



2012 Education News

Earlier this year, Governor Dannel P. Malloy stated that this session would focus on major education reform to reduce Connecticut's achievement gap. After months of public input, 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 both better prepared students and instructors. Here are some of the major points of this legislation.

Best,



HOUSE DEMOCRATS of CONNECTICUT

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*Representative Matt Ritter at the Boys & Girls Club
on Sigourney Street in Hartford.*

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State Representative | 1st District - Hartford & Bloomfield

MATT RITTER

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, low performing 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 the Commissioner's Network, which will provide intensive supports and interventions needed to turn around 25 of the most chronically low-performing schools over the next 3 years. New charters schools may be approved in school districts in the Commissioner's Network.
- There will be 10 new Family Resource Centers and at least 20 new or expanded School Based Health Centers to be located in needy districts. It also increases funding for existing Family Resource Centers.

SCHOOL FUNDING

- This bill increases funding for vocational/technical and vocational/agricultural schools, charter and magnet schools, and a new kindergarten through 8th grade science initiative.

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, meet certain performance standards, and may mentor other teachers.
- The bill requires an applicant for a professional certificate to have a relevant master's degree.

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH



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