

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 26-49—sSB 423

Government Oversight Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING OVERSIGHT OVER HIGHER EDUCATION

SUMMARY: This act makes several changes to reporting requirements related to the public higher education system. It:

1. changes existing requirements and adds new ones for the Board of Regents for Higher Education's (BOR) annual report on consolidating the community colleges into Connecticut State Community College;
2. requires, by December 31, 2026, the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) chancellor to report to the Government Oversight and Higher Education and Employment Advancement committees on a comparison of the number of certain CSCU personnel on June 30 of 2011, 2019, and 2026; and
3. adds the Government Oversight Committee to the list of legislative committees that must receive the Planning Commission for Higher Education's updated higher education strategic master plan and annual reports on the plan's progress.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 1 — REPORT ON CONSOLIDATING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The community-technical colleges merged into Connecticut State Community College in 2023. The law requires BOR to annually report certain information on the consolidation's results through July 1, 2030. The act changes the due date for the next annual report from July 1, 2026, to August 1, 2026, and makes future annual reports due by August 1. Beginning with the next report, the act changes the report's existing requirements and adds new ones. It also requires submitting this report to the Government Oversight Committee, in addition to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee as is already required.

Changes to Report Requirements

Prior law required the report to compare certain performance metrics from July 1, 2023, to the report's date. The act instead requires the report to compare metrics from July 1, 2019, to July 1 of the year of the annual report. This applies to the following metrics:

1. percentage of students enrolled for the first time in courses for credit who (a) complete introductory math and English requirements within a year of enrollment; (b) enroll for a full semester and re-enroll the following semester or the next fall or spring semester, or graduate; and (c) within three years after enrollment, graduate, transfer to a four-year institution, or are

- still enrolled;
- 2. ratios of students to (a) student-counselors or advisors, (b) full-time faculty, and (c) part-time or adjunct faculty;
- 3. number of executive positions at each campus; and
- 4. number of personnel by location or functional area for each campus and type of position.

The act adds that the report must include data on the percentage of students who:

- 1. enrolled for the first time in courses for credit and either (a) enroll for more than six credits their first semester or (b) complete more than 24 credits during their first year, and
- 2. attend multiple campuses.

It also requires categorizing by demographics the data already required about student outcomes within three years of enrollment.

New Report Requirements

Starting with the report due August 1, 2026, the act also requires the annual report to include:

- 1. details on the financial impact of consolidation and whether it saved money or added costs from July 1, 2019, to the year prior to the report, including information on the average per student cost of the admissions and financial aid departments and the student registration and records process;
- 2. whether any administrative service cannot be efficiently redistributed;
- 3. a cost-benefit analysis of eliminating the central office and having an administrative office on each campus;
- 4. a comparison of the number of faculty and direct student support staff prior to consolidation and at the time of the report;
- 5. the percentage change in administrative positions, faculty, and direct student support staff since consolidation;
- 6. the results of a new annual survey of (a) students about the impact on their ability to take classes needed for their major and (b) faculty about the impact on their ability to teach classes;
- 7. details on how consolidation has or has not created a seamless transition from the regional-technical community colleges to the Connecticut State University System (CSUS);
- 8. an analysis of the consolidation's impact on the missions of two- and four-year colleges with an explanation of it;
- 9. a detailed comparison of CSUS budgets compared to the separate regional-technical community colleges before and after consolidation; and
- 10. a comparison of student outcomes at CSUS and UConn.

§ 2 — REPORT ON CSCU PERSONNEL

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The act requires the CSCU chancellor, by December 31, 2026, to report to the Government Oversight and Higher Education and Employment Advancement committees with information comparing the number of certain CSCU personnel on June 30 of 2011, 2019, and 2026. The comparison must address full- and part-time staff at the CSCU system office, the Connecticut State Community College central office, and each regional community-technical college campus performing the following functions:

1. academic and student affairs,
2. accounting,
3. board affairs,
4. finance and budget,
5. compliance and audit,
6. chancellor's office,
7. external affairs,
8. facilities,
9. human resources and labor relations,
10. decision support and institutional research,
11. information technology,
12. legal, and
13. business services and procurement.

§ 3 — HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

Existing law requires the Planning Commission for Higher Education to:

1. revise the 2015 higher education strategic master plan and submit an updated plan with goals and benchmarks for 2026 and 2030 to the governor and various legislative committees by December 1, 2025 (the plan does not appear to have been submitted) and
2. beginning by January 1, 2027, annually report on the plan's implementation and goal progression to these recipients.

Under this law, the legislative recipients are the Appropriations, Commerce, Education, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, and Labor and Public Employees committees. The act additionally requires the commission to submit the plan to the Government Oversight Committee by July 1, 2026, and also give it the annual updates.