



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

Raised Bill No. 7015

LCO No. 5166



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:
(ED)

***AN ACT EXCLUDING EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR STUDENT
OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS FROM TRUANCY
DETERMINATIONS.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-198a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

3 (a) For purposes of this section and sections 10-198c and 10-220,
4 "truant" means a child age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in
5 a public or private school and has four unexcused absences from school
6 in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school
7 year.

8 (b) Each local and regional board of education shall adopt and
9 implement policies and procedures concerning truants who are enrolled
10 in schools under the jurisdiction of such board of education. Such
11 policies and procedures shall include, but need not be limited to, the
12 following: (1) The holding of a meeting with the parent of each child
13 who is a truant, or other person having control of such child, and
14 appropriate school personnel to review and evaluate the reasons for the

15 child being a truant, provided such meeting shall be held not later than
16 ten school days after the child's fourth unexcused absence in a month or
17 tenth unexcused absence in a school year, (2) coordinating services with
18 and referrals of children to community agencies providing child and
19 family services, (3) annually at the beginning of the school year and
20 upon any enrollment during the school year, notifying the parent or
21 other person having control of each child enrolled in a grade from
22 kindergarten to eight, inclusive, in the public schools in writing of the
23 obligations of the parent or such other person pursuant to section 10-
24 184, (4) annually at the beginning of the school year and upon any
25 enrollment during the school year, obtaining from the parent or other
26 person having control of each child in a grade from kindergarten to
27 eight, inclusive, a telephone number or other means of contacting such
28 parent or such other person during the school day, (5) (A) on or before
29 August 15, 2018, the implementation of a truancy intervention model
30 identified by the Department of Education pursuant to subsection (a) of
31 section 10-198e for any school under its jurisdiction that has a
32 disproportionately high rate of truancy, as determined by the
33 Commissioner of Education, and (B) on or before September 1, 2023, the
34 adoption and implementation of a truancy intervention model
35 developed by the Department of Education pursuant to subsection (b)
36 of section 10-198e that accounts for mental and behavioral health, or a
37 similar truancy intervention plan that meets all of the requirements for
38 a truancy intervention model set forth in subsection (b) of said section,
39 (6) a system of monitoring individual unexcused absences of children in
40 grades kindergarten to eight, inclusive, which shall provide that
41 whenever a child enrolled in school in any such grade fails to report to
42 school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been
43 received by school personnel that the child's parent or other person
44 having control of the child is aware of the pupil's absence, a reasonable
45 effort to notify, by telephone and by mail, the parent or such other
46 person shall be made by school personnel or volunteers under the
47 direction of school personnel, (7) providing notice to the parent or
48 guardian of a child who is a truant of the information concerning the

49 existence and availability of the 2-1-1 Infoline program, and other
50 pediatric mental and behavioral health screening services and tools
51 described in section 17a-22rt, and (8) on and after July 1, 2023, a
52 requirement that an appropriate school mental health specialist, as
53 defined in section 12 of public act 22-47, conduct an evaluation of each
54 child who is a truant to determine if additional behavioral health
55 interventions are necessary for the well-being of the child. Any person
56 who, in good faith, gives or fails to give notice pursuant to subdivision
57 (6) of this subsection shall be immune from any liability, civil or
58 criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have
59 the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding which
60 results from such notice or failure to give such notice.

61 (c) Nothing in subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall preclude a
62 local or regional board of education from adopting policies and
63 procedures pursuant to this section which exceed the requirements of
64 said subsections.

65 (d) The provisions of this section shall not apply to any child
66 receiving equivalent instruction pursuant to section 10-184.

67 (e) A child, age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public
68 or private school and whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty
69 member of the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, and has been
70 called to duty for, is on leave from or has immediately returned from
71 deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be
72 granted ten days of excused absences in any school year and, at the
73 discretion of the local or regional board of education, additional excused
74 absences to visit such child's parent or legal guardian with respect to
75 such leave or deployment of the parent or legal guardian. In the case of
76 excused absences pursuant to this subsection, such child and parent or
77 legal guardian shall be responsible for obtaining assignments from the
78 student's teacher prior to any period of excused absence, and for
79 ensuring that such assignments are completed by such child prior to [his
80 or her] such child's return to school from such period of excused

81 absence.

82 (f) A child, age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public
 83 or private school shall be granted one day as an excused absence in any
 84 school year and, at the discretion of the local or regional board of
 85 education, additional excused absences to observe a religious holiday.
 86 In the case of an excused absence pursuant to this subsection, such child
 87 and parent or legal guardian shall be responsible for obtaining
 88 assignments from the student's teacher prior to such excused absence,
 89 and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by such child
 90 upon such child's return to school from such excused absence.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2025	10-198a

Statement of Purpose:

To exclude excused absences for student observance of religious holidays from truancy determinations.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]