



General Assembly

Amendment

February Session, 2026

LCO No. 4558



Offered by:
REP. LEEPER, 132nd Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. 5323

File No. 380

Cal. No. 266

**"AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE
EDUCATION STATUTES."**

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the
2 following in lieu thereof:

3 "Section 1. Section 10-244a of the general statutes is repealed and the
4 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

5 (a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2013, and each school year
6 thereafter, no municipality or local or regional board of education may
7 employ or enter into an agreement, as described in subdivision (2) of
8 subsection (b) of section 53a-217b, with any person, other than a sworn
9 member of an organized local police department or a retired [police]
10 officer as provided in subsection (b) of this section, to provide security
11 services in a public school if such person will possess a firearm, as
12 defined in section 53a-3, while in the performance of his or her duties.

13 (b) A municipality or a local or regional board of education may
14 employ or enter into an agreement with a retired [police] officer to

15 provide security services in a public school if such retired [police] officer
16 is a (1) qualified retired law enforcement officer, as defined in 18 USC
17 926C, as amended from time to time, or (2) parole officer who meets the
18 qualifications specified for a qualified retired law enforcement officer
19 under 18 USC 926C, as applicable to a parole officer. Such retired
20 [police] officer shall receive annual training pursuant to section 7-294x
21 and shall successfully complete annual firearms training provided by a
22 certified firearms instructor that meets or exceeds the standards of the
23 Police Officer Standards and Training Council or 18 USC 926C, as
24 amended from time to time. Such retired [police] officer shall not be
25 subject to the licensing requirements of part II of chapter 534.

26 (c) For the purposes of subsection (b) of this section, ["retired police
27 officer"] (1) "retired officer" means [(1)] (A) a sworn member of an
28 organized local police department who was certified by the Police
29 Officer Standards and Training Council, [and] retired or separated in
30 good standing from such department [or] and is not prohibited from
31 being hired by a law enforcement unit pursuant to section 7-291c, (B) a
32 sworn member of the Division of State Police within the Department of
33 Emergency Services and Public Protection who retired or separated in
34 good standing from said division [, (2)] and is not prohibited from being
35 hired by a law enforcement unit pursuant to section 7-291c, (C) a sworn
36 federal law enforcement agent who retired or separated in good
37 standing from such federal law enforcement service, is not prohibited
38 from being hired by a law enforcement unit pursuant to section 7-291c
39 and [who] meets or exceeds the standards of the Police Officer
40 Standards and Training Council for certification in this state, [or (3)] (D)
41 a sworn officer of an organized police department in another state who
42 was certified under standards that meet or exceed the standards of the
43 Police Officer Standards and Training Council for certification in this
44 state, [and who] retired or separated in good standing from such
45 department and is not prohibited from being hired by a law
46 enforcement unit pursuant to section 7-291c, or (E) a parole officer who
47 retired or separated in good standing from the Department of
48 Correction, and (2) "good standing" means the status of a police officer

49 whose employment in a law enforcement unit, as defined in section 7-
50 294a, or a parole officer whose employment with the Department of
51 Correction, was not terminated as a result of disciplinary action or
52 during a period when such police officer or parole officer was under
53 investigation or disciplinary action was pending.

54 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) The Connecticut Advisory Council for
55 School Administrator Professional Standards, established pursuant to
56 section 10-144e of the general statutes, in consultation with the
57 Connecticut Association of Schools, shall establish a pilot program for a
58 new school administrator mentorship program. Such pilot program
59 shall include, but need not be limited to, supports, training and
60 professional development for new school administrators. Not later than
61 July 1, 2027, the council shall report the plan for implementation of the
62 pilot program to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
63 having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with
64 the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

65 (b) For the school year commencing July 1, 2027, the Connecticut
66 Advisory Council for School Administrator Professional Standards shall
67 implement the pilot program in school districts identified in the plan
68 developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. Not later than
69 January 1, 2029, the council shall report on the results of the pilot
70 program, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the
71 general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General
72 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education. Such
73 report shall include, but need not be limited to, recommendations for
74 improvement to and requirements for the further implementation of the
75 pilot program.

76 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) Not later than July 1, 2027, no
77 local or regional board of education shall require students in grades nine
78 to twelve, inclusive, who participate in any interscholastic athletics to
79 meet or exceed academic eligibility standards that are higher than the
80 academic eligibility standards established by the Connecticut
81 Interscholastic Athletic Conference.

82 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) The Department of Education
83 shall, within available appropriations, establish a grant program for the
84 provision of a therapeutic arts program in public schools for the school
85 year commencing July 1, 2027, and each school year thereafter. Such
86 grant shall be in an amount determined by the Commissioner of
87 Education and available to any local or regional board of education or
88 regional educational service center interested in providing a therapeutic
89 arts program, but the department shall prioritize boards of education or
90 regional educational service centers serving school districts with a high
91 rate of exclusionary discipline, lack of access to behavioral health
92 services and supports and an existing social-emotional learning
93 program. Not later than January 1, 2027, the department shall post in a
94 conspicuous location on its Internet web site information about the
95 grant program, including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria,
96 application forms and the amount of grant funds available to applicants.

97 (b) Not later than July 1 2028, and annually thereafter, the
98 Department of Education shall submit a report, in accordance with the
99 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing
100 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
101 relating to education. Such report shall include the number of grants
102 awarded and recipients of such grants.

103 Sec. 5. (*Effective from passage*) (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of
104 section 10-264l of the general statutes, the Commissioner of Education
105 may authorize, for a period not to exceed two years, the temporary
106 placement of students enrolled in the Bridgeport Military Academy in
107 available classroom space at the Fairchild Wheeler Interdistrict Magnet
108 Campus for the purpose of facilitating construction of a permanent
109 facility for the Bridgeport Military Academy.

110 (b) The temporary placement of students authorized under this
111 section shall be limited to the grades and programs of the Bridgeport
112 Military Academy approved by the Department of Education and shall
113 not be deemed to alter the interdistrict magnet school status of the
114 Fairchild Wheeler Interdistrict Magnet Campus or the eligibility of

115 Fairchild Wheeler Interdistrict Magnet Campus for operating grant
116 funding under section 10-264l of the general statutes.

117 (c) The Department of Education shall assign a separate facility code
118 to the Bridgeport Military Academy during such temporary placement
119 and shall continue to maintain separate enrollment, performance and
120 accountability metrics for both the Bridgeport Military Academy and
121 the Fairchild Wheeler Interdistrict Magnet Campus.

122 (d) The Department of Education shall establish guidelines to ensure
123 that such temporary placement of students does not result in the
124 commingling of students in core academic courses or programs, except
125 as expressly approved by the Commissioner of Education for purposes
126 consistent with each school's educational program.

127 (e) Upon completion of the new permanent facility, the Bridgeport
128 Military Academy shall vacate the temporary location and temporary
129 placement of students at the Fairchild Wheeler Interdistrict Magnet
130 Campus and resume operations in the new permanent facility.

131 Sec. 6. (*Effective from passage*) Section 51 of public act 24-41 shall take
132 effect July 1, 2027.

133 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section, "broad
134 assessment" means an assessment that measures what students should
135 have learned during a semester or during a school year. "Broad
136 assessment" does not include the state-wide mastery examinations
137 under section 10-14n of the general statutes or any other student
138 assessments required by state or federal law.

139 (b) Not later than July 1, 2027, the Commissioner of Education shall
140 establish, within available appropriations, an incentive program for
141 school districts that (1) reduces or limits the amount of time students
142 spend on taking broad assessments during the school year, (2) integrates
143 state-provided interim and formative assessment tools into the local
144 curriculum in a manner that supports ongoing instructional
145 improvement, and (3) increases teacher competency in the formative

146 assessment process. The incentive program may include public
147 recognition, financial awards and enhanced autonomy or operational
148 flexibility for school districts.

149 (c) The Department of Education may accept private donations for
150 the purpose of this section.

151 Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) Not later than June 1, 2027, the
152 Department of Education shall develop and provide guidance to local
153 and regional boards of education on effective strategies for reducing the
154 amount of discretionary local student assessments. Such guidance may
155 include the elimination of the fall and spring administration of broad
156 assessments, as defined in section 7 of this act, or substituting, where
157 appropriate, certain end-of-unit classroom summative assessments with
158 state-provided interim and formative assessment tools.

159 Sec. 9. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Education may,
160 after consultation with the working group established pursuant to
161 section 28 of public act 24-45, submit a request to the United States
162 Secretary of Education to amend the state's approved plan submitted
163 pursuant to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, 20
164 USC 6301, et seq., as amended from time to time, and reauthorized by
165 the Every Student Succeeds Act, P.L. 114-95. Such request may include
166 a waiver from federal accountability requirements under said act that
167 allows the Department of Education to modify the state's high school
168 accountability model by reducing the weight assigned to the academic
169 achievement indicator and increasing the weight for other relevant
170 indicators, such as college and career-oriented measures.

171 Sec. 10. (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than January 1, 2027, the
172 Commissioner of Education shall redesign Connecticut's high school
173 mathematics pathways to prepare students for relevant postsecondary
174 careers. Such mathematics pathways shall include, but need not be
175 limited to, (1) science, technology, engineering and mathematics, (2)
176 data science and statistics, (3) quantitative reasoning, and (4) workforce
177 and applied mathematics. The commissioner may consult with relevant

178 stakeholders to implement the provisions of this subsection.

179 (b) The commissioner, in consultation with the Connecticut Educator
 180 Preparation and Certification Board established pursuant to section 10-
 181 150b of the general statutes, shall develop guidelines for the role of
 182 mathematics specialists in supporting mathematics interventions in
 183 schools.

184 (c) Not later than January 1, 2027, the commissioner shall (1) develop
 185 a list of professional development providers to support the
 186 implementation of high-quality mathematics instruction, and (2)
 187 explore the feasibility of launching MathConn, a professional learning
 188 series for educators. The commissioner may consult with relevant
 189 stakeholders to implement the provisions of this subsection."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2026	10-244a
Sec. 2	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 3	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 4	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 5	from passage	New section
Sec. 6	from passage	New section
Sec. 7	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 8	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 9	from passage	New section
Sec. 10	from passage	New section