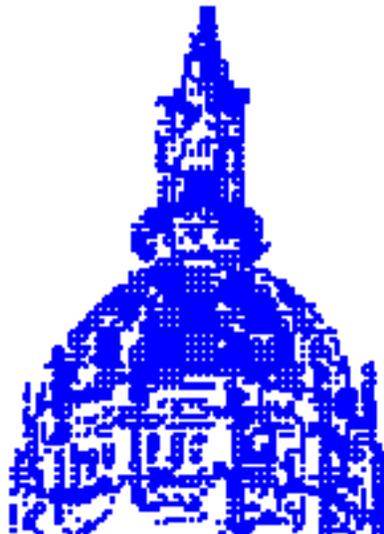


Office of Legislative Research
Connecticut General Assembly



OLR ACTS AFFECTING

EDUCATION



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Notice to Readers

This report provides highlights of new laws affecting education enacted during the 2006 regular legislative session. Not all provisions of the acts are included here. Complete summaries of all 2006 public acts passed will be available in the fall when OLR's Public Act Summary book is published; some are already available on OLR's webpage: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/OLRPASums.asp>. This report does not include major budget provisions, which may be obtained from the Office of Fiscal Analysis.

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, the House Clerk's Office, or the General Assembly's website: <http://www.cga.ct.gov>.

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BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

School Construction

This act authorizes \$784 million in state grant commitments for school construction projects, including increased grants for reauthorized projects that have changed in cost or scope by at least 10%.

It adds several provisions to control school project costs and cost increases. These include (1) limiting the legislature's ability to reauthorize a project whose scope or cost changes; (2) for projects costing more than \$10 million, halving the state reimbursement rate for any amount of change orders that exceed 5% of the project's authorized cost; (3) requiring SDE to approve plans and specifications for turn-key projects, under which a school district agrees to buy a completed building built by a third party; and (4) requiring SDE to develop a standard series of school construction contracts that districts can use as the basis for their own project contracts.

The act also places restrictions on the financial relationships between architects and construction managers working on school projects and their contracts and relationships with school boards. The act imposes penalties on contracts

that fail to comply with standards it establishes.

(PA 06-158, effective July 1, 2006 for most provisions, upon passage for the grant commitments)

EARLY CHILDHOOD/ SCHOOL READINESS

School Readiness Grants For Priority Districts

An act increases the FY 07 allocation of priority school district funds for school readiness grants by \$5,983,750, from \$50,355,222 to \$56,338,972. The act requires \$3,483,750 of the school readiness grant appropriation for priority school districts to be used only for school readiness programs in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Waterbury, and Windham.

(PA 06-135, §§ 1& 2, effective July 1, 2006)

Use of School Readiness Grants Funds Not Earmarked for Expenditure

By law, a town must submit a plan to SDE by October 1 for spending all the noncompetitive school readiness grant funds for which it is eligible. Otherwise, under prior law, SDE could use 70% of the unallocated funds to provide supplemental grants to other eligible towns and 30% of those funds for school readiness

professional development. The act allows SDE to determine the distribution of funds between these purposes and allows it also to use the funds to conduct activities related to preschool and kindergarten student development evaluations or assessments.

(PA 06-135, §23, effective July 1, 2006)

School Readiness Program Penalty for Lack of Accreditation

The law imposes a \$ 6,925 per child limit on the cost of the SDE's school readiness program component. The act prohibits SDE from providing funding to school readiness providers that are not accredited by a time certain. If the provider first entered into a service contract with the town on or before January 1, 2004, it must be accredited by January 1, 2007 to retain funding eligibility. If the service contract was entered into after January 1, 2004, the provider has to be accredited within three years of the contract date to retain funding eligibility. The law already limits grants to providing spaces in accredited programs.

(PA 06-135, §24, effective July 1, 2006)

Statewide Information System

SDE is required by law to maintain a statewide public school information system. The

act requires boards of education and state-funded preschool programs to participate in this information system by reporting on at least the following subjects in a manner prescribed by the education commissioner: (1) student experiences in preschools by program type and number of months in each such program and (2) student readiness for and progress in kindergarten. The reporting must be done annually beginning by October 1, 2007.

(PA 06-135, § 22, effective July 1, 2006)

The Early Childhood Education Workforce

This act requires the higher education commissioner, within available appropriations and in consultation with various groups, to develop accelerated, alternate route programs to initial teacher certification with an early childhood education endorsement. It also requires her to define preservice and minimum training requirements and competencies for people involved in early childhood education from birth to age five. These must include requirements for individual levels of credentialing and licensing.

(PA 06-154, effective July 1, 2006)

EDUCATION COST SHARING AND FUNDING

Education Cost Sharing Grants

This act establishes minimum education cost sharing (ECS) grants for all towns. For FY 07, it requires every town's ECS grant to be at least 60% of its full grant entitlement. For FY 08 and each subsequent fiscal year, it requires each town to receive an ECS grant that is at least (1) equal to the grant it received for the previous fiscal year or (2) 60% of its full ECS entitlement.

(PA 06-135, §19, effective July 1, 2006)

Minimum Expenditure Requirement

This act extends the minimum expenditure requirement (MER) for towns receiving the ECS grant through FY 07. The MER requires towns to spend a minimum amount on regular education programs.

Under the act, as for prior years, the FY 07 MER for each town is the sum of (1) its FY 06 MER; (2) any ECS grant increase it receives in FY 07; and (3) if its enrollment dropped between 2004 and 2005, an amount equal to the decrease multiplied by one-half of the ECS foundation amount. The ECS foundation amount for FY 07 is \$5,891 per pupil.

(PA 06-135, §5, effective July 1, 2006)

General Priority School District Grant Allocation

An act increases the FY 07 allocation of general priority school district funds for priority school district grants by \$6 million from \$36,513,547 to \$42,513,547. It requires the State Board of Education to allocate the \$6 million among the priority school districts. The money is in addition to other priority school district grant funds the districts receive. The board must distribute the additional money to each district in proportion to its regular priority school district funding.

(PA 06-135, §§ 2 & 27, effective July 1, 2006)

Youth Service Bureaus

This act increases the number of youth service bureaus (YSBs) eligible for SDE grants. It does so by making all YSBs eligible for state grants starting in FY 07 if they (1) were eligible for a grant in FY 06, rather than only in FY 05, or (2) applied by June 30, 2006, rather than only by June 30, 2005, after receiving approval for their town's matching contribution. The grants are \$14,000 each, with any excess funds distributed among bureaus that received grants of more than \$15,000 in FY 95.

(PA 06-135, §18, effective on passage)

Business Tax Credit for Computers Donated to Nonpublic Schools

An act extends to nonpublic schools an existing business tax credit for businesses that donate new or used computers to public schools. By law, the maximum credit is 50% of the computer's fair market value when donated. The credit applies against the corporation tax and the insurance premium, air carrier, railroad company, cable and satellite TV, and utility company taxes.

(PA 06-145, effective July 1, 2006 and applicable to income years starting on or after January 1, 2006)

After School Grant

The law allows SDE, in consultation with the after school committee, to administer an after school grant program for boards of education, municipalities, and tax exempt nonprofit organizations. The act requires the SDE and the committee to develop and apply evaluation procedures to measure the effectiveness of the grant program.

(sHB 5758, § 12, effective July 1, 2006)

“Generation Next” Pilot Program

An act requires SDE to establish, within available appropriations, a “Generation

Next” pilot program connecting (1) business-sponsored job shadowing to high school students and (2) externship experiences to public school teachers. Grant recipients must use the funds to develop and implement a coordinated high school teacher externship and student job shadowing program in the areas of math or science or with technology-related businesses in the state.

(PA 06-83, § 18, effective July 1, 2006)

HEALTH AND WELFARE

School Nutrition

This act (1) restricts the types of beverages that may be sold to students in school; (2) requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to set nutritional standards for food sold to students in schools; and (3) provides a financial incentive for school boards; charter school, endowed academy, and interdistrict magnet school governing authorities; and the regional vocational-technical school system to meet the SDE standards. It eliminates the requirement that school boards provide nutritious and low-fat drink options and extends the requirement that boards provide nutritious and low-fat food options to the governing authorities of state charter schools, interdistrict magnet schools, and endowed academies.

(PA 06-63, effective July 1, 2006)

School Breakfast Pilot Program

This act establishes a pilot in-classroom school breakfast program and permits SDE, within appropriations, to provide competitive grants to help up to 10 severe need schools establish them.

In awarding grants, the commissioner must consider, at a minimum:

1. the specific objectives and description of the proposed program,
2. its cost,
3. how many children will be fed, and
4. whether the proposed program is likely to increase the number of students receiving nutritious breakfasts.

(PA 06-135, § 20, effective July 1, 2006)

Connecticut Grown Foods in Connecticut Schools

The act establishes a farm-to-school program within the department agriculture (DOAg). The program must be run in consultation with SDE to promote and facilitate the sale of Connecticut-grown farm products by farms to school districts, schools, and other educational institutions under SDE's jurisdiction. The act also requires SDE to establish the

Connecticut-Grown for Connecticut Kids Week to promote Connecticut agriculture and foods to children through school meal and classroom programs, at farms, farmers' markets, and other community locations. The week-long promotional event must be established in consultation with DOAg, school food service directors, and interested farming organizations and held every year in late September or early October.

(PA 06-135, § 21, effective July 1, 2006)

Committee to Improve Health Care Access

This act requires the DPH commissioner to establish an ad hoc committee to assist him in examining statutory and regulatory changes to improve health care through access to school-based health centers, particularly by under- or uninsured people or Medicaid recipients. The committee must meet by July 15, 2006. The committee must focus on improving school-based resources, facilitating access to school-based health centers, and identifying or recommending appropriate fiscal support for operational and capital activities. It must also assess the current school-based health center system. The committee must submit the results of its examinations with specific recommendations for statutory or

regulatory changes to the governor and Public Health Committee by December 1, 2006.

(**sSB 317**, § 511, effective on passage)

Bullying Policies

This act broadens the law on bullying behavior in schools by:

1. expanding the definition of bullying to include overt acts directed at another student with the intent to harass that student and incidents that occur on a school bus,
2. enhancing schools' obligations to tell students how to report bullying, and
3. requiring interventions for students who repeatedly bully or are bullied.

(**PA 06-115**, §1, effective July 1, 2006)

At-Risk Students

The act requires SDE, within available resources, to review programs in other states for their effectiveness in reducing the drop-out and suspension rates for students at risk of either. SDE must report its findings to the Education Committee January 1, 2007.

(**sHB 5758**, § 6, effective July 1, 2006)

SCHOOL CHOICE

Charter School Bonus Grant

By law, the state charter school grant for each fiscal year starting in FY 07 is \$8,000 per student. If in any year, the state appropriates more than this per-student amount, the per-student grant must be increased proportionately.

This act limits the proportional increase in the charter school grant to a maximum of \$70 per student. It allocates any excess appropriation to the SDE for supplemental grants to interdistrict magnet schools.

(**PA 06-135**, § 26, effective July 1, 2006)

Charter School Enrollment Caps

Charter schools may enroll up to 250 students, except a school with a grade range of kindergarten through eight can enroll up to 300 students. Charter schools cannot enroll more than 25% of the enrollment of the school district where the school is located. The act provides an exception to these rules for schools with a demonstrated record of raising academic achievement. It permits the State Board of Education to allow such a school to have up to 85 students per grade if the board finds it is appropriate to do

so and if it is within available appropriations.

(PA 06-55, effective on passage)

Summer School Programs for Magnet School Students

The act allows the education commissioner, within available appropriations, to make grants to regional educational service centers (RESCs) that provide summer school programs approved by the education commissioner to interdistrict magnet school students. It eliminates a provision allowing the annual supplemental grants to enhance magnet school educational programs that the commissioner may provide within available appropriations to be used for summer school programs.

(PA 06-135, § 3, effective July 1, 2006)

Magnet School Transportation Grants

The act increases the maximum state grant for transporting students to interdistrict magnet schools outside their home districts by \$100, from \$1,200 to \$1,300 per student. Grants must be provided within available appropriations and are payable to local and regional school boards, RESCs, cooperative arrangements between school districts, and the community-

technical colleges on behalf of Manchester Community College.

(PA 06-135, § 12, effective July 1, 2006)

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

School Notices

An act requires schools to mail school notices to the parent or guardian with whom the student does not primarily reside at the same time they mail them to the other parent or guardian.

(PA 06-115, § 2, effective July 1, 2006)

Parental Involvement Reporting in Strategic School Profiles

This act requires superintendents to include information on parental involvement in the strategic school profiles they are required to submit to their respective boards each year. They must include the information in the narrative portion of the report and note whether the district has taken measures to improve parental involvement, including engaging parents in school programs and increasing support to parents working with their children at home on learning activities. Boards must submit the reports to the education commissioner.

(PA 06-167, effective July 1, 2006)

Regional Education Service Centers

The act requires the SDE to encourage the use of RESCs to provide goods and services to school boards. It allows SDE to give special consideration to grant applications that indicate (1) such use or (2) joint purchasing agreements among boards to purchase supplies, testing materials, food or food services.

(sHB 5758, § 11, effective July 1, 2006)

Statewide Universal Fund Application

The Commission on Educational Technology oversees periodic statewide applications for funds from the federal Universal Service Fund to enhance the Connecticut Education Network (CEN). The act considers any local or regional board of education the commission designates for connection to CEN as having consented to the commission submitting the Universal Service Fund application on its behalf, without the commission having to obtain the consent of each one individually. The act also allows the commission to appoint a designee to submit the application.

(sHB 5758, § 8, effective July 1, 2006)

Credit and Records from Unified School District #1

This act specifically requires Unified School District #1 to send the records of transfer students to their new school districts. The law already required a sending school district to provide this information within 10 days of receiving the mandated notice of enrollment from the new school district.

The act also requires the new school district to credit students for all instruction received in the unified school district within 30 days of receiving students' education records. Unified School District #1 serves students in the custody of the Department of Correction.

(sHB 5758, § 1, effective July 1, 2006)

Regional Board of Education Reserve Funds

Capital and Nonrecurring Expenses. The act prohibits regional boards of education from creating new reserve funds to finance a specific (1) capital improvement or (2) equipment purchase. The act allows any such existing funds to be discontinued, upon the board's recommendation and approval. The act allows boards to instead create, by a majority vote of its members, a general reserve fund for capital and nonrecurring expenditures and sets a maximum appropriation for such funds. The act restricts use to

the funding of all or part of the planning, construction, reconstruction, or acquisition of a specific capital improvement or equipment item. If an expenditure is approved, an appropriation must be set up and plainly designated for that particular project. Any unexpended amount of the appropriation may be continued until the project or purchase is completed, with any remaining amount after completion reverting to the fund. The act allows the board, by majority vote, to terminate the appropriation if the project or purchase cannot be completed due to unforeseen circumstances.

Accrued Liabilities for Employee Sick Leave and Severance Benefits. The act also allows a regional board, by a majority vote, to create a reserve fund for accrued liabilities for employee sick leave and severance benefits and sets a maximum appropriation for such funds. Upon the board's approval by majority vote, any or all of the fund may be used to pay employee sick leave and severance benefits without further appropriation.

(sHB 5758, §§ 4 & 5, effective on passage)

Municipal Pension Deficit Funding Bonds

By law, municipalities can issue bonds to pay for their unfunded pension obligations.

This act changes the requirements for issuing and repaying these bonds, including (1) making scheduled contributions to the pension plan while the bonds are outstanding, (2) increasing the kind of information that must be provided to the state before and after issuing the bonds, and (3) requiring annual pension plan status reports for the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary and the state treasurer.

The act also allows regional school districts to issue and repay bonds to cover unfunded pension obligations under the same rules as municipalities. A district can issue bonds only if its board adopts an authorizing resolution by a two-thirds vote. The act gives municipalities more choices for investing retiree benefits reserve funds by allowing them to (1) increase the share they can invest in equities and (2) invest the remaining share in a broader range of government obligations and other investment instruments. The act also allows them to establish trusts to manage and invest retirement system assets.

Lastly, the act eliminates municipal authorization to issue bonds to fund retiree benefits reserve funds and, consequently, limits the authorization to issue bonds to fund loss reserve funds to just property or casualty losses.

(PA 06-79, effective July 1, 2006)

SPECIAL EDUCATION

IDEA Revisions

This act revises state special education laws to match the recently reauthorized federal Individuals With Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA), which governs special education programs and procedures in states and local school districts. Among other things, the act:

1. prohibits making a child get a prescription drug before he may go to school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education, or receive special education;
2. authorizes SDE special education hearing officers to require school districts to reimburse parents of special education children for the cost of unilateral private school placements, if the child previously received special education from the district and the officer finds the district failed to give the child a free and appropriate public education in a timely manner;
3. eliminates a 30-day time limit on voluntary state mediation efforts to settle disputes between school districts and parents of special education students;
4. eliminates a requirement that a school district perform a full evaluation of a student who leaves

special education because he graduates from high school with a regular diploma or reaches the age at which he is no longer eligible for special education; and

5. requires SDE to appoint surrogate parents for homeless and unaccompanied youths, as defined by federal law.

The act also revises special education hearing and evaluation procedures, expands the Advisory Council for Special Education, updates and revises terminology, and makes technical changes.

(PA 06-18, effective July 1, 2006)

Board of Education and Services for the Blind

Beginning January 4, 2007, this act increases the membership of the governing board of the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) from seven to 13. It specifies that the board serves as the state's central policy making authority in providing services to the blind and visually impaired and enumerates specific monitoring responsibilities. The terms of all members serving on the board on the date the act passes expire on January 3, 2007.

(PA 06-124, effective on passage)

State Excess Cost Grants for Special Education Children

Starting on July 1, 2006, the act prohibits the state from deducting Medicaid reimbursement the local education agencies (LEAs) receive from the Department of Social Services (DSS), when determining the amount of excess cost grants it provides LEAs for children (1) receiving special education and (2) living in foster homes, group homes, hospitals, state institutions, receiving homes, custodial institutions, or other residential or day treatment facilities or residing on state-owned or leased property or in permanent family residences from deducting from these grants.

(**SB 703**, § 10, effective July 1, 2006)

School-Based Child Health (SBCH) Program

The act makes a few changes to the SBCH program. It specifies that durable medical equipment (DME) can be one of the “services” that can be recommended for a child enrolled in the program and that this equipment is eligible for Medicaid reimbursement, as are the other services, such as physical therapy. The act also allows the DSS commissioner to require prior authorization (PA) for some of this equipment.

The act permits these changes, as well as the existing

law, to be implemented regardless of any other provision of law that may be contrary to it. The act also removes the requirement that diagnostic and evaluation services that children receive under the program be specified on their individualized education program (IEP). These two services typically are used to determine whether a child needs an IEP.

(**SB 703**, § 26, effective July 1, 2006)

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Early Reading Success Administration

For FY 07, the act increases the maximum amount SDE receives for administering the Early Reading Success program by \$150,000, from \$203,646 to \$353,646.

(**PA 06-135**, § 28, effective July 1, 2006)

SDE Website

The act allows the SDE to develop and maintain a website without the Department of Information Technology’s help.

(**sHB 5758**, § 7, effective on passage)

School Accommodation Hearing Officers

The SBE employs hearing officers to hear and decide appeals of local school board

decisions on student residency for the purpose of school accommodations. Hearing officers can be SDE employees or qualified people from outside SDE. Hearing officers are paid reasonable fees and expenses established by SBE. Prior law barred SBE from paying these fees and expenses to any hearing officer who is a state employee. The act narrows this prohibition to cover only SDE employees, thus allowing SBE to pay employees of other state agencies the per diem fee and expenses when they act as school accommodation hearing officers.

(sHB 5758, § 9, effective on passage)

Classified Service Exemption for Education Department Managers

The act exempts SDE's managerial employees from the state classified service. Previously, only SDE's professional employees and certified teachers employed in teaching positions at state institutions were exempt. The act also makes a technical change to specify that the employees covered by the exemptions are employed by the state department and not the State Board of Education.

(PA 06-135, § 13, effective on passage)

TEACHERS

Reemployment of Retired Teachers

Under certain conditions, the law allows local boards of education to reemploy retired teachers for a full school year and to extend the reemployment for an additional school year while the teacher continues to receive benefits from Teachers' Retirement System. This act adds an additional condition for this reemployment.

By law, the retired teacher must be reemployed in a subject shortage area identified by the education commissioner, the reemploying local school board must apply in writing to the Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) for permission, and the TRB must approve. The act also requires a local board, as part of its request for approval, to certify that no qualified candidate other than the retired teacher is available.

(sHB 5758, § 13, July 1, 2006)

Teachers' Retirement System Changes

This act makes several changes in the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS). It allows a local school board and its teachers to share the cost of an early retirement incentive program. It also allows the Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) to pay a new retiree his

first monthly benefit payment up to three months after the effective date of his retirement. The payment must be retroactive to the retirement date.

If a teacher who has filed for retirement dies before the retirement takes effect, the act allows his spouse to choose to receive either (1) the teacher's pre-retirement benefits, which includes either a lump sum death benefit or return of the teacher's contributions plus interest, or (2) the benefit payment option the deceased teacher chose on his retirement application. The option applies only if the deceased teacher designated his spouse as his sole beneficiary on his retirement application.

The act requires retired teachers who participate in TRB's health plan to be participating in both Medicare Part A hospital insurance and Medicare Part B medical insurance instead of only the former.

Finally, the act allows TRS members to purchase up to 10 years of service credit in the system for (1) Connecticut public school service as a social work assistant between January 1, 1969 and December 31, 1986 and (2) service in the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program. The social work service purchase authorization applies only to members who became certified school social workers and remained in public school service as a social worker after becoming certified.

(**sHB 5723**, effective July 1, 2006)

Alternate Route to Certification Programs

The act requires the Department of Higher Education (DHE), in consultation with SDE, to develop alternate route to certification (ARC) programs for (1) school administrators and superintendents and (2) early childhood education teachers. DHE must develop criteria for program admission. Programs must include mentored apprenticeships.

DHE already administers an ARC program for teachers. The ARC program prepares highly qualified mid-career adults to become teachers and focuses on teacher shortage subjects identified by the education commissioner.

(**PA 06-135**, § 25, effective July 1, 2006)

Student Teaching in Foreign Countries

The act allows prospective teachers to do their student teaching in foreign countries instead of only under the supervision of a cooperating teacher as part of the SDE's cooperating teacher program. The foreign student teaching must be conducted under a written cooperative agreement between a Connecticut and a foreign higher education institution. The act allows a

Connecticut institution to make these agreements only after SBE and the Board of Governors of Higher Education have jointly approved participation in the agreements by its teacher preparation program.

(**sHB 5758**, § 2, effective July 1, 2006)

Durational Shortage Area Permits for National Teacher Corps Graduates

The act allows the SDE to issue special durational shortage area permits (DSAPs) to allow qualified graduates of a national teacher corps (such as Teach for America) training program to work at the elementary or secondary level in public and charter schools in Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven.

The act modifies some of DSAP qualifications for those issued to national teacher corps graduates. It requires:

1. the education commissioner to approve the national corps training program from which the applicant graduated;
2. the national corps graduates holding the DSAPs to be enrolled in (a) a teacher preparation program in the subject area they are teaching, (b) an approved alternate route to teacher certification (ARC) program, or (c) a program that meets the requirements for an ARC

program and that is awaiting has state approval; and

3. the graduates to have either completed at least 12 credits of coursework or passed the SBE-approved test in the subject they are teaching.

Like regular DSAPs, the national teacher corps DSAPs are valid for one year. But unlike regular DSAPs, the DSAPs issued to teacher corps graduates under the act may be renewed only once instead of twice.

(**sHB 5758**, § 3, effective July 1, 2006)

TESTING AND CURRICULUM

Testing Start Times

This act eliminates the prohibition against administering before 9:00 a. m., any state mastery examination or test mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind Act for students in grades seven through 12.

Students in grades seven, eight, and 10 must take an examination that measures their reading, writing, and math skills. Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, these tests will also include science.

(**PA 06-8**, effective July 1, 2006)

State Expenditures for the No Child Left Behind Act

The act eliminates a requirement that state or local

costs for complying with the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act be paid exclusively from federal funds received under that act. It thus allows state funds to be spent on NCLB-related activities.

(PA 06-135, §4, effective July 1, 2006)

National and International Measures of Student Progress

This act allows the education commissioner to require boards of education she designates to participate in any national or international measure of student progress, rather than just in the U.S. Department of Education sponsored National Assessment of Educational Progress.

(sHB 5758, § 10, effective July 1, 2006)

Math and Science Challenge Grant Program

The act requires SDE to establish, within available appropriations, a high school Math and Science Challenge Pilot Program. The program must use results from the math and science portion of the 10th grade mastery test to design and implement math and science curricula for 11th grade public school students. Grantees must use the money to develop and implement a math and science program for students who did not perform at least at the proficient level on the 10th grade test. They must evaluate the program,

including by an analysis of student testing performance before and after participating in the program.

(PA 06-83, § 17, effective July 1, 2006)

“Future Scholars” Grant

The act requires SDE to establish, within available appropriations, a “Future Scholars” pilot matching grant program. The grant is for public schools participating in externally funded programs that provide supplemental math and science instruction to students in grades eight through 10 who scored above the basic but below the proficient level on the mastery test in the previous year. School boards and vo-tech schools awarded grants under the program must use the money to develop and implement an interdisciplinary math, science, and technology curriculum. The curriculum must include the establishment and staffing of math and science labs in middle and high schools that have demonstrated support from math, science, or technology-related businesses in the state.

(PA 06-83, § 19, effective July 1, 2006)

Reading Programs for Priority School District Students

The act makes several changes to the priority school district reading program. It requires more intensive remedial

assistance for elementary school students deficient in reading skills, including requiring additional instruction as part of student's personal reading plans and enhancing summer school requirements.

Specifically, among other things, the act requires school principals to provide written justification to the superintendent in order to promote 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade students with personal reading plans who are still substantially deficient in reading. Superintendents must submit this information to the education commissioner, and the State Board of Education must publish a report on it. Prior law required principals and superintendents to report this information only for the promotion of 3rd graders.

Beginning with the 2006-07 school year, the act requires boards for priority school districts, within available appropriations, to require students in grades one through three to attend summer school if they are found to be substantially deficient in reading based on their end-of-the-year evaluation. Any nonexempt student who fails to attend summer school cannot be promoted to the next grade.

(PA 06-135, §§ 14-16, effective on passage)

Early Reading Success Grant Requirements

The act requires priority school districts seeking funding for early intervention reading programs from state early reading success grants to include in their proposals a provision for onsite teacher training and coaching in how to implement the research-based reading instruction specified by the Early Reading Success panel. It also requires each district that receives early reading success funds to report annually to SDE on its progress in reducing the achievement gap in reading. The report must include data on student progress and information on how the data has been used to guide professional development and teacher coaching.

(PA 06-135, §§ 17, effective July 1, 2007)

HIGHER EDUCATION

UConn Construction Oversight

This act establishes two mechanisms to provide independent oversight of UConn 2000 projects: board of trustee audits and an independent committee to review university policies and procedures and compliance with them during the construction process. The act also (1) subjects UConn 2000 projects to department of Public Works (DPW) and Administrative Services (DAS) building

construction requirements, (2) requires public bidding on UConn 2000 projects costing over \$500,000, (3) revises the process for UConn to prequalify contractors to bid on UConn 2000 projects, (4) requires UConn and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to make arrangements for UConn staff to ensure code compliance on UConn 2000 projects, and (5) requires UConn to spend all money allocated for deferred maintenance for that purpose and identify future deferred maintenance needs and costs.

(PA 06-134, various effective dates)

Higher Education FY 07 Reductions Eliminated

The act repeals a requirement that the higher education constituent units reduce operating expenses by specified amounts in FY 07 and that the amounts lapse and be credited to the General Fund. The mandatory lapses eliminated are: \$832,500 for UConn, \$312,500 for the UConn Health Center, \$542,500 for the community-technical colleges, and \$592,500 for Connecticut State University.

(HB 5845, § 86, effective July 1, 2006)

Higher Education Endowment Matching Grants

This act restores the state's 50% match of private donations made to its public colleges and

universities between January 1 and June 30, 2005 under the Higher Education Matching Grant Program. PA 05-3, June Special Session, halved the state's match, from 50% to 25%, for donations made after December 31, 2004 and prohibited the legislature from appropriating funds for the grants until the Budget Reserve Fund equals 10% of the net General Fund appropriation for the current fiscal year. The act exempts appropriations for grants to match donations made between January 1 and June 30, 2005 from this prohibition.

The grants match donations for endowed chairs, scholarships, and program enhancements made to UConn, the state universities and community-technical colleges, and Charter Oak College.

(PA 06-135, §§ 7-11, July 1, 2006)

Income Tax Deductions for Contributions to CHET

The act allows taxpayers to deduct contributions to the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET), which is Connecticut's state-sponsored college savings plan, from their Connecticut adjusted gross income for state income tax purposes. It limits annual CHET deductions to \$5,000 for single filers and \$10,000 for joint filers. It allows taxpayers to carry forward any unused deductions for the five following years as

long as each deduction does not exceed the annual maximums.

(HB 5845, §§ 76-78, effective July 1, 2006 and applicable to tax years starting on or after January 1, 2006)

In-state Tuition for Certain Minority Students from Outside the State

The act makes certain minority students from outside Connecticut eligible for in-state tuition at UConn, the Connecticut State Universities, and the community-technical colleges if they went to a public high school here as part of a program that meets specified criteria.

Students from other states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. territories and possessions, and resident aliens that come from these places, may obtain in-state tuition if they:

1. attended for three years and graduated from a public high school in Connecticut and
2. during high school, were sponsored, supported, and housed by a nonprofit organization that raises funds locally in order to give minority students from single family or impoverished homes the chance to attend school in a different environment, such as the “A Better Chance” program.

(PA 06-135, § 6, July 1, 2006)

Tuition Waivers for Dependent Children of Residents Killed in Avon Car Accident

The act establishes a tuition waiver for attendance at UConn, the community colleges, and the Connecticut State University system institutions for any dependent child of a state resident who was killed in the multivehicle crash at or near the intersection of Routes 44 and 10 and Nod Road in Avon on July 29, 2005.

(PA 06-141, effective on passage)

Eminent Faculty Recruitment Program

The act requires UConn’s trustees to establish a program for recruiting eminent faculty and their research staffs to the university. The program must target faculty who have demonstrated excellence in their research fields, want to work collaboratively with other UConn scientists, and are interested in finding ways to commercialize their research.

The program must facilitate the recruitment process, with the aim of accelerating applied research and development in a way that supports the state’s economic development and promotes core competency areas. It must do so by supplementing faculty’s compensation and related personnel and materials costs. But it may do so only if

industry or other sources will match its funds.

(PA 06-83, § 1, effective July 1, 2006)

Center for Entrepreneurship

The act requires UConn to establish a center for training the next generation of entrepreneurs in an experiential manner that would help the state's businesses. The center must:

1. train faculty and student inventors in commercialization and issues that generate business opportunities,
2. allow faculty and students to help technology-based programs find real-time solutions to their business problems, and
3. establish an intellectual property law clinic.

The center must perform some of these tasks in conjunction with other entities. It must help technology-based companies through the business school's accelerator program, and it must establish the clinic in conjunction with the law school. The center must leverage other resources by collocating the accelerator program and the clinic with the nonprofit Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT).

(PA 06-83, § 2, effective July 1, 2006)

"Engineering Connecticut" Student Loan Reimbursement Program

The act establishes a program, within available appropriations, to repay student loans for certain engineers. Eligible candidates must have an undergraduate or graduate degree in engineering from any college or university and have started working as an engineer in Connecticut after December 31, 2005.

DHE must (1) develop eligibility requirements for reimbursement recipients, which can include income guidelines, and (2) prescribe application dates and procedures. The DHE commissioner determines the annual reimbursements for "qualifying" student loan payments. The act does not state what payments qualify. A recipient can receive reimbursement grants only for loan payments he or she makes while employed as an engineer in Connecticut.

(PA 06-83, § 15, effective July 1, 2006)

"You Belong" Student Loan Reimbursement Program

The act establishes a program, within available appropriations, to repay student loans for certain people with doctoral degrees. Eligible candidates must (1) hold a doctorate from any college or university, (2) have started

working in Connecticut in an “economically valuable field” after December 31, 2005, and (3) be employed by a company or university registered with or qualified by DECD. The DECD commissioner determines the economically valuable fields.

The act requires DHE to (1) in consultation with DECD, develop eligibility requirements for reimbursement recipients, which can include income guidelines, and (2) prescribe application dates and procedures. The higher education commissioner determines the annual reimbursements for “qualifying” student loan payments. The act does not state what payments qualify. A recipient can receive reimbursement grants only for loan payments he or she makes while employed in an economically valuable field by a qualifying company or by a college or university in a research capacity in such a field.

(PA 06-83, § 16, effective July 1, 2006)

Community Technical Colleges Board of Trustees

This act requires, beginning July 1, 2010, that at least two members of the Community-Technical College Board of Trustees be people whose education or experience gives them an understanding of relevant accounting principals and practices and financial statements.

(PA 06-34, effective July 1, 2006)

Nanotechnology Initiatives

This act establishes several initiatives to promote research collaborations between academia and industry in the field of nanotechnology. It provides for matching grants to support students working on nanotechnology projects and university teams working with businesses to apply research and create product prototypes. The act also calls for the Office of Workforce Competitiveness to help businesses apply for nanotechnology-related federal Small Business Innovation Research funds and study the feasibility of developing a center for nanoscale sciences and development.

(HB 5846, §§27 & 91, effective July 1, 2006)

Textbook Affordability

This act requires a textbook publisher to make available to college faculty the price at which it would make its products, excluding custom or special edition textbooks, available to the college bookstore and the history of the products’ revisions.

The act also requires the UConn, Connecticut State University, and Community-Technical College boards of trustees to adopt one of two policies governing student financial aid. The policy must (1)

allow students to purchase textbooks at campus bookstores during the first week of an academic term using financial aid that the students may have not yet received or (2) provide for disbursement of financial aid to students who meet all federal, state, and institutional requirements for the aid before the first day of an academic term.

(PA 06-103, effective July 1, 2006)

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