste; and (B) ensure that such source-separated organic materials are recycled at any authorized source-separated organic material composting facility that has available capacity and that will accept such source-separated organic material.

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(2) On and after January 1, 2020, each commercial food wholesaler or distributor, industrial food manufacturer or processor, supermarket, resort or conference center that is located not more than twenty miles from an authorized source-separated organic material composting facility and that generates an average projected volume of not less than fifty-two tons per year of source-separated organic materials shall: (A) Separate such source-separated organic materials from other solid waste; and (B) ensure that such source-separated organic materials are recycled at any authorized source-separated organic material composting facility that has available capacity and that will accept such source-separated organic material.

(3) On and after January 1, 2022, each commercial food wholesaler or distributor, industrial food manufacturer or processor, supermarket, resort or conference center that is located not more than twenty miles from either an authorized source-separated organic material composting facility an authorized transfer station or any collection location authorized to receive source-separated organic materials, and that generates an average projected volume of not less than twenty-six tons per year of source-separated organic materials shall: (A) Separate such source-separated organic materials from other solid waste; and (B) ensure that such source-separated organic materials are recycled at any authorized source-separated organic material composting facility that has available capacity and that will accept such source-separated organic material.

(4) On and after January 1, 2025, each commercial food wholesaler or distributor, industrial food manufacturer or processor, supermarket, resort, conference center or institution that generates an average projected volume of not less than twenty-six tons per year of source-separated organic materials shall: (A) Separate such source-separated organic materials from other solid waste; and (B) ensure that such source-separated organic materials are recycled at any authorized

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

source-separated organic material composting facility that has available capacity and that will accept such source-separated organic material. For the purposes of this section "institution" means any establishment engaged in providing hospitality, entertainment or rehabilitation and health care services, and any hospital, public or [private educational] independent institution of higher education building or facility or correctional facility.

(5) On and after July 1, 2026, each public or nonpublic school building or educational facility in which students in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, or any combination thereof, are enrolled, that is located not more than twenty miles from either an authorized source-separated organic material composting facility and that generates an average projected volume of not less than twenty-six tons per year of source-separated organic materials shall: (A) Separate such source-separated organic materials from other solid waste; and (B) ensure that such source-separated organic materials are recycled at any authorized source-separated organic material composting facility that has available capacity and that will accept such source-separated organic material.

Sec. 7. Section 10-248a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

For the fiscal year ending June 30, [2020] 2024, and each fiscal year thereafter, notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes or any special act, municipal charter, home rule ordinance or other ordinance, [the board of finance in each town having a board of finance, the board of selectmen in each town having no board of finance or the authority making appropriations for the school district for each town] a local board of education may deposit into a nonlapsing account any unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation for education, [for the town,] provided (1) such deposited amount does not exceed two per cent of the total budgeted appropriation for education for such prior fiscal year, (2) each

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

expenditure from such account shall be made only for educational purposes, and (3) each such expenditure shall be authorized by the local board of education for such town.

Sec. 8. Subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of section 10-51 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(2) [On and after June 7, 2006] For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and each fiscal year thereafter, a regional board of education, by a majority vote of its members, may create a reserve fund for [capital and nonrecurring] educational expenditures. Such fund shall thereafter be termed ["reserve fund for capital and nonrecurring expenditures"] "reserve fund for educational expenditures". The aggregate amount of annual and supplemental appropriations by a district to such fund shall not exceed two per cent of the annual district budget for such fiscal year. Annual appropriations to such fund shall be included in the share of net expenses to be paid by each member town. Supplemental appropriations to such fund may be made from estimated fiscal year end surplus in operating funds. Interest and investment earnings received with respect to amounts held in the fund shall be credited to such fund. The board shall annually submit a complete and detailed report of the condition of such fund to the member towns. Upon the recommendation and approval by the regional board of education, any part or the whole of such fund may be used for [capital and nonrecurring] educational expenditures, [, but such use shall be restricted to the funding of all or part of the planning, construction, reconstruction or acquisition of any specific capital improvement or the acquisition of any specific item of equipment.] Upon the approval of any such expenditure an appropriation shall be set up, plainly designated for the [project or acquisition] educational expenditure for which it has been authorized. [, and such unexpended appropriation may be continued until such project or acquisition is completed.] Any

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

unexpended portion of such appropriation remaining [after such completion] shall revert to said fund. If any authorized appropriation is set up pursuant to the provisions of this subsection and through unforeseen circumstances [the completion of the project or acquisition for which such appropriation has been designated is impossible to attain] the board is unable to expend the total amount of such appropriation, the board, by a majority vote of its members, may terminate such appropriation which then shall no longer be in effect. Such fund may be discontinued, after the recommendation and approval by the regional board of education, and any amounts held in the fund shall be transferred to the general fund of the district.

Sec. 9. Section 10-221a of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) For classes graduating from 1988 to 2003, inclusive, no local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty credits, not fewer than four of which shall be in English, not fewer than three in mathematics, not fewer than three in social studies, not fewer than two in science, not fewer than one in the arts or vocational education and not fewer than one in physical education.

(b) For classes graduating from 2004 to 2022, inclusive, no local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty credits, not fewer than four of which shall be in English, not fewer than three in mathematics, not fewer than three in social studies, including at least a one-half credit course on civics and American government, not fewer than two in science, not fewer than one in the arts or vocational education and not fewer than one in physical education.

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(c) [Commencing with] For classes graduating [in] from 2023 [, and for each graduating class thereafter] to 2026, inclusive, no local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty-five credits, including not fewer than: (1) Nine credits in the humanities, including civics and the arts; (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; (3) one credit in physical education and wellness; (4) one credit in health and safety education, as described in section 10-16b; and (5) one credit in world languages, subject to the provisions of subsection [(h)] (g) of this section. A local or regional board of education may require a student to complete a one credit mastery-based diploma assessment in order to graduate from high school or be granted a diploma.

[(d) Commencing with classes graduating in 2025, and for each graduating class thereafter, no local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not satisfied the requirements of section 10-221z and not satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty-five credits, including not fewer than: (1) Nine credits in the humanities, including civics and the arts; (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; (3) one credit in physical education and wellness; (4) one credit in health and safety education, as described in section 10-16b; and (5) one credit in world languages, subject to the provisions of subsection (h) of this section. A local or regional board of education may require a student to complete a one credit mastery-based diploma assessment in order to graduate from high school or be granted a diploma.]

[(e)] (d) Commencing with classes graduating in 2027, and for each graduating class thereafter, no local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not satisfied the requirements of section 10-221z,

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

as amended by this act, and not satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty-five credits, including not fewer than: (1) Nine credits in the humanities, including civics and the arts; (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; (3) one credit in physical education and wellness; (4) one credit in health and safety education, as described in section 10-16b; (5) one credit in world languages, subject to the provisions of subsection [(h)] (g) of this section; and (6) one-half credit in personal financial management and financial literacy, which may count towards the requirement described in subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection or as an elective credit. [A local or regional board of education may require a student to complete a one credit mastery-based diploma assessment in order to graduate from high school or be granted a diploma.]

[(f)] (e) Commencing with classes graduating in 2023, and for each graduating class thereafter, local and regional boards of education shall provide adequate student support and remedial services for students beginning in grade seven. Such student support and remedial services shall provide alternate means for a student to complete any of the high school graduation requirements described in subsections (c) [to (e), inclusive,] and (d) of this section, if such student is unable to satisfactorily complete any of the required courses or exams. Such student support and remedial services shall include, but not be limited to, (1) allowing students to retake courses in summer school or through an on-line course; (2) allowing students to enroll in a class offered at a constituent unit of the state system of higher education, as defined in section 10a-1, pursuant to subdivision (4) of subsection [(i)] (h) of this section; (3) allowing students who received a failing score, as determined by the Commissioner of Education, on an end of the school year exam to take an alternate form of the exam; and (4) allowing those students whose individualized education programs state that such students are eligible for an alternate assessment to demonstrate competency on any of the five core courses through success on such

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

alternate assessment.

[(g)] (f) Any student who presents a certificate from a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse stating that, in the opinion of the physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse, participation in physical education is medically contraindicated because of the physical condition of such student, shall be excused from the physical education requirement, provided the credit for physical education may be fulfilled by an elective.

[(h)] (g) Determination of eligible credits shall be at the discretion of the local or regional board of education, provided the primary focus of the curriculum of eligible credits corresponds directly to the subject matter of the specified course requirements. The local or regional board of education may permit a student to graduate during a period of expulsion pursuant to section 10-233d, if the board determines the student has satisfactorily completed the necessary credits pursuant to this section. The requirements of this section shall apply to any student requiring special education pursuant to section 10-76a, except when the planning and placement team for such student determines the requirement not to be appropriate. For purposes of this section, a credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of a forty-minute class period for each school day of a school year except for a credit or part of a credit toward high school graduation earned (1) at an institution accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally accredited, (2) through on-line coursework that is in accordance with a policy adopted pursuant to subsection [(i)] (h) of this section, or (3) through a demonstration of mastery based on competency and performance standards, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.

[(i)] (h) Only courses taken in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, and that are in accordance with the state-wide subject matter content standards, adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to section

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

10-4, shall satisfy the graduation requirements set forth in this section, except that a local or regional board of education may grant a student credit (1) toward meeting the high school graduation requirements upon the successful demonstration of mastery of the subject matter content described in this section achieved through educational experiences and opportunities that provide flexible and multiple pathways to learning, including cross-curricular graduation requirements, career and technical education, virtual learning, work-based learning, service learning, dual enrollment and early college, courses taken in middle school, internships and student-designed independent studies, provided such demonstration of mastery is in accordance with such state-wide subject matter content standards; (2) toward meeting a specified course requirement upon the successful completion in grade seven or eight of any course, the primary focus of which corresponds directly to the subject matter of a specified course requirement in grades nine to twelve, inclusive; (3) toward meeting the high school graduation requirement upon the successful completion of a world language course (A) in grade six, seven or eight, (B) through on-line coursework, or (C) offered privately through a nonprofit provider, provided such student achieves a passing grade on an examination prescribed, within available appropriations, by the Commissioner of Education and such credits do not exceed four; (4) toward meeting the high school graduation requirement upon achievement of a passing grade on a subject area proficiency examination identified and approved, within available appropriations, by the Commissioner of Education, regardless of the number of hours the student spent in a public school classroom learning such subject matter; (5) toward meeting the high school graduation requirement upon the successful completion of coursework during the school year or summer months at an institution accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally accredited. One three-credit semester course, or its equivalent, at such an institution shall equal one-half credit for purposes of this section; (6) toward meeting the high

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

school graduation requirement upon the successful completion of on-line coursework, provided the local or regional board of education has adopted a policy in accordance with this subdivision for the granting of credit for on-line coursework. Such a policy shall ensure, at a minimum, that (A) the workload required by the on-line course is equivalent to that of a similar course taught in a traditional classroom setting, (B) the content is rigorous and aligned with curriculum guidelines approved by the State Board of Education, where appropriate, (C) the course engages students and has interactive components, which may include, but are not limited to, required interactions between students and their teachers, participation in on-line demonstrations, discussion boards or virtual labs, (D) the program of instruction for such on-line coursework is planned, ongoing and systematic, and (E) the courses are (i) taught by teachers who are certified in the state or another state and have received training on teaching in an on-line environment, or (ii) offered by institutions of higher education that are accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally accredited; or (7) toward meeting the high school graduation requirement upon the successful completion of a credit recovery program approved by the Commissioner of Education.

[(j)] (i) A local or regional board of education may offer one-half credit in community service which, if satisfactorily completed, shall qualify for high school graduation credit pursuant to this section, provided such community service is supervised by a certified school administrator or teacher and consists of not less than fifty hours of actual service that may be performed at times when school is not regularly in session and not less than ten hours of related classroom instruction. [For purposes of this section, community service does not include partisan political activities.] The State Board of Education shall assist local and regional boards of education in meeting the requirements of this section. [The State Board of Education shall award a community service recognition award to any student who satisfactorily completes fifty hours or more

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

of community service in accordance with the provisions of this subsection.]

[(k)] (j) (1) A local or regional board of education may award a diploma to a veteran, as defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, which veteran or person served during World War II or the Korean hostilities, as described in section 51-49h, or during the Vietnam Era, as defined in section 27-103, withdrew from high school prior to graduation in order to serve in the armed forces of the United States and did not receive a diploma as a consequence of such service.

(2) A local or regional board of education may award a diploma to any person who (A) withdrew from high school prior to graduation to work in a job that assisted the war effort during World War II, December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946, inclusive, (B) did not receive a diploma as a consequence of such work, and (C) has been a resident of the state for at least fifty consecutive years.

(3) (A) A local or regional board of education under whose jurisdiction a student would otherwise be attending school if such student were not educated under the oversight of the education unit of the Department of Children and Families established pursuant to section 17a-3b, shall award a diploma to any such student seventeen years of age or older who satisfactorily completes the minimum credits required pursuant to this section for students graduating in the year in which such diploma is awarded.

(B) If no such local or regional board of education can be identified, the Department of Children and Families shall determine whether a student educated under the oversight of the education unit of the department who is seventeen years of age or older has satisfactorily completed the minimum credits required pursuant to this section for students graduating in the year in which a diploma is sought by such student and the department shall award a diploma to any such student

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

who has met such requirement.

[(l)] (k) For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall create a student success plan for each student enrolled in a public school, beginning in grade six. Such student success plan shall include a student's career and academic choices in grades six to twelve, inclusive. Beginning in grade six, such student success plan shall provide evidence of career exploration in each grade including, but not limited to, careers in manufacturing. The Department of Education shall revise and issue to local and regional boards of education guidance regarding changes to such student success plans. On and after July 1, 2020, in creating such student success plans, consideration shall be given to career and academic choices in computer science, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. On and after July 1, 2021, such student success plans shall be created, if possible, in collaboration with each student and the parent or guardian of such student. On and after July 1, 2022, such student success plans shall, to the extent it does not conflict with the career choices of the student or such student's parent or guardian, include an academic plan that is in compliance with the challenging curriculum policy adopted by the local or regional board of education pursuant to section 10-221x, as amended by this act. On and after July 1, 2024, in creating such student success plans, consideration shall be given to enrollment opportunities in the Technical Education and Career System.

[(m)] (l) Commencing with classes graduating in 2018, and for each graduating class thereafter, a local or regional board of education may affix the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy, as described in subsection (f) of section 10-5, to a diploma awarded to a student who has achieved a high level of proficiency in English and one or more foreign languages, as defined in said subsection (f). The local or regional board of education shall include on such student's transcript a designation that the student

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

received the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy.

Sec. 10. Section 10-221z of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) No local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student pursuant to section 10-221a, as amended by this act, unless such student has (1) completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, (2) completed and submitted to a public institution of higher education an application for institutional financial aid for students without legal immigration status established pursuant to section 10a-161d, or (3) completed a waiver, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section and on a form prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, signed by such minor student's parent or legal guardian or by such student if such student is a legally emancipated minor or eighteen years of age or older.

(b) Any waiver completed by a student pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of this section shall require the parent, legal guardian or student to affirm that such parent, legal guardian or student understands the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and shall not require the parent, legal guardian or student to state any reasons for choosing not to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid or the application for institutional financial aid for students without legal immigration status. On and after March fifteenth of the school year, a principal, school counselor, teacher or other certified educator may complete such waiver on behalf of any student who has not satisfied any of the requirements described in subsection (a) of this section, if such principal, school counselor, teacher or other certified educator affirms that they have made a good faith effort to contact the parent, legal guardian or student about completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or an application for institutional financial aid for

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

students without legal immigration status.

(c) The provisions of this section shall not apply to any student enrolled in an incorporated or endowed high school or academy approved pursuant to section 10-34 and who holds an F-1 visa.

Sec. 11. Subsection (b) of section 10-76ll of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(b) On or before July 1, 2015, the State Board of Education shall draft a written bill of rights for parents of children receiving special education services to guarantee that the rights of such parents and children are adequately safeguarded and protected during the provision of special education and related services until such children have graduated from high school or at the end of the school year during which such children reaches age twenty-two, whichever occurs first, under this chapter. Such bill of rights shall inform parents of: (1) The right to request consideration of the provision of transition services for a child receiving special education services who is eighteen until such child has graduated from high school or at the end of the school year during which such child reaches age twenty-two, whichever occurs first, (2) the right to receive transition resources and materials from the department and the local or regional board of education responsible for such child, (3) the requirement that the local or regional board of education responsible for such child shall create a student success plan for each student enrolled in a public school, beginning in grade six, pursuant to subsection [(l)] (k) of section 10-221a, as amended by this act, and (4) the right of such child to receive realistic and specific postgraduation goals as part of such child's individualized education program.

Sec. 12. Subsection (b) of section 10-221x of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(b) Each local and regional board of education shall create an academic plan for each student identified under the criteria described in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section. In creating an academic plan for a student, such plan shall be designed to enroll such student in one or more advanced course or programs and allow such student to earn college credit or result in career readiness. Each academic plan shall be aligned with (1) the courses or programs offered by the local or regional board of education, (2) such student's student success plan created pursuant to subsection [(l)] (k) of section 10-221a, as amended by this act, (3) the high school graduation requirements under section 10-221a, as amended by this act, and (4) any other policies or standards adopted by the board relating to the eligibility for student enrollment in advanced courses or programs. A student, or the parent or guardian of a student, may decline to implement the provisions of an academic plan created for such student.

Sec. 13. Subsections (c) and (d) of section 10-233a of the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(c) "In-school suspension" means an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than [ten] five consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed.

(d) "Suspension" means an exclusion from school privileges or from transportation services only, [for no more than ten consecutive school days,] provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension was imposed.

Sec. 14. Subsection (g) of section 10-233c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(g) On and after July 1, 2015, all suspensions pursuant to this section shall be in-school suspensions, except a local or regional board of education may authorize the administration of schools under its direction to impose an out-of-school suspension on any pupil in (1) grades three to twelve, inclusive, if, during the hearing held pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, (A) the administration determines that the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the pupil shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension, or (B) the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence of (i) previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such pupil, and (ii) efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies, or (2) grades preschool to two, inclusive, if during the hearing held pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the administration (A) determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence that such pupil's conduct on school grounds is [of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons] behavior that causes physical harm, (B) requires that such pupil receives services that are trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate and align with any behavioral intervention plan, individualized education program or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, for such pupil upon such pupil's return to school immediately following the out-of-school suspension, and (C) considers whether to convene a planning and placement team meeting for the purposes of conducting an evaluation to determine whether such pupil may require special education or related services. An out-of-school suspension imposed under subdivision (1) of this subsection shall not exceed ten school days, and an out-of-school suspension imposed under subdivision (2) of this subsection shall not exceed five school days. An in-school suspension may be served in the school that the pupil attends,

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

or in any school building under the jurisdiction of the local or regional board of education, as determined by such board. Nothing in this section shall limit a person's duty as a mandated reporter pursuant to section 17-101a to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

Sec. 15. Section 10-233p of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

Each school resource officer, as defined in section 10-233m, as amended by this act, shall submit to the chief of police of such school resource officer's local law enforcement agency a report for each investigation or behavioral intervention of challenging behavior or conflict that escalates to violence or constitutes a crime conducted by such school resource officer not later than five school days after conducting such investigation or behavioral intervention. The chief of police shall submit such report to the superintendent of schools for the school district in which such investigation or behavioral intervention occurred in accordance with the provisions of the memorandum of understanding entered into pursuant to section 10-233m, as amended by this act, but shall be not less frequently than monthly. If the chief of police of the school resource officer's local law enforcement agency is not certified by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council pursuant to section 7-294d, such school resource officer shall submit such report directly to the superintendent of schools for the school district in which such investigation or behavioral intervention occurred in the same manner specified in this section for the chief of police to submit such report. Such superintendent shall submit such report to the local or regional board of education of the school district. Such report shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) the date, time and location of such investigation or behavioral intervention, (2) the name and badge number of such school resource officer, (3) the race, ethnicity, gender, age and disability status for each student involved in such investigation

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

or behavioral intervention, (4) the reason for and nature of such investigation or behavioral intervention, (5) the disposition of such investigation or behavioral intervention, and (6) whether any student involved in such investigation or behavioral intervention was (A) searched, (B) apprised of such student's constitutional rights, (C) issued a citation or a summons, (D) arrested, or (E) detained, including the amount of time such student was detained. For purposes of this section, "investigation or behavioral intervention" means a circumstance in which a school resource officer is conducting (i) a fact-finding inquiry concerning student behavior or school safety, including, but not limited to, emergency circumstances, or (ii) an intervention to resolve violent or nonviolent student behavior or conflicts.

Sec. 16. Subsection (a) of section 10-222q of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) There is established a social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative. The collaborative shall (1) collect information concerning the school climate improvement efforts of local and regional boards of education, (2) document any needs articulated by local and regional boards of education for technical assistance and training relating to fostering positive school climates, (3) identify best practices for promoting positive school climates, (4) direct resources to support state-wide and local initiatives on issues relating to fostering and improving positive school climates and improving access to social and emotional learning in schools, (5) develop an assessment for screening students in grades three to twelve, inclusive, to determine whether such students are at risk for suicide, (6) develop a biennial state-wide school climate survey, as described in subsection (c) of section 2 of public act 19-166, (7) develop a model positive school climate policy, as described in subsection (a) of section 2 of public act 19-166, (8) develop a plain language explanation of the rights and remedies available under

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

sections 10-4a and 10-4b for distribution to parents and guardians pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (c) of section 10-222d, and provide such explanation to each local and regional board of education not later than January 1, 2021, (9) develop school climate survey standards, including, but not limited to, standards for the collection of data on diversity, equity and inclusion and for the reduction in disparities in data collection between school districts, (10) develop a model school climate improvement plan, and [(9)] (11) perform other functions concerning social and emotional learning and fostering positive school climates.

Sec. 17. Subsection (a) of section 10-222q of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes, as amended by section 65 of public act 23-167, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(a) There is established a social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative. The collaborative shall (1) collect information concerning the school climate improvement efforts of local and regional boards of education, (2) document any needs articulated by local and regional boards of education for technical assistance and training relating to fostering positive school climates, (3) identify best practices for promoting positive school climates, (4) direct resources to support state-wide and local initiatives on issues relating to fostering and improving positive school climates and improving access to social and emotional learning in schools, (5) develop an assessment for screening students in grades three to twelve, inclusive, to determine whether such students are at risk for suicide, (6) develop a biennial state-wide school climate survey, as described in subsection (c) of section 2 of public act 19-166, (7) adopt a Connecticut school climate policy, as defined in section 10-222aa, as amended by this act, (8) develop a plain language explanation of the rights and remedies available under sections 10-4a and 10-4b for distribution to parents and guardians, and

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

provide such explanation to each local and regional board of education not later than January 1, 2021, (9) develop standards for a school climate survey, including, but not limited to, standards for the collection of data on diversity, equity and inclusion and for the reduction in disparities in data collection between school districts, (10) develop a model school climate improvement plan, and [(9)] (11) perform other functions concerning social and emotional learning and fostering positive school climates.

Sec. 18. Subdivision (12) of section 10-222aa of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(12) "School climate survey" means a research-based, validated and developmentally appropriate survey administered to students, school employees and families of students, in the predominant languages of the members of the school community, that (A) measures and identifies school climate needs and tracks progress through a school climate improvement plan, and (B) (i) meets the school climate survey standards developed by the social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q, as amended by this act, or (ii) is the state-wide school climate survey developed by said collaborative.

Sec. 19. Subsection (a) of section 10-222hh of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the school climate specialist, as described in section 10-222ee, for each school, in collaboration with the school climate coordinator, as described in section 10-222dd, shall develop, and update as necessary, a school climate improvement plan. Such plan shall be based on the results of the school climate survey, administered pursuant to section

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

10-222gg, any recommendations from the school climate committee, as described in section 10-222ff, the protocols and supports, described in subsection (b) of this section and any other data the school climate specialist and school climate coordinator deemed relevant. Such plan [shall be submitted] may incorporate the model school climate improvement plan developed by the social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q, as amended by this act. The school climate specialist shall submit such plan to the school climate coordinator for review and approval on or before December thirty-first of each school year. Upon approval of such plan, a written or electronic copy of such plan shall be made available to members of the school community and such plan shall be used in the prevention of, identification of and response to challenging behavior.

Sec. 20. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) The Department of Education shall, within available appropriations, appoint a director of school climate improvement to serve as the state-wide social and emotional learning and school climate expert. The director of school climate improvement shall (1) assist local and regional boards of education with the implementation of (A) sections 10-222t to 10-222v, inclusive, and sections 10-222aa to 10-222jj, inclusive, of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and (B) the Connecticut school climate policy, as defined in section 10-222aa of the general statutes, as amended by this act, (2) assist the social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, as amended by this act, in the development and implementation of tools and best practices related to school climate and culture, including, but not limited to, the development of a model school climate survey and a model school climate improvement plan, (3) provide information and assistance to local and regional boards of education, students and parents and guardians of students on the uniform bullying complaint form created pursuant to section 10-222bb

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

of the general statutes, (4) not later than January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education on recommendations for best practices and improvement of school climate improvement strategies in this state, (5) assist school climate coordinators, appointed pursuant to section 10-222dd of the general statutes, in the development of a continuum of strategies to prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, (6) develop and provide technical assistance and recommendations, in collaboration with the social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative, to local and regional boards of education on trainings for school employees for the purposes of school climate improvement, and (7) in collaboration with the social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative, develop strategies to improve the delivery of services concerning social and emotional learning, skills building and mental health supports.

Sec. 21. (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section:

(1) "At-risk student" means a student who is enrolled in high school and is in danger of not graduating for reasons including, but not limited to, (A) not earning sufficient credits to meet the high school graduation requirements under section 10-221a of the general statutes, as amended by this act, (B) being a chronically absent child, or (C) behavioral and other disciplinary issues, such as suspensions and expulsions;

(2) "Chronically absent child" has the same meaning as provided in section 10-198c of the general statutes; and

(3) "Disconnected youth" means an individual who is fourteen to twenty-six years of age, inclusive, and who is (A) an at-risk student, or (B) not enrolled in high school, and (i) has not obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent, (ii) has obtained a high school diploma or its

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

equivalent but is unemployed and not enrolled in an adult education program, institution of higher education or otherwise pursuing postsecondary education, or a workforce training or certification program, including an apprenticeship program, or (iii) is incarcerated.

(b) The Connecticut Preschool Through Twenty and Workforce Information Network, established pursuant to section 10a-57g of the general statutes, shall develop a plan to establish a state-wide data intermediary that is responsible for (1) providing technical support, (2) creating data sharing agreements, and (3) building and maintaining the infrastructure necessary to share data between nonprofit organizations serving disconnected youth. Not later than January 1, 2025, the executive board of the Connecticut Preschool Through Twenty and Workforce Information Network shall submit such plan to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

Sec. 22. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the executive board of the Connecticut Preschool Through Twenty and Workforce Information Network, established pursuant to section 10a-57g of the general statutes, shall submit an annual report on disconnected youth. In developing such report, the executive board shall use the data model established through the data sharing agreement 0043 regarding Research on Disengaged and Disconnected Youth in Connecticut. The executive board shall submit such report to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, children, the judiciary, labor, human services, public health and appropriations, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. As used in this section, "disconnected youth" has the same meaning as provided in section 21 of this act.

Sec. 23. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) (a) As used in this section:

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(1) "Education records" has the same meaning as provided in 34 CFR 99.3, as amended from time to time; and

(2) "Youth service bureau" means a youth service bureau established pursuant to section 10-19m of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

(b) A local or regional board of education shall, upon request of the youth service bureau that provides services for such board, enter into a memorandum of understanding with such youth service bureau regarding the circumstances under which educational records of students may be shared between the board and the youth service bureau in the provision of services for which such youth service bureau is providing for such board.

(c) Any memorandum of understanding entered into under this section shall require that the local or regional board of education shall provide, and such youth service bureau shall receive and maintain, any educational records of students in a manner that is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC 1232g, as amended from time to time, and 34 CFR 99.1 et seq., as amended from time to time.

Sec. 24. Subsection (a) of section 10-19m of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) For the purposes of this section, "youth" means a person from birth to eighteen years of age. Any one or more municipalities or any one or more private youth-serving organizations, designated to act as agents of one or more municipalities or local or regional boards of education, may establish a multipurpose youth service bureau for the purposes of evaluation, planning, coordination and implementation of services, including prevention and intervention programs for delinquent,

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

predelinquent, pregnant, parenting and troubled youths referred to such bureau by [schools] local or regional boards of education, police, juvenile courts, adult courts, local youth-serving agencies, parents and self-referrals. A youth service bureau shall be the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment and follow-up services.

Sec. 25. Section 10-74j of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) As used in this section, "alternative education" means a school or program maintained and operated by a local or regional board of education that is offered to students in a nontraditional educational setting and addresses the social, emotional, behavioral and academic needs of such students.

(b) A local or regional board of education may provide alternative education to students, in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education pursuant to section 10-74k. A local or regional board of education may use space in an existing school or establish a new school for the purposes of providing alternative education to students. Alternative education shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of sections 10-15 and 10-16 and shall be subject to all federal and state laws governing public schools.

(c) Each local and regional board of education shall make available on its Internet web site information relating to alternative education offered under this section, including, but not limited to, the purpose, location, contact information, staff directory and enrollment criteria for such alternative education.

(d) For the school year commencing July 1, 2024, and each school year thereafter, any local or regional board of education that includes a credit recovery program as part of its alternative education provided under

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

this section shall permit any student enrolled in a traditional school program offered by such board and who is at risk of not graduating to enroll in such credit recovery program while still enrolled in the traditional school program.

Sec. 26. Section 4-124*ll* of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) On or before July 1, 2023, the Chief Workforce Officer, in consultation with the Commissioner of Education, the executive director of the Technical Education and Career System and the Labor Commissioner, shall develop a model student work release policy. Not later than July 1, 2023, the Chief Workforce Officer shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, regarding such model student work release policy to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, commerce and labor.

(b) The Chief Workforce Officer, in consultation with the Commissioner of Education, may update the model student work release policy developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section as needed. The Chief Workforce Officer shall notify each local and regional board of education of such updated model student work release policy.

(c) For the school year commencing July 1, 2024, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall adopt the model student work release policy developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section or the most recent updated model student work release policy developed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

Sec. 27. (*Effective July 1, 2024*) (a) The executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, or the executive director's designee, may convene a working group to conduct a review of and make recommendations regarding the high school graduation

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

requirements, described in section 10-221a of the general statutes, as amended by this act, for the purpose of identifying those requirements that have the effect of limiting or restricting the provision of instruction or services to students.

(b) The working group shall consist of the following members:

(1) A representative from each of the following organizations, designated by each such organization:

(A) The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education;

(B) The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents;

(C) The Connecticut PTA;

(D) The American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut;

(E) The Connecticut Education Association;

(F) The Connecticut Association of Schools;

(G) The Connecticut Federation of School Administrators;

(H) The Connecticut School Counselor Association;

(I) The Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; and

(J) The education and workforce affiliate of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association;

(2) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, or the chairpersons' and ranking members' designees;

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(3) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee; and

(4) Any additional member deemed appropriate by the chairperson of the working group.

(c) All initial appointments to the working group shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, or the executive director's designee, shall serve as the chairperson of the working group. The chairperson shall schedule the first meeting of the working group, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(e) The working group may provide an opportunity for public comment or seek input from students, parents, educators, boards of education and other education stakeholders while conducting the review and developing its recommendations under this section.

(f) Not later than January 1, 2026, the working group shall submit a report on its review of such graduation requirements and its recommendations for revisions to such graduation requirements to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The working group shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or July 1, 2026, whichever is later.

Sec. 28. (*Effective July 1, 2024*) (a) The president of the Connecticut Education Association, or the president's designee, and the president of the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut, or the president's designee, may jointly convene a working group to conduct a review of (1) high school grading policies in use by local and regional boards of education, (2) the accountability index, as defined in section 10-223e of

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

the general statutes, and (3) the information and data selected by the Department of Education in the calculation of accountability index scores for school districts.

(b) The working group shall consist of the following members:

(1) A representative from each of the following organizations, designated by each such organization:

(A) The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education;

(B) The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents;

(C) The Connecticut PTA;

(D) The American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut;

(E) The Connecticut Education Association;

(F) The Connecticut Association of Schools;

(G) The Connecticut Federation of School Administrators;

(H) The Connecticut School Counselor Association;

(I) The Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; and

(J) The education and workforce affiliate of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association;

(2) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, or the chairpersons' and ranking members' designees;

(3) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

and

(4) Any additional member deemed appropriate by the cochairpersons of the working group.

(c) All initial appointments to the working group shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The president of the Connecticut Education Association, or the president's designee, and the president of the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut, or the president's designee, shall serve as the cochairpersons of the working group. The cochairpersons shall jointly schedule the first meeting of the working group, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(e) The working group may provide an opportunity for public comment or seek input from students, parents, educators, boards of education and other education stakeholders while conducting the review and developing its recommendations under this section.

(f) Not later than January 1, 2026, the working group shall submit a report on its review of high school grading policies, the accountability index and the calculation of the accountability index to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The working group shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or July 1, 2026, whichever is later.

Sec. 29. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to develop recommendations for the creation and administration of a state-wide program for the delivery of bereavement and grief counseling services to children and families at no cost to participants. The task force shall make recommendations for (1) the appropriate agency or agencies to administer such program, (2) the scope of services offered by such

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

program, including, but not limited to, the provision of culturally informed services and services to marginalized communities, (3) the role that existing bereavement and grief counseling services programs and school-based health centers should have in the delivery of services under such program, (4) the delivery of services by such program in areas of the state where such services do not currently exist or are not sufficient, and the resources that will be needed to deliver services to such areas, (5) long-term funding sources for such program, and (6) any additional considerations identified by the task force.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of a bereavement and grief counseling services program that serves children and families;

(2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who shall be a representative of a state-wide association of school-based health centers;

(3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of a state-wide association of school counselors;

(4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who shall be a representative of the state chapter of a national nonprofit organization that works to improve the lives of children and families;

(5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of a child study center affiliated with a medical school in the state;

(6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who shall be a psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 383 of the general statutes, who has expertise in treating bereaved children;

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

(7) One appointed jointly by the House chairperson and the House ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, who has experience with grief and bereavement;

(8) One appointed jointly by the Senate chairperson and the Senate ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, who is a representative of the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists;

(9) The Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's designee;

(10) The Commissioner of Children and Families, or the commissioner's designee;

(11) The Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or the commissioner's designee;

(12) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;
and

(13) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's designee.

(c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) or (8) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member of the General Assembly.

(d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule

Substitute House Bill No. 5437

the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(f) The administrative staff of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(g) Not later than July 1, 2025, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public health and children, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or July 1, 2025, whichever is later.

Sec. 30. Section 1 of public act 23-160 is repealed. (*Effective July 1, 2024*)

Approved May 21, 2024