Senate Bill No. 154

Public Act No. 24-93

AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS AND ASSORTED REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.

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

Section 1. (*Effective July 1, 2024*) The Department of Education shall, in consultation with national assessment experts and local and regional boards of education in the state, conduct a comprehensive audit of the assessments that are administered to students. Such audit shall include, but not be limited to, (1) issuance of guidance to local and regional boards of education for conducting an inventory of the assessments administered to students at the classroom, school and school district levels, (2) development of a program of professional learning for teachers concerning assessment literacy, and (3) an evaluation of the assessments inventoried by local and regional boards of education with the goals of eliminating redundant assessments, discouraging classroom activities that focus only on test preparation, reducing testing time and maximizing assessments that provide actionable information for classroom teachers. Not later than January 31, 2026, the Department of Education shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education a report concerning the audit and related activities conducted pursuant to this section and any requisite legislative proposals to accomplish the

goals of such audit.

Sec. 2. Subdivision (2) of subsection (g) of section 10-266aa of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(2) (A) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, and each fiscal year thereafter, the department shall provide, within available appropriations, an annual grant to the local or regional board of education for each receiving district if one of the following conditions are met as follows: (i) (I) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, three thousand dollars, and (II) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, at least three thousand dollars for each out-of-district student who attends school in the receiving district under the program if the number of such out-of-district students is less than two per cent of the total student population of such receiving district plus any amount available pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, (ii) (I) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, four thousand dollars, and (II) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, at least four thousand dollars for each out-of-district student who attends school in the receiving district under the program if the number of such out-of-district students is greater than or equal to two per cent but less than three per cent of the total student population of such receiving district plus any amount available pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, (iii) (I) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, six thousand dollars, and (II) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, at least six thousand dollars for each out-of-district student who attends school in the receiving district under the program if the number of such out-of-district students is greater than or equal to three per cent but less than four per cent of the total student population of such receiving district plus any amount available pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, (iv) (I) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, six thousand

dollars, and (II) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, at least six thousand dollars for each out-of-district student who attends school in the receiving district under the program if the Commissioner of Education determines that the receiving district has an enrollment of greater than four thousand students and has increased the number of students in the program by at least fifty per cent from the previous fiscal year plus any amount available pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, or (v) (I) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, eight thousand dollars, and (II) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, at least eight thousand dollars for each out-of-district student who attends school in the receiving district under the program if the number of such out-of-district students is greater than or equal to four per cent of the total student population of such receiving district plus any amount available pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision.

(B) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, and each fiscal year thereafter, the department shall, in order to assist the state in meeting its obligations under commitment 9B of the Comprehensive School Choice Plan pursuant to the settlement in Sheff v. O'Neill, HHD-X07-CV89-4026240-S, provide, within available appropriations, an additional grant to the local or regional board of education for each receiving district in the amount of two thousand dollars for each out-of-district student who resides in the Hartford region and attends school in the receiving district under the program.

<u>(C) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, the local or regional board of education for each receiving district shall include the amount of the grants projected to be received pursuant to this subdivision in such board's annual budget and projected revenue statement.</u>

Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 10-226b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*

2024):

(a) Whenever the State Board of Education finds that racial imbalance exists in a public school, it shall notify in writing the board of education having jurisdiction over said school that such finding has been made, except the State Board of Education shall not notify a board of education of such finding until July 1, 2025.

Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 10-226c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) Any board of education receiving notification of the existence of racial imbalance as specified in section 10-226b, as amended by this act, shall forthwith prepare a plan to correct such imbalance and file a copy of said plan with the State Board of Education, except such board of education shall not be required to prepare and file said plan until July 1, 2025. Said plan may be limited to addressing the imbalance existing at any school and need not result in a district-wide plan or district-wide pupil reassignment. A school district may request an extension of time in cases in which the number of students causing said imbalance is fewer than five students at a school.

Sec. 5. Section 10-226d of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

Upon receipt of any plan required under the provisions of subsection (b) of section 10-226c, the State Board of Education shall review said plan. If it determines that the plan is satisfactory, it shall approve the plan and shall provide to the board of education such assistance and services as may be available. The board of education shall submit annual reports on the implementation of the approved plan, as the State Board of Education may require. The State Board of Education shall not take action on any plan received on or after July 1, 2024, until July 1, 2025.

Sec. 6. Subsection (d) of section 10-212a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(d) (1) (A) With the written authorization of a student's parent or guardian, and (B) pursuant to the written order of a qualified medical professional, a school nurse and a school medical advisor, if any, may jointly approve and provide general supervision to an identified **[**school paraprofessional**]** paraeducator to administer medication, including, but not limited to, medication administered with a cartridge injector, to a specific student with a medically diagnosed allergic condition that may require prompt treatment in order to protect the student against serious harm or death. Each such paraeducator and any qualified school employee authorized to administer epinephrine in the absence of a school nurse pursuant to policies and procedures adopted by a board of education in accordance with subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section shall annually complete the training program described in section 10-212g.

(2) A school nurse or, in the absence of a school nurse, a qualified school employee shall maintain epinephrine in cartridge injectors for the purpose of emergency first aid to students who experience allergic reactions and do not have a prior written authorization of a parent or guardian or a prior written order of a qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine. A school nurse or a school principal shall select qualified school employees to administer such epinephrine under this subdivision, and there shall be at least one such qualified school employee on the grounds of the school during regular school hours in the absence of a school nurse. A school nurse or, in the absence of such school nurse, such qualified school employee may administer such epinephrine under this subdivision, provided such administration of epinephrine is in accordance with policies and procedures adopted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. Such administration of

epinephrine by a qualified school employee shall be limited to situations when the school nurse is absent or unavailable. No qualified school employee shall administer such epinephrine under this subdivision unless such qualified school employee annually completes the training program described in section 10-212g. The parent or guardian of a student may submit, in writing, to the school nurse and school medical advisor, if any, that epinephrine shall not be administered to such student under this subdivision.

(3) In the case of a student with a medically diagnosed life-threatening allergic condition, (A) with the written authorization of such student's parent or guardian, and (B) pursuant to the written order of a qualified medical professional, such student may possess, self-administer or possess and self-administer medication, including, but not limited to, medication administered with a cartridge injector, to protect such student against serious harm or death.

(4) For purposes of this subsection, (A) "cartridge injector" means an automatic prefilled cartridge injector or similar automatic injectable equipment used to deliver epinephrine in a standard dose for emergency first aid response to allergic reactions, (B) "qualified school employee" means a principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by a school district, coach or school paraprofessional, and (C) "qualified medical professional" means (i) a physician licensed under chapter 370, (ii) an optometrist licensed to practice optometry under chapter 380, (iii) an advanced practice registered nurse licensed to prescribe in accordance with section 20-94a, or (iv) a physician assistant licensed to prescribe in accordance with section 20-12d.

Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) No local or regional board of education shall require a parent or guardian of a student to participate in school activities, such as through volunteering, as a condition for the enrollment of such student in a school under the jurisdiction of such

board.

Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) Each regional community-technical college shall consult with the school counselors and school administrators at public high schools located within the region of the state in which such college is located for the purpose of establishing collaborative partnerships between such schools and such college. Such partnerships may include, but not be limited to, collaborative counseling programs for students interested in specific careers, evaluation and alignment of curricula and offering support or educational programs to improve student outcomes.

Sec. 9. Section 19a-900a of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

Any provider of child care services, as described in section 19a-77, <u>that is</u> licensed by the Office of Early Childhood **[**, that**]** <u>or is exempt from licensure pursuant to subsection (b) of section 19a-77, and</u> maintains a supply of epinephrine cartridge injectors pursuant to section 19a-909, may administer such epinephrine for the purpose of emergency first aid to a child in the care of such provider who experiences an allergic reaction and does not have a prior written authorization of a parent or guardian or a prior written order of a qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine, provided the person administering such epinephrine is a person with training, as defined in section 19a-909. The parent or guardian of a child may submit, in writing, to such child's provider of child care services, that epinephrine shall not be administered to such child pursuant to this section.

Sec. 10. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Not later than December 31, 2024, and each December thirty-first thereafter, the Department of Education shall calculate an estimated amount that each town may

receive under the provisions of section 10-262h of the general statutes, for the next fiscal year using data collected during the current fiscal year, and notify each such town of such estimated amount.

Sec. 11. Section 10-236c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) A school principal or other school administrator shall notify a parent or guardian of a student whose behavior has caused a serious disruption to the instruction of other students, caused self-harm or caused physical harm to a teacher, another student or other school employee not later than twenty-four hours after such behavior occurs. Such notice shall include, but not be limited to, informing such parent or guardian that the teacher of record in the classroom in which such behavior occurred may request a behavior intervention meeting, as described in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) For the school year commencing July 1, 2022, and each school year thereafter, any teacher of record in a classroom may request a behavior intervention meeting with the crisis intervention team for the school, as described in section 10-236b, for any student whose behavior has caused a serious disruption to the instruction of other students, or caused self-harm or physical harm to such teacher or another student or staff member in such teacher's classroom. The crisis intervention team shall, upon the request of such teacher and notifying such student's parent or guardian, convene a behavior intervention meeting regarding such student. The participants of such behavior intervention meeting shall identify resources and supports to address such student's social, emotional and instructional needs. Not later than seven days after the behavior intervention meeting, the crisis intervention team shall submit to the parent or guardian of such student, in the dominant language of such parent or guardian, a written summary of such meeting, including, but not limited to, the resources and supports identified.

Sec. 12. Subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section 10-233d of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(3) Unless an emergency exists, no pupil shall be expelled without a formal hearing held pursuant to sections 4-176e to 4-180a, inclusive, and section 4-181a, provided whenever such pupil is a minor, the notice required by section 4-177 and section 4-180 shall also be given to the parents or guardian of the pupil at least five business days before such hearing, not including the day of such hearing. If an emergency exists, such hearing shall be held as soon after the expulsion as possible. The notice shall include information concerning the parent's or guardian's and the pupil's legal rights and concerning legal services provided free of charge or at a reduced rate that are available locally and how to access such services. An attorney or other advocate may represent any pupil subject to expulsion proceedings. The parent or guardian of the pupil shall have the right to have the expulsion hearing postponed for up to one week to allow time to obtain representation, except that if an emergency exists, such hearing shall be held as soon after the expulsion as possible.

Sec. 13. Section 6 of public act 23-150 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Civic engagement" means participation in improving the quality of life in a community and developing the combination of knowledge and skills to enable such participation;

(2) "Civics" means the study of the rights and obligations of citizens; and

(3) "Media literacy" means the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate with media in all forms by understanding the role

of media in society, and building skills of inquiry and self-expression essential to participation and collaboration in a democratic society.

(b) There is established the Connecticut Civics Education, Civics Engagement and Media Literacy Task Force to study and develop strategies to improve and promote civic engagement and instruction on civics, citizenship, media literacy and American government. Such study shall include, but need not be limited to (1) reviewing existing state and national curricula and standards, classroom practices and high school and college graduation requirements to identify and publicize best practices in instruction on civics, citizenship, media literacy and American government, (2) receiving recommendations from educators, administrators, governmental entities, nongovernmental organizations and the public, (3) a review of existing civics, citizenship, media literacy and American government educational opportunities provided by governmental entities and nongovernmental organizations throughout the state, and (4) exploring the feasibility of establishing public and private partnerships to fund, coordinate, promote and support enhancements to such engagement and instruction.

(c) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall be a certified social studies teacher and a member of the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut;

(2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut Education Association;

(3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be an officer or member of a nongovernmental organization that promotes civic education, civic engagement or media literacy;

(4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who shall be

an officer or member of a nongovernmental organization that promotes civic education, civic engagement or media literacy;

(5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents;

(6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who shall be a representative of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education;

(7) One appointed by the chairperson of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus of the General Assembly;

(8) One appointed jointly by the House chairperson and the House ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, who is a student at an institution of higher education in the state;

(9) One appointed jointly by the Senate chairperson and the Senate ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, who is a student at a high school in the state;

[(8)**]** (10) The Secretary of the State, or the Secretary's designee;

[(9)**]** (11) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

[(10)**]** (12) The president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, or the president's designee;

[(11)**]** (13) The president of The University of Connecticut, or the president's designee;

[(12)**]** (14) The president of the Connecticut Bar Association, or the president's designee;

[(13)**]** (15) The Chief Court Administrator, or the Chief Court Administrator's designee;

[(14)**]** (16) The chairpersons of the Connecticut Hate Crimes Advisory Council, or the chairpersons' designees;

[(15)**]** (17) The executive director of the Connecticut Humanities Council, or the executive director's designee;

[(16)**]** (18) The president of the Connecticut Democracy Center, or the president's designee; and

[(17)**]** (19) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's designee.

(d) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) or (7) of subsection (c) of this section may be a member of the General Assembly.

(e) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(f) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(g) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(h) Not later than January 1, 2025, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of

the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or July 1, 2025, whichever is later.

Sec. 14. Section 3 of public act 21-95, as amended by section 3 of public act 22-116 and section 13 of public act 23-150, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) There is established a task force to study issues relating to the provision and funding of special education in the state during the school years commencing July 1, 2016, to July 1, 2020, inclusive. Such study shall focus on funding, eligibility and delivery of special education services and include, but need not be limited to, an examination of (1) the provision of special education and related services, including the provision of services to students identified as gifted and talented, and services or accommodations for a student as part of a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, and whether local and regional boards of education are providing such services directly or partnering with regional educational service centers, contracting with a private provider of special education services, as defined in section 10-91g of the general statutes, or as part of a cooperative arrangement pursuant to section 10-158a of the general statutes, (2) the cost of providing special education and related services, including gifted and talented services, the total aggregate amount per school district per year and the annual percentage increase or decrease per school district of such cost, (3) the effect that the cost of special education and gifted and talented services has on a board of education's minimum budget requirement, (4) the level of state reimbursement to boards of education for special education and gifted and talented services, including the total amount for reimbursement submitted by each school district per year and the total amount received by such school district per year, and the percentage increase or decrease per year

of the difference of the total amount submitted and the total amount received for each school district, (5) the criteria and manner by which school districts are identifying students who require special education and related services or as gifted and talented, including whether school districts are overidentifying or underidentifying such students and the causes and reasons for such overidentification and underidentification, (6) the feasibility of authorizing independent evaluators from the Department of Education or hired by the parents and guardians of students receiving special education and related services to observe the provision of such services in the classroom, (7) delaying the age in which a classification category of special education services shall be made for a child requiring special education and related services, (8) special education student-to-teacher ratios prescribed by case load policies, regulations and formulas in effect in other states, with a focus on provisions regarding the numbers of special education students and intensity of services required for such students, (9) the prohibition of the use of seclusion under section 10-236b of the general statutes and the implementation of alternative methods in lieu of seclusion for certain student behavior, and (10) any other issues or topics relating to special education that the task force deems necessary.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) Three appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom is a representative of the Special Education Equity for Kids of Connecticut, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education and one of whom is the parent or guardian of a student who is enrolled in a public school and receiving special education services;

(2) Three appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Education Association and one of whom is the parent or

guardian of a student who is enrolled in a public school and receiving special education services;

(3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom is a representative of the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut and one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center;

(4) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education and one of whom is a representative of the RESC Alliance;

(5) Three appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of School Administrators, one of whom is a representative of the School and State Finance Project and one of whom is a representative from an educator preparation program offered at a public institution of higher education in the state;

(6) Three appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of Schools, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials and one of whom is a representative from an educator preparation program offered at an independent institution of higher education in the state;

(7) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

(8) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, or their designees;

(9) The chairperson of the Advisory Council for Special Education, established pursuant to section 10-76i of the general statutes; **[**and**]**

(10) A representative of the Connecticut Association of Private Special Education Facilities, designated by the association; and

(11) A representative of the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education, designated by the council.

(c) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the cochairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such cochairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section. On and after the effective date of this section, the representative designated pursuant to subdivision (11) of subsection (b) of this section shall serve as the third cochairperson of the task force.

(e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(f) (1) Not later than January 1, 2024, the task force shall submit an interim report on its findings to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

(2) Not later than January 1, 2025, the task force shall submit a final report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

(3) The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such

report or July 1, 2025, whichever is later.

Sec. 15. Section 10-211f of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

For the school year commencing July 1, 2024, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall annually approve and provide professional development programs or activities for all school nurses and nurse practitioners appointed by or under contract with such board. **[**Each board shall provide**]** As part of such professional development programs or activities **[**related to**]** provided by each local and regional board of education under this section, each new school nurse or nurse practitioner shall receive and complete (1) training and instruction in the implementation of individualized education programs and plans pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, **[**to any new school nurse or nurse practitioner**]** not later than thirty days after such school nurse or nurse practitioner has been appointed by or entered into a contract with such board, and (2) an orientation to school health services, developed by an association that represents nurses in the state, not later than six months after such nurse or nurse practitioner has been appointed by or entered into a contract with such board.

Sec. 16. Section 10-227 of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) Each board of education shall cause the superintendent to make returns not later than September first of each year to the Commissioner of Education of the receipts, expenditures and statistics, as prescribed by the commissioner, provided each such board may submit revisions to the returns in such form and with such documentation as required by the commissioner **[**no**]** not later than **[**December**]** January thirty-first of

each year following the September submission. Such reports or returns required shall be filed in accordance with the instructions furnished by the commissioner, shall be certified **[**no**]** not later than **[**December**]** January thirty-first of each year by the independent public accountant selected pursuant to section 7-392 for the purpose of auditing municipal accounts, and shall be subject to Department of Education verification. If the returns and statistics and revisions called for by said commissioner are not filed on or before the days specified in this section or if the returns are not certified as required by the commissioner on or before **[**December**]** January thirty-first, each local and regional board of education required by law to make separate returns, whose returns and statistics or revisions are delayed until after those days, shall forfeit of the total sum which is paid for such board of education from the State Treasurer an amount to be determined by the State Board of Education, which amount shall be not less than one thousand dollars nor more than ten thousand dollars. The amount so forfeited shall be withheld from a subsequent grant payment as determined by the commissioner. Notwithstanding the penalty provision of this section, the Commissioner of Education may waive said forfeiture for good cause.

(b) Not later than **[**February 15, 2024**]** March 15, 2025, and annually thereafter, the Department of Education shall publish on its Internet web site the data contained in the reports and returns filed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section by education program type, expense function, expense object and funding source, including, but not limited to, federal, combined state and local and combined private and other sources for the school and district level. The department shall develop and publish a guide that contains definitions for each category of expenditure and funding source.

(c) Not later than **[**February**]** March 15, 2025, and annually thereafter, the Department of Education shall develop and publish the data contained in the reports and returns filed pursuant to subsection (a) of

this section in a format that allows financial comparisons between school districts and schools, including student enrollment and demographic statistics as of October first of the school year in which such reports and returns were filed.

Sec. 17. Subsection (d) of section 10-76d of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(d) To meet its obligations under sections 10-76a to 10-76g, inclusive, any local or regional board of education may make agreements with another such board or subject to the consent of the parent or guardian of any child affected thereby, make agreements, or on and after July 1, 2019, enter into a contract with any private provider of special education services, as defined in section 10-91g, private school, or public or private agency or institution, including a group home to provide the necessary programs or services, but no expenditures made pursuant to a contract with a private provider of special education services, private school, agency or institution for such special education shall be paid under the provisions of section 10-76g, unless (1) such contract includes a description of the educational program and other treatment the child is to receive, a statement of minimal goals and objectives which it is anticipated such child will achieve, an estimated time schedule for returning the child to the community or transferring such child to another appropriate facility, and an explanation of how the tuition or costs for services provided under the agreement or contract are to be calculated, (2) subject to the provisions of this subsection, the educational needs of the child for whom such special education is being provided cannot be met by public school arrangements in the opinion of the commissioner who, before granting approval of such contract for purposes of payment, shall consider such factors as the particular needs of the child, the appropriateness and efficacy of the program offered by such private school, agency or institution, and the economic feasibility

of comparable alternatives, and (3) commencing with the 1987-1988 school year and for each school year thereafter, each such private provider of special education services, private school, agency or institution has been approved for special education by the Commissioner of Education or by the appropriate agency for facilities located out of state, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (2) of this subsection or any regulations adopted by the State Board of Education setting placement priorities, placements pursuant to this section and payments under section 10-76g may be made pursuant to such a contract if the public arrangements are more costly than the private provider of special education services, private school, institution or agency, provided the private provider of special education services, private school, institution or agency meets the educational needs of the child and its program is appropriate and efficacious. Any payment under the provisions of section 10-76g shall include all expenditures incurred by a local or regional board of education pursuant to a contract with a private provider of special education services, private school, agency or institution, to the extent permitted under said section, during the school year in which such private provider of special education services, private school, agency or institution provided such services, even if such private provider of special education services, private school, agency or institution is approved for special education by the Commissioner of Education during such school year. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection to the contrary, nothing in this subsection shall (A) require the removal of a child from a nonapproved facility if the child was placed there prior to July 7, 1987, pursuant to the determination of a planning and placement team that such a placement was appropriate and such placement was approved by the Commissioner of Education, or (B) prohibit the placement of a child at a nonapproved facility if a planning and placement team determines prior to July 7, 1987, that the child be placed in a nonapproved facility for the 1987-1988 school year. Each child placed in a nonapproved facility as described in

subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subdivision (3) of this subsection may continue at the facility provided the planning and placement team or hearing officer appointed pursuant to section 10-76h determines that the placement is appropriate. Expenditures incurred by any local or regional board of education to maintain children in nonapproved facilities as described in said subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall be paid pursuant to the provisions of section 10-76g. Any local or regional board of education may enter into a contract with the owners or operators of any sheltered workshop or rehabilitation center for provision of an education occupational training program for children requiring special education who are at least sixteen years of age, provided such workshop or institution shall have been approved by the appropriate state agency. Whenever any child is identified by a local or regional board of education as a child requiring special education and such board of education determines that the requirements for special education could be met by a program provided within the district or by agreement with another board of education except for the child's need for services other than educational services such as medical, psychiatric or institutional care or services, such board of education may meet its obligation to furnish special education for such child by paying the reasonable cost of special education instruction in a private provider of special education services, private school, hospital or other institution provided such board of education or the commissioner concurs that placement in such institution is necessary and proper and no state institution is available to meet such child's needs. Any such private provider of special education services, private school, hospital or other institution receiving such reasonable cost of special education instruction by such board of education shall submit all required documentation to such board of education for purposes of submitting claims to the Medicaid School Based Child Health Program administered by the Department of Social Services.

Sec. 18. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) Each local and regional board of

education shall conform the design of any school playground designed on or after July 1, 2025, to the principles of universal design. Such playgrounds shall include, at a minimum, (1) play spaces that appeal to a variety of senses and allow multiple forms of play, (2) landform designed to encourage unstructured play, (3) multiple options for accessing play spaces and equipment that allow for varying levels of ability, and (4) sensory-engaging materials and use of trees and other plantings. As used in this section, "universal design" means a concept of designing spaces with the goal of maximizing usability and access, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

Sec. 19. Subsections (b) and (c) of section 10-14gg of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) The Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success shall be under the direction of a director who shall, in consultation with the Reading Leadership Implementation Council described in subsection (c) of this section, be responsible for (1) overseeing all activities of the center, (2) facilitating communication between the center, local and regional boards of education and other affiliates of the center, and (3) coordinating the dissemination of information, tools and services made available by the center.

(c) The activities of the center shall be informed by the Reading Leadership Implementation Council which shall consist of the following members: (1) The director of the center, or the director's designee; (2) the executive director of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's designee; (3) an individual designated by the Governor, who has experience in literacy or education and is engaged in the development and implementation of the intensive reading instruction program; (4) an individual designated by the speaker of the House of Representatives, who has experience in literacy or education; (5) an individual designated by the president pro

tempore of the Senate, who has experience in literacy or education; (6) an individual designated by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, who has experience in literacy or education; (7) an individual designated by the minority leader of the Senate, who has experience in literacy or education; (8) two individuals, designated by the chairperson of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus of the General Assembly, one of whom has experience with literacy or education and is engaged in the development and implementation of the intensive reading instruction program, provided such individual is not a member of the General Assembly; (9) the dean of the Neag School of Education at The University of Connecticut, or the dean's designee; and (10) three individuals designated by the Commissioner of Education. The initial terms of the members of the council shall expire on June 30, 2024, and the subsequent appointments shall be made by July 1, 2024. Members shall serve two-year terms and may serve consecutive terms. The Reading Leadership Implementation Council shall develop and publish annual goals for the center and meet at least once every two months. The Reading Leadership Implementation Council may consult with representatives from public, private and philanthropic organizations.

Sec. 20. Section 25 of public act 23-167 is repealed. (*Effective July 1, 2024*)

Approved June 4, 2024