

Education Mandates Enacted in 2023

By: Taylorann Vibert, Sessional
February 22, 2024 | 2024-R-0062

Issue

This report summarizes the local education mandates the legislature enacted during the 2023 session.

Education Mandates

Table 1 lists the mandates that apply to all local and regional school districts. Not all the mandates included necessarily have a cost associated with them, but they place a requirement on the school district.

Many of the mandates add additional specifications or steps to an existing mandate (e.g., the mandates regarding “SDE [(State Department of Education)]-approved reading curriculum models” and “in-service training for licensed teachers”), and one extends the deadline of an existing mandate (i.e., “free menstrual products in restrooms”). The table does not include obsolete and expired mandates and those that apply:

1. only to certain types of school districts, such as priority, alliance, or low-achieving school districts;
2. as a condition of receiving a state grant other than an Education Cost Sharing grant; or
3. to all public agencies, such as the Freedom of Information Act requirements.

Table 1: 2023 Statutory Mandates on All Local and Regional School Districts

<i>Statute (CGS §)/ Public Act (PA)</i>	<i>Mandate Requirements</i>
Adult Education	
10-73d, as amended by PA 23-160, § 4	Allows any parent under age 17, rather than only mothers under age 17 as permitted under prior law, to request permission from the board of education to attend adult education classes.
Bilingual Education/English Learner	
10-17o, as enacted by PA 23-150, § 17	Requires each local and regional board of education that provides bilingual education or English as a new language to give parents and guardians a copy of the bill of rights. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDE must draft this written bill of rights for parents or guardians of multilingual learner students to guarantee that their rights are protected when bilingual education is provided • Begins with the 2024-25 school year
10-218b, as enacted by PA 23-150, § 18	Requires boards of education, upon request, to provide translation services to parents, guardians, and students at meetings of the board or at scheduled meetings with members of the board.
Boards of Education	
10-220, as amended by PA 23-160, § 3	Requires boards of education to make all curriculum approved by their school district curriculum committee, as well as all associated curriculum materials, available to parents and guardians under the requirements of the federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPRA, in part, gives parents and guardians the right to inspect instructional material used by the school district as part of their student’s educational curriculum (excluding academic tests and assessments)
10-220, as amended by PA 23-160, § 6	Requires boards of education conducting a board meeting to make any associated documents for members at the meeting available for public inspection and post them on the board’s website. These requirements appear to be in addition to those of the Freedom of Information Act.
10-221z, as enacted by PA 23-204, § 320	Prohibits school boards from allowing any student to graduate high school, or granting a diploma to any student, who has not (1) completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or an application for institutional financial aid for students without legal immigration status or (2) signed a waiver declining to file the application. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The waiver form may be signed by a minor student’s parent or guardian, a student 18 years old or older, or a legally emancipated minor • The waiver cannot require its signatory to state any reasons for declining to complete the student aid application
10-264u, as enacted by PA 23-167, § 37	Requires boards of education to annually report the number of students enrolled as of April 1, including the number enrolled in specified interdistrict programs.

Table 1 (continued)

Statute (CGS §)/ Public Act (PA)	Mandate Requirements
10-218c, as enacted by PA 23-167 , § 3	Requires newly elected school board members to take training on the responsibilities and obligations of being a school board member provided by SDE. First-time elected school board members must complete the training within one year after assuming office.
7-395, as amended by PA 23-197 , § 2	<p>Requires regional boards of education hold public hearings to discuss annual municipal financial audits involving school districts that (1) were not in compliance with state law or (2) show evidence of unsound or irregular financial practices or lack of internal controls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting must include discussion of the audit’s findings and potential causes of discrepancies. The board must consider what was discussed at the meeting when preparing the corrective action plan in response to the audit
Curriculum and Instruction	
10-16b & 10-221a, as amended by PA 23-21	Adds a half-credit of personal financial management and financial literacy to the high school graduation requirements beginning with the graduating class of 2027 (i.e., students currently enrolled in eighth grade). The law allows the half-credit in financial literacy to count towards either the nine-credit humanities graduation requirement or as an elective credit.
10-16b, as amended by PA 23-150 , § 7	Adds civics and media literacy to the required public schools’ social studies program of instruction beginning in the 2025-26 school year.
Early Childhood Education	
10-24f, as enacted by PA 23-159 , § 4, & PA 23-101 , § 20; 10-148a, as amended by PA 23-159 , § 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires schools to provide play-based learning during each regular school day for kindergarten and preschool students • Requires school boards to permit a teacher to use play-based learning during the school day for grades one to five and adds play-based learning to educator professional development • “Play-based learning” is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes play in promoting learning and includes developmentally appropriate strategies that can be integrated with existing learning standards but does not mean recess time or physical education
Health and Safety	
10-206(b), as amended by PA 23-31 , § 39	Requires all children, before enrolling in public school, to have a lead poisoning medical risk assessment and, if the assessment indicates risk, a test of their blood lead levels. The assessment must be conducted as part of the child’s school health assessment required under existing law. The school health assessment must be completed by a licensed physician, APRN, PA, or school medical advisor in the presence of the child’s parent or guardian or a school employee.

Table 1 (continued)

Statute (CGS §)/ Public Act (PA)	Mandate Requirements
10-222y, as enacted by PA 23-66 , § 3	Requires boards of education to implement the Title IX toolkit to be identified or developed pursuant to CGS § 2-128a, in such board's efforts to prevent, identify and respond to reports of child sexual abuse, harassment, and discrimination, for the school year commencing July 1, 2025.
10-222z, as enacted by PA 23-66 , § 4	Requires boards of education to submit a Title IX compliance report to the Department of Education, beginning in the school year commencing July 1, 2026.
10-231h, as enacted by PA 23-167 , § 43; 10-220, as amended by PA 23-167 , § 44	Requires school districts to conduct more frequent indoor air quality inspections and requires the inspection reports to be submitted to the Department of Administrative Services to post on its website. Beginning January 1, 2024, the inspections must be done every year, rather than every three years.
Pre-K and Kindergarten	
10-15c, as amended by PA 23-159 , § 3, & PA 23-208 , § 1	<p>Raises the age children can start public school kindergarten from age five by January of the school year to age five by September of the school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows a child under five years old as of September 1 to be admitted to kindergarten if the parent or guardian makes a request to the school principal, and the principal and an appropriate staff person conduct an assessment that shows the child is developmentally ready
10-16p & 10-505, as amended by PA 23-160 , §§ 35 & 37	Lowers the eligibility age of children for the school readiness program. Under prior law, eligible children were ages three or four, and children aged five who are not eligible to enroll in kindergarten. The new law lowers the entry age to birth.
10-14hh-gg & -u, as amended by PA 23-167 , §§ 20-23 & 86	<p>Prior law required school boards to implement one of five SDE-approved reading curriculum models or programs for grades pre-kindergarten to three beginning with the 2023-24 school year and allowed a board to seek a waiver from using one of the recommended five if it could show the model it uses is comparable. A new law requires school boards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that did not receive a waiver and are not implementing an approved program, to begin partially implementing an approved program beginning with the 2023-24 school year and to fully implement the program by the start of the 2025-26 year that received a waiver to implement its comparable model under the waiver by the 2024-25 school year
Special Education	
10-76d(b), as amended by PA 23-137 , § 32	Aligns the state's special education statutes to a federal court ruling by requiring boards of education to provide special education until (1) an eligible student graduates high school or (2) the end of the school year when the eligible student reaches age 22 (due to the court ruling, this was already a requirement on all school boards).

Table 1 (continued)

Statute (CGS §)/ Public Act (PA)	Mandate Requirements
10-74r, as enacted by PA 23-137, § 31; 10-76d, as amended by PA 23-137, § 40	Requires each (1) board of education to appoint a districtwide transition services coordinator and (2) planning and placement team (PPT) to coordinate these services at two points in an eligible student’s high school career.
10-76d, as amended by PA 23-137, § 39	Aligns state statutes with federal requirements requiring interpreters at PPT meetings and translated individualized education plan (IEP) documents to ensure student, parent, and guardian understanding. Local and regional boards of education must provide these interpreters and translated documents upon request. Includes registered interpreters for persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. Language interpreters may appear in person or be available by phone or through a State Board of Education-approved online platform or application.
10-76d, as amended by PA 23-137, § 39	Requires local and regional school boards to give information about decision-making supports, including the process for establishing guardianship, conservatorship, or other decision-making alternatives, at the first PPT meeting when a student reaches age 14 and then annually. Students, parents, guardians, or surrogate parents of students eligible for special education must receive this information.
10-76h, as amended by PA 23-137, § 47	Makes various changes in the special education administrative hearing laws, including (1) modifying the order in which the parties must testify to require that the party responsible for providing special education to the student testifies before any other party does; (2) requiring that the hearing officers’ decisions be “promptly indexed and published,” and (3) allowing any one party to request that the mediation services coordinator appoint a mediator but does not require this request to be written or signed as under prior law.
10-76d, as amended by PA 23-159, § 12	Requires school paraprofessionals, or any other paraprofessional providing special education or related services to a student, to review a student’s IEP with a supervisor as needed. (Prior law allowed paraprofessionals to review IEPs without a supervisor being present.)
10-148d, as amended by PA 23-159, § 10	Preexisting law requires school boards to make available free, 18-hour professional development programs to paraeducators. A new law prohibits otherwise-mandated trainings (e.g., training on blood-borne pathogens, sexual harassment, or Department of Children and Families policies and procedures) from being counted toward the 18-hour offered program (they can be part of school district in-service training).
10-220a, as amended by PA 23-137, § 49	Adds the following topics to the required in-service training for licensed teachers, administrators, and pupil personnel provided by local or regional boards of education: (1) laws governing PPT meeting implementation and 504 plans and (2) an annual update of new state and federal policies about special education, recommendations, and best practices.

Table 1 (continued)

Statute (CGS §)/ Public Act (PA)	Mandate Requirements
<p>10-76d, as amended by PA 23-137, § 39</p>	<p>Requires the state’s mediation services coordinator to create (1) an online resource explaining the mediation process and (2) a notice of available mediation services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires school boards to provide this notice to students, parents, guardians, and surrogate parents in writing at the beginning of the school year, to be read aloud at the end of the first PPT meeting of each school year
<p>10-74n, as amended by PA 23-137, § 29</p>	<p>Requires boards of education to annually distribute a notice about transition resources to students and families at PPT meetings for students in grades 6 to 12.</p>
<p>10-74v, as enacted by PA 23-137, § 51; 10-76d, as amended by PA 23-137, § 52</p>	<p>Requires boards of education to give students eligible for special education and their parents information about their rights, resources, and advocacy groups (1) immediately when the student is formally identified as requiring special education, and at each subsequent PPT meeting, and (2) at the beginning of each school year.</p>
<p>10-76d, as amended by PA 23-150, § 16</p>	<p>Prohibits boards of education from disciplining any employee who discusses or makes recommendations about student services or accommodations during a 504 plan meeting. (Students with mental or physical disabilities who receive school accommodations under the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 have them memorialized in a written plan, commonly known as a “504 plan.”)</p>
Students	
<p>10-212k, as amended by PA 23-160, § 10</p>	<p>Extends the deadline by which boards of education must begin providing free menstrual products in school restrooms by one year, from September 1, 2023, to September 1, 2024.</p>
<p>10-222cc(b)-jj, as enacted by PA 23-167, §§ 47-55, 71, & 74</p>	<p>Revises the state’s existing anti-bullying law and requires all boards of education to adopt and implement the revised Connecticut school climate policy by the 2025-26 school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes implementing the following preexisting requirements revised in accordance with the new policy: an administrator for each school district to serve as climate coordinator with specified responsibilities; a professional school employee for each school to be trained and serve as school climate specialist with specified responsibilities including appointing members to a school climate committee and developing a school climate improvement plan; administration of a school climate survey; training and resources to be provided to school employees on school climate and related topics Imposes an additional requirement, beginning with the 2025-26 school year, to adopt a restorative practices policy to be implemented by school employees for incidents of challenging behavior or nonviolent student conflict that does not constitute a crime
<p>10-220, as amended by PA 23-167, § 76</p>	<p>Requires school districts with high rates of in- and out-of-school suspension and expulsion to (a) develop strategies to reduce suspensions and expulsions and (b) submit these strategies to SDE.</p>

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Statute (CGS §)/ Public Act (PA)</i>	<i>Mandate Requirements</i>
Teachers and Other Educational Employees	
<p>10-151j, as enacted by PA 23-159, § 6; 10-220, as amended by PA 23-159, § 7</p>	<p>Requires school boards to (1) develop and conduct exit surveys of teachers voluntarily leaving employment with the board and (2) add teacher attrition rates to their strategic school profile report that they annually submit to SDE.</p>
<p>10-151b, as enacted by PA 23-159, § 23</p>	<p>Requires local and regional boards of education to adopt revised teacher evaluation programs.</p>
<p>10-220a, as enacted by PA 23-160, § 2</p>	<p>Requires the in-service training on school violence prevention, which boards of education must annually provide to teachers, administrators, and other certified school employees, be aligned with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection’s school security and safety plan standards. Also requires in-service trainings to include emergency responses to students who have seizures in school.</p>
<p>10-156jj, as enacted by PA 23-167, § 10</p>	<p>Requires each school board to (1) submit its increasing educator diversity plan (referred to in prior law as the minority educator recruitment plan) to the education commissioner by March 15, 2024, for review and approval and (2) implement its approved plan beginning with the 2024-25 school year.</p>

TV:co