
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applications that are not under a contract that meets the state data privacy law (but this requirement has already been repealed by PA 26-1, § 98) (§ 5).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)