



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

***Raised Bill No. 5329***

LCO No. 2096



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:  
(ED)

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT EDUCATION  
INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) For the fiscal year ending  
2 June 30, 2027, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Department of  
3 Education shall establish a competitive grant program to be known as  
4 the "Connecticut Education Innovation Grant Program" to fund  
5 educational innovations in schools. When awarding grants under said  
6 grant program, the department shall prioritize education innovation  
7 project proposals that are designed to improve one or more of the  
8 following: (1) Early literacy and numeracy outcomes for students from  
9 birth to grade eight, inclusive, (2) access to and the impact of high-  
10 dosage tutoring in reading and mathematics, (3) college, career and  
11 service navigation for students and families, (4) career and early college  
12 pathways for students in middle school and high school, (5) effective  
13 family and community engagement, including, but not limited to,  
14 language access, and (6) any priority areas established by the  
15 Commissioner of Education that align with the goals of improving  
16 educational access and outcomes.

17 (b) Any local or regional board of education, regional educational  
18 service center, governing council of a charter school or other public or  
19 nonprofit education provider approved by the Commissioner of  
20 Education may apply, in the form and manner specified by the  
21 commissioner, for a grant under the Connecticut Education Innovation  
22 Grant Program to plan, implement or scale an education innovation  
23 project. Each grant application shall include, but need not be limited to,  
24 (1) a description of the education challenge to be addressed and the  
25 student population to be served, (2) a plan of action and description of  
26 the proposed activities, (3) the baseline data and proposed outcome  
27 measures, including, but not limited to, targets for student achievement  
28 and other relevant indicators, (4) implementation steps and timelines,  
29 and (5) a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of and sharing lessons  
30 from the project.

31 (c) The Department of Education shall award grants under the  
32 Connecticut Education Innovation Grant Program for the following  
33 durations: (1) A period of not more than one year for planning grants,  
34 and (2) a period of not more than three years for implementation and  
35 scale grants.

36 (d) (1) Any applicant for a grant under the Connecticut Education  
37 Innovation Grant Program may request a waiver from the  
38 Commissioner of Education of one or more statutory or regulatory  
39 requirements that such recipient demonstrates are a significant barrier  
40 to the design or implementation of the education innovation project.

41 (2) The commissioner may grant such waiver request for a specified  
42 period of time, not to exceed the duration of the grant, if the  
43 commissioner finds the (A) waiver is necessary to carry out the project,  
44 (B) project is designed to improve student outcomes, and (C) applicant  
45 established clear and measurable goals for the project. The  
46 commissioner shall not waive any requirement related to student health  
47 and safety, civil rights, special education, student data privacy or  
48 educator certification standards.

49 (3) The commissioner may terminate a waiver prior to the expiration  
50 of the waiver period or grant period if the commissioner determines that  
51 (A) an applicant has failed to make satisfactory progress toward the  
52 goals of the project, or (B) continuation of the project is inconsistent with  
53 state education goals.

54 (e) (1) Each recipient of a grant under the Connecticut Education  
55 Innovation Grant Program shall submit, at such time and in such  
56 manner as specified by the Department of Education, a report to the  
57 department on the implementation and results of the education  
58 innovation project, including, but not limited to, data on student  
59 outcomes disaggregated by grade, school and student subgroup in a  
60 manner that complies with the requirements of the Family Educational  
61 Rights and Privacy Act, 20 USC 1232g, as amended from time to time.  
62 Such report shall be submitted not less than annually, until at least one  
63 year after the termination of the grant period.

64 (2) Not later than January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, the  
65 Department of Education shall submit, in accordance with the  
66 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing  
67 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
68 relating to education a report summarizing the grants awarded,  
69 outcomes achieved and promising practices identified under the  
70 Connecticut Education Innovation Grant Program during the prior  
71 fiscal year.

72 (f) There is established an account to be known as the "Connecticut  
73 education innovation fund", which shall be a separate, nonlapsing  
74 account. The account shall contain any moneys required by law to be  
75 deposited in the account. Moneys in the account shall be expended by  
76 the Department of Education for the purposes of the Connecticut  
77 Education Innovation Grant Program.

78 Sec. 2. Section 10-262j of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes  
79 is amended by adding subsection (l) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

80 (NEW) (l) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, and each fiscal year  
81 thereafter, any district that has received a grant under the Connecticut  
82 Education Innovation Grant Program, established pursuant to section 1  
83 of this act, during such fiscal year shall not be required to include the  
84 amount of such grant in the calculation of such district's budgeted  
85 appropriation for education for the subsequent fiscal year.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	10-262j(1)

**Statement of Purpose:**

To require the establishment of the Connecticut Education Innovation Grant Program to fund educational innovations in schools in the state.

*[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.]*