



Senate Bill No. 1032

Public Act No. 21-199

AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE STATUTES RELATING TO EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

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

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Not later than December 1, 2021, and annually thereafter, any local or regional board of education that participates in the National School Lunch Program, in which at least one school under the jurisdiction of such board qualifies for the maximum federal reimbursement for all school meals served under the federal Community Eligibility Provision, but does not implement the Community Eligibility Provision, shall submit a report to the Department of Education that notifies the department that such board is not implementing the Community Eligibility Provision and the reasons for why such board is not implementing the Community Eligibility Provision. Such report shall include, but not be limited to, a description of the specific impediments to implementing the Community Eligibility Provision, any actions that are needed to remove those impediments and a plan for implementation of the Community Eligibility Provision during the following school year, if possible. As used in this section, "Community Eligibility Provision" means the federal meal reimbursement program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture, as set forth in 7 CFR 245.9, as amended from

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time to time.

Sec. 2. Section 10-76xx of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

(a) A local or regional board of education shall, upon the identification of a student as gifted and talented, provide electronic notice of such identification to the parent or guardian of such student. Such notice shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) an explanation of how such student was identified as gifted and talented, and (2) the contact information for (A) the employee of the school district in charge of the provision of services to gifted and talented students, or, if there is no such employee, the employee of the school district in charge of the provision of special education and related services, (B) the employee at the Department of Education who has been designated as responsible for providing information and assistance to boards of education and parents or guardians of students related to gifted and talented students, pursuant to section 10-3e, and (C) any associations in the state that provide support to gifted and talented students.

(b) Not later than July 1, 2022, each local and regional board of education shall adopt a policy for the equitable identification of gifted and talented students. Such policy shall require the use of multiple methods of identification of gifted and talented students that are in compliance with guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) As used in this section:

(1) "Advanced course or program" means an honors class, advanced placement class, International Baccalaureate program, Cambridge International program, dual enrollment, dual credit, early college or any other advanced or accelerated course or program offered by a local or regional board of education in grades nine to twelve, inclusive; and

(2) "Prior academic performance" means the course or courses that a

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student has taken, the grades received for such course or courses and a student's grade point average.

(b) Not later than July 1, 2022, each local and regional board of education shall adopt a policy, or revise an existing policy, concerning the eligibility criteria for student enrollment in an advanced course or program. Such policy shall provide for multiple methods by which a student may satisfy the eligibility criteria for enrollment in an advanced course or program, including, but not limited to, recommendations from teachers, administrators, school counselors or other school personnel. Such eligibility criteria shall not be based exclusively on a student's prior academic performance and that any use of a student's prior academic performance shall rely on evidence-based indicators of how a student will perform in an advanced course or program.

(c) Any policy adopted or revised and implemented under this section shall be in accordance with guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Sec. 4. Subsection (j) of section 10-221a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

(j) For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall create a student success plan for each student enrolled in a public school, beginning in grade six. Such student success plan shall include a student's career and academic choices in grades six to twelve, inclusive. Beginning in grade six, such student success plan shall provide evidence of career exploration in each grade including, but not limited to, careers in manufacturing. The Department of Education shall revise and issue to local and regional boards of education guidance regarding changes to such student success plans. On and after July 1, 2020, in creating such student success plans, consideration shall be given to career and

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academic choices in computer science, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. On and after July 1, 2021, such student success plans shall be created, if possible, in collaboration with each student and the parent or guardian of such student. On and after July 1, 2022, such student success plans shall, to the extent it does not conflict with the career choices of the student or such student's parent or guardian, include an academic plan that is in compliance with the challenging curriculum policy adopted by the local or regional board of education pursuant to section 5 of this act.

Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) Not later than July 1, 2022, each local and regional board of education shall adopt a challenging curriculum policy. A challenging curriculum policy shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) criteria for the identification of students in grades eight and nine who may be eligible to take or enroll in an advanced course or program, as defined in section 3 of this act, and (2) a provision requiring the creation of an academic plan, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Each local and regional board of education shall create an academic plan for each student identified under the criteria described in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section. In creating an academic plan for a student, such plan shall be designed to enroll such student in one or more advanced course or programs and allow such student to earn college credit or result in career readiness. Each academic plan shall be aligned with (1) the courses or programs offered by the local or regional board of education, (2) such student's student success plan created pursuant to subsection (j) of section 10-221a of the general statutes, as amended by this act, (3) the high school graduation requirements under section 10-221a of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and (4) any other policies or standards adopted by the board relating to the eligibility for student enrollment in advanced courses or programs. A student, or the parent or guardian of a student, may decline

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to implement the provisions of an academic plan created for such student.

(c) A challenging curriculum policy adopted and implemented under this section shall be in accordance with guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Not later than July 1, 2022, each local and regional board of education shall adopt a policy to improve completion rates of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by students enrolled in grade twelve in a high school under the jurisdiction of such board or an adult education program maintained by such board pursuant to section 10-69 of the general statutes. A local or regional board of education may accept gifts, grants and donations, including in-kind donations, to implement the provisions of a policy adopted under this section.

Sec. 7. Subsection (d) of section 10-262u of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

(d) The local or regional board of education for a town designated as an alliance district may apply to the Commissioner of Education, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner prescribes, to receive any increase in funds received over the amount the town received for the prior fiscal year pursuant to subsection (a) of section 10-262i. Applications pursuant to this subsection shall include objectives and performance targets and a plan that are developed, in part, on the strategic use of student academic performance data. Such plan may include, but not be limited to, the following: (1) A tiered system of interventions for the schools under the jurisdiction of such board based on the needs of such schools, (2) ways to strengthen the foundational programs in reading, through the intensive reading instruction program pursuant to section 10-14u, to ensure reading mastery in kindergarten

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to grade three, inclusive, with a focus on standards and instruction, proper use of data, intervention strategies, current information for teachers, parental engagement, and teacher professional development, (3) additional learning time, including extended school day or school year programming administered by school personnel or external partners, (4) a talent strategy that includes, but is not limited to, teacher and school leader recruitment and assignment, career ladder policies that draw upon guidelines for a model teacher evaluation program adopted by the State Board of Education, pursuant to section 10-151b, and adopted by each local or regional board of education. Such talent strategy may include provisions that demonstrate increased ability to attract, retain, promote and bolster the performance of staff in accordance with performance evaluation findings and, in the case of new personnel, other indicators of effectiveness, (5) training for school leaders and other staff on new teacher evaluation models, (6) provisions for the cooperation and coordination with early childhood education providers to ensure alignment with district expectations for student entry into kindergarten, including funding for an existing local Head Start program, (7) provisions for the cooperation and coordination with other governmental and community programs to ensure that students receive adequate support and wraparound services, including community school models, (8) provisions for implementing and furthering state-wide education standards adopted by the State Board of Education and all activities and initiatives associated with such standards, (9) strategies for attracting and recruiting minority teachers and administrators, (10) provisions for the enhancement of bilingual education programs, pursuant to section 10-17f, or other language acquisition services to English language learners, including, but not limited to, participation in the English language learner pilot program, established pursuant to section 10-17n, (11) entering into the model school district responsibilities agreement, described in section 10-223l, (12) leadership succession plans that provide training and learning opportunities for administrators and are designed to assist in the

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seamless transition of school and district personnel in and out of leadership positions in the school district and the continuous implementation of plans developed under this subsection, (13) implementing the policy adopted pursuant to section 6 of this act to improve completion rates of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by students enrolled in grade twelve in a high school under the jurisdiction of such board or students enrolled in an adult education program maintained by such board pursuant to section 10-69, and, as applicable, the parent and guardians of such students, and [(13)] (14) any additional categories or goals as determined by the commissioner. Such plan shall demonstrate collaboration with key stakeholders, as identified by the commissioner, with the goal of achieving efficiencies and the alignment of intent and practice of current programs with conditional programs identified in this subsection. The commissioner may (A) require changes in any plan submitted by a local or regional board of education before the commissioner approves an application under this subsection, and (B) permit a local or regional board of education, as part of such plan, to use a portion of any funds received under this section for the purposes of paying tuition charged to such board pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (k) of section 10-264~~l~~ or subsection (b) of section 10-264o.

Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Not later than July 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Department of Education shall publish and make available on its Internet web site the student completion rate of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid for the graduating class for each high school and each school district. The department may exclude the completion data of certain subgroups of students for the purposes of publishing such data under this section if the career choices of the students in such subgroup are not relevant or applicable to the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Sec. 9. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Education shall

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establish a working group to develop strategies and recommendations to improve the rates of student completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The membership of the working group shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) the executive director of the Office of Higher Education, or the executive director's designee, (2) the president of Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, or the president's designee, (3) the president of The University of Connecticut, or the president's designee, and (4) one representative from each of the following associations or organizations, designated by the association or organization, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, the Connecticut Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut, the Connecticut Association of Schools, the RESC Alliance, the Connecticut School Counselor Association and the Connecticut Students for a DREAM. Not later than December 1, 2024, the working group shall submit a report on its strategies and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education and higher education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

Sec. 10. Section 10-184 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

All parents and those who have the care of children shall bring them up in some lawful and honest employment and instruct them or cause them to be instructed in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, geography, arithmetic and United States history and in citizenship, including a study of the town, state and federal governments. Subject to the provisions of this section and section 10-15c, each parent or other person having control of a child five years of age and over and under eighteen years of age shall cause such child to attend a public school regularly during the hours and terms the public school in the district in

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which such child resides is in session, unless such child is a high school graduate or the parent or person having control of such child is able to show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools. For the school [year] years commencing July 1, 2011, [and each school year thereafter] to July 1, 2022, inclusive, the parent or person having control of a child seventeen years of age may consent, as provided in this section, to such child's withdrawal from school. For the school year commencing July 1, 2023, and each school year thereafter, a student who is eighteen years of age or older may withdraw from school. Such parent, [or] person or student shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form shall include an attestation from a guidance counselor, school counselor or school administrator of the school that such school district has provided such parent, [or] person or student with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community. The parent or person having control of a child seventeen years of age may withdraw such child from school and enroll such child in an adult education program pursuant to section 10-69. Such parent or person shall personally appear at the school district office and sign an adult education withdrawal and enrollment form. Such adult education withdrawal and enrollment form shall include an attestation (1) from a school counselor or school administrator of the school that such school district has provided such parent or person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community, and (2) from such parent or person that such child will be enrolled in an adult education program upon such child's withdrawal from school. The parent or person having control of a child five years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is six years of age and the parent or person having control of a child six years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is seven years of age. The parent or person shall exercise such option by personally appearing at the school district office and signing an option form. The school district

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shall provide the parent or person with information on the educational opportunities available in the school system.

Sec. 11. Subsection (a) of section 10-5 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

(a) The Commissioner of Education shall, in accordance with this section, issue a state high school diploma to any person (1) who successfully completes an examination approved by the commissioner, or (2) who (A) is ~~[seventeen]~~ eighteen years of age or older and has been officially withdrawn from school in accordance with the provisions of section 10-184, as amended by this act, ~~[or is eighteen years of age or older,]~~ and (B) presents to the commissioner evidence demonstrating educational qualifications which the commissioner deems equivalent to those required for graduation from a public high school. Application for such a diploma shall be made in the manner and form prescribed by the commissioner provided, at the time of application to take the examination described in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the applicant ~~[is seventeen years of age or older,]~~ has been officially withdrawn from school, in accordance with section 10-184, as amended by this act, for at least six months and has been advised, in such manner as may be prescribed by the commissioner, of the other options for high school completion and other available educational programs. For good cause shown, the commissioner may allow a person who is ~~[sixteen]~~ seventeen years of age to apply to take the examination. ~~[, provided the commissioner may not issue a state high school diploma to such person until the person has attained seventeen years of age.]~~

Sec. 12. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1, 2022, the Commissioner of Education, upon approval of the State Board of Education, may submit to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in

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accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, recommendations concerning: (1) Providing information to students and their families about the net cost of attending college, how applying for federal Pell grants can make college more affordable for students, and the varying income potential of different college and certificate programs; (2) strategies to remove barriers and simplify access to high-quality postsecondary education and training options, including, but not limited to, non-degree programs; (3) the feasibility of establishing an early graduation program in which a student who graduates from high school in three years receives a scholarship from the local or regional board of education responsible for educating such student to attend an undergraduate, in-person program at a nonprofit institution of higher education in the state; and (4) the feasibility of developing a standardized exit survey for all students in grade twelve in the state. In developing such recommendations, the commissioner shall consult with the parents of students, teachers and school administrators, and may establish a working group with members selected by the commissioner.

Sec. 13. Section 10-220g of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

Each local and regional board of education shall establish, and update as necessary, a written policy concerning [weighted grading for honors and advanced placement classes] the manner in which students' grade point averages are calculated, including whether such grade point average is weighted or not weighted. The policy shall provide that parents and students are advised as to whether a grade in an honors class, [or an] advanced placement class, International Baccalaureate program, Cambridge International program, dual enrollment, dual credit or early college is or is not given added weight for purposes of calculating grade point average and determining class rank.