

# LATEST DEVELOPMENTS FROM THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY: FEBRUARY 22ND PUBLIC HEARING

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## Education Law Notes

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By Mark Sommaruga

On **Friday, February 22, 2019**, the General Assembly's Education Committee will conduct a public hearing on numerous proposed bills. The hearing will take place at **11:00 A.M.** in **Room 2E of the Legislative Office Building**. Of note is another bill attempting to address "classroom safety" issues; without commenting on the bill's merits, this year's version may not raise as many student privacy and special education issues (not to mention student discipline/due process concerns) as last year's bill that was vetoed by then-Governor Malloy.

The following is a brief summary of the bills that will be the subject of the hearing.

**H.B. No. 7110 AN ACT CONCERNING ENHANCED CLASSROOM SAFETY AND SCHOOL CLIMATE.** This proposed bill would require school districts to revise their safe school climate plans to include provisions addressing "classroom safety," with protocols for addressing disruptive or injurious incidents occurring in classrooms. The bill would also require the State Department of Education to 1) develop and implement a state-wide school climate survey, and 2) disseminate strategies to assist school districts with their safe school climate plans.

**H.B. No. 7111 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND THE INCLUSION OF THE DANGERS OF VAPING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM.** This proposed bill would require the State Department of Education to 1) include the role of consent in sexual relationships in the comprehensive school health education component of its Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework, and 2) include instruction on the dangers of vaping in the health component of the mandated school curriculum.

**S.B. No. 851 AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DISAGGREGATION OF STUDENT DATA BY ETHNIC SUBGROUPS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION SYSTEM.** This proposed bill would prohibit the collection of disaggregated student data on specific ethnic subgroups unless such student data is required by federal law or collected uniformly across the entire population of students.

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---

**S.B. No. 853 AN ACT CONCERNING THE AVAILABILITY OF THE REAL ESTATE LICENSING CURRICULUM FOR USE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.** This proposed bill would require the State Board of Education to make available curriculum materials to school districts relating to “Real Estate Principles and Practice.”

**S.B. No. 813 AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF ISSUES RELATING TO EARLY COLLEGE AND DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS.** This proposed bill would require the State Department of Education to conduct a study of issues relating to early college and dual enrollment programs, and report back to the General Assembly regarding the same.

**S.B. No. 814 AN ACT REQUIRING BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO CONDUCT TESTING OF WATER SUPPLIES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR THE PRESENCE OF LEAD.** This proposed bill would require school districts to conduct a test of the water supply for any school building or facility constructed before July 1, 1986 for the presence of lead and report the results to the State Departments of Education and Public Health.

**H.B. No. 7113 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION ISSUES.** This proposed bill would require the State Department of Education to conduct a study relating to “education issues in the state” and report back to the General Assembly regarding the same. This broad proposed bill may just be a placeholder for some other bill.

**S.B. No. 850 AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SCHOOLS.** This proposed bill would require the State Department of Education to conduct a study relating to “issues concerning public schools in the state” and report back to the General Assembly regarding the same. Again, this broad proposed bill may just be a placeholder for some other bill.

**S.B. No. 852 AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PILOT PROGRAM.** This proposed bill would require the State Department of Education to include personal financial management in the mandated school curriculum; this proposed bill would also establish a pilot program, to be administered by the Capitol Region Education Council, for the teaching of personal financial management for its member school districts.

**H.B. No. 7112 AN ACT INCREASING THE AMOUNT A TOWN MAY DEPOSIT INTO A NONLAPSING ACCOUNT FOR UNEXPENDED EDUCATION FUNDS.** This proposed bill would increase the amount of unexpended education funds that a town may deposit into a nonlapsing account at the end of each fiscal year to 2% of the total budgeted appropriation for education (from the current 1%). This bill would also require that any expenditure of funds from this account be authorized by the local board of education of the town and be for educational purposes only.

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**H.B. No. 7109 AN ACT CONCERNING INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOL PROGRAM FUNDING.** This proposed bill would increase the per pupil funding for interdistrict magnet school programs by 5%.

**To repeat my standard warning: The fact that a public hearing has been scheduled on these bills is not necessarily an indication that the Committee will pass them, but *it is at least an indication that they are under serious consideration. When these bills have been fully drafted and/or revised, and if they advance toward a vote by the Committee and the full General Assembly, we will provide more detail as to their contents.***

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