



2016 Legislative Session Summary

WINS

AFT CONNECTICUT BILLS/ISSUES

- **SB 179 Newtown Special Education Funding Fix** – Worked with Newtown Federation of Teachers and Newtown legislators to pass legislation excluding funds received post-Sandy Hook from the US Department of Justice and the US Department of Education from the formula determined to calculate state special education grants awarded to districts.
- **SB 267 TRB 45% Rule** – Defeated attempts by the superintendents’ association to provide exemptions to the 45% rule so that retired superintendents could collect their pension and receive 100% compensation if they go back to work. The bill provides a 2-year exemption for 2 superintendents (Bloomfield and Bridgeport) and allows retired teachers to “unretire” so they may stop collecting a pension and collect full compensation for their work.
- **SB 336 Vouchers** – Defeated efforts by Hartford legislators to establish the first program in Connecticut to provide tax credits to corporations that provide scholarships for low-income students to attend private schools.
- **SB 383 CTHSS Staffing** – Passed legislation providing authority for the superintendent of the Connecticut Technical High School to interface directly with the Office of Policy & Management to fill CTHSS vacancies. Requires CTHSS to provide annual staffing needs assessments to OPM and the Education and Appropriation Committees.
- **SB 464 Hartford Fiscal Sustainability Commission** – Defeated legislation sought by Mayor Bronin that would have obliterated collective bargaining rights and binding arbitration for Hartford municipal and Board of Education employees.
- **HB 5129 Vaccine Administration** – Defeated legislation to permit medical assistants to administer the flu vaccine.
- **HB 5469 Student Data Privacy** – Worked in coalition to pass legislation that determines how student information may be used by entities that contract to provide educational software and electronic storage of student records and (2) operators of websites, online services, or mobile applications and requires school districts to withhold the release of student information if board of education determines that a request for such information is not related to school purposes.

OTHER KEY BILLS

PreK-12/PSRP

- **HB 5400 School Employee Personnel Records** - Adds new requirements to the hiring processes of boards of education, state or local charter schools and magnet school operators for positions that would place applicants in direct contact with students. Requires applicants to participate in additional investigative measures to determine, prior to employment, whether an applicant has a history of sexual misconduct or abuse or neglect involving children. AFT Connecticut worked with the proponents of the bill to add clarity and fairness so that teachers with unresolved or unsubstantiated charges were held as harmless as possible.
- **HB 5468 Professional Development Task Force & Manufacturing Teacher Recruitment Task Force** – Establishes task forces to study issues related to professional development and in-service training requirements. AFT Connecticut is required to designate a representative to the task force and a representative must also be designated by the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council. Also establishes a task force related to the recruitment of manufacturing teachers. A teacher employed at a technical high school is one of the required members of the task force.
- **SB 379 Minority Teacher Recruitment** – Establishes a Minority Teacher Recruitment Policy Oversight Council within the State Department of Education and provides AFT Connecticut the opportunity to designate a representative. Eliminates a satisfactory score on the Praxis competency exam as an entrance requirement for teacher preparation programs. Requires SDE to report annually on the progress of minority teacher recruitment and approve proposals to create Alternative Routes to Certification for school support staff, including paraprofessionals. Makes changes to certification procedures for out-of-state teachers.

Healthcare

- **SB 351 Physicians and Medical Foundations** – Places limits on physician non-compete agreements and expands which entities may employ physicians by allowing Independent Practice Associations (IPAs) to establish medical foundations. Requires hospitals to include the facility's cost-to-charge ratio on patient bills.