



Representative James Albis and Speaker of the House Chris Donovan at a press conference in Hartford.

2012 Education News

Earlier this year, Governor Dan Malloy stated that this session would focus on major education reform to reduce Connecticut's achievement gap. After months of public discourse, the final version of legislation brought together the input of many different stakeholders. The bill looks at many different aspects of our schools and how we can improve the quality of the classroom experience - by having better prepared students, instructors, and administrators. Here are some of the major points of this legislation.

Best,

HOUSE DEMOCRATS of CONNECTICUT

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The Education Reform Bill (SB 458) makes numerous changes to education laws in the state. Here are some of the highlights:

EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION

- Adds 1,000 new pre-K School Readiness seats in high need communities.
- Establishes a pilot program to enhance literacy for students in grades K - 3, with the goal of getting all kids reading at grade level by grade 4.

ADDRESSING OUR NEEDIEST SCHOOLS

- The new legislation establishes 30 Alliance Districts, which will likely include East Haven. Alliance Districts allow for increased education funding if the school district agrees to make certain improvements, such as strengthening K-3 reading programs, encouraging parental engagement, and providing teachers with the most current information and techniques available.
- There is also increased funding for Family Resource Centers, such as the one at D.C. Moore School in East Haven, and School Based Health Centers in needy districts.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Public schools will now have to include a total of 20 minutes of physical exercise in each regular school day for students in grades K - 5.

TEACHER EVALUATION

- Schools will be required to perform annual teacher evaluations.
- Teachers who receive low evaluations are to work with evaluators to develop improvement plans.

TEACHER PREPARATION

- Teacher preparation programs must provide classroom experience for four semesters.
- The new law creates a "distinguished educator designation" which requires a teacher with the designation to have additional education and meet certain performance standards. A distinguished educator may also mentor other teachers.
- The bill requires an applicant for a professional certificate to have a relevant master's degree.

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