



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 412

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5324

House of Representatives, April 7, 2026

The Committee on Education reported through REP. LEEPER of the 132nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION MANDATE RELIEF.

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

1 Section 1. Section 17a-106h of the 2026 supplement to the general
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

4 (a) The Commissioner of Children and Families, in consultation with
5 the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, shall
6 develop an initial educational training program and refresher training
7 program for the accurate and prompt identification and reporting of
8 suspected human trafficking.

9 (b) The training program shall include a presentation, developed and
10 approved by said commissioners, that offers awareness of human
11 trafficking issues and guidance to (1) law enforcement personnel, (2)
12 judges of the Superior Court, (3) prosecutors, (4) public defenders and
13 other attorneys who represent criminal defendants, (5) hospital
14 emergency room staff, urgent care facility staff and emergency medical

15 services personnel who have contact with patients, and (6) persons
16 employed by a local or regional board of education or a constituent unit,
17 as defined in section 10a-1, who have contact with students.

18 (c) Any person described in subsection (b) of this section shall
19 complete the initial educational training program not later than July 1,
20 2018, and, except for a person described in subdivision (6) of said
21 subsection, shall complete the refresher training program every three
22 years thereafter, provided any person being employed as such a person
23 shall complete such initial educational training program not later than
24 six months after beginning such employment or July 1, 2018, whichever
25 is later.

26 Sec. 2. Subdivision (5) of subsection (a) of section 22a-226e of the 2026
27 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is
28 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

29 (5) On and after July 1, [2026] 2028, each public or nonpublic school
30 building or educational facility in which students in grades
31 kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, or any combination thereof, are
32 enrolled, that is located not more than twenty miles from either an
33 authorized source-separated organic material composting facility and
34 that generates an average projected volume of not less than twenty-six
35 tons per year of source-separated organic materials shall: (A) Separate
36 such source-separated organic materials from other solid waste; and (B)
37 ensure that such source-separated organic materials are recycled at any
38 authorized source-separated organic material composting facility that
39 has available capacity and that will accept such source-separated
40 organic material.

41 Sec. 3. Subsection (f) of section 10-262j of the 2026 supplement to the
42 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
43 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

44 (f) Any district that has (1) elected to act as a self-insurer, pursuant to
45 section 10-236, (2) experienced a loss that is overexposure of an insured
46 member or incurred as a result of one or more catastrophic events, as

47 declared by a nationally recognized catastrophe loss index provider,
48 during the prior fiscal year, and (3) increased its budgeted appropriation
49 for education during said prior fiscal year as a result of such loss, shall
50 not be required to include the amount of such increase in the calculation
51 of such district's budgeted appropriation for education for the
52 subsequent fiscal year.

53 Sec. 4. Section 10-260b of the general statutes is repealed and the
54 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

55 (a) There is established the Education Mandate Review Advisory
56 Council. The council shall advise and provide annual reports to the joint
57 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
58 matters relating to education on the cost and implementation of existing
59 education mandates on local and regional boards of education, as well
60 as the impact of any proposals relating to additions or revisions to such
61 education mandates. Such annual reports may include, but need not be
62 limited to, (1) a review of each education mandate on local and regional
63 boards of education passed by the General Assembly during the prior
64 legislative session and not fewer than ten existing education mandates
65 on local and regional boards of education [in] required by the general
66 statutes and the regulations of Connecticut state agencies for the
67 purpose of identifying those mandates that may be burdensome or have
68 the effect of limiting or restricting the provision of instruction or services
69 to students, including a detailed analysis of each such mandate so
70 identified, the specific statutory or regulation citation for such mandate
71 and how such mandate is imposed on a board of education, and (2) any
72 recommendations regarding the repeal of or amendment to any such
73 sections of the general statutes or regulations of Connecticut state
74 agencies.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

98 (8) One appointed by the Senate chairperson of the joint standing
99 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
100 relating to education, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut
101 Education Association;

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

106 (10) One appointed by the Senate ranking member of the joint
107 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
108 matters relating to education, who shall be a representative of the

109 American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut.

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

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

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

123 (f) The council shall have the following powers and duties: (1) Review
124 education mandates and submit annual reports pursuant to the
125 provisions of subsection (a) of this section; (2) obtain from any executive
126 department, board, commission or other agency of the state such
127 assistance and data as necessary and available to carry out the purposes
128 of this section; (3) accept any gift, donation or bequest for the purpose
129 of performing the duties described in this section; (4) establish bylaws
130 to govern its procedures; and (5) perform such other acts as may be
131 necessary and appropriate to carry out the duties described in this
132 section.

133 ~~[(f)]~~ (g) Not later than January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the
134 council shall develop and submit an annual report on its review of the
135 implementation and cost of statutory and regulatory education
136 mandates on local and regional boards of education. Such annual report
137 shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) a review of ~~[all]~~ each
138 education mandate on local and regional boards of education passed by
139 the General Assembly during the prior legislative session and not fewer
140 than ten existing education mandates required by state law, (2) the costs

141 incurred by local and regional boards of education resulting from the
 142 implementation of such education mandates, and (3) how such
 143 education mandates are being implemented by local and regional
 144 boards of education, including, but not limited to, the manner in which
 145 and how often such education mandate is being implemented. The
 146 council shall submit such report, and any recommendations for
 147 legislation, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
 148 having cognizance of matters relating to education and the
 149 Commissioner of Education, in accordance with the provisions of
 150 section 11-4a.

151 Sec. 5. Sections 10-14ee, 10-212l, 10-212m and 10-234gg of the general
 152 statutes are repealed. (*Effective July 1, 2026*)

| | | |
|---|---------------------|------------------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>July 1, 2026</i> | 17a-106h |
| Sec. 2 | <i>July 1, 2026</i> | 22a-226e(a)(5) |
| Sec. 3 | <i>July 1, 2026</i> | 10-262j(f) |
| Sec. 4 | <i>July 1, 2026</i> | 10-260b |
| Sec. 5 | <i>July 1, 2026</i> | Repealer section |

ED *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact:

| Municipalities | Effect | FY 27 \$ | FY 28 \$ |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Local and Regional School Districts | See Below | See Below | See Below |

Explanation

The bill modifies or eliminates various requirements related to education, resulting in the fiscal impacts described below.

Section 1 has no fiscal impact. It exempts school and constituent unit employees from completing a human trafficking refresher training every three years after the initial training. It is assumed any time that would have been spent on the refresher training will be used for other professional development.

Section 2 delays potential costs incurred by certain school districts. The section delays, until July 1, 2028, the requirement that certain school facilities that produce at least 26 tons per year of source-separated organic materials must separate these materials and recycle them at an organic composting facility. This correspondingly delays, until FY 29, any costs a board of education (BOE) would incur in order to comply with the recycling provision.

Section 3 exempts, beginning in FY 27, overexposure of an insured member from a BOE's minimum budget requirement (MBR) for education, allowing for greater future budget flexibility in the event of overexposure.

Section 4 expands the duties of the Education Mandate Review Advisory Council, which does not have a fiscal impact as the council has the necessary expertise to meet the requirements.

Section 5 results in potential savings to districts beginning in FY 27 by repealing certain requirements including: (1) a voluntary family history questionnaire regarding the risk of reading proficiency challenges; (2) implementation of mental health plans for student athletes; and (3) reporting the usage of websites, online services or mobile applications without a contract.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5324*****AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION MANDATE RELIEF.*****SUMMARY**

This bill narrows the scope of the Education Mandate Review Advisory Council to (1) annually review each education mandate on local and regional boards of education (school boards) enacted in the previous session and at least 10 existing mandates, and (2) authorizes the council to get help and data from state agencies to carry out its duties. By law, the council reports annually to the Education Committee with recommendations to repeal or modify mandates in the report (§ 4).

It also makes several changes on certain education mandates state law imposes on school boards, including:

1. delays from July 1, 2026, to July 1, 2028, the requirement that certain public or private schools or educational facilities producing more than 26 tons per year of organic materials separate and recycle the material at an authorized composting facility (§ 2) and
2. expands an existing exception to the minimum budget requirement (MBR) for self-insured school districts to let them exclude from the MBR calculation any insurance loss due to overexposure of an insured member (§ 3).

Additionally, the bill eliminates the following education mandates current law places on school boards, their employees, or the State Department of Education (SDE):

1. the requirement that every three years school district employees get refresher training on identifying and reporting suspected human trafficking (but it keeps the requirement for an initial training for every employee) (§ 1);

2. the requirement that SDE develop or approve a voluntary family history questionnaire, distributed during the school year, to help identify students at risk of a reading proficiency problem (CGS § 10-14ee) (§ 5);
3. the requirement that SDE develop a plan to raise awareness of mental health resources for student athletes, post it on the department website, and help school boards implement the plan (§ 5); and
4. the requirement that school boards annually implement this plan for student athletes (§ 5).

The bill also repeals the requirement that school boards annually report to the Commission for Educational Technology information on their use of websites or mobile applications that are not under a contract that meets the state data privacy law (but this requirement has already been repealed by PA 26-1, § 98) (§ 5).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

§ 4 — EDUCATION MANDATE REVIEW ADVISORY COUNCIL

PA 24-45 created a 10-member council to advise and annually report to the Education Committee on (1) the cost and implementation of education mandates and (2) any proposals to add to or revise them.

The bill explicitly adds that the council may:

1. review education mandates, including a new requirement to review each mandate enacted in the previous session plus at least 10 existing mandates and submit the related annual reports;
2. obtain from any state agency, board, or commission the help and data necessary to carry out its duties;
3. accept any gift, donation, or bequest in order to carry out its duties; and

- 4. establish procedural bylaws and take action as necessary and appropriate to carry out its duties.

§ 2 — DELAYS ORGANIC MATERIAL RECYCLING MANDATE

The bill delays from July 1, 2026, to July 1, 2028, the requirement that certain public or private schools or educational facilities producing more than 26 tons per year of organic materials separate and recycle the material at an authorized composting facility. By law, the requirement applies to buildings or facilities (1) with grades kindergarten to 12 or any grade combination and (2) within 20 miles of an authorized source-separated organic material composting facility. The material must be recycled at a composting facility that has available capacity and will accept the source-separated organic material.

§ 3 — EXPANDS A MINIMUM BUDGET REQUIREMENT EXCEPTION

The MBR generally prohibits towns from budgeting less for education in the upcoming fiscal year than was budgeted for the current year, but there are exceptions.

The law allows an exception for a self-insured school district that experiences a loss due to one or more recognized catastrophic events and must increase its budget appropriation to cover the cost. The bill expands this exception to include any self-insured school district that has an insurance loss due to overexposure of an insured member.

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

sHB 5524 (File 398), favorably reported by the Environment Committee, delays the organic materials recycling requirement for schools until July 1, 2027.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
 Yea 45 Nay 0 (03/16/2026)