



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 420

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5468

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 THE PROVISION OF EQUIVALENT INSTRUCTION.

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-184 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2027*):

3 [All parents and those who have the care of children shall bring them
4 up in some lawful and honest employment and instruct them or cause
5 them to be instructed in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar,
6 geography, arithmetic and United States history and in citizenship,
7 including a study of the town, state and federal governments. Subject to
8 the provisions of this section and section 10-15c, each parent or other
9 person having control of a child five years of age and over and under
10 eighteen years of age shall cause such child to attend a public school
11 regularly during the hours and terms the public school in the district in
12 which such child resides is in session, unless such child is a high school
13 graduate or the parent or person having control of such child is able to
14 show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the

15 studies taught in the public schools. For the school years commencing
16 July 1, 2011, to July 1, 2022, inclusive, the parent or person having
17 control of a child seventeen years of age may consent, as provided in
18 this section, to such child's withdrawal from school. For the school year
19 commencing July 1, 2023, and each school year thereafter, a student who
20 is eighteen years of age or older may withdraw from school. Such
21 parent, person or student shall personally appear at the school district
22 office and sign a withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form shall include
23 an attestation from a guidance counselor, school counselor or school
24 administrator of the school that such school district has provided such
25 parent, person or student with information on the educational options
26 available in the school system and in the community. The parent or
27 person having control of a child seventeen years of age may withdraw
28 such child from school and enroll such child in an adult education
29 program pursuant to section 10-69. Such parent or person shall
30 personally appear at the school district office and sign an adult
31 education withdrawal and enrollment form. Such adult education
32 withdrawal and enrollment form shall include an attestation (1) from a
33 school counselor or school administrator of the school that such school
34 district has provided such parent or person with information on the
35 educational options available in the school system and in the
36 community, and (2) from such parent or person that such child will be
37 enrolled in an adult education program upon such child's withdrawal
38 from school. The parent or person having control of a child five years of
39 age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the
40 child is six years of age and the parent or person having control of a
41 child six years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to
42 school until the child is seven years of age. The parent or person shall
43 exercise such option by personally appearing at the school district office
44 and signing an option form. The school district shall provide the parent
45 or person with information on the educational opportunities available
46 in the school system.]

47 (a) As used in this section and sections 2 to 4, inclusive, of this act:

48 (1) "Equivalent instruction" means the provision of education by a

49 parent or guardian of a child in a setting other than a public school or
50 nonpublic school.

51 (2) "Nonpublic school" means a school that is not a public school and
52 that (A) is approved by the Department of Education following such
53 school receiving accreditation by an accrediting agency approved by the
54 Department of Education, or (B) files a student attendance report with
55 the Commissioner of Education pursuant to section 10-188.

56 (b) All parents and guardians of children shall bring such children up
57 in some lawful and honest employment and instruct or cause such
58 children to be instructed in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar,
59 geography, arithmetic and United States history and citizenship,
60 including a study of town, state and federal governments. Subject to the
61 provisions of this section and section 10-15c, each parent or guardian of
62 a child, who is five years of age or over and under eighteen years of age
63 and not a high school graduate, shall cause such child to (1) enroll in
64 public school regularly during the hours and terms the public school in
65 the district in which such child resides is in session, (2) attend a
66 nonpublic school, or (3) receive equivalent instruction in the studies
67 taught in the public schools.

68 (c) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, for the
69 school year commencing July 1, 2028, and each school year thereafter,
70 the parent or guardian of a child (A) who will be five years of age on or
71 before September first of the school year, or (B) for whom an option form
72 for the prior school year was signed, shall personally appear at the
73 school district office and sign an intent to educate form to indicate
74 whether such child will be enrolling in public school, attending a
75 nonpublic school or receiving equivalent instruction. If such child will
76 be attending a nonpublic school, the parent or guardian shall provide
77 evidence to show that such child will be attending a nonpublic school.

78 (2) The parent or guardian of a child five years of age shall have the
79 option of not sending the child to school until the child is six years of
80 age and the parent or guardian of a child six years of age shall have the
81 option of not sending the child to school until the child is seven years of

82 age. Such parent or guardian shall exercise such option by personally
83 appearing at the school district office and signing an option form. The
84 school district shall provide such parent or guardian with information
85 on the educational opportunities available in the school system.

86 (3) For the school year commencing July 1, 2028, and each school year
87 thereafter, the parent or guardian of a child who moves into a school
88 district during the school year shall, not later than fourteen days after
89 moving into such school district, personally appear at the school district
90 office and sign an intent to educate form to indicate whether such child
91 will be enrolling in public school, attending a nonpublic school or
92 receiving equivalent instruction. If such child will be attending a
93 nonpublic school, the parent or guardian shall provide evidence to show
94 that such child will be attending a nonpublic school.

95 (4) For the school year commencing July 1, 2028, and each school year
96 thereafter, the parent or guardian of a child who withdraws from
97 attending a nonpublic school shall personally appear at the school
98 district office for which such parent or guardian had previously signed
99 an intent to educate form and sign an updated intent to educate form to
100 indicate whether such child will be enrolling in public school or
101 receiving equivalent instruction.

102 (d) (1) (A) (i) For the school year commencing July 1, 2028, on or
103 before September first of said school year, the parent or guardian of a
104 child who was withdrawn from public school to receive equivalent
105 instruction, pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (e) of this section,
106 during the prior school year, shall submit to the school district office a
107 continuation of equivalent instruction form to indicate that such child
108 will continue to receive equivalent instruction. Such continuation of
109 equivalent instruction form may be submitted electronically to the
110 school district office.

111 (ii) For the school year commencing July 1, 2029, on or before
112 September first of said school year, the parent or guardian of a child (I)
113 who was withdrawn from public school to receive equivalent
114 instruction, pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (e) of this section,

115 during the prior school year, or (II) for whom a continuation of
116 equivalent instruction form for the prior school year was submitted,
117 shall submit to the school district office a continuation of equivalent
118 instruction form to indicate that such child will continue to receive
119 equivalent instruction. Such continuation of equivalent instruction form
120 may be submitted electronically to the school district office.

121 (B) For the school year commencing July 1, 2029, on or before
122 September first of said school year, the parent or guardian of a child who
123 is receiving equivalent instruction and for whom an intent to educate
124 form was signed for the prior school year, shall submit to the school
125 district office a continuation of equivalent instruction form to indicate
126 that such child will continue to receive equivalent instruction. Such
127 continuation of equivalent instruction form may be submitted
128 electronically to the school district office.

129 (C) For the school year commencing July 1, 2030, and each school year
130 thereafter, on or before September first of each school year, the parent
131 or guardian of a child who is receiving equivalent instruction and (i) for
132 whom (I) an intent to educate form for the prior school year was signed,
133 or (II) a continuation of equivalent instruction form for the prior school
134 year was submitted, or (ii) who was withdrawn from public school to
135 receive equivalent instruction, pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection
136 (e) of this section, during the prior school year, shall submit to the school
137 district office a continuation of equivalent instruction form to indicate
138 that such child will continue to receive equivalent instruction. Such
139 continuation of equivalent instruction form may be submitted
140 electronically to the school district office.

141 (2) For the school year commencing July 1, 2028, and each school year
142 thereafter, any local or regional board of education that does not receive
143 a continuation of equivalent instruction form on or before September
144 first from a parent or guardian who signed an intent to educate form for
145 the prior school year, submitted a continuation of equivalent instruction
146 form for the prior school year, or who withdrew such parent or
147 guardian's child from public school to receive equivalent instruction

148 during the prior school year, pursuant to subdivision (1) of this
149 subsection, shall make at least three attempts to contact such parent or
150 guardian for the purpose of informing such parent or guardian that they
151 are required to submit a continuation of equivalent instruction form for
152 the current school year. If the board is unable to make such contact with
153 such parent or guardian by October first, the board shall notify the
154 Department of Education that the board has not received a continuation
155 of equivalent instruction form from such parent or guardian.

156 (e) (1) For the school year commencing July 1, 2027, and each school
157 year thereafter, the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in public
158 school may withdraw such child from public school for the purpose of
159 causing such child to attend a nonpublic school. Such parent or
160 guardian shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a
161 withdrawal form. Such withdrawal shall not be effective unless such
162 parent or guardian provides evidence to show that such child will be
163 attending a nonpublic school.

164 (2) (A) Subject to the provisions of subparagraph (B) of this
165 subdivision, for the school year commencing July 1, 2027, and each
166 school year thereafter, the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in
167 public school may withdraw such child from public school for the
168 purpose of causing such child to receive equivalent instruction. Such
169 parent or guardian shall personally appear at the school district office
170 and sign a withdrawal form. Such withdrawal shall not be effective until
171 the board of education notifies such parent or guardian that such child
172 may be withdrawn following receipt of notice under subparagraph (B)
173 of this subdivision.

174 (B) Not later than two business days following receipt of a
175 withdrawal form under this subdivision, a local or regional board of
176 education shall request the Commissioner of Children and Families to
177 (i) determine if a parent or guardian of such child is the subject of an
178 order for protective supervision, as defined in section 17a-93, or
179 receiving protective services, as defined in section 17a-93, and (ii)
180 conduct a check of the state child abuse and neglect registry established

181 pursuant to section 17a-101k for the name of such parent or guardian.
182 Not later than five business days following receipt of such request, the
183 commissioner shall make such determination, conduct such check and
184 notify such board whether such parent or guardian is the subject of an
185 order for protective supervision or receiving protective services or is on
186 the state child abuse and neglect registry. If the board is notified that a
187 parent or guardian of such child (I) is not the subject of such an order or
188 receiving such services and is not on the state child abuse and neglect
189 registry, the board shall immediately notify such parent or guardian
190 that such withdrawal is effective and such child may be withdrawn, or
191 (II) is the subject of such an order or receiving such services or is on the
192 state child abuse and neglect registry, the board shall notify such parent
193 or guardian that such withdrawal is not effective and such child may
194 not be withdrawn from public school pursuant to this subdivision. A
195 request made to the commissioner under this subparagraph is not a
196 report for purposes of sections 17a-101a to 17a-101d, inclusive, or 17a-
197 103.

198 (3) The parent or guardian of a child seventeen years of age may
199 withdraw such child from public school and enroll such child in an
200 adult education program pursuant to section 10-69. Such parent or
201 guardian shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a
202 withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form shall include an attestation (A)
203 from a school counselor or school administrator of the school that such
204 school district has provided such parent or guardian with information
205 on the educational options available in the school system and in the
206 community, and (B) from such parent or guardian that such child will
207 be enrolled in an adult education program upon such child's
208 withdrawal from public school.

209 (4) A student who is eighteen years of age or older may withdraw
210 from public school. The parent or guardian of such student or such
211 student shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a
212 withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form shall include an attestation
213 from a guidance counselor, school counselor or school administrator of
214 the school that such school district has provided such parent, guardian

215 or student with information on the educational options available in the
216 school system and in the community.

217 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) For the school year
218 commencing July 1, 2028, and each school year thereafter, the parent or
219 guardian of a child receiving equivalent instruction and for whom an
220 intent to educate form was signed or a continuation of equivalent
221 instruction form was submitted for the school year, pursuant to section
222 10-184 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, shall show that
223 such child is receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the
224 public schools by providing a demonstration of equivalent instruction
225 of such child's academic work for the school year, in accordance with
226 the guidance developed by the Department of Education pursuant to
227 section 4 of this act. The purpose of the demonstration of equivalent
228 instruction is to ensure that such child is being educated. A
229 demonstration of equivalent instruction shall be provided on or after
230 March first and not later than June first of the school year. A parent or
231 guardian shall provide the demonstration of equivalent instruction by
232 (1) submitting a portfolio that may include, but need not be limited to,
233 the curriculum used and academic work completed by such child for
234 the school year, the results of a nationally normed standardized test,
235 evidence of completion of online coursework or taking classes as part of
236 an online academy, or enrollment in courses or programs at the
237 Connecticut State Community College; (2) causing such child to take the
238 state-wide mastery examination, pursuant to section 10-14n of the
239 general statutes, administered by a local or regional board of education
240 or a regional educational service center; or (3) receiving a state high
241 school diploma issued by the Commissioner of Education pursuant to
242 section 10-5 of the general statutes. The demonstration of equivalent
243 instruction shall be submitted to the local or regional board of education
244 for the town in which such child resides. A local or regional board of
245 education may contract with a regional educational service center, the
246 State Education Resource Center or an interdistrict magnet school
247 operator described in section 10-264s of the general statutes to receive
248 the demonstrations of equivalent instruction required to be submitted
249 to the board under this section.

250 (b) The parent or guardian of a child receiving equivalent instruction
251 shall retain education records of such child for at least three years. Such
252 education records include, but are not limited to, the curriculum used
253 in the provision of equivalent instruction and the academic work
254 completed by such child.

255 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2028*) (a) As used in this section:

256 (1) "Equivalent instruction" has the same meaning as provided in
257 section 10-184 of the general statutes, as amended by this act;

258 (2) "Children receiving equivalent instruction" means the number of
259 children of the town who are receiving equivalent instruction and for
260 whom an intent to educate form was signed or a continuation of
261 equivalent instruction form was submitted for the school year, pursuant
262 to section 10-184 of the general statutes, as amended by this act; and

263 (3) "Amount per child receiving equivalent instruction" means the
264 product of (A) the amount that a town is entitled to receive under the
265 provisions of section 10-262h of the general statutes divided by the
266 number of resident students, as defined in subdivision (22) of section
267 10-262f of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and (B) one-tenth.

268 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of chapter 172 of the general
269 statutes, each local and regional board of education shall divide the
270 number of children receiving equivalent instruction by ten for purposes
271 of the counts for subdivision (22) of section 10-262f of the general
272 statutes, as amended by this act.

273 (c) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2029, and each fiscal year
274 thereafter, the Comptroller shall withhold from each town an amount
275 equal to the number of children receiving equivalent instruction
276 multiplied by the amount per child receiving equivalent instruction. The
277 Comptroller shall transfer funds equaling such amount to the
278 Commissioner of Education.

279 (2) Upon receipt of an application pursuant to subsection (d) of this
280 section, the Commissioner of Education shall pay such funds to the

281 town and such town shall pay all such funds to the local or regional
282 board of education for such town on the condition that such funds shall
283 be expended for the purpose of implementing the provisions of section
284 10-184 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and section 10-249
285 of the general statutes, and reviewing the demonstrations of equivalent
286 instruction in accordance with the provisions of section 2 of this act.

287 (d) Each local and regional board of education may apply to the
288 Commissioner of Education, at such time and in such manner as the
289 commissioner prescribes, to receive the funds described in subsection
290 (c) of this section. Applications pursuant to this subsection shall include
291 the total number of children receiving equivalent instruction.

292 (e) A local or regional board of education shall expend such funds in
293 accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of subsection (c) of
294 this section and the guidance developed by the Department of
295 Education pursuant to section 4 of this act. A local or regional board of
296 education may expend such funds as part of a contract with a regional
297 educational service center, the State Education Resource Center, or an
298 interdistrict magnet school operator described in section 10-262s of the
299 general statutes, to perform the review of the demonstrations of
300 equivalent instruction pursuant to section 2 of this act.

301 (f) Any balance remaining for each local and regional board of
302 education at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried forward for such
303 local or regional board of education for the next fiscal year.

304 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) Not later than July 1, 2027, the
305 Department of Education shall develop (1) guidance for parents and
306 guardians and local and regional boards of education regarding (A) the
307 provision of equivalent instruction in accordance with the provisions of
308 section 10-184 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, (B) the
309 demonstration of equivalent instruction in accordance with the
310 provisions of section 2 of this act, (C) the expenditure of funds pursuant
311 to section 3 of this act, and (D) participation in public school activities
312 under section 5 of this act, and (2) the intent to educate form,
313 continuation of equivalent instruction form and withdrawal form, as

314 such forms are described in section 10-184 of the general statutes, as
315 amended by this act.

316 Sec. 5. (*Effective July 1, 2028*) (a) A local or regional board of education
317 may permit any child who is a resident of the town of the school district
318 for such board and who is otherwise receiving equivalent instruction
319 pursuant to section 10-184 of the general statutes, as amended by this
320 act, to participate in the following public school activities: (1) Taking up
321 to two classes during the school year in a public school under the
322 jurisdiction of the board, provided space is available in any such class,
323 and (2) participating in any extracurricular activities, intramural
324 athletics and interscholastic athletics offered by the board during the
325 school year, except any student who withdraws from public school
326 pursuant to section 10-184 of the general statutes, as amended by this
327 act, may not participate in interscholastic athletics for the remainder of
328 the school year in which such child withdraws and the following school
329 year.

330 (b) Each such child permitted to participate in public school activities
331 under this section shall meet the requirements of sections 10-204a and
332 10-206 of the general statutes and comply with the provisions of the
333 board's student handbook for the school. Each such child shall be
334 considered a part-time student for purposes of enrollment in the school
335 district.

336 (c) Notwithstanding any provision of chapter 172 of the general
337 statutes, a local or regional board of education may, for purposes of
338 subdivision (22) of section 10-262f of the general statutes, as amended
339 by this act, include the children participating in public school activities
340 under this section in the number of resident students of the town as
341 follows: The total number of such children divided by four.

342 Sec. 6. Subdivision (22) of section 10-262f of the general statutes is
343 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
344 *2028*):

345 (22) "Resident students" means the number of pupils of the town

346 enrolled in public schools at the expense of the town on October first or
347 the full school day immediately preceding such date, provided the
348 number shall be decreased by the Department of Education for failure
349 to comply with the provisions of section 10-16 and shall be increased by
350 one one-hundred-eightieth for each full-time equivalent school day in
351 the school year immediately preceding such date of at least five hours
352 of actual school work in excess of one hundred eighty days and nine
353 hundred hours of actual school work and be increased by the full-time
354 equivalent number of such pupils attending the summer sessions
355 immediately preceding such date at the expense of the town; "enrolled"
356 shall include pupils who are (A) scheduled for vacation on the above
357 date and who are expected to return to school as scheduled, (B) children
358 receiving equivalent instruction, as defined in section 3 of this act, and
359 (C) children receiving equivalent instruction pursuant to section 10-184,
360 as amended by this act, and participating in public school activities
361 pursuant to section 5 of this act. Pupils described in subparagraph (B) of
362 this subdivision shall be counted in accordance with the provisions of
363 section 3 of this act. Pupils described in subparagraph (C) of this
364 subdivision shall be counted in accordance with the provisions of
365 section 5 of this act. Pupils participating in the program established
366 pursuant to section 10-266aa shall be counted in accordance with the
367 provisions of subsection (h) of section 10-266aa.

368 Sec. 7. Subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of section 10-10a of the general
369 statutes, as amended by section 22 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the
370 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2027*):

371 (1) Track and report data relating to student, teacher and school and
372 district performance growth and make such information available to
373 local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating educational
374 performance and growth of teachers and students enrolled in public
375 schools in the state. Such information shall be collected or calculated
376 based on information received from local and regional boards of
377 education and other relevant sources. Such information shall include,
378 but not be limited to:

379 (A) In addition to performance on state-wide mastery examinations
380 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, data relating to students shall
381 include, but not be limited to, (i) the primary language spoken at the
382 home of a student, (ii) student transcripts, (iii) student attendance and
383 student mobility, (iv) reliable, valid assessments of a student's readiness
384 to enter public school at the kindergarten level, (v) data collected, if any,
385 from the preschool experience survey, described in section 10-515, and
386 (vi) data required pursuant to section 10-17m concerning the academic
387 progress of students in bilingual education programs;

388 (B) Data relating to teachers shall include, but not be limited to, (i)
389 teacher credentials, such as master's degrees, teacher preparation
390 programs completed and certification levels and endorsement areas, (ii)
391 teacher assessments, such as whether a teacher is deemed highly
392 qualified pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110, or
393 deemed to meet such other designations as may be established by
394 federal law or regulations for the purposes of tracking the equitable
395 distribution of instructional staff, (iii) the presence of substitute teachers
396 in a teacher's classroom, (iv) class size, (v) numbers relating to
397 absenteeism in a teacher's classroom, and (vi) the presence of a teacher's
398 aide. The department shall assign a unique teacher identifier to each
399 teacher prior to collecting such data in the public school information
400 system;

401 (C) Data relating to schools and districts shall include, but not be
402 limited to, (i) school population, (ii) annual student graduation rates,
403 (iii) annual teacher retention rates, (iv) school disciplinary records, such
404 as data relating to suspensions, expulsions and other disciplinary
405 actions, (v) the percentage of students whose primary language is not
406 English, (vi) the number of and professional credentials of support
407 personnel, (vii) information relating to instructional technology, such as
408 access to computers, (viii) disaggregated measures of school-based
409 arrests pursuant to section 10-233n, [and] (ix) the measures and data
410 required pursuant to section 10-17g for the evaluation of bilingual
411 education programs, (x) the number of children receiving equivalent
412 instruction for whom an intent to educate form was signed or a

413 continuation of equivalent instruction form was submitted pursuant to
414 section 10-184, as amended by this act, and (xi) the number of children
415 receiving equivalent instruction and who are participating in public
416 school activities pursuant to section 5 of this act.

417 Sec. 8. Subsection (g) of section 17a-28 of the 2026 supplement to the
418 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
419 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

420 (g) The department shall disclose records, subject to subsections (b)
421 and (c) of this section, without the consent of the person who is the
422 subject of the record, to:

423 (1) The person named in the record or such person's authorized
424 representative, provided such disclosure shall be limited to information
425 (A) contained in the record about such person or about such person's
426 biological or adoptive minor child, if such person's parental rights to
427 such child have not been terminated; and (B) identifying an individual
428 who reported abuse or neglect of the person, including any tape
429 recording of an oral report pursuant to section 17a-103, if a court
430 determines that there is reasonable cause to believe the reporter
431 knowingly made a false report or that the interests of justice require
432 disclosure;

433 (2) An employee of the department for any purpose reasonably
434 related to the performance of such employee's duties;

435 (3) A guardian ad litem or attorney appointed to represent a child or
436 youth in litigation affecting the best interests of the child or youth;

437 (4) An attorney representing a parent, guardian or child in a petition
438 filed in the Superior Court pursuant to section 17a-112 or 46b-129,
439 provided (A) if such records do not pertain to such attorney's client or
440 such client's child, such records shall not be further disclosed to another
441 individual or entity by such attorney except pursuant to the order of a
442 court of competent jurisdiction, (B) if such records are confidential
443 pursuant to federal law, such records shall not be disclosed to such

444 attorney or such attorney's client unless such attorney or such attorney's
445 client is otherwise entitled to such records, and (C) nothing in this
446 subdivision shall limit the disclosure of records under subdivision (3) of
447 this subsection;

448 (5) The Attorney General, any assistant attorney general or any other
449 legal counsel retained to represent the department during the course of
450 a legal proceeding involving the department or an employee of the
451 department;

452 (6) The Child Advocate or the Child Advocate's designee;

453 (7) The Chief Public Defender or the Chief Public Defender's designee
454 for purposes of ensuring competent representation by the attorneys
455 with whom the Chief Public Defender contracts to provide legal and
456 guardian ad litem services to the subjects of such records and for
457 ensuring accurate payments for services rendered by such attorneys;

458 (8) The Chief State's Attorney or the Chief State's Attorney's designee
459 for purposes of investigating or prosecuting (A) an allegation related to
460 child abuse or neglect, (B) an allegation that an individual made a false
461 report of suspected child abuse or neglect, (C) an allegation that a
462 mandated reporter failed to report suspected child abuse or neglect in
463 accordance with section 17a-101a, provided such prosecuting authority
464 shall have access to records of a child charged with the commission of a
465 delinquent act, who is not being charged with an offense related to child
466 abuse, only while the case is being prosecuted and after obtaining a
467 release, or (D) an allegation of fraud in the receipt of public or private
468 benefits, provided no information identifying the subject of the record
469 is disclosed unless such information is essential to such investigation or
470 prosecution;

471 (9) A state or federal law enforcement officer, including a military law
472 enforcement authority under the United States Department of Defense,
473 for purposes of investigating (A) an allegation related to child abuse or
474 neglect, (B) an allegation that an individual made a false report of
475 suspected child abuse or neglect, or (C) an allegation that a mandated

476 reporter failed to report suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance
477 with section 17a-101a;

478 (10) A foster or prospective adoptive parent, if the records pertain to
479 a child or youth currently placed with the foster or prospective adoptive
480 parent, or a child or youth being considered for placement with the
481 foster or prospective adoptive parent, and the records are necessary to
482 address the social, medical, psychological or educational needs of the
483 child or youth, provided no information identifying a biological parent
484 is disclosed without the permission of such biological parent;

485 (11) The Governor, when requested in writing in the course of the
486 Governor's official functions, the joint standing committee of the
487 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human
488 services, the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having
489 cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary or the joint standing
490 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
491 relating to children, when requested in writing by any of such
492 committees in the course of such committee's official functions, and
493 upon a majority vote of such committee, provided no name or other
494 identifying information is disclosed unless such information is essential
495 to the gubernatorial or legislative purpose;

496 (12) The Office of Early Childhood for the purpose of (A) determining
497 the suitability of a person to care for children in a facility licensed
498 pursuant to section 19a-77, 19a-80, 19a-87b or 19a-421; (B) determining
499 the suitability of such person for licensure; (C) determining the
500 suitability of a person to provide child care services to a child and
501 receive a child care subsidy pursuant to section 17b-749k; (D) an
502 investigation conducted pursuant to section 19a-80f; (E) notifying the
503 office when the Department of Children and Families places an
504 individual licensed or certified by the office on the child abuse and
505 neglect registry pursuant to section 17a-101k; or (F) notifying the office
506 when the Department of Children and Families possesses information
507 regarding an office regulatory violation committed by an individual
508 licensed or certified by the office;

509 (13) The Department of Developmental Services, (A) to allow said
510 department to determine eligibility, facilitate enrollment and plan for
511 the provision of services to a child who is a client of said department
512 and who is applying to enroll in or is enrolled in said department's
513 behavioral services program. At the time that a parent or guardian
514 completes an application for enrollment of a child in the Department of
515 Developmental Services' children's services program, or at the time that
516 said department updates a child's annual individualized plan of care,
517 said department shall notify such parent or guardian that the
518 Department of Children and Families may provide records to the
519 Department of Developmental Services for the purposes specified in this
520 subdivision without the consent of such parent or guardian; or (B) for
521 purposes of an investigation pursuant to section 46a-11c;

522 (14) Any individual or entity for the purposes of identifying resources
523 that will promote the permanency plan of a child or youth approved by
524 the court pursuant to sections 17a-11, 17a-111b and 46b-129;

525 (15) A state agency that licenses or certifies a person to educate, care
526 for or provide services to children or youths;

527 (16) A judge or employee of a Probate Court who requires access to
528 such records in order to perform such judge's or employee's official
529 duties;

530 (17) A judge of the Superior Court for purposes of determining the
531 appropriate disposition of a child adjudicated as delinquent;

532 (18) A judge of the Superior Court in a criminal prosecution for
533 purposes of in camera inspection whenever (A) the court has ordered
534 that the record be provided to the court; or (B) a party to the proceeding
535 has issued a subpoena for the record;

536 (19) A judge of the Superior Court and all necessary parties in a
537 family violence proceeding when such records concern family violence
538 with respect to the child who is the subject of the proceeding or the
539 parent of such child who is the subject of the proceeding;

540 (20) The Auditors of Public Accounts, or their representative,
541 provided no information identifying the subject of the record is
542 disclosed unless such information is essential to an audit conducted
543 pursuant to section 2-90;

544 (21) A local or regional board of education, provided the records are
545 limited to educational records created or obtained by the state or
546 Connecticut Unified School District #2, established pursuant to section
547 17a-37;

548 (22) The superintendent of schools for any school district for the
549 purpose of determining the suitability of a person to be employed by
550 the local or regional board of education for such school district pursuant
551 to subsection (a) of section 10-221d;

552 (23) The Department of Motor Vehicles for the purpose of criminal
553 history records checks pursuant to subsection (e) of section 14-44,
554 provided information disclosed pursuant to this subdivision shall be
555 limited to information included on the Department of Children and
556 Families child abuse and neglect registry established pursuant to section
557 17a-101k, subject to the provisions of sections 17a-101g and 17a-101k
558 concerning the nondisclosure of findings of responsibility for abuse and
559 neglect;

560 (24) The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services for the
561 purpose of treatment planning for young adults who have transitioned
562 from the care of the Department of Children and Families;

563 (25) The superintendent of a public school district or the executive
564 director or other head of a public or private institution for children
565 providing care for children or a private school (A) pursuant to sections
566 17a-11, 17a-101b, 17a-101c, 17a-101i, 17a-111b and 46b-129, or (B) when
567 the Department of Children and Families places an individual
568 employed by such institution or school on the child abuse and neglect
569 registry pursuant to section 17a-101k;

570 (26) The Department of Social Services for the purpose of (A)

571 determining the suitability of a person for payment from the
572 Department of Social Services for providing child care; (B) promoting
573 the health, safety and welfare of a child or youth receiving services from
574 either department; or (C) investigating allegations of fraud provided no
575 information identifying the subject of the record is disclosed unless such
576 information is essential to any such investigation;

577 (27) The Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch, for
578 the purpose of (A) determining the supervision and treatment needs of
579 a child or youth or any other person, and provide appropriate
580 supervision and treatment services to such child or youth or any other
581 person, or (B) sharing common case records to track recidivism of
582 juvenile offenders;

583 (28) The birth-to-three program's referral intake office for the purpose
584 of (A) determining eligibility of, (B) facilitating enrollment for, and (C)
585 providing services to (i) substantiated victims of child abuse and neglect
586 with suspected developmental delays, and (ii) newborns impacted by
587 withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure;

588 (29) The Department of Public Health for (A) the purpose of
589 notification when the Commissioner of Children and Families places an
590 individual licensed or certified by the Department of Public Health on
591 the child abuse and neglect registry established pursuant to section 17a-
592 101k, and (B) purposes relating to the licensure of the Albert J. Solnit
593 Children's Center and the administration of licensing requirements
594 established pursuant to or set forth in sections 19a-134 and 19a-498;

595 (30) The Department of Correction, for the purpose of determining
596 the supervision and treatment needs of a child or youth, and providing
597 appropriate supervision and treatment services to such child or youth;

598 (31) Any child placing agency subject to licensure by the Department
599 of Children and Families, for the purpose of determining the suitability
600 of a person (A) for employment by such agency, or (B) to adopt or
601 provide foster care pursuant to sections 17a-114 and 17a-151;

602 (32) The Department of Administrative Services, for the purpose of
603 determining whether an applicant for employment with the state, who
604 would have contact with children in the course of such employment,
605 appears on the child abuse or neglect registry maintained pursuant to
606 section 17a-101k;

607 (33) Any individual, upon the request of such individual, when the
608 information concerns an incident of abuse or neglect that resulted in the
609 fatality or near fatality of a child or youth, provided (A) such disclosure
610 shall be limited to (i) the cause and circumstances of such fatality or near
611 fatality, (ii) the age and gender of such child or youth, (iii) a description
612 of any previous reports of or investigations into child abuse or neglect
613 that are relevant to the child abuse or neglect that led to such fatality or
614 near fatality, (iv) the findings of any such investigations, and (v) a
615 description of any services provided and actions taken by the state on
616 behalf of such child or youth that are relevant to the child abuse or
617 neglect that led to such fatality or near fatality, and (B) the department
618 shall not make any disclosure that is prohibited by the provisions of any
619 relevant federal law, including, but not limited to, Titles IV-B and IV-E
620 of the Social Security Act, as amended from time to time. The
621 department may withhold the disclosure of any records described in
622 this subdivision if the commissioner determines that such disclosure
623 may (i) result in harm to the safety or well-being of the child or youth
624 who is the subject of such records, the family of such child or youth, or
625 any individual who made a report of abuse or neglect pertaining to such
626 child or youth, or (ii) interfere with a pending criminal investigation;
627 [and]

628 (34) The Office of Policy and Management, for purposes of labor
629 relations investigations conducted on behalf of the Department of
630 Children and Families; and

631 (35) A local or regional board of education in response to a request by
632 such board pursuant to section 10-184, as amended by this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2027	10-184
Sec. 2	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 3	July 1, 2028	New section
Sec. 4	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 5	July 1, 2028	New section
Sec. 6	July 1, 2028	10-262f(22)
Sec. 7	July 1, 2027	10-10a(c)(1)
Sec. 8	July 1, 2026	17a-28(g)

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(b), "age and over" was changed to "age or over" for clarity; in Section 1(e)(2)(B), "determination and conduct such check and then notify" was changed to "determination, conduct such check and notify" and "pursuant to this subdivision" was added after "may not be withdrawn from public school" for proper form; in Section 3(d), "subsection (a)" was changed to "subsection (c)" for accuracy; in Section 3(e), "subsection (b)" was changed to "subdivision (2) of subsection (c)" for accuracy; and Section 7 was changed to incorporate the amendments made in public act 26-1, for accuracy.

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:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$	FY 29 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Cost	400,000	550,000	At least 400,000
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Potential Cost	None	23,400	23,400

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$	FY 29 \$
Local and Regional School Districts	Revenue Gain	None	None	See Below
Local and Regional School Districts	STATE MANDATE ¹ - Potential Cost	None	Potential Minimal	Potential Minimal

Explanation

The bill, which establishes a regulatory framework for students educated in a setting other than public or nonpublic school, results in the fiscal impacts described below by section.

Sections 1 and 4 result in an annual cost of \$400,000 to the State Department of Education (SDE), beginning in FY 27, to implement the bill's regulatory framework and develop, distribute, and maintain

¹ State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

guidance regarding the bill's provisions. This funding is required to expand capacity annually as needed.

Section 1 results in potential minimal staffing costs to local and regional Boards of Education (BOEs) annually beginning in FY 28. It is anticipated that some BOEs may need to hire additional staff to implement the bill's regulatory framework, which includes forms received by the BOE and, in certain situations, attempts to contact families. The number of staff hired will vary based on the number of students subject to the framework.

Additionally, Section 1 requires certain Department of Children and Families' (DCF) records checks when parents submit a form to withdraw their children from public school for equivalent instruction, resulting in a potential cost to DCF of \$23,400 in FY 28 (and annually thereafter) to hire a Careline processing technician (0.5 FTE) who would support any increase in case search volume associated with the bill's requirements.

The framework established by the bill requires: (1) parents who withdraw a student from public school to sign a withdrawal form in person, beginning in FY 28; (2) certain parents² to sign an intent to educate form,³ beginning in FY 29; (3) parents who withdrew their child to receive equivalent instruction (homeschooling) to annually sign a continuation of equivalent instruction form electronically, beginning in FY 30; (4) BOEs to attempt to contact parents who do not submit required continuation of equivalent instruction forms by September 1, beginning in FY 29, and if they are unable to contact the parents they must notify SDE; and (5) BOEs to contact DCF within two business days of receiving a withdrawal form.

² Parents subject to this requirement include: (1) parents of children who turn five by September 1 of the school year; (2) parents who signed, the previous year, the form deferring their five or six year old from starting school, or whose child is five or six years old; (3) parents of school-aged children who move into a school district; and (4) parents who withdraw their child from a nonpublic school.

³ Parents must indicate whether their child will: (1) enroll in public school; (2) enroll in nonpublic school, with evidence of said enrollment; or (3) receive equivalent instruction.

Section 2 results in a potential minimal cost to BOEs to receive demonstrations of equivalent instruction⁴ or to contract with another entity to receive such demonstrations, beginning in FY 29. The cost is dependent on the number of children receiving equivalent instruction, the complexity of the demonstrations, and the terms of any contract. The section requires parents of children receiving equivalent instruction to submit demonstrations of equivalent instruction annually to their resident BOE. BOEs can contract with Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), magnet school operators, or the State Education Resource Center (SERC) to receive demonstrations of equivalent instruction.

Section 3 results in a revenue gain to BOEs and a corresponding cost to SDE annually beginning in FY 29. It requires students receiving equivalent instruction pursuant to the bill to be included as one-tenth of a resident student in a town's Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant. The revenue gain and corresponding cost is dependent on the number of children receiving equivalent instruction in a town, and that town's ECS grant per student. In FY 27 under current law, the ECS grant per resident student ranges from \$12,687 (Hartford) to \$116 (New Canaan) and the median is \$3,845 (Columbia).⁵

BOEs must submit an application to SDE to receive the portion of the ECS grant attributable to children receiving equivalent instruction.⁶ This portion of ECS funding must be used to: (1) implement the documentation requirements in Section 1; (2) review demonstrations of equivalent instruction as required by Section 2, which may include contracting with a RESC, SERC, or magnet operator; and (3) determine

⁴ Demonstrations of equivalent instruction can be one of the following: (1) a portfolio which may include curriculum, completed academic work, results from a nationally normed standardized test, or proof of completing online coursework; (2) the statewide mastery exam; or (3) a high school diploma from the GED test.

⁵ The rounded increase in ECS for Hartford, New Canaan, and Columbia per child receiving equivalent instruction using FY 27 ECS data and the current ECS foundation would be approximately \$1,269, \$12, and \$385 respectively.

⁶ This structure is similar to existing law for the Alliance District portion of ECS grants. ECS grants are paid to towns, but the Alliance District portion and the new equivalent instruction portion are paid entirely to the BOE.

the number of children of compulsory school age residing in the BOE's jurisdiction, as required under current law.

Section 5 results in a revenue gain to BOEs and a cost to SDE annually beginning in FY 29. It allows BOEs to permit children receiving equivalent instruction to take up to two classes, provided space is available, and participate in extracurricular activities. Such children are: (1) counted as a part time student in the district's enrollment; and (2) counted as an additional one-fourth of a resident student for ECS purposes.⁷ Similar to Section 3, including these students in the ECS resident student count results in a revenue gain to BOEs by increasing a town's ECS grant (assuming all other grant factors remain equal) and a corresponding cost to SDE. The cost is dependent on the number of children receiving equivalent instruction in a town, and, roughly, that town's ECS grant per student.⁸ This portion of the ECS grant is not subject to the same application and use conditions as the portion in Section 3.

Section 6 changes the definition of resident student in the ECS formula to include the one-tenth and one-fourth counts for children receiving equivalent instruction and children receiving equivalent instruction and participating in public school activities, respectively. This is a conforming change respective to the bill; however, the resident student count is used in the vocational agriculture and BOE-operated magnet school grant formulas. The change potentially results in changes to these grants, but as the data for these grants are updated annually, it is unknown to what extent they would be affected.

Section 7 results in a one-time cost of \$150,000 in FY 28 for SDE to update the statewide education data system to include data about students receiving equivalent instruction. This funding is also necessary

⁷ A child receiving equivalent instruction who participates in school activities is counted twice for ECS; once as one-tenth of a student (under Section 3) and once as one-fourth of a student (under Section 5).

⁸ The increase in ECS for Hartford, New Canaan, and Columbia per child receiving equivalent instruction and participating in classes or extracurricular activities in FY 27 would be approximately \$3,172, \$29, and \$961 respectively.

for SDE to implement data system requirements pursuant to Sections 5 and 6.

Section 8 makes a conforming and procedural change which has no fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of students participating in equivalent instruction, the number of forms submitted, and inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5468****AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF EQUIVALENT INSTRUCTION.****SUMMARY**

This bill creates a regulatory framework for providing “equivalent instruction,” which is education given to a child by his or her parents or guardians (“parents”) in a setting other than a public or nonpublic school (such as homeschooling). It requires (1) certain parents to submit forms indicating how their child is being educated and (2) those parents who indicate that their child is receiving equivalent instruction to show that their child is being educated in one of the ways allowed under the bill (such as by submitting a portfolio or taking the state mastery exam).

The bill’s framework does not apply to parents whose children are currently receiving equivalent instruction (or enrolled in nonpublic school) or withdraw from public school before July 1, 2027, unless they move into a new school district or leave a nonpublic school. The bill’s requirements phase in as follows:

1. starting with the 2027-28 school year, they apply to parents seeking to withdraw their children from public school (and prohibits withdrawal if the results of a Department of Children and Families (DCF) check indicate the parent is ineligible to provide equivalent instruction) and
2. starting with the 2028-29 school year, they apply to parents of children newly eligible for public school, children who move into a district, and children withdrawn from nonpublic school.

The bill also does the following:

1. explicitly allows school boards to permit students receiving

- equivalent instruction to participate in certain public school activities and allows these students to be partially counted when calculating a town's education cost sharing (ECS) grant;
2. provides additional funding, tied to ECS, for school boards for fulfilling their responsibilities under the bill;
 3. requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to provide guidance for parents and school boards on the provision of equivalent instruction, as well as other specified topics.

Lastly, the bill makes various technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2027, except that provisions on (1) demonstrations of equivalent instruction, SDE guidance, and permitting DCF to release information (§§ 2, 4 & 8) take effect July 1, 2026, and (2) funding and public school activities (§§ 3, 5 & 6) take effect July 1, 2028.

§§ 1, 4 & 8 — EQUIVALENT INSTRUCTION AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Under the state's current compulsory school attendance law, parents must either send their children to public school or show they are otherwise receiving instruction equivalent to the one provided in public school (with certain exceptions, such as parents opting to delay school for a five- or six-year-old). So, under current law, "equivalent instruction" refers to any schooling option other than a public school.

The bill modifies this law to specifically require parents to (1) send their child to public or nonpublic school or (2) ensure their child receives "equivalent instruction" in the studies taught in public school. It defines "equivalent instruction" as education provided by a child's parent or guardian in a setting other than a public or nonpublic school and establishes an oversight framework for children receiving equivalent instruction. Under existing law and the bill, regardless of educational setting, children must receive instruction in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, geography, arithmetic, and United States history and citizenship (including town, state, and federal governments).

The bill establishes and phases in procedures for documenting the educational setting where children are being educated and requesting DCF records checks when parents withdraw their children from public school for equivalent instruction.

Depending on the circumstances, the bill requires parents to fill out withdrawal forms, intent to educate forms, or continuation of equivalent instruction forms. Once they fill out one of these forms, the child is documented as receiving equivalent instruction. These requirements generally do not apply to children who are currently receiving equivalent instruction (or enrolled in a nonpublic school), unless they move into a new school district or leave a nonpublic school.

Withdrawal From Public School (§§ 1(e) & 8)

Starting with the 2027-28 school year, the bill requires parents who withdraw a child from public school to go, in person, to the school district's office and sign a withdrawal form (created by SDE).

Withdrawals for Nonpublic School. If the child is withdrawing to attend a nonpublic school, the parent must show evidence that the child will attend the school (for example, an acceptance letter). The child's withdrawal is complete when the school district receives this evidence.

Withdrawals for Equivalent Instruction. If the child is withdrawing to receive equivalent instruction, the school district must request a check of DCF records, and the withdrawal is not effective until it does so and notifies the parents that the withdrawal is permitted. The bill specifies that this check does not constitute a report of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Within two business days after receiving a withdrawal form from a child's parent, the school board must ask DCF to determine whether the parent is (1) receiving protective services or subject to protective supervision (see BACKGROUND) or (2) on the state child abuse and neglect registry. DCF must do so within five days after receiving a request from a school board and then notify the school board of the results. The bill specifically allows DCF to release information from its

records to school boards in order to complete the bill's requirement.

If a school board receives notice from DCF that none of these circumstances apply to the parent, the board must immediately notify the parent that the child's withdrawal is complete. If any of these circumstances do apply to the parent, the school board must notify the parent that the child may not be withdrawn from public school.

Intent to Educate Form (§ 1(c))

Starting with the 2028-29 school year, the bill requires certain categories of parents to go, in person, to their school district and sign an "intent to educate" form, which SDE must create. This requirement applies to:

1. parents of children who will turn five before September 1 of the school year;
2. parents who signed, in the previous year, the option form deferring their five- or six-year old from starting school (which is required under current law for parents choosing this option);
3. parents of school-aged children who move into a school district; and
4. parents who withdraw their child from a nonpublic school.

On the intent to educate form, parents must indicate whether their child will (1) enroll in public school, (2) attend a nonpublic school, or (3) receive equivalent instruction. If the child will attend a nonpublic school, the parent must show evidence indicating that the child will do so. Parents who move into a district have 14 days to complete the form.

Continuation of Equivalent Instruction Form (§ 1(d))

Under the bill, starting with the 2028-29 school year, the bill (1) creates a "continuation of equivalent instruction form" (continuation form) requirement that applies to parents subject to the bill's withdrawal form and intent to educate form requirements and (2) phases it in based on when these form requirements take effect.

In effect, when a parent submits an intent to educate form or a withdrawal form indicating their child will receive equivalent instruction, they are then required to complete a continuation form in each subsequent school year (unless the child enrolls in a public or nonpublic school). While the other forms must be submitted in person, the bill allows parents to submit continuation forms to school districts electronically.

When Forms Are Not Submitted. Under the bill, continuation forms are due by September 1 each school year. If a school board does not receive a continuation form from a parent required to submit one, the board must make at least three attempts to contact the parent to tell them they must submit the form. If the board cannot make contact by October 1, the bill requires the school board to notify SDE.

§§ 2 & 4 — DEMONSTRATION OF EQUIVALENT INSTRUCTION

For the purpose of checking that a child receiving equivalent instruction is being educated, the bill establishes a procedure for demonstrating that a child is receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in public schools. This requirement (1) starts in the 2028-29 school year and (2) applies to parents of children who are documented as receiving equivalent instruction for the school year (on an intent to educate or continuation form).

The bill requires these parents to show their child is receiving equivalent instruction by demonstrating the child's academic work, according to the guidance the bill requires SDE to develop. Parents may demonstrate their child's work in the following ways:

1. turning in a portfolio, which may include the curriculum the parent used, the child's completed academic work, results from a nationally normed standardized test, or proof of completing online coursework or enrollment in community college courses;
2. having the child take the statewide mastery exam, administered by a school board or regional educational service center (RESA);
or

3. getting a high school diploma by taking the GED test.

Under the bill, parents submit this demonstration, sometime between March 1 and June 1, to the school board for the child's town of residence. The bill allows school boards to contract with a RESC, the State Education Resource Center (SERC), or an interdistrict magnet school operator to receive these submissions.

Record Retention

The bill also requires parents of a child receiving equivalent instruction to retain the child's education records for at least three years, including the curriculum they used and the academic work the child completed.

§§ 3, 4 & 6 — FUNDING TO SCHOOL BOARDS

Starting in FY 29, the bill provides additional funds to school boards, through a new funding mechanism tied to ECS, for the following purposes:

1. administering the bill's documentation requirements (see § 1);
2. fulfilling their responsibility under existing law to annually determine the number of children of compulsory school age residing in their jurisdiction (CGS § 10-249); and
3. reviewing demonstrations of equivalent instruction (which may include paying a RESC, SERC, or interdistrict magnet school operator to do so).

Under the bill, schools receive funding through this new mechanism in addition to the ECS increase they receive for children receiving equivalent instruction who participate in public school activities (see "Participation in Public School Activities" below).

Calculation

For each resident child documented as receiving equivalent instruction, the bill effectively gives school boards 10% of the amount they receive in ECS per resident student.

Resident Student Count. Under the bill, each resident child documented as receiving equivalent instruction is counted as 1/10th of a student in the town's resident student count for ECS purposes. Assuming other ECS factors for a town remain the same, this increases the ECS grant amount a town is entitled to.

(This applies in addition to the requirement that children receiving equivalent instruction who participate in public school activities count as 1/4 of a student (see "Participation in Public School Activities" below). So, some children receiving equivalent instruction may be counted twice for ECS purposes, once as 1/10 of a student and once as 1/4 of a student.)

Amount per Child Receiving Equivalent Instruction. Under the bill, this amount is calculated by (1) dividing the ECS grant amount a town is entitled to receive by its resident student count and then (2) multiplying that amount by 10%.

Grant Amount. The grant amount schools may receive under the bill equals the amount per child receiving equivalent instruction, multiplied by the number of children documented as receiving equivalent instruction.

Disbursement

By law, ECS grants are paid to municipalities, not to school boards directly. The bill creates a process that pays the grant described above to the municipality but requires the entire amount be sent to the school board.

Starting with FY 29, the comptroller must withhold the amount calculated as described above from each town (presumably, from the town's ECS grant) and transfer the funds to SDE. School boards must apply to SDE to get these funds and include the number of resident students documented as receiving equivalent instruction. SDE must determine when and how school boards must apply and must give school boards the funds after receiving their application. School boards must spend the money for the purposes outlined in the bill and in

compliance with guidance SDE must issue under the bill.

The bill requires school boards to carry forward any of these funds they do not spend to the next fiscal year.

§§ 4-7 — PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The bill specifically allows school boards to permit resident children who are receiving equivalent instruction to participate in the following public school activities:

1. up to two public school classes in schools under the school board's jurisdiction, as long as space is available in the class, and
2. extracurricular activities, intramural athletics, and interscholastic athletics.

However, the bill limits participation in interscholastic athletics by students who withdraw from public school for equivalent instruction, prohibiting them from doing so for the remainder of the school year during which they withdrew and the following school year. Children who participate in these public school activities must (1) meet the same vaccination and health assessment requirements applicable to public school students under state law and (2) comply with the school board's student handbook. The bill also requires the guidance SDE develops to cover participation in public school activities as allowed under the bill.

The bill counts each resident child who is receiving equivalent instruction and participating in public school activities as 1/4 of a student in their ECS grant calculation. The students are considered part-time students for school district enrollment purposes, and SDE's statewide public school information system must include the number of children receiving equivalent instruction who are participating in public school activities.

BACKGROUND

Protective Services and Orders for Protective Supervision

By law, protective services are public welfare services provided to the

family following a complaint of abuse, neglect, or abandonment with no ruling on the complaint. This means either there has been no court decision on the complaint or court jurisdiction has not been determined. An order for protective supervision means a court determined that a child was neglected, but DCF or another social agency, at the court’s request, is helping to correct the neglect while the child remains in the home (CGS § 17a-93).

Related Bill

sSB 6 (File 118), favorably reported by the Committee on Children, requires (1) school boards to notify SDE and DCF when a child is withdrawn from public school and (2) DCF to determine if the child is subject to protective supervision or services.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 26 Nay 20 (03/18/2026)