

# Education Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-1513

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING ASPIRING EDUCATORS.

**Vote Date:** 3/24/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Change of Reference to Appropriations

**PH Date:** 3/19/2025

**File No.:**

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## SPONSORS OF BILL:

Education Committee

## REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill aims to address Connecticut's teacher shortages and improve educator diversity by reducing financial and certification barriers. It creates scholarships for underrepresented students pursuing teaching careers and requires paid clinical experience during teacher prep programs. The Talent Office will oversee these efforts and report annually on progress. To ensure a steady pipeline of new educators, the bill sets a goal of hiring 250 aspiring teachers each year starting in 2025. It creates apprenticeship opportunities, offers alternate certification paths for support staff and professionals, and expands certification to roles like administrators and computer science teachers. The bill also establishes loan forgiveness and grant programs to ease student debt and requires school districts to submit educator recruitment plans. Schools must meet basic service standards, including transportation and continued education for students up to age 21. By investing in recruitment, training, and support, this bill strengthens the educator workforce and ensures all students have access to diverse, qualified teachers, especially in high-need areas.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[State of Connecticut Department of Education, Commissioner, Charlene Tucker:](#) Has concerns about this bill, as the definitions of 'aspiring educator' and 'shortage area' are too vague. While they appreciate the concept of Section 3, there is no mention of funding being provided. They already produce the report required by Section 7. They support Sections 5, 6, 8, and 13. The Department also supports Section 12 and recommends that plans be submitted by March 15, 2026.

[The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity, Children's Policy Analyst, TJ Nuccio](#): Supports this bill and emphasizes the importance of Section 3, which would mandate a stipend for student teachers. Regarding Section 5, CWCSEO is pleased to be included on the task force.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[Anonymous and Anonymous](#): supports this bill because they want funding for special education in Bridgeport.

[Anonymous](#): supports this bill because they support the education of the kids in their community.

[John Pez](#): supports this bill, stating that they want to give their daughters a better future than they had and are committed to supporting any child or young person who wants to pursue a better education.

[UConn Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Neag School of Education, Dorothea Anagnostopoulos](#): They support Senate Bill 1513 but urge lawmakers to broaden the definition of “aspiring educator” to ensure more students are eligible for support. As written, the bill restricts eligibility to individuals who are both from an underrepresented group and seeking certification in a teacher shortage area, excluding many qualified candidates. For example, at the University of Connecticut, this definition would disqualify about 40% of underrepresented students in their teacher prep program. It would also exclude men pursuing elementary education, even though they are underrepresented in that field, simply because elementary teaching is not classified as a shortage area. They recommend revising the definition to include all individuals from underrepresented groups, regardless of their certification area, to better achieve the bill’s goal of diversifying and strengthening Connecticut’s educator workforce.

[Aspiring Educator, Benjamin Bagues](#): Supports this bill because, while teaching can be emotionally rewarding, it is not financially rewarding. Future educators deserve financial support.

[Aspiring Educator, Darcy Cook](#): Supports this bill because student teaching is an unpaid position that places a significant burden on student teachers. Receiving a stipend while student teaching would encourage more individuals to pursue careers in education. The following aspiring educators offer similar testimonies:

[Aspiring Educator, Michaela De Los Cientos](#):

[Aspiring Educator Danyelix Echevarris Figueroa](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Elda Hernandez](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Asya Kerr](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Maria Klosowski](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Julia Lockery](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Lynore Plouffe](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Wesley Poirier](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Hannah Spinner](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Riley Smith](#):

[Aspiring Educator, Jiajia Xu:](#)

[Aspiring Educator, Anthony Leonardo:](#) supports this bill because student teachers need stipends to support themselves, and this would help address the educator shortage.

[ConnCAN Executive Director, Steven Hernandez:](#) Supports this bill because it builds on the state's ongoing efforts to diversify and retain the education workforce.

[Educators for Excellence Executive Director, Daniel Pearson:](#) Supports this bill but encourages an expansion of eligibility for the scholarship, as the current definition of shortage areas is too narrow.

[Connecticut Education Association, Education Issues Specialist, Elizabeth Sked:](#) Supports this bill because it is essential for student teachers to receive a stipend. Other states already mandate this.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

[Capitol Region Education Council Executive Director, Greg Florio:](#) Opposes this bill and requests that the Connecticut Resident Program be granted its request for \$1.5 million, as it already provides living wages for student teachers.

[Interim Dean of the College of Education at SCSU, Christopher Trombly:](#) raised concerns about SB 1513. They said the definition of "aspiring educator" is unclear and mixes up who the person is with what subject they want to teach. They also worry that the bill promises stipends for student teachers but doesn't explain where the money will come from, which could put a strain on schools and limit students' opportunities. Finally, they're concerned that the bill allows people to become school administrators without meeting the same standards as traditional programs, which could lead to underprepared leaders. They recommend changes to the bill to fix these issues.

**Reported by: Julia Cabral**

**Date: 4/9/25**