



2023 Legislative Session Summary

The 2023 legislation session ended on June 6th at midnight. Below is a summary of many of the bills that we were tracking this legislative session; to get the specific legislation language click on the bill which will take you to the Public Act. Also, some of the issues we are tracking might be in the budget or other bills, so I strongly urge you to read the entire document. If you have questions or would like further information on any of these bills, please reach out to either Teri Merisotis or Jim Vigue.

Click on the link below to go to that subject:

- [Budget](#)
- [Dead Bills](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Healthcare](#)
- [Higher Education](#)
- [Labor](#)
- [Miscellaneous](#)
- [State Employees](#)

Education Legislation

SB 1 PA 23-167

- Section 1 — PUBLISHING SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIPTS, EXPENDITURES, AND STATISTICS
Requires SDE, starting by February 15, 2024, to annually publish each school district's receipts, expenditures, and statistics for the previous fiscal year; requires SDE, starting by February 15, 2025, to prepare and publish the same data in a format that allows financial comparisons between school districts and schools
- Section 2 & 3 — NEW BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER REQUIRED TRAINING
Requires SDE to provide, and newly elected school board members to take, training on the responsibilities and obligations of being a school board member
- Section 4 & 5 — ALLIANCE DISTRICTS
Expands what alliance district funding may be used for to include establishing a family resource center in each elementary school under an alliance district's jurisdiction; requires SDE to publish each alliance district's improvement plan
- Section 6 — WHOLESOME SCHOOL MEALS PILOT PROGRAM
Requires SDE to administer a wholesome school meals pilot program to award five grants to alliance districts to embed a professional chef in the district to assist school meal programs
- Section 7 — VIRTUAL REALITY STUDY
Requires SDE to study the use of virtual reality in grade 9-12 classroom instruction
- Section 8 — EDUCATOR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
Requires SDE to establish an educator apprenticeship initiative to enable students in teacher preparation programs to gain paid classroom teaching experience
- Section 9 & 10 — SDE REVIEW OF SCHOOL BOARDS' INCREASING EDUCATOR DIVERSITY PLANS
Requires each school board to (1) submit its increasing educator diversity plan (referred to in current law as the minority educator recruitment plan) to the education commissioner by March 15, 2024, for review and approval and (2) implement its approved plan beginning with the 2024-25 school year
- Section 11 & 18 — ASPIRING EDUCATORS DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Changes the name of the minority teacher candidate scholarship program to the aspiring educators diversity scholarship program, reduces the maximum annual grant amount from \$20,000 to \$10,000, and requires SDE to hire four staff members to administer the program

- Section 12-14 — EDUCATOR DIVERSITY POLICY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL
Changes the name of the Minority Teacher Recruitment Oversight Council to the Increasing Educator Diversity Policy Oversight Council and the term “minority” student to “diverse” student
- Section 15 — ADJUNCT PROFESSOR PERMIT
Allows SBE to issue adjunct professor permits to allow part-time nontenured college instructors to work part-time for a school district; establishes employment limits and criteria
- Section 16 — ADDING CURSIVE WRITING AND WORLD LANGUAGES TO THE MODEL CURRICULUM
Adds cursive writing and world language to the K to eight model curriculum that SDE is currently developing
- Section 17 — HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CREDIT FOR CREDIT RECOVERY PROGRAMS
Allows school boards to award high school graduation credit for completing an approved credit recovery program
- Section 19 — USE OF CERTAIN OPEN CHOICE FUNDS
Changes terminology describing excess Open Choice funds from “nonlapsing” to “additional,” limits the amount of these funds for one earmarked use, and allows any remaining funds to lapse
- Section 20-23 & 86 — IMPLEMENTATION OF READING MODELS OR PROGRAMS
Requires a school board that received a waiver from using one of the recommended reading models to implement the alternative model under the waiver by the 2024-25 school year; allows school boards without a waiver, but that have not adopted a recommended model, to partially implement a recommended model over time; eliminates a provision that allows the commissioner to grant a school board more time for implementation due to insufficient resources or funding; extends a notification deadline
- Section 24 — REVIEW OF ISSUES RELATED TO IMPLEMENTING THE READING MODEL OR PROGRAM
Requires SDE’s literacy center to review issues related to implementation of the reading curriculum models and programs
- Section 25 — STATEWIDE MASTERY TEST AUDIT
Requires the education commissioner to audit statewide mastery test and local testing requirements and preparation and administration time
- Section 26 & 27 — LOCAL FOOD FOR SCHOOLS INCENTIVE PROGRAM
Creates in DoAg the local food for schools incentive program to reimburse eligible school boards for the purchase of locally or regionally sourced food for school meal programs; establishes reimbursement rates for locally- and regionally-sourced food; outlines the grant process and requires DoAg to develop guidelines; redirects unexpended CT Grown for CT Kids Grant Program funds to the new program
- Section 28 & 33 — AEROSPACE AND AVIATION TRAINING
Allows school boards to partner with local businesses to provide aerospace and aviation apprenticeship training programs to students; requires creation of a working group to study the feasibility of an aviation and aerospace high school
- Section 29 — MODEL PARAEDUCATOR TRAINING PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
Requires the education commissioner, by January 1, 2024, and in consultation with the School Paraeducator Advisory Council, to develop a model paraeducator training program for high school students
- Section 30 — DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ON SCHOOL OPTIONS
Requires school boards to annually distribute information on vocational, technical, technological, and postsecondary education school options to middle school students
- Section 31 — HIGH SCHOOL PRE-APPRENTICESHIP GRANT PROGRAM

- Requires SDE, by January 1, 2024, to establish a pre-apprenticeship grant program for boards of education that include DOL-registered pre-apprenticeship programs in their high school curriculum
- **Section 32 & 33 — EXPANSION OF DUAL CREDIT AND DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS**
Requires SDE, in partnership with boards of education and public higher education institutions, to expand opportunities for dual credit and dual enrollment for high school students, including courses required for health care occupations
 - **Section 34 & 35 — SCHOOL NURSES AND NURSE PRACTITIONERS**
Exempts school nurses and nurse practitioners from the work experience requirement in state regulations; requires employing boards of education to provide 15 hours of professional development biennially to school nurses and nurse practitioners beginning with the 2024-25 school year
 - **Section 36 — COMMISSION TO STUDY EDUCATION FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES**
Creates a new commission to study various educational issues including funding for local school districts, charter schools, and magnet schools and related accountability measures
 - **Section 37 — APRIL ENROLLMENT REPORT**
Requires local and regional boards of education, magnet school operators, and charter school governing councils to annually report enrollment data as of April 1 to SDE
 - **Section 38-40 — RENAMING AND REVISING THE ALLIANCE DISTRICTS**
Renames the alliance districts the educational reform districts and reduces the number of these designated districts to 20; makes conforming changes in ECS and tiered PILOT grants law
 - **Section 41 — ALLIANCE DISTRICT HOLDBACK FOR MINORITY TEACHER PROGRAM FUNDING**
Requires SDE to calculate alliance districts' funding holdback for minority teacher residency candidates using a new formula for FY 24; limits this holdback to FY 24 only
 - **Section 42-45 — INDOOR AIR QUALITY IN SCHOOLS**
Expands charge of, and extends deadline for, the school indoor air quality working group; requires more frequent indoor air quality inspections; requires the inspection reports to be submitted to DAS on a form the agency creates; requires DPH to develop temperature comfort range guidelines for school buildings
 - **Section 46 — PATHWAYS IN TECHNOLOGY EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT**
Requires SDE to create a grant for new or expanded pathways in technology early college high school programs in alliance districts
 - **Section 47 - 71 — SCHOOL CLIMATE**
Defines "school climate" and related terms; requires the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative to (1) develop school climate standards based on national guidelines and (2) create a uniform bullying complaint form; requires SDE and boards of education to post the form on their websites and in their handbooks; phases in the requirement for boards of education to adopt and implement a new Connecticut school climate policy over the next three school years; requires each school district to have a school climate coordinator and each school to have a school climate specialist and a school climate committee; requires each school climate committee to annually administer a school climate survey; requires the creation of a school climate improvement plan in each school that aligns with the Connecticut school climate standards and includes protocols and supports to enhance classroom safety and address challenging behavior; requires each local and regional board of education to provide training and resources for school employees on school climate, social and emotional learning, and restorative practices; repeals a law requiring the statewide safe school climate resource network
 - **Section 72 & 73 — SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS**
Requires the MOU between a school board that assigns an SRO to its schools and the SRO's local law enforcement agency specify the SRO's duties and procedures; requires school boards to post the MOUs on their website and in the SRO's assigned school; and requires each SRO to submit a report for each investigation or behavioral intervention the SRO conducts
 - **Section 74 — RESTORATIVE PRACTICES RESPONSE POLICY**

- Requires school boards to adopt a restorative practices response policy
- Section 75 — SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PRACTICES WORKING GROUP
- Requires the SDE commissioner to establish a working group, under the Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative, to study current school discipline practices and report the study's results to the Education Committee
- Section 76-82 — RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE CONCERNING EDUCATION
- Makes various changes in the education statutes governing suspension and expulsion
- Section 83 & 84 — GRANTS FOR THE HIRING OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, COUNSELORS, NURSES, LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS, AND SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS
- Pushes out by one year the dates by which SDE must administer the school mental health therapist grant program; removes the requirement that grant recipients in both programs refund unexpended grant amounts to SDE; adjusts education commissioner reporting dates
- Section 85 — GRANT FOR DELIVERY OF STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
- Pushes out by one year the dates by which SDE must administer a grant program to provide student mental health services to certain youth camp and summer program operators; removes the requirement that grant recipients refund unexpended grant amounts to SDE
- **SB 2 PA 23-101**
 - Section 1 & 12-14 — LICENSURE OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS
Requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to hire a full-time employee, by January 1, 2024, to assist in licensing clinical and master social workers; generally reduces initial and renewal license fees for social workers, marital and family therapists, and professional counselors
 - Section 2 — PRINCIPAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANTS
Prohibits any principal public library from receiving state grants if it does not maintain and adhere to certain collection policies approved by the library's governing body; requires a principal public library's collection reconsideration policy to offer residents a clear process to request a reconsideration of library materials; specifies that the reconsideration policy governs if there is a book challenge
 - Sections 3-4 — PAYMENT TO BIRTH-TO-THREE PROGRAM EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE PROVIDERS
Makes permanent the \$200 general administrative payment the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) commissioner must make to Birth-to-Three program early intervention service providers for each child with an individualized family service plan that accounts for less than nine service hours during the billing month
 - Section 5-6 — INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLANS
Requires individualized family service plans to be translated into and provided in Spanish; requires an eligible child whose primary language is Spanish to receive early intervention services from Spanish-speaking personnel and coordinators; allows the services of Spanish-speaking interpreters or translators to be used under certain circumstances
 - Section 7-8 — MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS DAY
Requires employers to permit service workers to use accrued paid sick leave to take a mental health wellness day to attend to their emotional or psychological well-being
 - Section 8 — ELIGIBILITY FOR PAID SICK LEAVE
Extends eligibility for paid sick leave to a service worker who is the parent or guardian of a child who is a victim of family violence or sexual assault, provided the worker is not the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator
 - Section 9 — MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS
Requires the DSS commissioner to (1) provide Medicaid reimbursement for certain mental health evaluations and services at school-based health centers or public schools, to the extent federal law allows; (2) if necessary, amend the Medicaid state plan to do so; and (3) set the reimbursement at a level to ensure adequate providers for these evaluations and services

- Section 10-11 & 21 — OFFICE OF THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVOCATE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Establishes the Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate to advocate for and assist behavioral and mental health care providers and (2) Behavioral Health Advocate Advisory Committee to review and assess the office’s performance
- Section 15 — TASK FORCE TO STUDY CHILDREN’S NEEDS
Expands the duties of the Task Force to Study Children’s Needs to include (1) reviewing and analyzing certain programs that received pandemic-related federal funding, (2) making recommendations on which programs should receive a more permanent funding structure and (3) conducting a needs assessment focused on children and individuals who were enrolled in a Connecticut high school and a member of the classes graduating from 2020-2023
- Section 16 — DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (DSS) HUSKY HEALTH CHILD ENROLLMENT
Requires DSS, for FY 24, to hire temporary and part-time employees to collaborate with nonprofit organizations to identify and enroll eligible children in the HUSKY Health program
- Section 17 — SERVICES FOR AT-RISK TEENAGE STUDENTS
Requires the State Department of Education (SDE), for FY 24, to award a grant to, and collaborate with, a nonprofit organization specializing in identifying and providing services to certain at-risk teenage students allows SDE, within available appropriations, to hire one full-time employee to implement the bill’s provisions
- Section 18 — LEGAL REPRESENTATION FOR CHILDREN IN CERTAIN SUPERIOR COURT PROCEEDINGS
Requires counsel assigned or appointed by the chief public defender’s office or the court to represent a child in a child abuse or neglect case in Superior Court to continue to represent the child for the duration of the court proceedings
- Section 19 — STUDY OF COMMUNITY-BASED BEREAVEMENT AND GRIEF COUNSELOR ORGANIZATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Requires CWCSEO, in collaboration with the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative and at least one community-based bereavement and grief counseling resource center serving children and families, to conduct a study of community-based bereavement and counseling resource centers serving children and families.
- Section 20 — PLAY-BASED LEARNING
Requires schools to provide play-based learning for kindergarten and preschool students; requires school boards to permit a teacher to utilize play-based learning for grades one to five; adds it to educator professional development
- Section 22 — AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER ADVISORY COUNCIL
Expands the Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council’s duties to include (1) identifying strategies and methods of outreach and coordination of services for racial minority groups and (2) identifying and recommending updates to existing state guidelines for early screening and intervention
- Section 23 — SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND SCHOOL CLIMATE ADVISORY COLLABORATIVE
Requires the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative to include in their annual report to the Children’s and Education Committee recommendations concerning ways to promote the social and emotional development of young children
- **[SB 1165](#)** adds a half-credit of personal financial management and financial literacy to the high school graduation requirements beginning with the graduating class of 2027 (i.e., students currently enrolled in eighth grade). The bill also adds personal financial management and financial literacy to the state’s required program of instruction for public schools. It also makes completion of a one-credit, mastery-based diploma assessment (i.e., a “capstone”) an optional, rather than mandatory, graduation requirement at each board of education’s discretion. **PA 23-21 Signed by the Governor**
- **[HB 5003](#)** - Section 1 - Makes changes to Kindergarten Start Age that was passed in HB 6880 - child who has not reached the age of five on or before the first day 18 of September of the school year may be admitted (1) upon a written request by the parent or guardian of such child to the principal of the school in which such

child would be enrolled, and (2) following an assessment of such child, conducted by such principal and an appropriate certified staff member of the school, to ensure that admitting such child is developmentally appropriate. **Passed in Concurrence**

- [HB 5441](#) requires the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) to subsidize student loan interest rates for paraeducators and school counselors employed in Alliance Districts. **PA 23-70**
- [HB 6489](#) adds two persons to serve as members of the Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) for a four-year term. Both the people must be retired teachers who are receiving pensions from the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS). They must also be nominated and elected only by members of the TRS who are also retired. **PA 23-63**
- [HB 6762](#) **PA 23-150**
 - Section 1 — SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM PER CHILD COST
Extends the FY 21 cap on the per child cost rate through FY 24 and increases it beginning in FY 25
 - Section 5 — STATEWIDE MASTERY TEST AUDIT
Requires the education commissioner to audit statewide mastery test and local testing requirements and preparation and administration time
 - Section 6 & 7 — CIVICS AND MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION
Creates the Connecticut Civics Education, Civics Engagement, and Media Literacy Task Force; adds civics and media literacy to the required public schools social studies program of instruction
 - Section 8 — CTECS PROGRAM AND CAREER ALIGNMENT STUDY
Requires the CTECS board to study the programs it offers to determine whether they align with the technical careers available in Connecticut
 - Section 9-11 — STATE AID FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION
Prohibits the State Department of Education (SDE) from including specified pandemic relief funds received by school districts when determining their special education excess cost grant amount; revises terminology referenced in calculating state aid for special education
 - Section 12 — REMOTE LEARNING USING DUAL INSTRUCTION
Allows dual instruction as part of remote learning when (1) needed to implement a student's IEP or 504 plan and (2) part of an intradistrict or interdistrict cooperative learning program for students on school grounds during a regular school day
 - Section 13 — SPECIAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE
Expands the charge and membership of the task force studying special education services and funding and also extends its reporting deadline and termination date
 - Section 14 — CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT CRITERIA
Generally prohibits charter schools from asking about or considering an applicant student's need - for or receipt of special education and related services, including as part of enrollment lottery criteria
 - Section 15 — SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPLAINTS FILED WITH SDE
Requires SDE to post online summaries of (1) special education complaints filed with the department and (2) corrective actions required by the department
 - Section 16 — 504 PLANS AND SCHOOL EMPLOYEES
Prohibits boards of education from disciplining any school employee who discusses or makes recommendations about student services or accommodations during a 504 plan meeting
 - Section 17 & 18 — MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS' BILL OF RIGHTS
Changes the term "English learner" to "multilingual learner" in the education statutes; requires SBE to draft a written bill of rights for parents or guardians of multilingual learner students
- [HB 6846](#) The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, in consultation with the Department of Education, shall conduct an evaluation of the efficacy and effectiveness of the number and implementation of fire drills and crisis response drills and the effects such drills have on the mental health and physical safety and protection of children. **Passed in Concurrence**
- [HB 6880](#) **PA 23-159**
 - Section 1 — LIMITATIONS ON USE OF EDTPA

- Limits the use of the teacher preservice performance assessment, edTPA, to only as an accountability measure for teacher preparation programs, retroactive to July 1, 2022
- Section 2 — CEASE-AND-DESIST ORDERS FOR PROHIBITED PRACTICES
Allows SBLR to issue a cease-and-desist order for certain violations of the teachers collective bargaining law
- Section 3 — RAISING THE KINDERGARTEN STARTING AGE
Raises the age children can start public school kindergarten from age five by January of the school year to age five by September of the school year
- Section 4 & 5 — PLAY-BASED LEARNING DURING PRESCHOOL, KINDERGARTEN, AND GRADES ONE TO FIVE
Requires schools to provide play-based learning during each regular school day for kindergarten and preschool students; requires school boards to permit a teacher to use play-based learning during the school day for grades one to five; adds play-based learning to educator professional development
- Section 6-7 — EXIT SURVEY FOR TEACHERS LEAVING THE PROFESSION AND TEACHER ATTRITION RATES
Requires school boards to (1) develop and conduct exit surveys of teachers voluntarily leaving employment with the board and (2) add teacher attrition rates to their strategic school profile report
- Section 8 — TEACHER PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS ADVISORY COUNCIL
Revises and expands the membership of the Teacher Professional Standards Advisory Council, including adding the Teacher of the Year and the previous year's Teacher of the Year
- Section 9 — TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM TASK FORCE
Establishes a task force to analyze the per pupil equity of TRS funding; requires the task force to submit its recommendations to the Education and Appropriations committees by January 1, 2025
- Section 10 & 11 — PARAEDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Excludes certain mandated trainings from paraeducator professional development programs; requires annual updates to SDE's guidance and best practices for programs of professional development
- Section 11 — PARAEDUCATOR PDEC MEMBERSHIP
Adds a paraeducator to each school district's professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC)
- Section 12 — IEP REVIEW BY PARAPROFESSIONALS
Requires paraeducators to review a student's IEP with a supervisor as needed
- Section 13 — CERTIFICATE ENDORSEMENTS FOR PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN TEACHING
Allows the education commissioner to allow a teacher with a (1) grade one through six endorsement to teach kindergarten for a second year without demonstrating enrollment in a kindergarten endorsement program or (2) grade one through 12 comprehensive special education endorsement to teach preschool in addition to kindergarten as current law allows
- Section 14 — ARC PROGRAM EXPANSION
Requires OHE to expand its ARC program attended by minority teacher incentive program grant recipients and hire one full-time permanent employee to administer the expanded ARC program
- Section 15 — ADJUNCT ARTS INSTRUCTOR PERMIT
Allows SBE to additionally issue adjunct instructor permits in the arts to applicants who hold a degree higher than a bachelor's and meet other requirements in existing law
- Section 16 — STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE BY DRG
Removes the requirement that teacher preparation program participants complete their clinical, field, or student teaching experience in two different types of school districts according to DRG categorization
- Section 17 — INTEGRATED AND CROSS ENDORSEMENTS
Allows SDE, in cooperation with OHE, to authorize three new endorsements affecting early childhood education, special education, and grades kindergarten through three teaching positions
- Section 18 — SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

- Allows local or regional boards of education, under certain circumstances, to employ a substitute teacher for up to 60 days without obtaining an SDE-issued substitute authorization
 - Section 19 — PURCHASING TEACHER RETIREMENT CREDIT
 - Removes service at SERC from the 10-year aggregate limit on purchases of TRS retirement credit
 - Section 20 & 21 — ADDITIONS TO THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
 - Expands the TRS to cover teachers employed by an interdistrict magnet school operated by (1) a private higher education institution's board of governors; (2) an SDE-approved, third-party nonprofit corporation; or (3) Goodwin University Magnet Schools, Inc. and Goodwin University Educational Services, Inc., specifically
 - Section 22 — TENURE AND ACCUMULATED SICK LEAVE
 - Maintains a teacher's tenure and accumulated sick leave in the event a new regional school district is formed
 - Section 23-27 — TEACHER PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS
 - Requires local and regional boards of education to adopt revised teacher evaluation programs and SBE to adopt revised program guidelines that use new (1) student indicators and assessment methods and (2) teacher feedback mechanisms; removes obsolete language
- **HB 6882 PA 23-160**
 - Section 1 — EDUCATION MANDATE WORKING GROUP
 - Requires CABE to convene an 11-member mandate review working group to recommend to the legislature repealing or amending obsolete or duplicative mandates; sets January 1, 2025, deadline for the recommendations
 - Section 2 — IN-SERVICE VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND SEIZURE RESPONSE TRAINING
 - Requires the existing school district in-service training on school violence prevention to be aligned with DESPP school security and safety plan standards and adds new training requirement on emergency responses to students who have seizures. The bill also requires boards to allow paraeducators and other noncertified employees to voluntarily participate in its in-service training program. Currently, the board can decide whether to allow these noncertified employees or paraprofessionals to attend.
 - Section 3 — ACCESS TO CURRICULUM
 - Requires boards of education to make curriculum and associated materials available to parents and guardians under the requirements of the federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment
 - Section 4 — ACCESS TO ADULT EDUCATION
 - Allows any parent under age 17 to request permission from the local or regional board of education to attend adult education classes
 - Section 5 — ELIGIBILITY FOR STATEWIDE REMOTE LEARNING SCHOOL
 - Requires SDE, when developing a plan for a statewide remote learning school, to narrow the range of students eligible to enroll; also extends the deadline to submit a plan for the school to legislative committees
 - Section 6 — BOARD MEETING AGENDA AND DOCUMENT POSTING
 - Requires boards of education conducting a board meeting to make the agenda or any associated documents that members may review at the meeting available for public inspection and post them on the board's website
 - Section 7 — FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION COUNCIL
 - Requires the education commissioner to convene a family and community engagement in education council
 - Section 8 — SUPPORT FOR AFTER-SCHOOL GRANT RECIPIENTS
 - Requires SDE to support after-school grant recipients in new, specified ways; allows the department to increase the amount it retains from the appropriation for this grant program
 - Section 9 — SERC REAL ESTATE AND CONTRACTING
 - Removes SERC from specified state oversight pertaining to real estate and contracting
 - Section 10 — FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS IN SCHOOL RESTROOMS
 - Extends the deadline for boards of education to begin providing free menstrual products in restrooms by one year, from September 1, 2023, to September 1, 2024

- Section 29 & 32 — MAGNET SCHOOL ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS AND REVISING REDUCED ISOLATION STANDARDS
Makes permanent existing magnet school enrollment requirements; allows the education commissioner to revise the magnet school reduced isolation standards
- Section 30 — SUNSETS TARGETED MAGNET SCHOOL GRANT
Sunsets a targeted magnet school grant
- Section 31 — REINSTATES BAN ON MAGNET SCHOOL TUITION
Reinstates the ban on Sheff-decision host K-12 magnet schools charging tuition to sending school districts
- Section 33 — GRANTS TO ASSIST SHEFF PROGRAMS
Allows the commissioner to award grants from existing Sheff settlement funds for four specific purposes
- Section 34 — INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN
Makes technical changes to the Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children
- Section 35 & 37 — LOWERING ELIGIBILITY AGE FOR SCHOOL READINESS
Lowers the eligibility age of children for the School Readiness preschool program to birth, rather than age three
- Section 36 & 38 — SCHOOL READINESS AND CHILD CARE GRANTS
Removes a requirement that certain excess funds be used exclusively to increase salaries of early childhood educators; changes annual awarding of a school readiness grant from annual to biennial
- Section 39 — SMART START COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM
Removes the FY 24 sunset date (i.e., June 30, 2014) for the smart start competitive grant, thus making the program permanent
- Section 40 — PARENT ADVISORY CABINET
Requires OEC to establish a parent advisory council
- Section 41 — CARE 4 KIDS INCOME LEVEL ELIGIBILITY
Requires the OEC commissioner to establish a two-tiered income eligibility limit for Care 4 Kids that conforms with federal regulations
- Section 42 — PUBLIC SCHOOL OPERATOR DEFINITION FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES
Expands the definition of the types of public school operators that can join in health care benefit agreements with other school operators or municipalities
- Section 43 & 44 — CHARTER SCHOOLS AND THE EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF THE STATE
Explicitly places charter schools under the educational interests of the state law that includes a complaint process if a party believes the school is not meeting the educational interests of the state
- Section 45 — SDE CURRICULUM COORDINATOR
Requires the education commissioner to employ at least one curriculum coordinator
- **[HB 6930](#)** requires municipalities to report to the State Comptroller, (1) a statement of whether the municipality has formally adopted an investment policy statement, and (2) a number of data points concerning retirement plans municipalities offer to employees. The Comptroller, the Treasurer and the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management to jointly develop (A) best practices for governance structures of municipal retirement plans; (B) training resources to assist municipalities to implement or improve the governance structures of their retirement plans and (C) report to the General Assembly and local governments of the best practices and training resources developed and any recommendations for legislative changes regarding implementation of such best practices or training resources. **PA 23-182**
- **[HB 6941](#)** (Budget) Signed by Governor
 - Section 213-216 & 528 — HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR PARAEDUCATORS
Establishes two subsidy programs for paraeducators' health insurance costs; requires the Office of Health Strategy to help paraeducators enroll in certain health insurance programs; establishes a paraeducator healthcare working group
 - Section 327 & 328 — SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMS

- Extends free lunch eligibility to students with a family income below 200% of the federal poverty level who are otherwise ineligible; makes state payment of federal reimbursement grants to school operators in the federal feeding programs required rather than optional
- Section 329 — OPEN CHOICE FUNDS GRANT FOR LEGACY FOUNDATION
Requires the education commissioner to expend \$500,000 of remaining Open Choice funds for a grant to The Legacy Foundation for student wrap-around services
- Section 330-333 — REQUIREMENT TO PROPORTIONATELY REDUCE SPECIFIED EDUCATION GRANTS
Extends the requirement that certain education grants be proportionately reduced if the amount appropriated for them is insufficient to fully fund them according to their statutory formulas
- Section 334 — TRS MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA FOR STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION STAFF
Changes the eligibility criteria for membership in the Teachers' Retirement System for certain professional staff of the State Board of Education
- Section 335-338 — FAFSA COMPLETION REQUIREMENT FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
Beginning with the graduating class of 2025, institutes a FAFSA completion high school graduation requirement; allows a waiver of the requirement; requires SDE to create the forms to implement the waiver; and makes various technical and conforming changes
- Section 339-341 — PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDING
Ties eligibility for certain population-based supplemental PSD grants to FY 22; adds a fourth fiscal year of PSD phase-out
- Section 344 & 345 — HVAC AND OUTDOOR ATHLETIC FACILITY MINIMUM REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR CERTAIN TOWNS
Creates minimum HVAC and outdoor athletic facility school construction reimbursement rates for certain towns
- Section 349 — MAGNET SCHOOL ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS AND REVISING REDUCED ISOLATION STANDARDS
Makes permanent existing magnet school enrollment requirements; allows the education commissioner to revise the magnet school reduced isolation standards
- Section 350 — GRANTS TO ASSIST SHEFF PROGRAMS
Allows the commissioner to award grants from existing Sheff settlement funds for four specific purposes
- Section 351-352 — GRANTS FOR THE HIRING OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, COUNSELORS, NURSES, LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS, AND SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS
Pushes out by one year the dates by which SDE must administer the school mental health therapist grant program; removes the requirement that grant recipients in both programs refund unexpended grant amounts to SDE; adjusts education commissioner reporting dates
- Section 353 — GRANT FOR DELIVERY OF STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
Pushes out by one year the dates by which SDE must administer a grant program to provide student mental health services to certain youth camp and summer program operators; removes the requirement that grant recipients refund unexpended grant amounts to SDE
- Section 356 — ECS GRANT SCHEDULE
Changes the statutory schedule for ECS grant increases so that currently underfunded towns are fully funded sooner, by FY 26 rather than by FY 28; changes the scheduled reductions for overfunded towns by holding the towns harmless for certain years and making the reduction smaller in other years
- Section 357 & 358 — MAGNET SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAMS AND TUITION
Requires that beginning in FY 25 each magnet school grant be "at least" the amount indicated in law; beginning in FY 25, limits magnet school tuition to 58% of the amount charged in the previous year; extends through FY 25 the ban on SDE awarding magnet school grants to schools that do not meet residency and reduced isolation enrollment requirements; makes permanent the

- requirement that magnet school operators meet these enrollment requirements; renews for FY 24
 - reduced magnet school tuition payments for certain towns; sunsets a targeted magnet school grant
- Section 359 — CHARTER SCHOOL GRANT INCREASES
 - Increases the per-student state charter school grant for FYs 24-25; makes the FY 25 amount ongoing for future years
- Section 360 — VO-AG CENTER GRANTS AND TUITION
 - Requires in FY 25 and subsequent years each vo-ag center grant to be “at least” the amount indicated in law, \$5,200; beginning in FY 25, limits vo-ag center tuition for sending towns to 58% of the amount charged in the previous year
- Section 361 — OPEN CHOICE GRANT SCHEDULE
 - Requires that beginning in FY 25 each Open Choice grant be “at least” the amount indicated in law
- Section 362 — EDUCATION FINANCE REFORM SPENDING FUND AMOUNTS
 - Requires SDE to apportion the \$150 million appropriated for “Education Finance Reform” in specific amounts to fund ECS grants, charter school operating grants, magnet school operating grants, Open Choice grants, and agriscience and technology center grants

Healthcare Legislation

- **SB 9 PA 23-97**

- Section 7 — SDE HEALTH CARE CAREER PROMOTION
 - Requires the education commissioner to use an existing plan to promote health care careers and provide health care job shadowing and internship experiences; requires the commissioner to give the plan to school boards and support its implementation
- Section 8 — HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE WORKING GROUP
 - Requires OWS to convene a working group to develop recommendations to expand the state’s health care workforce
- Sections 9 & 10 — HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS SERVING AS ADJUNCT FACULTY
 - Requires public higher education institutions to consider any licensed health care provider with at least 10 years of clinical experience to be qualified for an adjunct faculty position; correspondingly requires the Office of Higher Education, within available appropriations, to establish a program providing incentive grants to these providers who become adjunct professors
- Section 11 — PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT CAREER PATHWAYS PROGRAM
 - Requires DSS to establish a PCA career pathways program, including both basic skills and specialized skills pathways, to improve PCAs’ quality of care and incentivize their recruitment and retention in the state
- Section 22 — LPN EDUCATION PILOT PROGRAM
 - Allows the state nursing board, under certain conditions, to approve applications from higher education institutions to create a pilot program for licensed practice nurse education and training, and grants the program full approval if it meets specified requirements for two years
- Section 23 — RECIPROCITY AGREEMENTS FOR CLINICAL ROTATION TRAINING
 - Allows OHE to enter into a reciprocity agreement with neighboring states regarding clinical training credit at higher education institutions
- Section 27 — EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT CROWDING WORKING GROUP
 - Requires the DPH commissioner to convene a working group to advise her on how to alleviate emergency department crowding and the lack of available beds
- Section 37 — RURAL HEALTH TASK FORCE
 - Creates a task force to study issues concerning rural health
- Section 38 — HEALTH CARE MAGNET SCHOOL STUDY
 - Requires the education commissioner, in consultation with the labor and DPH commissioners, to study the feasibility of establishing an interdistrict magnet school program focused on training students for health care professions
- Section 44 — PRACTITIONER SHORTAGE TASK FORCE
 - Creates a task force to study how to address the state’s shortage of radiologic technologists, nuclear medicine technologists, and respiratory care practitioners

- [HB 5441](#) PA 23-70
 - Section 1 creates an 11-member task force to develop a plan to establish clinical placements at state facilities for nursing students at public and private higher education institutions;
 - Section 7-8 amends sHB 6689 of the current session to expand a CHESLA loan subsidy program for specified health care professionals to also include emergency services professionals
- [HB 6689](#) requires the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) to establish a Nursing and Mental Health Care Professionals Loan Subsidy Program. This program must subsidize interest rates on CHESLA refinancing loans to certain Connecticut-licensed nurses, nurse’s aides, psychologists, marital and family therapists, clinical and master social workers, and professional counselors. **PA 23-60**
- [HB 6741](#) DPH shall develop a marketing campaign and make monthly public service announcements on its Internet web site and social media accounts for not less than two years (1) discouraging aggressive or violent behavior toward any health care provider in any health care setting, and (2) regarding the opportunity for grants for building security infrastructure through the nonprofit organization security infrastructure competitive grant program administered by the DESPP and any other programs providing an opportunity for capital investments by nonprofit hospitals to enhance patient and employee safety. **SA 23-29**
- [HB 6941](#) (Budget)Signed by Governor
 - Section 54 — HOSPITAL NURSE STAFFING PLANS
 - Requires hospitals to report biannually, instead of annually to DPH on their prospective nurse staffing plans and expands the plan’s required contents
 - Section 54 — HOSPITAL STAFFING COMMITTEES
 - Modifies the composition, leadership, and selection of hospital staffing committee membership; establishes criteria the committees must consider when developing hospital nurse staffing plans; sets related notification, recordkeeping, and compensation requirements
 - Section 54 — HOSPITAL NONCOMPLIANCE WITH NURSE STAFFING REQUIREMENTS
 - Requires hospitals to biannually report to DPH on their compliance with nurse staffing assignments in their nurse staffing plans; requires DPH to investigate complaints regarding nurse staffing plan violations and, when appropriate, issue orders of noncompliance that require hospitals to implement corrective action plans and pay civil penalties; allows DPH to audit nurse staffing assignments
 - Section 54 — HOSPITAL NURSE PARTICIPATION IN HOSPITAL ACTIVITIES
 - Prohibits hospitals from requiring registered nurses to perform patient care tasks beyond the scope of their license and allows an RN to object to doing so, with limited exceptions
 - Section 55 — MANDATORY NURSE OVERTIME IN HOSPITALS
 - Prohibits hospitals from requiring nurses to work overtime and from discriminating or retaliating against them for refusing to do so, with limited exceptions
 - Section 135 & 136 — HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS SERVING AS ADJUNCT FACULTY
 - Requires public higher education institutions to consider any licensed health care provider with at least 10 years of clinical experience to be qualified for an adjunct faculty position; correspondingly requires OHE, within available appropriations, to establish a program providing incentive grants to these providers who become adjunct professors

Higher Education Legislation

- [SB 921](#) requires the Board of Regents to annually report (starting on July 1, 2024) to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee on the results of the consolidation of the regional community-technical schools into the CT State Community College (CSCC). **PA 23-8 Signed by the Governor**
- [HB 5441](#) PA 23-70
 - Section 1 creates an 11-member task force to develop a plan to establish clinical placements at state facilities for nursing students at public and private higher education institutions;
 - Section 7-8 amends sHB 6689 of the current session to expand a CHESLA loan subsidy program for specified health care professionals to also include emergency services professionals
- [HB 6755](#) establishes a working group to facilitate the expansion of an advanced manufacturing technology center at a regional community-technical college in the state, and to maximize the economic, educational and workforce benefits provided to the state by the center. **SA 23-4 Signed by the Governor**

- [HB 6689](#) requires the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) to establish a Nursing and Mental Health Care Professionals Loan Subsidy Program. This program must subsidize interest rates on CHESLA refinancing loans to certain Connecticut-licensed nurses, nurse’s aides, psychologists, marital and family therapists, clinical and master social workers, and professional counselors. **PA 23-60**
- [HB 6941 \(Budget\) Signed by Governor](#)
 - Section 67 — PLANNING COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
Changes commission membership and appointing authorities and requires the commission to update the strategic master plan for higher education
 - Section 88 & 89 — ETHNIC AND RACIAL DIVERSITY PLAN
Eliminates a requirement that OHE maintain a racial and ethnic diversity plan for the state’s higher education institutions, but adds similar provisions into the existing OHE minority advancement program
 - Section 90 — BOR DISPOSING OF SURPLUS REAL PROPERTY
Authorizes BOR, with the OPM secretary’s review and approval, to sell surplus CSCU property outside of the current disposition process for surplus state property
 - Section 92 & 419 — HIGHER EDUCATION CONSTITUENT UNIT EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT COSTS
Beginning FY 24, requires the (1) comptroller to pay the retirement-related fringe benefit costs for all employees of the constituent units of the state higher education system, rather than only for General Fund-supported employees; and (2) constituent units to fund their employee health and life insurance, unemployment compensation, and employers’ social security tax.
 - Section 93-97 & 419 — ONLINE LOTTERY SALES
Eliminates the diversion of online lottery sales revenue to fund the state’s debt-free community college program
 - Section 98 — OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE COUNCIL
Transfers the Connecticut Open Educational Resource Coordinating Council from OHE to CSCU and makes conforming changes; expands restrictions on council grant award recipients; adds to council duties, and requires them to include additional information in their biennial report to the legislature; allows the OER state-wide coordinator to hire a part-time employee
 - Section 135 & 136 — HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS SERVING AS ADJUNCT FACULTY
Requires public higher education institutions to consider any licensed health care provider with at least 10 years of clinical experience to be qualified for an adjunct faculty position; correspondingly requires OHE, within available appropriations, to establish a program providing incentive grants to these providers who become adjunct professors
 - Section 137-139 — DEBT FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND THE ROBERTA B. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
Extends eligibility for the state’s debt-free community college program to returning students; makes various changes to the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship program, including requiring FY 24 awards to use ARPA funds first and excluding regional-community technical colleges from the program
 - Section 175 — PRIVATE EDUCATION LENDER & CREDITOR DISCLOSURES
Requires private education lenders and creditors to register with DOB and provide it with certain information about their loans and borrowers; requires DOB to publish a summary of the information it receives; allows DOB to bar certain violators for up to 10 years
 - Section 176 — OFFICE OF THE STUDENT LOAN OMBUDSMAN
Establishes an Office of the Student Loan Ombudsman and requires the DOB commissioner to appoint a student loan ombudsman to head the office
 - Section 177 & 178 — FEDERAL STUDENT LOAN SUBSERVICER REGISTRATION
Extends existing law’s registration requirement for federal student loan servicers to also cover subservicers of these loans
 - Section 183 & 184 — STUDENT LOAN REIMBURSEMENT PILOT PROGRAM
Requires OHE, within available appropriations, to establish a pilot program to reimburse eligible people for up to \$5,000 a year (for a total of up to \$20,000) for their student loan payments; makes payments deductible from a person’s state adjusted gross income
 - Section 185-192 — EARLY VOTING IMPLEMENTATION

Moves implementation of early voting from January 1, 2024, to April 1, 2024, and modifies several effective dates

Labor Legislation

- **[SB 228](#)** requires Connecticut's health insurance exchange (i.e., Access Health CT) to have a special enrollment period for people whose employer-sponsored health benefits are terminated by an employer because of a labor dispute. (Although the bill does not define labor dispute, presumably, it includes lockouts and strikes.) **PA 23-172**
- **[SB 913](#)** expands eligibility for workers' compensation benefits for post-traumatic stress injuries (PTSI) to cover all employees covered by the workers' compensation law by January 1, 2024. **PA 23-35 Signed by Governor**
- **[HB 6874](#)** includes language to correct a drafting error in last session's captive audience bill that adjusted employer penalties when they violate the new law. **PA 23-46 Signed by the Governor**

State Employee Legislation

- **[HR 26/SR 26](#)** approves of an interest arbitration award between the State of Connecticut and the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) on pandemic pay.
- **[SB 984](#)** eliminates statutory requirements to base hiring state employee decisions on examination scores and ratings, places job applicants on a candidate list before they are examined for a position and removes various details about how examinations must be noticed, administered, and scored. **PA 23-194**
- **[SB 1003](#)** **PA 23-16 Signed by Governor**
 - This bill requires the executive and judicial branches to (1) conduct an inventory of all their systems that employ artificial intelligence (AI) and (2) develop and set policies and procedures on developing, procuring, using, and assessing systems that use AI. It also requires them to publicly post the inventory and policies and procedures online.
 - Beginning February 1, 2024, the bill prohibits the executive and judicial branches from implementing any system that uses AI unless they have done an impact assessment to ensure the system will not result in any unlawful discrimination or disparate impact against specified individuals or groups (e.g., age and race). It also establishes a 21-member working group to make recommendations to the General Law Committee on certain issues concerning AI. Among other things, the working group must engage stakeholders and experts on how to develop best practices for the ethical and equitable use of AI in state government.
- **[SB 1124](#)** requires DAS to conduct a study regarding the hiring practices of state agencies for positions in state service including, (1) the feasibility of eliminating requirements for college degrees for certain appointments to state classified services, and (2) the feasibility of establishing a program to provide applicants with pathways for alternative routes to appointment to state classified service. The commissioner shall report the findings by January 1, 2024. **SA 23-19**
- **[HB 6888](#)** creates an implementation team to develop a prearrest diversion plan for low-risk children; expands the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee's (JJPOC) membership by adding five new members, establishes incarceration and enterprise subcommittees, and requires these subcommittees to help specified state agencies develop certain plans; requires various state agencies, by November 1, 2023, and in consultation with designated JJPOC subcommittees, to develop a reentry success plan for youth released from the Department of Correction (DOC) and the Judicial Department's facilities and programs; and requires the judicial branch, by July 1, 2023, to begin reviewing and updating the implementation plan developed under PA 21-174, to securely house in the branch's custody anyone under age 18 who is arrested and detained.
- **[HB 6941](#)** **(Budget) Signed by Governor**
 - Section 61 — RESERVE FOR SALARY ADJUSTMENTS ACCOUNT REPORTS
Starting by January 1, 2024, requires the OPM secretary to give the Appropriations Committee quarterly reports on the status of the reserve for salary adjustments account
Eliminates the diversion of online lottery sales revenue to fund the state's debt-free community college program
 - Section 73 — OFFICE OF WORKFORCE STRATEGY LOCATION
Moves OWS from the Office of the Governor to DECD for administrative purposes only

- Section 100 — CONTRACT ASSIGNMENTS BY STATE AGENCIES
Allows the OPM secretary to execute an MOU with a department head to assign the department head the authority to enter into a contract or written agreement using funds appropriated to the secretary for the contract's or agreement's purposes; allows budgeted agencies' department heads to similarly assign this authority upon the secretary's approval
- Section 103-109 — BACKGROUND CHECKS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
Authorizes DAS to conduct background checks for certain agencies and positions in addition to the existing requirement for the employing state agencies
- Section 110-114 & 421 — PERSONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT PROCUREMENT THRESHOLDS
Increases, from \$20,000 to \$50,000, the cost threshold at which agencies must use competitive solicitation methods to enter into a PSA; eliminates a PSA's length as a criterion for determining whether a competitive solicitation is required; these changes also apply to POS contracts
- Section 117 — BUDGET RESERVE FUND SURPLUS
Prescribes, through FY 24, the order in which the state treasurer must transfer excess BRF funds to reduce the state's unfunded pension liability
- Section 132-134 — DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
Makes DOH an executive branch agency instead of an agency within DECD for administrative purposes only

Miscellaneous Legislation

- **HJ 1** proposes a constitutional amendment to remove the state constitution's current restrictions on absentee voting, thereby permitting no-excuse absentee voting. Since it passed each chamber with a majority, it will appear on the 2024 general election ballot. If a majority of those voting on the amendment in the general election approves it, the amendment will become part of the state constitution.
- **HB 5004** establishes a framework for early, in-person voting for all general elections, primaries, and special elections, held on or after January 1, 2024. It requires a 14-day early voting period for general elections, a 7-day period for most primaries, and a 4-day early voting period for special elections and presidential preference primaries. Municipalities must establish at least one early voting location and may establish more. **PA 23-5 Signed by the Governor**

Legislations that DIED when the General Assembly Adjourned

- **SB 938** would allow striking workers to collect unemployment benefits after a two-week waiting period. Governor Lamont opposed the bill, repeatedly raising his unfounded concerns that the bill would adversely impact the solvency of the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.
- **SB 1157** protects public employees from having their home addresses disclosed in Freedom of Information requests. It passed the Senate and was called in the House, but was tabled after Republicans filibustered the bill.
- **SB 1178** expands paid sick days to (1) cover all private-sector employers and employees, (2) broaden the range of family members employees may use leave for, (3) increase rate at which employees accrue leave, (4) broaden reasons employees may use leave, and (5) increase the maximum number of hours an employee may accrue. It passed the Senate but was killed in the House by the moderate caucus.
- **SB 1179** clarifies the intent of the original Paid Family and Medical Leave law by allowing workers to collect benefits concurrently between the PFML program and employer-sponsored short-term disability insurance plans, as long as an employee does not receive more than 100% of their regular wages. It passed the Senate, but was killed in the House by the insurance industry.
- **HB 6720** broadens the range of state employees who have a right to collectively bargain by tightening the criteria used to determine whether an employee is a "managerial employee" who, by law, does not have collective bargaining rights. It died on the House calendar.



CT State Budget (FY 2024-2025)

The General Assembly adopted the FY 2024-2025 biennium budget with passage of [HB 6941](#). The 2-year, \$51.1 billion budget comes in under the spending cap by \$14 million in 2024 and \$2.2 million in 2025. Instead, an expected \$2 billion in excess revenues will be used to pay down Connecticut's unfunded pension liabilities. It increases spending 3.8% in the first fiscal year and 3.5% in the second. Proponents pointed to historic funding increases in K-12 education and tax relief for lower and middle income residents.

Despite a \$2.95 billion surplus this fiscal year and nearly \$4 billion in the Rainy Day Fund, legislators declined to bypass the spending cap and address residents' tremendous unmet need by boosting funding for many essential public services. Instead, they opted to carry forward \$340 million of the surplus into the new biennium and build in significant savings targets, assuming the governor will cut spending by \$134 million next fiscal year, and by \$183 million in 2024-25. Both mechanisms recognize the constraints of the spending cap and increase spending marginally, but do not go nearly far enough to pass the "moral budget" Recovery For All called for to significantly reduce inequities, appropriately staff public agencies and robustly fund public services. The remaining surplus and much of the excess Rainy Day funds will be used to pay down pension debt.

It passed the House with a bipartisan vote of [139-12](#) and passed the Senate with a bipartisan vote of [35-1](#).

Among the budget items important to working families are:

Tax Cuts/Revenue Measures

- Reduces the state income tax by lowering the 5.0% rate to 4.5% and the 3.0% rate to 2.0% for the income year 2024. The benefits will be capped at \$150,000 for single filers and \$300,000 for joint filers.
- Increases the Earned Income Tax Credit from 30.5% to 40%.
- Eliminates retirement income tax cliff by adding a phase-out for allowable pension and annuity and IRA distribution deductions against the Personal Income Tax.
- Allowed the child tax credit to assist Connecticut families to expire.
- Extends the 10% corporation business tax surcharge for three additional years to the 2023, 2024, and 2025 income years.
- Increases the human capital investment tax credit from 5% to 10% (for most eligible investments) and 25% (for eligible child care-related expenditures); makes donations or capital contributions to nonprofits for establishing child care centers for use by children residing in the community a credit-eligible investment; allows corporations to use the 25% human capital investment credits to reduce up to 70% of their corporation business tax liability, rather than 50.01%
- Allows certain Connecticut-headquartered corporations that own at least 80% of an LLC to claim the fixed capital investment tax credit for amounts the LLC invested in qualifying fixed capital.
- Eliminates the 40% angel investor tax credit for eligible investments in approved cannabis businesses beginning July 1, 2023.
- Starting in 2024, (1) makes the Pass Through Entity tax optional, (2) changes the method for calculating the tax base, (3) eliminates the corporation tax credit for PE taxes paid, and (4) eliminates the option for PEs to file a combined return with one or more commonly-owned PEs; reimposes a requirement that PEs file an income tax return and pay the tax on behalf of any nonresident member for whom the business is the only source of Connecticut income.
- Creates tax incentives for eligible corporations offering an employee stock-sharing arrangement that distributes their common stock to participating employees (i.e., offering a "share plan"); exempts from

state personal income tax any share plan stock taxpayers receive; requires DRS to study the share plan program and report its findings to the legislature by December 15, 2023.

- Establishes a new tax credit for production companies of eligible theater productions performed at qualified facilities in Connecticut; caps the total credits allowed at \$2.5 million per fiscal year.
- Expands the scope of DRS's biennial tax incidence report by requiring that the report include (1) the Pass Through Entity tax and other taxes generating at least \$100 million and (2) additional information on tax burden distribution, effective tax rates, and tax credit and modification distribution.
- Requires DRS to (1) estimate the state's tax gap, develop a strategy to reduce the gap, and evaluate related staffing needs; (2) report information on this estimate and strategy to the legislature; and (3) publish a plan for the agency for closing the tax gap.

§ 61 — RESERVE FOR SALARY ADJUSTMENTS ACCOUNT REPORTS

Starting by January 1, 2024, requires the OPM secretary to give the Appropriations Committee quarterly reports on the status of the reserve for salary adjustments account

Agency Appropriations

- Budgets \$3.3M to the Department of Labor to support the unemployment call center.
- Allocates \$100,000 to the Department of Labor to require apprenticeship program sponsors of registered apprenticeship programs to annually submit the following information to DOL: (1) the minimum completion rate of the sponsor's apprentices; (2) the number of registered apprentices (a) currently participating in the program and (b) who have separated from the program since the date of their previous registration, or year to date for new sponsors; (3) the number of licensed journeypersons the sponsor currently employs; (4) the number of registered apprentices participating in the program who have advanced a year since the previous registration, or year to date for new sponsors; (5) the number of apprentices who have completed the sponsor's apprenticeship program since the previous registration, or year to date for new sponsors; and (6) the number of apprentices who completed the sponsor's program who (a) have been issued a Department of Consumer Protection occupational license and (b) are currently employed by the sponsor (was [SB 1125](#)).
- Includes \$1 million for the Building Trades Training Institute.
- Allows Capitol Region Development Authority to enter into two separate agreements concerning the XL Center's management and operation and reconstruction and renovation.
- Provides \$5M to the Department of Administrative Services for the Firefighter Cancer Relief Fund. Requires that firefighters who have certain cancers and meet other specified criteria receive workers' compensation-like benefits and disability retirement benefits paid by the municipalities where the firefighter is employed and then reimbursed from the state's firefighters cancer relief account (was [SB 937](#)).
- Moves the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) from the Office of the Governor to the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD).
- Establishes a Department of Housing.

K-12 Education & Early Childhood

- Provides \$25 million in additional special education funding each year.
- Continues to phase-in the new ECS formula, providing \$48 million to districts in FY 2024 and \$96 million in FY 2025. Holds wealthy towns harmless from losing ECS dollars under the new formula.
- Adds an additional \$150 million in FY 2025 to further accelerate the ECS phase-in and for other education funding.
- An attempt to establish school vouchers was defeated and eliminated from the budget.
- Funds 11% rate increases for licensed childcare providers and 6% for unlicensed providers in the Care4Kids system.
- Increases Infant Pre-K rates to \$10,500 per pupil in School Readiness and Child Day Care Contract programs in FY 2025.

- Increases the per-student state charter school grant for FYs 24-25; makes the FY 25 amount ongoing for future years (FY 24 foundation plus 36% and FY 25 foundation plus 56% for charter school grant adjustment).
- Includes \$1.8 million for paraeducator professional development.
- Includes \$15 million to identify affordable, quality healthcare for paraeducators:
 - Requires the State Comptroller to establish two programs providing subsidies to paraeducators for certain health insurance and health care related costs:
 - Finance within available appropriations a reimbursement to initially fund a health savings account (HSA), which is a tax advantaged account available to people with high deductible health plans in FY 24, as a percentage of the paraeducator's investment; and
 - \$5 million to finance a stipend to purchase silver-level health insurance plans through Access Health CT. for those whose employer does not provide a health insurance plan that meets the federal Affordable Care Act minimum actuarial value standards (plans with actuarial values less than 60%) in FY 25. Allows the Comptroller to increase the limit to ensure full utilization of the stipend fund.
 - Requires the Office of Health Strategy (OHS) to help boards of educations enroll paraeducators in (1) health insurance plans that are eligible for the bill's second subsidy program; (2) the Covered Connecticut program, which provides eligible individuals with health insurance for no out-of-pocket cost; or (3) Medicaid.
 - Establishes a paraeducator healthcare working group to study health care access, equity, and affordability for paraeducators. The working group consists of the comptroller (or his designee) and at least one representative each from Access Health CT (i.e., the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange) and OHS and at least one member appointed by the two organizations representing Connecticut paraeducators (Connecticut AFL-CIO and the SEIU State Council). The study must at least: (1) analyze the cost to boards to offer health benefit plans with an actuarial value (AV) of at least 75% (AV represents the total average costs for benefits that plan covers); (2) consider any fees or taxes assessed on boards for not providing health insurance plans that meet the federal minimum essential benefits coverage requirements; (3) compare the costs to offer health benefit plans (by AV) and the costs of a qualified silver-level plan; (4) examine the feasibility of expanding the Covered Connecticut program, or any other premium subsidy program available through Access Health CT, to provide affordable coverage for paraeducators and other similarly situated occupations; and (5) assess the average out-of-pocket costs for paraeducators under existing cost-sharing subsidy programs. Access Health CT's representative must convene the group's first meeting by October 1, 2023 and report to the Appropriations, Education, Insurance and Real Estate, and Labor and Public Employees committees on its findings, including any legislative recommendations, by July 1, 2024.

Higher Education

Public higher education funding remains precarious. The budget includes significantly more in funding than Governor Lamont proposed in February, but many fear it is not as much as needed to avoid program cuts and layoffs.

In total, it provides state universities and community colleges next fiscal year with about \$630 million coming from a block grant supplemented by more than \$200 million in pandemic grants and surplus dollars. That effectively matches the \$620 million the system received this fiscal year. But in FY 2024-25, the regional universities and community colleges would have \$115 million less than they received in FY 2023-24.

It also cuts funding to UConn and UConn Health by about \$20 million to \$30 million in the first year and \$100 million in the second year. University administration has warned such cuts would force tuition hikes, faculty layoffs and larger class sizes.

It does restructure fringe benefit funding for higher education institutions to ensure that the state's unfunded pension liability is not being passed on to students or make the universities less competitive for federal grants. It also:

- Expands the state's debt-free community college program to include previously enrolled students returning to college after a break.
- Provides \$6 million for student loan reimbursements.
- Increases the award amount and includes permanent funding for PACT need-based grants and expands PACT to include students returning to college after being previously enrolled.

Healthcare

- Provides \$50 million in each year of the biennium to enhance compensation for 1,700 group home workers serving residents with developmental disabilities. Represented by SEIU 1199NE, they went on strike May 24 to increase wages, seeking a pathway to \$25/hour minimum wage.
- Enacts nurse staffing level standards by requiring hospitals to biannually report to the Department of Public Health (DPH) on their compliance with nurse staffing assignments in their nurse staffing plans; requiring DPH to investigate complaints regarding nurse staffing plan violations and, when appropriate, issue orders of noncompliance that require hospitals to implement corrective action plans and pay civil penalties; and allowing DPH to audit nurse staffing assignments.
- Limits mandatory overtime for hospital nurses.
- Expands HUSKY C income eligibility to 105% of federal poverty level, after all income disregards.
- Extends state HUSKY coverage for undocumented children from age 12 to 15, with continuation of coverage for participants through age 18.

Municipal Aid

- Provides a \$45 million combined increase in Tiered PILOT and Car Tax.
- \$1.8 million to help fund early voting for towns.
- \$7.5 million to support local fire departments including PFAS removal from fire apparatuses, supporting volunteer fire responses to highway incidents, regional fire academies, and studying fire service in the state.

Transportation

- \$9.1 million in FY 2024 and \$9.4 million in FY 2025 to expand bus service to support workforce transportation.
- \$525,000 in FY 2024 and \$575,000 in FY 2025 for the Connecticut Work Zone Safety Awareness Program.
- \$4.6 million in FY 2024 and \$4.8 million in FY 2025 for Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) Position Funding to support 206 positions to pursue and support IIJA federal funding.
- New Haven Line funded at 86% of pre-pandemic usage in FY 2024 and fully funded in FY 2025 to match ridership trends.
- Hartford Line funded at 100% to optimize federal funding.
- Shoreline East funding exceeds current usage – 44% of pre-pandemic service in both years.
- Freezes the state's diesel fuel tax for the 2023-24 fiscal year at 49.2 cents per gallon. Diesel rates are currently based on a formula that relies heavily on diesel fuel prices over the prior year.

Private Providers

- Provides an additional \$206.6 million over the biennium to strengthen private providers.
- Funds \$53.3 million in each fiscal year across all private providers, including DDS-contracted providers – roughly equivalent to a 2.5% increase.
- Funds a comprehensive evaluation of Medicaid rates to inform future rate increases, with a focus on access barriers and equity considerations.
- Improves prescription drug affordability by facilitating participation in a multistate consortium to negotiate discounts on prescription drugs.
- Adds agency-based Personal Care Attendant (PCA) services as an option to allow individuals that choose not to self-direct to benefit from these services while remaining independent at home (savings of \$12.3 million in FY 2024, cost of \$3.1 million in FY 2025).
- Adds to the factors an arbitrator must consider in rendering an arbitration decision in PCA contract negotiations: (1) the prevailing wages, fringe benefits, and working conditions in the job market for workers covered by the collective bargaining unit; (2) the overall compensation paid to the employees

involved in the arbitration, including direct wages, paid time off, holiday pay, other forms of assistance, and all other benefits they receive; (3) the ability of the state Medicaid program to pay; and (4) the sustainability of the state-funded programs that provide PCA services to consumers (e.g., the Medicaid Acquired Brain Injury Waiver Program, Medicaid PCA Waiver Program for adults with disabilities, and Connecticut Homecare Program for Elders).

Bills Included in the Budget Implementer HB 6941

- [HB 6854](#) Directs the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) to hire a food and nutrition policy analyst to coordinate state efforts to reduce food insecurity and food deserts, promote food as medicine, and provide data on access to nutritionally adequate food. Authorizes municipalities to provide real property tax abatements to new grocery stores established in a food desert if certain conditions are met, including requiring stores that are larger than 20,000 square feet to enter into a labor peace agreement with a bona fide labor organization.
- Expands the standard wage law to cover contractors who provide security services and specifies that each pay period an employee is not paid the required standard wage rate is a separate violation, subject to a \$2,500 to \$5,000 fine.
- Enacts the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, prohibiting election methods that impair a protected class member's right to vote and allows aggrieved parties to seek remedies in court (was [SB 1226](#)).