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EXTENDED SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS IN CONNECTICUT

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You asked for information about extended school day, extended school year, and after-school programs in Connecticut, including state laws, state and federal grants, and school and school district practice.

SUMMARY

Connecticut state law establishes an annual minimum number of days and hours of instruction that public schools in the state must offer. Once they meet these minimum requirements, boards of education and charter and magnet school governing authorities have discretion to set school calendars and daily schedules.

Since 2003, the State Board of Education's (SBE) [policy](#) has been to encourage school districts to use various options to expand the amount of time students spend on academic activities, including through longer school days; after-school, weekend, and summer programs; and longer school years. Federal and state grants are available to fund extended school time programs, including after-school activities. These grants are targeted to low-performing, high-poverty schools and schools districts where students have the most need for academic support.

Despite SBE's policy and available federal and state funding, the statewide average number of public school instructional days per year has remained at 181 for the most recent seven years for which instructional time data is available. State Department of Education (SDE) data show that most school districts offer the minimum or near the minimum number of school days annually and that only a handful have average school days longer than seven and one-half hours. In addition, of

the schools offering extended school days and years, most are charter or interdistrict magnet schools.

STATE LAWS

Local and regional boards of education and charter school governing boards have discretion over annual school calendars and daily school schedules. These authorities establish starting and ending dates for school years, schedule school vacations, and decide the starting and ending times for school days. But in doing so, they must comply with state statutory requirements.

State law requires public schools to provide at least 180 days of actual school sessions for kindergarten through grade 12. Schools must also provide a minimum of 900 hours of actual school work per year for a full-day kindergarten program through grade 12 and at least 450 hours per year for a half-day kindergarten program. Districts may count no more than seven hours per day towards these minimums ([CGS § 10-16](#)).

If school sessions are cancelled because of bad weather or for other reasons, state law prohibits districts from rescheduling sessions on Saturday or Sunday, although supplemental programs for students may occur on those days. The law also authorizes SBE to allow a school board to shorten the school year on account of an unavoidable emergency, or to provide school according to an alternate schedule. But the alternate schedule must allow a student to attend school for at least an average of 180 days per year over 13 years ([CGS § 10-15](#)).

Finally, state law also requires school districts to offer full-day students at least 20 minutes per day for lunch and, for students in grades K-5, a daily period of physical exercise of unspecified length ([CGS § 10-221o](#)).

FEDERAL GRANTS

21st Century Learning Center Program

The major federal grant for extended school time and after-school programs is the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) grant. The grants are available to school districts and nonprofit and community-based organizations to support out-of-school-time academic enrichment programs for students attending low-performing schools. Grants are targeted to schools with high concentrations of poverty (schools where at least 40% of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches). They must be used for programs that reinforce and complement participating students' regular academic programs,

such as tutoring; art, music, and recreation programs; and technology education.

According to [a 2009-10 evaluation report](#) of Connecticut's 21st CCLCs, the state's aggregate grant for FY 10 was \$8,857,873. In that year, 56 grant-funded programs served 7,074 students daily. The average grantee budget was \$158,176, the average program had 125 students, and the average per-pupil allocation was \$1,370.

According to SDE, Connecticut received federal grants totaling \$7,418,577 in FY 11 for 21st CCLCs.

School Improvement Grants

Although not primarily focused on extended school time programs, federal School Improvement Grants (SIGs) are also available to fund extended time programs in certain schools. The grants are intended to improve student achievement in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under the Elementary and Secondary Education (“No Child Left Behind”) Act. To receive a grant, a school district must commit to reconstituting the identified schools using one of the four federally specified intervention models. Two of the models, Turnaround and Transformation, require schools to improve academic performance through extended learning time, among other strategies.

Connecticut received a total of \$29.3 million in the first two SIG grant award phases in April and December of 2010. SDE, in turn, awarded SIG grants to eight districts for use in a total of 19 schools. All but two of the schools have chosen to use either the Turnaround or Transformation model, and will thus use the federal funds, in part, to implement extended learning time strategies to improve student achievement.

Table 1 shows the 17 schools using the Transformation and Turnaround models and their SIG grants.

TABLE 1: FEDERAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

<i>School</i>	<i>Intervention Model</i>	<i>Year 1 2010-11</i>	<i>Year 2 2011-2012</i>	<i>Year 3 2012-13</i>
<i>Bloomfield School District</i>				
Bloomfield High School	Transformation	\$700,800	Not Available	Not Available
<i>Bridgeport School District</i>				
Barnum School	Transformation	500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000

Bassick High School	Transformation	700,000	700,000	700,000
Roosevelt School	Turnaround	757,883	Not Available	Not Available
Hartford School District				
Milner Core Knowledge School	Turnaround	430,569	400,000	400,000
Burns Latino Studies Academy	Turnaround	430,568	400,000	400,000
Sand School	Turnaround	400,000	400,000	400,000
Dr. Ramon E. Betances School	Turnaround	400,000	400,000	400,000
New Britain School District				
Smalley Academy	Transformation	700,000	700,000	700,000
New Haven School District				
Katherine Brennan School	Turnaround	590,000	500,000	500,000
Hill Central Music Academy	Turnaround	590,000	500,000	500,000
James Hillhouse High School	Transformation	700,000	700,000	700,000
Wilbur Cross High School	Transformation	700,000	700,000	700,000
New London School District				
New London High School	Transformation	800,000	Not Available	Not Available
Stamford Academy				
Stamford Academy	Transformation	400,000	400,000	400,000
Windham School District				
Natchaug School	Transformation	700,000	700,000	700,000
Windham High School	Transformation	800,000	Not Available	Not Available

Source: State Department of Education

STATE GRANTS

The state provides several grants to support extended school hours and after-school programs, especially in school districts with low student achievement. These grant programs are briefly summarized below.

Priority School District Grants

The state provides grants to school districts that qualify as “priority districts” based on demographic, academic, and economic characteristics specified in state law ([CGS § 10-266p \(a\)](#)). Priority district grants are available to fund various programs to improve educational achievement, including summer and after-school programs.

Table 2 shows the 15 priority districts and their FY 11 grants. PA 11-6 allocates \$40,319,326 and \$39,792,940, respectively for the grants for FY 12 and FY 13.

TABLE 2: FY 11 PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICT GRANTS

District	FY 11 Grant
Ansonia	\$1,170,738
Bridgeport	6,851,635
Bristol	802,770
Danbury	2,307,294
East Hartford	1,201,409
Hartford	6,298,095
Meriden	1,386,576
New Britain	2,307,294
New Haven	6,298,095
New London	1,170,738
Norwalk	2,957,294
Norwich	1,170,737
Stamford	2,860,834
Waterbury	2,641,464
Windham	1,170,737
TOTAL	\$40,595,710

Source: State Department of Education

Extended School Hours Grants

This state grant provides funds to priority districts for academic, enrichment, and recreational programs. Activities can take place before or after school, on weekends, and during school vacations ([CGS § 10-266t](#)). Table 3 shows the FY 11 grants. PA 11-6 allocates the same amounts for for FYs 12 and 13.

TABLE 3: FY 11 EXTENDED SCHOOL HOURS GRANTS

District	FY 11 Grant
Ansonia	\$54,044
Bridgeport	403,020
Danbury	191,824
East Hartford	149,888
Hartford	411,300
Meriden	179,547
New Britain	204,730
New Haven	342,164
New London	66,363
Norwalk	204,575
Norwich	105,597

Stamford	281,763
Waterbury	335,751
Windham	64,186
TOTAL	2,994,752

Source: State Department of Education

Summer School Grants

This grant goes to priority school districts for summer school programs for students in grades 1 to 3 who are substantially deficient in reading. Funds may also be used for summer school for kindergarten students and students in grades 4 to 6 who fail to improve their reading ([CGS § 10-265m](#)). Table 4 shows the FY 11 grants. Under PA 11-6, grants remain the same for FYs 12 and 13.

TABLE 4: FY 11 SUMMER SCHOOL GRANTS

<i>District</i>	<i>FY 11 Grant</i>
Ansonia	\$60,422
Bridgeport	442,920
Bristol	185,074
Danbury	215,949
East Hartford	168,741
Hartford	451,721
Meriden	194,748
New Britain	229,087
New Haven	373,843
New London	72,973
Norwalk	230,544
Norwich	115,977
Stamford	315,287
Waterbury	371,001
Windham	71,412
TOTAL	\$3,499,699

Source: State Department of Education

After-School Programs

This competitive grant is available to school districts, community-based organizations, charter and magnet schools, and other entities for high-quality after-school programs that provide educational enrichment and

recreational activities for students in grades K-12. To be funded, programs must include a parent involvement component.

Programs may be located in schools or other facilities. They can include tutoring and mentoring; homework help; hands-on science or technology programs; and art, music, sports, and cultural activities. In FY 10 and FY 11, the program provided grants to 40 programs operated by school districts, regional education service centers, and nonprofit organizations. A total of \$4.32 million was distributed in FY 11. The program's budgeted appropriation for FY 12 and FY 13 is \$4.5 million annually. Table 5 lists FY 11 grant recipients and amounts.

TABLE 5: FY 11 AFTER SCHOOL GRANTS

GRANT RECIPIENT	GRANT	GRANT RECIPIENT	GRANT
Bridgeport	\$133,500	Education Connection	\$133,500
Bridgeport	133,500	A C E S	133,500
East Hartford	44,500	LEARN	133,428
Enfield	133,500	E A S T C O N N	92,560
Hamden	83,286	Catholic Charities/Catholic Family Services – Hartford	133,145
Hartford	133,500	Village For Families	125,491
Montville	25,000	Bridges	133,500
New Britain	133,500	YWCA Of New Britain	26,700
New Haven	133,500	Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance Center Inc.	65,415
New Haven	133,500	Domus	124,155
Plainville	133,500	Padres Abriendo Puertas	71,491
Plainville	50,000	Boys & Girls Club of Hartford	65,087
Stafford	133,500	Environmental Learning Ctrs of CT	133,500
Stamford	133,500	Boys & Girls Club - Meriden	65,776
Stratford	133,500	Dwight Hall At Yale	133,500
Stratford	133,500	CT Puerto Rican Frm	133,500
Thompson	67,752	Organized Parents	133,500
Thompson	25,000	Organized Parents	133,500
Waterbury	89,896	Carver Foundation of Norwalk	133,500
Waterbury	96,411		
Waterbury	131,407		

Source: State Department of Education

A March 2011 [report](#) on the after-school grant program by the University of Connecticut's Center for Applied Research in Human Development, states that the 40 programs offered academic, enrichment, recreation,

and wellness activities to 4,717 students at 60 sites in 26 school districts statewide. The report has additional details about the programs' operations and effectiveness.

SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT PRACTICE

As already noted, as long as they comply with state laws, school districts have wide discretion to determine how many days of instruction and how many hours per day they provide. However, SDE data on instructional time shows most public schools offer close to the required minimum number of days per year. Charter and magnet schools are more likely to offer longer school days and years.

Average Annual Number of Instructional Days

According to SDE data, the average number of annual instructional days offered in Connecticut public schools in the 2009-10 school year (the most recent year available) was 181. This average has remained the same since 2002-03.

Over 81% of the 193 schools and school districts included in SDE's database provided between 180 and 182 instructional days in 2009-10, with nearly 40% providing the statutory minimum number of 180 days. Five schools offer more than 190 days of instruction. All are charter schools.

Table 5 shows the range of annual instructional days offered in Connecticut districts.

TABLE 5: NUMBER OF INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS OFFERED

2009-10 SCHOOL YEAR

<i>Days Offered</i>	<i>Number of Districts/ Schools</i>
180	75
181	38
182	44
183-184	28
185	2
194	3
195	1
200	1

Daily Instructional Time

SDE data on school start and end times in the 2009-10 school year show that, of 1,040 public schools, only 13 provided more than seven and one half hours of daily instructional time. Of these, 10 are charter or interdistrict magnet schools. Table 6 lists the 13 schools and their starting and ending times.

TABLE 6: SCHOOLS WITH AVERAGE INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS OF 7.5 HOURS OR MORE

<i>District/Type</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Start Time</i> <i>(AM)</i>	<i>End Time</i> <i>(PM)</i>	<i>Hours</i>
Hartford/Charter	Achievement First Hartford Academy	7:30	4:00	8.5
New Haven/Charter	Amistad Academy	7:15	4:00	8.75
Bridgeport/Charter	Bridgeport Achievement First Academy	7:15	4:00	8.75
CREC*/ Magnet	Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts – Full Time	7:30	4:15	8.75
CREC*/ Magnet	Greater Hartford Academy of Math & Science	7:30	4:00	8.5
EASTCONN**/Magnet	ACT Magnet School (Arts at the Capitol Theater) – Full Time	9:20	5:00	7 hours, 40 minutes
New Haven/Charter	Elm City College Preparatory School	7:15	4:15	9.0
Hartford/Magnet	Breakthrough II	8:15	3:55	7 hours, 40 minutes
Hartford/Magnet	Breakthrough Magnet School	8:30	4:00	7.5
Hartford/Magnet	Classical Magnet School	8:00	4:00	8.0
Hartford	High School, Inc.	8:45	4:25	7 hours, 40 minutes
Hartford	Journalism and Media High School	7:45	3:10	7 hours, 40 minutes
Hartford	OPPportunity High School	8:35	4:30	7 hours, 55 minutes

* Capitol Region Education Council

** Eastern Connecticut Regional Educational Service Center