



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

***Raised Bill No. 7015***

LCO No. 5166



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:  
(ED)

***AN ACT EXCLUDING EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR STUDENT  
OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS FROM TRUANCY  
DETERMINATIONS.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-198a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

3 (a) For purposes of this section and sections 10-198c and 10-220,  
4 "truant" means a child age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in  
5 a public or private school and has four unexcused absences from school  
6 in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school  
7 year.

8 (b) Each local and regional board of education shall adopt and  
9 implement policies and procedures concerning truants who are enrolled  
10 in schools under the jurisdiction of such board of education. Such  
11 policies and procedures shall include, but need not be limited to, the  
12 following: (1) The holding of a meeting with the parent of each child  
13 who is a truant, or other person having control of such child, and  
14 appropriate school personnel to review and evaluate the reasons for the

15 child being a truant, provided such meeting shall be held not later than  
16 ten school days after the child's fourth unexcused absence in a month or  
17 tenth unexcused absence in a school year, (2) coordinating services with  
18 and referrals of children to community agencies providing child and  
19 family services, (3) annually at the beginning of the school year and  
20 upon any enrollment during the school year, notifying the parent or  
21 other person having control of each child enrolled in a grade from  
22 kindergarten to eight, inclusive, in the public schools in writing of the  
23 obligations of the parent or such other person pursuant to section 10-  
24 184, (4) annually at the beginning of the school year and upon any  
25 enrollment during the school year, obtaining from the parent or other  
26 person having control of each child in a grade from kindergarten to  
27 eight, inclusive, a telephone number or other means of contacting such  
28 parent or such other person during the school day, (5) (A) on or before  
29 August 15, 2018, the implementation of a truancy intervention model  
30 identified by the Department of Education pursuant to subsection (a) of  
31 section 10-198e for any school under its jurisdiction that has a  
32 disproportionately high rate of truancy, as determined by the  
33 Commissioner of Education, and (B) on or before September 1, 2023, the  
34 adoption and implementation of a truancy intervention model  
35 developed by the Department of Education pursuant to subsection (b)  
36 of section 10-198e that accounts for mental and behavioral health, or a  
37 similar truancy intervention plan that meets all of the requirements for  
38 a truancy intervention model set forth in subsection (b) of said section,  
39 (6) a system of monitoring individual unexcused absences of children in  
40 grades kindergarten to eight, inclusive, which shall provide that  
41 whenever a child enrolled in school in any such grade fails to report to  
42 school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been  
43 received by school personnel that the child's parent or other person  
44 having control of the child is aware of the pupil's absence, a reasonable  
45 effort to notify, by telephone and by mail, the parent or such other  
46 person shall be made by school personnel or volunteers under the  
47 direction of school personnel, (7) providing notice to the parent or  
48 guardian of a child who is a truant of the information concerning the

49 existence and availability of the 2-1-1 Infoline program, and other  
50 pediatric mental and behavioral health screening services and tools  
51 described in section 17a-22rt, and (8) on and after July 1, 2023, a  
52 requirement that an appropriate school mental health specialist, as  
53 defined in section 12 of public act 22-47, conduct an evaluation of each  
54 child who is a truant to determine if additional behavioral health  
55 interventions are necessary for the well-being of the child. Any person  
56 who, in good faith, gives or fails to give notice pursuant to subdivision  
57 (6) of this subsection shall be immune from any liability, civil or  
58 criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have  
59 the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding which  
60 results from such notice or failure to give such notice.

61 (c) Nothing in subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall preclude a  
62 local or regional board of education from adopting policies and  
63 procedures pursuant to this section which exceed the requirements of  
64 said subsections.

65 (d) The provisions of this section shall not apply to any child  
66 receiving equivalent instruction pursuant to section 10-184.

67 (e) A child, age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public  
68 or private school and whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty  
69 member of the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, and has been  
70 called to duty for, is on leave from or has immediately returned from  
71 deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be  
72 granted ten days of excused absences in any school year and, at the  
73 discretion of the local or regional board of education, additional excused  
74 absences to visit such child's parent or legal guardian with respect to  
75 such leave or deployment of the parent or legal guardian. In the case of  
76 excused absences pursuant to this subsection, such child and parent or  
77 legal guardian shall be responsible for obtaining assignments from the  
78 student's teacher prior to any period of excused absence, and for  
79 ensuring that such assignments are completed by such child prior to [his  
80 or her] such child's return to school from such period of excused

81 absence.

82 (f) A child, age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public  
83 or private school shall be granted one day as an excused absence in any  
84 school year and, at the discretion of the local or regional board of  
85 education, additional excused absences to observe a religious holiday.  
86 In the case of an excused absence pursuant to this subsection, such child  
87 and parent or legal guardian shall be responsible for obtaining  
88 assignments from the student's teacher prior to such excused absence,  
89 and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by such child  
90 upon such child's return to school from such excused absence.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2025	10-198a

**Statement of Purpose:**

To exclude excused absences for student observance of religious holidays from truancy determinations.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*