OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 6

AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

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SUMMARY

This bill makes unrelated changes regarding taxes (creating a child tax credit), school meals, withdrawing from public schools (homeschooling), people convicted of certain crimes against children, and the P20 WIN data system, as described in the section-by-section analysis below.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026, except as noted below.

§ 1 — CHILD TAX CREDIT

Establishes a refundable state child tax credit against the personal income tax for resident taxpayers with qualifying incomes; credit equals $600 per child for up to three children but phases out as taxpayer income increases above specified thresholds

Starting with the 2026 tax year, the bill establishes a refundable state child tax credit (CTC) against the personal income tax (but not the withholding tax) for resident taxpayers with qualifying incomes. The CTC is $600 per dependent child for up to three children (age 16 or younger), but the credit phases out at 10% intervals as taxpayer federal adjusted gross income (AGI) increases above specified income levels, which vary by filing status.

The table below shows, for each filing status, the income level at which taxpayers (1) qualify for the maximum CTC and (2) no longer qualify for it. The state earned income tax credit must be disregarded in calculating a taxpayer's tax liability for the CTC.

Table: CTC Qualifying Income Levels by Filing Status

Filing Status	*Maximum CTC (Federal AGI ≤)*	*No Credit (Federal AGI >)*
Single or Married Filing Separately	$100,000	$109,000
Head of Household	160,000	169,000
Joint Filers or Surviving Spouses	200,000	209,000

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026, and applicable to tax years starting on or after January 1, 2026.

§ 2 — FREE SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

For FY 27, requires all non-CEP-participating school districts in a federal school meals program to provide free school breakfasts and lunches to students; creates a new State Department of Education (SDE) grant to provide funding for the meals

For FY 27, the bill requires eligible school districts to provide all students with school breakfasts and lunches at no charge and makes these districts eligible for a grant from SDE for these costs.

Under the bill, "eligible school districts" are local and regional boards of education, state and local charter schools, and interdistrict magnet

school operators that (1) participate in the federal School Breakfast Program or the National Lunch Program and (2) do not participate in the federal Community Eligibility Program (CEP; see *Background – Community Eligibility Program (CEP)*). It is unclear how this provision would apply to a school district where some, but not all, of its schools participate in CEP.

Relatedly, for eligible school districts, the bill waives the existing law's requirement on school districts participating in the federal school lunch and breakfast, or other school feeding, programs for FY 27.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Background — Community Eligibility Program (CEP)

The federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 created CEP, which allows eligible schools to serve free breakfast and lunch to all students without collecting applications from individual households (P.L. 111-296, § 104, codified as 7 C.F.R. § 245.9(f)). Instead, schools that adopt CEP are reimbursed using a formula based on their percentage of enrolled students who are categorically eligible for free meals because they participate in other specific means-tested programs, such as SNAP and TANF. Broadly speaking, schools or districts may use CEP if at least 25% of their enrolled students are categorically eligible.

Within a school district, all schools, a group of schools, or an individual school may participate in CEP if eligible. Eligible schools and school districts must submit required documentation to their state education agency (in Connecticut, this is SDE).

§§ 3 & 4 — RESIDENCE RESTRICTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS ON PEOPLE CONVICTED OF CERTAIN CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN

Generally, prohibits people who are convicted of certain crimes from living with a minor child and requires notification to DCF when people convicted of these crimes are released from incarceration

Primary Residence With a Minor Child Prohibition

The bill prohibits any person convicted, on or after October 1, 2026, of certain crimes against children from sharing a primary residence with a minor child, unless the person is the child's biological or adoptive

parent, if the adoption was finalized before the conviction. The table below lists the 15 crimes for which the prohibition applies and provides a high-level summary for each. A minor child is a person under 18 years old.

(This provision may be unconstitutional as it does not include a due process or appeals procedure, see COMMENT — *No Due Process for Significant Penalty*.)

Table: Crimes Triggering Prohibition Against Living With a Minor Child*

Crime	***CGS §***	***Description***
Cruelty to persons	53-20	When a person intentionally tortures, torments, or unlawfully punishes another person or deprives them of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or physical care
Injury or risk of injury to, or impairing morals of, children; sale of children	53-21	When a person (1) causes or allows a child under age 16 to be placed in a situation where the child's life or limb is endangered or morals are likely to be impaired, (2) has sexual or indecent contact with the child's intimate parts, or (3) sells or buys permanent custody of the child
Leaving child unsupervised in public accommodation or a motor vehicle; failure to report disappearance of a child	53-21a	When a parent, guardian, or person supervising a child under age 12 knowingly (1) leaves the child unsupervised in a public place or vehicle for a period of time that presents a substantial risk to the child's health or safety or (2) fails to report a child's disappearance to law enforcement
Abandonment of child under the age of six years	53-23	When a person having charge of a child under age six leaves the child in any place, with intent to abandon the child
Aggravated sexual assault of a minor	53a-70c	When any person commits certain crimes (for example, sexual assault) against a child under 13 and the crime is compounded by certain factors (for example, the victim was kidnapped, illegally restrained, or stalked or the accused has been convicted of a violent sexual assault before)
Promoting prostitution of a person less than 18 years old in the first degree	53a-86(a)(2)	When a person knowingly advances or profits from the prostitution of a person under age 18
Enticing a minor	53a-90a	When a person uses an interactive computer service (such as the internet) to knowingly persuade, induce, entice, or coerce any someone who is under aged 18, or the

Crime	*CGS §*	*Description*
		person reasonably believes to be under 18, to engage in prostitution or unlawful sexual activity
Obscenity as to minors	53a-196	When a person knowingly promotes to a minor, for money, any material or performance that is obscene for minors
Employing a minor in an obscene performance	53a-196a	When a person employs a minor or allows a minor to be employed to promote any material or performance that is obscene for minors, regardless of whether the minor receives any consideration (is paid)
Promoting a minor in an obscene performance	53a-196b	When a person knowingly promotes any material or performance that employs a minor, whether or not the minor receives consideration, and the material or performance is obscene for minors
Importing child sexual abuse material	53a-196c	When a person knowingly imports or causes to be imported into the state three or more visual depictions of child sexual abuse material (often called child pornography)
Possessing child sexual abuse material in the first degree	53a-196d	When a person knowingly possesses (1) 50 or more images of child sexual abuse material, (2) one or more images of child sexual abuse material depicting the infliction or threatened infliction of serious injury, or (3) a series of images or a video depicting either multiple children engaging in sexually explicit conduct or more than one act of explicit conduct by one or more children
Possessing child sexual abuse material in the second degree	53a-196e	When a person knowingly possesses (1) between 20 and 49 images of child sexual abuse material or (2) a series of images or a video depicting a single act of sexually explicit conduct by one child
Possessing child sexual abuse material in the third degree	53a-196f	When a person knowingly possesses (1) fewer than 20 images of child sexual abuse material or (2) a series of images or a video depicting a single act of sexually explicit conduct by one child
Commercial sexual exploitation of a minor	53a-196i	When a person knowingly buys advertising space for an advertisement for a commercial sex act that includes a depiction of a minor

*Except for biological parents or adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized before the conviction

DCF Notification Upon Release From Prison

The bill also requires that, when someone convicted of a crime in the

table above (except for those under CGS § 53-21a, described above) is released from incarceration, the correction commissioner must notify the Department of Children and Families (DCF) commissioner. She must give this notice within one week after the person is released and it must include the (1) residential address to which the person was released and (2) crime for which the person was incarcerated.

Within one week after receiving this notification, the bill requires the DCF commissioner to check if the address in the notice is the primary residence of a child who is under a protective supervision order or receiving protective services, as described below. If it is, she must immediately (1) notify the child's DCF social worker of the person's release to the address and the crime that led to the incarceration and (2) include a copy of the notice in the child's case file.

(While the bill requires the child's social worker to be notified of the residence of the person released from the correctional facility under the circumstances above, it is silent on what steps, if any, DCF or the social worker must take after receiving the notification.)

By law, a protective supervision order means a court determined a child was neglected, but DCF or another social agency is, at the court's request, helping correct the neglect while the child remains in the home. "Protective services" means public welfare services provided to a family following a complaint of abuse, neglect, or abandonment, but where there is no ruling on the complaint (CGS § 17a-93).

§ 5 — NOTIFICATION TO SDE AND DCF OF CHILD WITHDRAWN FROM PUBLIC SCHOOL

Notification to state agencies when a child is withdrawn from public school; determination if the child is subject to protective supervision or services

The bill requires local and regional boards of education to notify the education commissioner when a parent or other authorized person submits a form to withdraw a child from public school, as existing law allows. The board must notify the commissioner within two business days after receiving the form.

Within two business days after receiving the board's notice, the bill

requires the education commissioner to notify the DCF commissioner of the withdrawal. (This requirement may be a violation of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which generally makes student information confidential and only allows its release to another agency if a parent consents or one of the act's exceptions applies, see COMMENT — *Potential FERPA Violation*.)

State law allows a parent or other authorized person to withdraw their child as long as they can show the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in public schools. In practice this is done either by homeschooling or attending private school. (State law does not require parents to notify the school district of the intent to homeschool, but the agency recommends notification and many families do notify the school district.)

After she receives notice that a child was withdrawn from the public schools, the DCF commissioner must, as soon as she reasonably can, check if the child is under a protective supervision order or receiving protective services. If the child is, she must note the withdrawal in the child's case file for informational purposes. If the child is not, the commissioner must immediately destroy all the information she received on the child and the notice.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

§§ 6-11 — P20 WIN DATA SYSTEM

Changes the name of the P20 WIN data system to "DataLinkCT "and makes the executive board's reports on disconnected youth due every two years, rather than every year

Program Name Change (§§ 6-10)

The bill changes the name of the P20 WIN program (Preschool through Twenty and Workforce Information Network) to "Data Link Connecticut" (or "DataLinkCT") in five statutes without otherwise changing the law. The program is a state data system used to match and integrate data from certain labor- and education-related state agencies, colleges and universities, and other organizations to inform policy and practice for education, workforce, and supportive service efforts.

Disconnected Youth Report (§ 11)

The bill requires the P20 WIN (renamed DataLinkCT under the bill, see above) executive board to report on disconnected youth biennially (every two years) rather than annually, as current law requires. It makes the first biennial report due by July 1, 2027. Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, the reports must go to the Appropriations, Children, Education, Human Services, Judiciary, Labor and Public Employees, and Public Health committees.

For the reports, a "disconnected youth" is someone age 14-26 who is (1) an at-risk student (see below) or (2) not enrolled in high school and (a) does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent; (b) has a diploma or equivalent but is unemployed and not enrolled in an adult education program, college, or a workforce training or certification program, including an apprenticeship, or otherwise pursuing postsecondary education; or (c) is incarcerated.

COMMENT

No Due Process for Significant Penalty

The U.S. Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment provides that no state may "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." The amendment's due process clause guarantees procedural due process, meaning that government actors must follow certain procedures before they may deprive a person of a protected life, liberty, or property interest.

The bill creates a new penalty for people convicted of specified crimes by prohibiting them from residing in a home with a minor child unless they are the child's parent or adoptive parent. However, the bill does not include the elements typically required for due process, for example, a notice provision, a process for government actors to follow, a hearing, the right to counsel, or any ability for the person to appeal this provision.

Potential FERPA Violation

Generally, FERPA requires schools, school districts, and federally funded institutions to keep personally identifying information (PII) in a student's records confidential unless (1) the parents (of students

younger than age 18) or students age 18 or older consent to disclose it or (2) one of the legal exceptions to the confidentiality requirement applies (20 U.S.C. § 1232g). Examples of PII include a student's name, date of birth, and personal identifier (34 C.F.R. § 99.3).

The FERPA exceptions that allow PII to be shared include program evaluation and research, cases of a health or safety emergency, or due to a court order or subpoena. The bill requires SDE to transmit student information to DCF, which does not appear to match any of the existing exceptions (34 C.F.R. 99.30 and 31).

RELATED BILL

P20 WIN Data System

sSB 311, favorably reported by the Education Committee also includes provisions changing the name of the P20 WIN data system to DataLinkCT.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 11 Nay 6 (03/05/2026)