



General Assembly

**Substitute Bill No. 311**

February Session, 2026



**AN ACT CONCERNING DISCONNECTED YOUTH.**

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (c) of section 4-124w of the 2026 supplement to  
2 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
3 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

4 (c) The Chief Workforce Officer may call upon any office,  
5 department, board, commission, public institution of higher education  
6 or other agency of the state to supply such reports, information, data  
7 and assistance as may be reasonable, necessary and appropriate in order  
8 to carry out the Chief Workforce Officer's or the Office of Workforce  
9 Strategy's duties and requirements. Each officer or employee of such  
10 office, department, board, commission, public institution of higher  
11 education or other agency of the state shall furnish such reports,  
12 information, data and assistance as requested by the Chief Workforce  
13 Officer, to the extent permitted under state and federal law. Any request  
14 for data from a participating agency in [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT,  
15 established pursuant to section 10a-57g, as amended by this act, shall be  
16 submitted through [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT in accordance with the  
17 policies and procedures established by [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT.

18 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 10-15o of the 2026 supplement to the  
19 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu

20 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

21 (b) The Office of the Educational Ombudsperson shall:

22 (1) Receive, review and attempt to resolve any complaints from  
23 students and students' families, including, but not limited to, attempts  
24 to resolve such complaints in collaboration with schools and educators;

25 (2) Compile and analyze data on students and young people, through  
26 available data systems, including, but not limited to, the [Connecticut  
27 Preschool through Twenty and Workforce Information Network] Data  
28 Link Connecticut, established pursuant to section 10a-57g, as amended  
29 by this act;

30 (3) Assist employees of local and regional boards of education  
31 involved in planning and placement team meetings;

32 (4) Provide information to the public, agencies, legislators and others  
33 regarding the issues and concerns of students and make  
34 recommendations for resolving such issues and concerns;

35 (5) Analyze and monitor the development and implementation of  
36 federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies relating to students  
37 and recommend any changes the Educational Ombudsperson deems  
38 necessary;

39 (6) Disseminate information concerning the availability of the Office  
40 of the Educational Ombudsperson to assist students and families of  
41 students, as well as local and regional boards of education with  
42 educational resource concerns;

43 (7) On and after July 1, 2027, prioritize the office's efforts on those  
44 school districts that have been identified in the study conducted  
45 pursuant to section 10-76000 as disproportionately or over-identifying  
46 minority students for special education and related services; and

47 (8) Take any other actions necessary to fulfill the duties of the Office  
48 of the Educational Ombudsperson and the Educational Ombudsperson

49 as set forth in this subsection.

50 Sec. 3. Section 10a-57g of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes  
51 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
52 *1, 2026*):

53 (a) As used in this section:

54 (1) ["Preschool through Twenty and Workforce Information  
55 Network" or "P20 WIN"] "Data Link Connecticut" or "DataLinkCT"  
56 means a state integrated data system utilized for the purpose of  
57 matching and integrating data of state agencies and other organizations  
58 to inform policy and practice for education, workforce and supportive  
59 service efforts.

60 (2) "Participating agency" means the Connecticut State Colleges and  
61 Universities, Department of Education, Labor Department, the Office of  
62 Early Childhood, The University of Connecticut, the Connecticut  
63 Conference of Independent Colleges and any entity that has executed  
64 an enterprise memorandum of understanding for participation in the  
65 [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT and has been approved for participation  
66 pursuant to the terms of the enterprise memorandum of understanding.

67 (3) "Enterprise memorandum of understanding" means a  
68 foundational multiparty agreement that sets forth the details of how  
69 data is shared and the respective legal rights and responsibilities of each  
70 party within the data sharing process.

71 (b) There is established a [Preschool through Twenty and Workforce  
72 Information Network] Data Link Connecticut. The executive board of  
73 the [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT, established pursuant to subsection (d) of  
74 this section, shall establish processes and structures governing the  
75 secure sharing of data across participating agencies.

76 (c) The Office of Policy and Management shall serve as the  
77 administrator for [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT to support the executive board  
78 and data governing board, develop procedures for secure sharing and

79 analysis of data and provide program management to support the  
80 continued operation and maintenance of [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT, in  
81 accordance with the state data plan and data sharing efforts specified in  
82 sections 4-67n and 4-67p.

83 (d) The [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT shall be governed by an executive  
84 board that shall provide oversight of such network. Said executive  
85 board shall include, but need not be limited to, the chief executive officer  
86 of each participating agency, or their respective designees, the Chief  
87 Workforce Officer, or the officer's designee, and the Secretary of the  
88 Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee. The duties  
89 of the executive board shall be to:

90 (1) Advance a vision for the [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT including a  
91 prioritized research agenda with support from the Office of Policy and  
92 Management.

93 (2) Convene as needed to respond to issues from the data governing  
94 board.

95 (3) Identify and work to secure resources necessary to sustain [P20  
96 WIN] DataLinkCT funding.

97 (4) Support system implementation, maintenance and improvement  
98 by advocating for the [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT in regard to policy,  
99 legislation and resources.

100 (5) Advocate and support the state's vision for the [P20 WIN]  
101 DataLinkCT.

102 (6) Establish a data governing board to establish and implement  
103 policies related to cross-agency data management, including, but not  
104 limited to, data confidentiality and security in alignment with the vision  
105 for the [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT and any applicable law. In establishing  
106 such policies, the data governing board shall consult with the Office of  
107 Policy and Management, in accordance with the provisions of sections  
108 4-67n and 4-67p and other applicable statutes and policies.

109 (e) The executive board established pursuant to this section may  
110 appoint advisory committees to make recommendations on data  
111 stewardship, data system expansion and processes, and such other areas  
112 that will advance the work of the [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT.

113 (f) (1) Each regional workforce development board established under  
114 section 31-3k shall regularly submit data to the [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT  
115 to report on the performance and outcomes achieved by the state's  
116 workforce system, including, but not limited to, workforce training and  
117 development programs that receive federal and state funds or grants.  
118 Not later than September 1, 2025, the Chief Workforce Officer shall, in  
119 consultation with the Labor Commissioner, the Chief Data Officer and  
120 the regional workforce development boards, establish standards for the  
121 submission of data by regional workforce development boards  
122 specifying the data to be submitted and the form and manner in which  
123 to submit such data.

124 (2) On or before January 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, the Chief  
125 Workforce Officer may, in consultation with the Chief Data Officer and  
126 the Labor Commissioner, submit to the administrator of the [P20 WIN]  
127 DataLinkCT a request for data and analysis of such data for the  
128 purposes of assessing performance and outcomes of the state's  
129 workforce system. Such data and analysis request shall be completed by  
130 the administrator of the [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT not later than August  
131 15, 2022, and annually thereafter.

132 (g) Not later than October 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, each  
133 constituent unit of the state system of higher education, as defined in  
134 section 10a-1, and such constituent unit's central or system office, if any,  
135 shall submit, in a manner that complies with the requirements of the  
136 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 USC 1232g, as amended  
137 from time to time, data to the [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT to report on the  
138 outcomes of postsecondary education and workforce development  
139 programs operated by such constituent unit. Not later than September  
140 1, 2025, the Chief Data Officer shall specify the form and manner in  
141 which to submit such data. Any report produced from such data shall

142 be in aggregated form and, consistent with any other provision of state  
143 or federal law, shall not include any personally identifiable information  
144 of students or participants in such programs.

145 (h) Not later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the  
146 executive board of DataLinkCT shall renew its data sharing agreement  
147 concerning youth outcomes in the city of Hartford, using the data model  
148 established pursuant to data sharing agreement 0055, with a nonprofit  
149 collaborative in the state that provides data and data support services to  
150 other nonprofit organizations, state agencies, businesses and residents  
151 of the state.

152 Sec. 4. Subdivision (19) of subsection (b) of section 12-15 of the 2026  
153 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is  
154 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

155 (19) To the extent allowable under federal law, return information to  
156 another state agency or to support a data request submitted through  
157 [P20 WIN] DataLinkCT, established in section 10a-57g, as amended by  
158 this act, in accordance with the policies and procedures of [P20 WIN]  
159 DataLinkCT for the purposes of evaluation or research, provided the  
160 recipient of such data enters into a data sharing agreement pursuant to  
161 section 4-67aa if such recipient is not a state agency;

162 Sec. 5. Subsection (e) of section 17b-112l of the 2026 supplement to the  
163 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
164 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

165 (e) Not later than July 1, 2020, pursuant to the advisory authority  
166 established in section 3-125, the Office of the Attorney General, in  
167 consultation with the Two-Generational Advisory Board, the Secretary  
168 of the Office of Policy and Management, the Chief Data Officer  
169 appointed pursuant to section 4-67p and the [Preschool through Twenty  
170 and Workforce Information Network] DataLinkCT, established  
171 pursuant to section 10a-57g, as amended by this act, shall develop a  
172 uniform interagency data sharing protocol to remove legal barriers to  
173 promote cross-agency and cross-sector collaboration under this section

174 to the fullest extent permitted under state and federal laws.

175 Sec. 6. Section 10-233c of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes,  
176 as amended by section 40 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the  
177 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

178 (a) Any local or regional board of education may authorize the  
179 administration of the schools under its direction to suspend from school  
180 privileges a pupil whose conduct on school grounds or at a school  
181 sponsored activity is violative of a publicized policy of such board or is  
182 seriously disruptive of the educational process or endangers persons or  
183 property or whose conduct off school grounds is violative of such policy  
184 and is seriously disruptive of the educational process. In making a  
185 determination as to whether conduct is seriously disruptive of the  
186 educational process, the administration may consider, but such  
187 consideration shall not be limited to: (1) Whether the incident occurred  
188 within close proximity of a school; (2) whether other students from the  
189 school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement; (3)  
190 whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence or the  
191 unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in section 29-38, and whether any  
192 injuries occurred; and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of  
193 alcohol. Any such board may authorize the administration to suspend  
194 transportation services for a pupil whose conduct while awaiting or  
195 receiving transportation to and from school endangers persons or  
196 property or is violative of a publicized policy of such board. Unless an  
197 emergency exists, no pupil shall be suspended without an informal  
198 hearing by the administration, at which such pupil shall be informed of  
199 the reasons for the disciplinary action and given an opportunity to  
200 explain the situation, provided nothing herein shall be construed to  
201 prevent a more formal hearing from being held if the circumstances  
202 surrounding the incident so require, and further provided no pupil shall  
203 be suspended more than ten times or a total of [fifty] forty-five days in  
204 one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless  
205 such pupil is granted a formal hearing pursuant to sections 4-176e to 4-  
206 180a, inclusive, and section 4-181a. If an emergency situation exists, such  
207 hearing shall be held as soon after the suspension as possible. Prior to

208 conducting any hearing under this subsection, an administrator, school  
209 counselor or school social worker at the school in which the pupil is  
210 enrolled shall contact the local homeless education liaison designated  
211 by the local or regional board of education for the school district,  
212 pursuant to Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless  
213 Assistance Act, 42 USC 11431 et seq., as amended from time to time, to  
214 make a determination whether such pupil is a homeless child or youth,  
215 as defined in 42 USC 11343a, as amended from time to time. If it is  
216 determined that such pupil is a homeless child or youth, the  
217 administration shall consider the impact of homelessness on the  
218 behavior of the pupil during the hearing.

219 (b) In determining the length of a suspension period, the  
220 administration may receive and consider evidence of past disciplinary  
221 problems which have led to removal from a classroom, suspension or  
222 expulsion of such pupil.

223 (c) Whenever any administration suspends a pupil, such  
224 administration shall not later than twenty-four hours after the  
225 suspension notify the superintendent or such superintendent's designee  
226 as to the name of the pupil against whom such disciplinary action was  
227 taken and the reason therefor.

228 (d) Any pupil who is suspended shall be given an opportunity to  
229 complete any classwork including, but not limited to, examinations  
230 which such pupil missed during the period of suspension.

231 (e) For any pupil who is suspended for the first time pursuant to this  
232 section and who has never been expelled pursuant to section 10-233d,  
233 the administration may shorten the length of or waive the suspension  
234 period if the pupil successfully completes an administration-specified  
235 program and meets any other conditions required by the  
236 administration. Such administration-specified program shall not  
237 require the pupil or the parent or guardian of the pupil to pay for  
238 participation in the program.

239 (f) Whenever a pupil is suspended pursuant to the provisions of this

240 section, notice of the suspension and the conduct for which the pupil  
241 was suspended shall be included on the pupil's cumulative educational  
242 record. Such notice shall be expunged from the cumulative educational  
243 record by the local or regional board of education if a pupil graduates  
244 from high school, or in the case of a suspension of a pupil for which the  
245 length of the suspension period is shortened or the suspension period is  
246 waived pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, such notice shall be  
247 expunged from the cumulative educational record by the local or  
248 regional board of education (1) if the pupil graduates from high school,  
249 or (2) if the administration so chooses, at the time the pupil completes  
250 the administration-specified program and meets any other conditions  
251 required by the administration pursuant to said subsection (e),  
252 whichever is earlier.

253 (g) [On and after July 1, 2015, all] All suspensions pursuant to this  
254 section shall be in-school suspensions, except a local or regional board  
255 of education may authorize the administration of schools under its  
256 direction to impose an out-of-school suspension on any pupil in (1)  
257 grades three to twelve, inclusive, if, during the hearing held pursuant to  
258 subsection (a) of this section, [(A)] the administration determines that  
259 [the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property  
260 or such a disruption of the educational process that the pupil shall be  
261 excluded from school during the period of suspension, or (B) the  
262 administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is  
263 appropriate for such pupil based on evidence of (i) previous disciplinary  
264 problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such pupil, and  
265 (ii) efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems  
266 through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion,  
267 including positive behavioral support strategies] such pupil engaged in  
268 violent behavior or acts of sexual misconduct or was in possession of a  
269 weapon or controlled substance, as defined in section 21a-240, or (2)  
270 grades [preschool] kindergarten to two, inclusive, if during the hearing  
271 held pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the administration (A)  
272 determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such  
273 pupil based on evidence that such pupil's conduct on school grounds is

274 behavior that causes serious physical harm, (B) requires that such pupil  
275 receives services that are trauma-informed and developmentally  
276 appropriate and align with any behavioral intervention plan,  
277 individualized education program or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the  
278 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, for such pupil  
279 upon such pupil's return to school immediately following the out-of-  
280 school suspension, and (C) considers whether to convene a planning  
281 and placement team meeting for the purposes of conducting an  
282 evaluation to determine whether such pupil may require special  
283 education or related services. An out-of-school suspension imposed  
284 under subdivision (1) of this subsection shall not exceed ten school days,  
285 and an out-of-school suspension imposed under subdivision (2) of this  
286 subsection shall not exceed five school days. An in-school suspension  
287 may be served in the school that the pupil attends, or in any school  
288 building under the jurisdiction of the local or regional board of  
289 education, as determined by such board. Nothing in this section shall  
290 limit a person's duty as a mandated reporter pursuant to section 17-101a  
291 to report suspected child abuse or neglect. As used in this subsection,  
292 "violent behavior" means intentional conduct resulting in physical  
293 injury to another person or the attempted infliction of physical injury to  
294 another person.

295       Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) For the fiscal year ending June  
296 30, 2027, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Department of Education  
297 shall, within available appropriations, establish a Disconnected Youth  
298 Investment Grant program. The department shall award grants, in an  
299 amount prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, to community-  
300 based organizations, workforce development organizations and multi-  
301 organization collaboratives that provide pathways back to education  
302 and employment and have a demonstrated track record in the provision  
303 of programs for workforce development, mentorship, case  
304 management, family advocacy, youth leadership, industry-recognized  
305 credential training, development of positive cognitive behavioral skills  
306 through trauma responsive strategies and youth recreational and  
307 volunteer activities. A grant under said program may be used to support

308 such programs and provide wraparound services, such as  
309 transportation, mental health support or housing subsidy or to resolve  
310 any other barriers to youth participation in such programs.

311 (b) Any community-based organization, workforce development  
312 organization or multi-organization collaborative described in  
313 subsection (a) of this section (1) may apply for such grant in the form  
314 and manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, and (2) shall  
315 report at least annually, in the form and manner prescribed by the  
316 commissioner, to the Department of Education on the use of such grant  
317 funds.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	4-124w(c)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	10-15o(b)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	10a-57g
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	12-15(b)(19)
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	17b-112l(e)
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	10-233c
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	New section

**ED**

*Joint Favorable Subst. C/R*

**APP**