

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

Public Act: 00-13

Bill Number: 5275

Senate Pages: 765, 829-831

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House Pages: 762-773, 814-818

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Committee: Education: 40, 42, 44-45, 76, 77, 79-89, 121-122, 144, 151, 153, (155-159), 207-208

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Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public Hearing(s) and/or Senate
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CONNECTICUT
GEN. ASSEMBLY
SENATE

PROCEEDINGS
2000

VOL. 43
PART 3
651-1007

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pat

Senate

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

271, HB5275 I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

272, HB5047 I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

273, HB5584 is Go.

274, HB5125 I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

Page 19, 275 is PR.

276, PR.

277, HB5809 I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

278 is PR.

279 is PR.

Page 20, 280, HB5060 I move to the Consent

Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

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Senate

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

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Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

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Senate

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Calendar 116, Substitute for HB5015.

Calendar 118, Substitute for HB5572.

Calendar Page 5, Calendar 126, SB378.

Calendar Page 9, Calendar 204, Substitute for
SB369.

Calendar Page 10, Calendar 214, Substitute for
SB3843. SB 384

Calendar Page 15, Calendar 239, Substitute for
SB489.

Calendar 241, Substitute for SB510.

Calendar Page 17, Calendar 254, Substitute for
SB88.

Calendar Page 18, Calendar 259, Substitute for
SB539.

Calendar 271, Substitute for HB5275.

Calendar 272, Substitute for HB5047.

Calendar 273, Substitute for HB5584.

Calendar 274, HB5125.

Calendar Page 19, Calendar 277, HB5809.

Calendar Page 20, Calendar 280, Substitute for
HB5060.

Calendar 281, HB5138.

Calendar 282, HB5140.

Calendar 283, Substitute for HB5702.

Calendar 284, HB5715.

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Calendar Page 26, Calendar 80, SB89.

Calendar Page 28, Calendar 128, SB444.

Calendar Page 29, Calendar 153, SB55, correction,
Page 29, Calendar 153, SB553.

And Calendar Page 30, Calendar 244, SR12.

Madam President, I believe that completes the first
Consent Calendar.

Correction. Also on Calendar Page 28, Calendar SB445
136, Madam President. I believe that completes the
first Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Sir. Would you once again announce a
roll call vote on the Consent Calendar. The machine
will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll call. Will all
Senators please return to the Chamber.

An immediate roll call has been ordered in the
Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators
please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Have all members voted? If all members have voted,
the machine will be locked. The Clerk please announce
the tally.

THE CLERK:

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Senate

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar No. 1.

Total number voting, 36. Those voting "yea", 36;
those voting "nay", 0. Those absent and not voting, 0.

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar is adopted.

Senator Jepsen.

SEN. JEPSEN:

Thank you, Madam President. The Clerk is in
possession of a second Senate Agenda.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of
Senate Agenda No. 2 for Wednesday, April 5, 2000, copies
of which have been distributed.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Jepsen.

SEN. JEPSEN:

Thank you, Madam President. I move all items on
Senate Agenda No. 2 dated Wednesday, April 5, 2000 be
acted upon as indicated and that the Agenda be
incorporated by reference into the Senate Journal and
the Senate Transcript.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATE AGENDA #2

H-821

CONNECTICUT
GEN. ASSEMBLY
HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS
2000

VOL. 43
PART 3
638-931

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School here today. Specifically they're the 7th grade gold team. They're being escorted by their teachers and third select person Janet Mccarthy of the town of North Haven. So I'd appreciate it, since Representative Nancy Beals and I don't often get constituents of ours from North Haven to come up to visit, to please give them our usual round of applause and thank them for coming to see us do the people's work. Thank you.

APPLAUSE.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Are there any further announcements or points of personal privilege? Are there any, if not, will the Clerk please return to the call of the Calendar. And if you would please call Calendar 110.

CLERK:

On page 7, Calendar 110, substitute for HB5275, AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER COMPETENCY. Favorable report of the Committee on Education.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Representative Staples you have the floor sir.

REP. STAPLES: (96th)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER LYONS:

The question before the Chamber is on acceptance and passage, will you remark?

REP. STAPLES: (96th)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, this bill before us today takes a great step forward in clarifying the grounds for determining incompetence in a dismissal proceeding against a teacher. Present law provides no definition of incompetence and for the protection of both sides in the disputes that may go forward this statute before us would reference an existing set of performance guidelines that the State Department of Education issues, which in most districts do serve as a basis for determining incompetence, but in some cases is a matter of dispute.

This legislation is attempting to provide a very predictable standard by which all sides can judge what competence is. And it has been embraced by all sides in our process leading us to this place today. Both the teachers and the administration in the form of the boards of education see this as a very beneficial step forward in clarifying what the expectations are of the district, what the needs are of the district in terms of competencies and by what standards teachers will be held accountable if their performance is judged not to be up to par. And so for many reasons Madam Speaker, this is

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really step forward for all sides and ought to provide some predictability and some guidance to the process to insure that teachers are measured based on the levels of competencies that are articulated by the State Department of Education.

It's a good bill and I urge my colleagues to support it.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Thank you sir. Will you remark further on the bill that is before us? Representative Mattiello.

REP. MATTIELLO: (65th)

Thank you Madam Speaker. I appreciate that. I rise in support of the bill. Madam Speaker I was part of a spirit of cooperation on this bill, as Representative Staples point out many people came together and with an intent of improving our teacher dismissal law in particular the provision that is most contentious, most expensive, most litigious, and most complex and that's the determination of incompetence.

Though a simple language change that is before us, there are three important goals associated with this measure. First is to strengthen the connection between teacher evaluation in determination of competence under our tenure law. The second is to offer a standard definition, a basis of relevancy for which a

determination of incompetence can be made. And while this will always remain a subjective construct Madam Speaker, I believe that more consistent judgements will be made as a result of this measure.

The third goal, is to simulate the evaluation process and bring greater emphasis on this important tool, aimed at improving public education. Just a couple of other comments I want to make, why this connection? First of all teacher evaluations are key in determining whether a person is a competent teacher.

While it is standard practice to use evaluations, because there is not direct link in statute with that explicit language, what has happened is that the first thing that takes place in a hearing is to establish an operational definition of the term incompetence.

And there have been some notable cases where evaluations which had not been useful in determining this. The change I think is both fair to both teachers and boards in making clear what the understanding of the term is and what the expectations are of teachers and boards. Because you're tying it to the evaluation process you'll have evidence in writing, you will also have progressive discipline will have taken place. And I also think that the change is fair when I look at these competencies, which all constituencies of public

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education have had input in. It is a framework for all teachers based upon which competencies are being determined each and every time evaluations take place.

Madam Speaker, some have raised concerns about extraordinary acts, single incidents, poor judgement, or inappropriate behavior, whether this somehow limits that. Let me say that under due and sufficient cause, which is another provision, does have some control in case law and that in that position these single incidents of poor judgement or inappropriate behavior can be handled.

In closing, Madam Speaker, there's no single factor which having greater impact on student learning than the quality of teaching. We take this action today with that in mind. We take our evaluation process more seriously and we bring greater certainty to dismissals.

In particular dismissals in which the grounds of incompetence are being cited. With that Madam Speaker, I do have an amendment. There were some concerns raised in screening about the effective date, when the language would become effective. And we do have agreement on both sides, an amendment that I'd like to bring before us will clarify. It's LCO 2926 will the Clerk please call and I be allowed to summarize?

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Will the Clerk please call LCO 2926, which will be designated House "A."

CLERK:

LCO 2926, House "A" offered by Representative
Mattiello.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Representative Mattiello.

REP. MATTIELLO: (65th)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Again, this is, I need to thank people on screening on both sides, this is just clarifying the effective date of the language. For dismissal cases initiated on or after July 1, the new language applies.

Initiated means the notice that is given from superintendents to teachers that he or she is moving to dismiss the teacher. I urge its adoption. Thank you Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Thank you sir. The question before the Chamber is on adoption of the amendment, will you remark? Will you remark? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Those opposed nay. The ayes have it the amendment is adopted. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Cafero.

REP. CAFERO: (142nd)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, a question through you to Representative Staples.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Please frame your question sir.

REP. CAFERO: (142nd)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Representative Staples for the purposes of legislative intent, the language being added indicates that "provided a determination of incompetence is based on evaluation of the teacher, using teacher evaluation guidelines, etcetera." One of the concerns that we had in the Committee was that that would not be interpreted as only say merely one evaluation.

That the guidelines that it refers to is an entire process that consists of more than one evaluation and for purposes of legislative intent, I would like you to confirm that if you would.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Representative Staples.

REP. STAPLES: (96th)

Through you Madam Speaker, yes, as you stated this

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applies to much more than a single evaluation. it applies to a whole process as laid out in the performance guidelines.

REP. CAFERO: (142nd)

Thank you.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Thank you sir. Will you remark? Will you remark further on the bill that is before us? Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Also rising to support the bill as amended. Many of us many have disagreements about whether there is a need or a role for tenure given the professionalism in the education systems today, given the salary of teachers and the like. I would like to see some further reforms.

What I would like to congratulate the chairman and ranking member of Education for having come together on something that I think everyone in the Chamber can agree we need to have a way to address that very small percentage of teachers who have difficulty or problems with confidence in the classroom.

I believe that this bill will do that. We have already put in place methods for evaluation, so administrators working with teachers know how to judge

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whether a teacher is performing well or not, know how to follow through on that, know how to build a record, know how to provide a system and help to the teach.

But once that's failed, we will now have in statute a specific standard that the arbitration panels can use and the mediation panels can use in judging in whether a termination is or is not appropriate. I think it is also important for legislative intent, because a cursory reading of this bill might lead one to believe that in fact we've made it more difficult to process an incompetency claim because this seems to be narrowing the definition of incompetency.

However, I believe that if we look at it more carefully, rather than narrowing, it simply is becoming more precise. So everybody knows the standards by which they are to be judged and that there should be no reason now for administrators not to follow through on evaluations and there should be no reason for teachers not to want to work together to respond to initial evaluations to correct the problems that are there, because everybody knows the evaluations will now have real meaning and real teeth.

And hopefully you never see this used, but we all know the reality of the world is on occasion it will need to be. So those boards of education that believe

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that there is a problem in a classroom that they haven't resolved through all the remedial process can actually go forward with a termination.

I think it's also important as Representative Mattiello indicates, this doesn't take away from a perhaps a very single bad act that other due and sufficient cause for removing a teacher, which again no one hope will occur, but all recognize could on rare occasion. That there is nothing in the intent of this bill to change that, that there is still that catch all phrase for due and sufficient cause.

Recognizing that, that may be very difficult to establish. But it's the kind of thing that when the arbitration or when the board in deciding whether it exists will know it when you see it. But now what we're saying when it's competency it's not that vague standard of maybe you know it when you see it, but it's a precise standard.

And in fact is important because both teachers and administrators have agreed to the evaluation process in the first place. So Madam Speaker, this doesn't do all of what some of us might want to do with regard to tenure in public education today, but I think it is meaningful legislation and will help insure that our children will only have competent professionals before

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them in the classroom. Thank you Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Thank you sir. Will you remark? Will you remark further on the bill that is before us? Will you remark?

The House of Representatives if voting by roll call, members to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll call, members to the Chamber please.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call members to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll call, members to the Chamber please.

SPEAKER LYONS:

The House will stand at ease for a moment. Have all members voted? Have all the members voted. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. Representative Jarmoc.

REP. JARMOC: (59th)

Yes Madam Speaker, in the affirmative please.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Representative Jarmoc in the affirmative. Just for the information of my colleagues. You know we're having a problem with the machine. The machine is properly recording that vote, it is not showing up there, but it is showing up on the official tallies at the Clerk's desk. So I will ask the Clerk to announce the tally,

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they do have it properly recorded.

CLERK:

HB5275 as amended by House "A."

Total Number Voting	144
Necessary for Passage	73
Those voting Yea	144
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	7

SPEAKER LYONS:

The bill as amended passes. Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, it is my understanding we will be recessing in a moment for an opportunity to caucus. So for the Republican side of the aisle immediately upon recess in Room 209 there will be a House Republican caucus. I would ask everyone to go there right at the beginning of the caucus, 209 in a couple of minutes immediately upon recess. Thank you Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER LYONS:

Thank you sir. Representative Pudlin.

REP. PUDLIN: (24th)

Madam Speaker, it is also the intention of the Democrats to meet in a caucus now at 12:30 in room 207a, there is a brief Democratic party caucus in room 207a.

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machine will be locked and the Clerk will now please take a tally. The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

HB5172 as amended by House "A."

Total Number Voting	146
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	111
Those voting Nay	35
Those absent and not voting	5

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The bill as amended is passed. Representative Godfrey. Will the House please come to order. Representative Godfrey, you have the floor sir. Will the Clerk please call the Consent Calendar.

CLERK:

On page 1 the Consent Calendar, HB5725, AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT POLICE CORPS PROGRAM. Favorable report of the Committee on Public Safety.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Godfrey.

REP. GODFREY: (110th)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, today's Consent Calendar consists a number of items, I'm going to read through them for the record. Calendar 116, HB5725, AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT

POLICE CORPS PROGRAM. Calendar 118, substitute for HB5584, AN ACT CONCERNING THE TAKING OF MENHADEN FISH.

Calendar 124, substitute for HB5141, AN AC CONCERNING THE ISSUANCE OF A SEARCH WARRANT. Calendar 125, SB10, AN ACT CONCERNING CREDIT UNION HOLIDAYS AND EMERGENCY CLOSINGS. Calendar 127, SB67, AN ACT CONCERNING PERMANENT PARTIAL DISABILITY BENEFITS. Calendar 128, SB345, AN ACT REQUIRING A BIENNIAL REVIEW OF ADOPTION SUBSIDIES. Calendar 132, HB5138, AN ACT CONCERNING THE CRIMINAL LIABILITY OF AN INDIVIDUAL FOR CONDUCT PERFORMED IN THE NAME OF OR IN BEHALF OF A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY.

Calendar 158, substitute for HB5047, AN ACT CONCERNING REVIEW OF PUBLIC UTILITIES. Calendar 182, substitute for HB5856, AN ACT CONCERNING THE METHOD OF PAYMENT FOR AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE CLAIMS. And Calendar 203, substitute for HB5760, NA ACT AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF SPECIAL PROPERTY TAXES IN THREE INSTALLMENTS IN THE TOWN OF SEYMOUR.

Madam Speaker, I move adoption of the bills and passage of the bills on the consent calendar. I yield the floor, I believe there are some people who want to remove some bills Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Tulisano you have the floor.

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REP. TULISANO:

Madam Speaker I would ask that two matters be removed from the consent list, Calendar 124, substitute for HB5141, file number 73. And Calendar 127, SB67, file number 40.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The request is to remove two items from the consent calendar, Calendar 124, HB5141 and Calendar 127, SB67. Representative Tulisano, so ordered. Representative Godfrey.

REP. GODFREY: (110th)

Yes Madam Speaker, I may have inadvertently left one of the bills off in my remarks that would be Calendar 168, HB5809, AN ACT MAKING MINOR CHANGES TO THE REAL ESTATE STATUTE, it is correctly on the board. But with those changes Madam Speaker, I would rule the adoption and passage of the bills on today's consent calendar.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you Representative Godfrey. If all the members would kindly take their seats and staff and guests -- Representative Prelli of the 63rd you have the floor sir.

REP. PRELLI: (63rd)

Madam Speaker I understand that 168 is on the

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consent calendar and is on our calendar and I have a parliamentary inquiry here Madam Speaker, but it does not show up on our go list. Do we have to waive our rules to vote on that seeing that it's not on our go list, as a parliamentary inquiry?

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Prelli, thank you for your inquiry sir. The item was indicated on the consent calendar, the go list is a frame of reference, so long as it is on the consent calendar it is before us and we can act on it properly. I thank you for your inquiry sir.

REP. PRELLI: (63rd)

Thank you Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Godfrey.

REP. GODFREY: (110th)

And just to back that up, there was a typographical error in the creation of the go list which is why it inadvertently didn't appear, it just didn't carry over when we tried to do it, and we apologize to the Chamber for that.

We will make sure that it doesn't happen again
Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you for your footnote Representative Godfrey.

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Will all of the members kindly take their seats so we can go about the business of voting the consent calendar. Staff and guests kindly come to the well, the machine will now be open.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives if voting by roll call, members to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll call, members to the Chamber please.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Have all the members voted? Is your vote properly recorded? If so the machine will now be locked. Will the Clerk please take a tally. The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

On the Consent Calendar.

Total Number Voting	145
Necessary for Passage	73
Those voting Yea	145
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	6

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The consent calendar is passed. Representative Godfrey.

REP. GODFREY: (110th)

Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I move for

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they've been kind of in and out, and in and out of our kind of general ed statute bill, and they're kind of basic housekeeping issues, and I would like to get them this year. Thank you.

REP. CLEMONS: Thank you. Representative Merrill?

REP. MERRILL: Thank you. As someone else who has also served on this board, I also would urge my colleagues to support these changes. They are fairly routine, but I think the one in particular that gets my attention is the one that says you should be able to designate someone to sit in your place.

There are important reasons that there should be some legislative representation on this board, because they do make available student loans to students in our state, and it's been a nice way for the legislature to sort of be involved with that, and it's very difficult, as we all know, to get to all the meetings. So I think it really would be very helpful if we would put that in place.

REP. CLEMONS: Okay, thank you very much.

RICHARD CROCE: Thank you.

REP. CLEMONS: Daria Plummer.

DARIA PLUMMER: Good afternoon, Representative Clemons, Representative Matiello, and members of the Education Committee. It's good to be back. And good afternoon. You have my comments before you. I'm going to summarize them. I'm not going to read them to you. I am here to comment on four bills.

SB156, 284, and HB5275, and HB5321. From the onset, I'd like to begin and discuss SB156 with you. And it is about the sixth grade mastery test. At the beginning, I simply wish to say that CEA feels that more testing in three additional areas, as noble as it sounds, is unnecessary and inappropriate.

First, I'd like to make reference to you, if I may, to the Common Core of Learning, which was adopted

the state, but an outstanding fourth grade teacher.

And I am here to tell you that we teach too much in our schools. You have heard the Commissioner say that. Not quite as pointedly as I, but we need to weed out some of the things that we teach, and I would give you a list of 55 things that any teacher teaches at any one time. To add another layer of testing on an unequal and equitable playing field is not academically, it is not academically or developmentally sound.

School has to be about a lifelong love of learning.

About a yearning for learning. Not about testing.

One more quantifiable chunk. Connecticut has got itself into a mania. We are doing very well at high standards. Great learning. But we have to stop this. This is not an appropriate bill. We do not need another layer of testing, and as I close, I want Representative Matiello to know that I am here in support of HB5275, teacher competency. We do support it.

SB 156

I would like to go a step further, if I may, and say that we do need to have grievability of individual evaluations. We are the only class -- the only class of public employee not to have this right. And the two other bills you also see that I have made reference to, we are in support, and we ask your consideration for all of these. And I'm happy to answer any questions.

SB 284
HB 5321

SEN. FREEDMAN: Good afternoon, Daria.

DARIA PLUMMER: Good afternoon, Senator.

SEN. FREEDMAN: You mentioned 55 things that you could give us a list of what's going on in classrooms. Has there ever been a meeting of the minds of the educators, as to what really is critical and should be going on in the classrooms, in terms of the type of curricula, and what should be discarded? Is this -- that's question number one, and then number two, I guess, would be is this an ongoing process or has it gotten stymied because of the way we do test?

SB 156

off using this public hearing for that conversation, but I guess I'm going to begin with a thank you on the teacher conference you built for two reasons.

One, obviously, because -- for your support. Thank you. Secondly, because since we've been dealing with this for -- in our second year, that your counsel has been valuable to me. The bill does have -- does try to accommodate some of the interest you've expressed over the last year, and the testimony last year.

I have before us today, conceptually agreed to this bill, testimony from CABE, the State Department of Education, from you, from CAS, and from two of Connecticut's premier education lawyers, Tom Sullivan and Tim Mooney. In just reviewing all of their testimony real quick, going forward, certainly all in support.

FB 5A75

There was two concerns raised. One was very technical, by the Department. It's very, as I read it, very consistent with the document. I want you guys to take a look at it. Which says that this is -- the evaluation is supposed to be based upon that there are -- that you can collectively bargain for standards and the evaluation procedure, above and beyond what's recommended, and I think we need to make sure we're capturing that.

The second thing was that from time to time, incompetence has been used as a grounds for dismissal, based on one act of a severe act. There were some examples that were given in Tom Mooney's testimony that I want you to take a look at, and see if this makes sense to you. It does make one recommendation, but one serious incident.

And he gave an example of a teacher who allowed unlicensed students to drive her car. And that part of the case involved using the grounds of incompetency. And so I just want -- I don't know if you have any comments on that, but really, what I'd like to do is make sure you get this, and I would like a response from you, just so I accommodate all of the --

DARIA PLUMMER: Understood.

REP. MATIELLO: -- testimony that's before me, and see if we can't move forward.

DARIA PLUMMER: No, I thank you very much. No, I would not be willing to comment on that without knowing the full details. I appreciate your sharing that with me, and I'd also like to say we thank you for being an open, willing and flexible student.

REP. MATIELLO: Just one final comment. Every member of the Education Committee has the --

DARIA PLUMMER: The common floor? Yes.

REP. MATIELLO: Right, and -- and also, public testimony, so I encourage them to take a look at that. But I will come down right now and make sure you have this, so thank you very much.

DARIA PLUMMER: Thank you very much. I appreciate that, Representative.

SEN. GAFFEY: Representative Fritz, followed by Representative Merrill.

REP. FRITZ: It's nice to see you.

DARIA PLUMMER: Nice to see you, too. Good afternoon.

REP. FRITZ: I have a couple of questions, and one of them deals with I'm concerned with your statement that there are so many courses being taught, or being forced to be taught, or expanding -- I don't want to say the body of knowledge -- I guess it is, but which really could be weeded out.

SB 156

Do you know of anybody or does your organization have the ability to be able to isolate courses that are presently in the school systems which could be identified as mandates and non-mandates throughout the school systems of Connecticut? Do you have that ability to do that, and is that something you would be willing to do?

being referred to as professionals, and the fact that we have -- we should be able to pay for licenses every year.

I think there's definitely paradoxical in the way in which teachers are kind of looked upon. And I guess it's a concern that I have. I mean, you can't have it both ways. If you want to regulate our sick days and say how many days we can be out, or leave it up to bargaining with the local board, then you can't turn around and say you've got to pay a professional fee.

If you're going to say we're professionals, then let us police ourselves, and if there's people abusing the system, as clearly there are in that article that Representative Matiello has mentioned, then really, the question should be asked of the administrators, how do you let this happen in your building?

Have you written up the people that were out abusing the system? Where's the paperwork documenting this, and I know in our system, it's grounds for dismissal if you've missed -- if you're not sick on a sick day, it is grounds for dismissal, and it has happened where staff members have been dismissed for abusing it, so --

SHARON PALMER: I would agree.

REP. BOUGHTON: I just wanted to put my two cents in. Thank you.

REP. CLEMONS: All set? Okay, thank you very much. Tom Galvin? Thank you.

HB 5275 HB 5274 HB 5276 SB 158 SB 156
TOM GALVIN: Good afternoon, Representative Clemons and Matiello, and the rest of the committee. I'm honored to be able to give some opinions today on bills that are before you, on behalf of the Connecticut Association of Schools. I've given you some written testimony, which I hope you'll have a chance to read, and I'd just like to summarize some of our thoughts on several bills.

First of all, on 5317, revisions to the statutes,

we certainly support the prompt delivery of educational records, and see no problem with the establishment of a time-line that would help this occur. We support the option of substituting a crisis response bill for a fire drill, as an appropriate choice for a school desiring this particular experience.

We highly support the bill for teacher competency. Administrators need much more help in the implementation of effective dismissal procedures. The standardization of the basic definition of competence in teacher evaluation will help. The teacher will know what the standards of competence are, and the administrator will be able to set teaching expectations based on these standards. This should reduce the incidence of incompetent teaching, we would hope.

HB 5275

Bill 4274, A CIVICS COURSE FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, we certainly all support a better knowledge of civics by our population, and in particular, our high school students. Whether the best way to accomplish this is by adding another course, which would either be an addition or a replacement to existing social studies courses, is more problematical.

HB 5274

What I think might be more efficient and less disruptive, is a requirement that in addition to the instruction in the Constitution, that there be instruction in civics, including the study of the Constitution and government at all levels. In this way, the school, the social studies departments, could include this instruction within the existing curriculum, and not disrupt how the social studies curriculum, credit-wise, is presently organized.

Further than that, this could be implemented much sooner. In fact, it could be implemented right away, because, to my knowledge, certainly, instruction in the Constitution is in every school, and I think most schools include the instruction of civics within their present curriculum, although the course in civics is pretty rare these days.

We support, certainly, students remaining in school

HB 5276

ROLFE WENNER: Good afternoon, Madam Chairman, Senator Gaffey, Representative Staples. I'm here to -- as a practicing superintendent, to ask and seek your support on HB5275. I think the issue of teacher competency is on the forefront of most people's minds, in terms of how you evaluate and how you assess, and I think the tolls are absolutely crucial.

HB 5276

I know that you did receive from Tom Mooney, kind of an outline of some of the questions and concerns, and I would reiterate I think that those points are well taken, and I won't go through all of them again and try to re-comment on each point. I would just like to reiterate a couple of few salient issues that I think are essential in this document. One is that every tool that an administrator has or a department head --

(Gap in testimony changing from tape 2a to 2b.)

ROLFE WENNER: -- supervise and help improve the instruction, whether it's the common core, the competency, the teacher competency, the standards, the mastery test, whatever you're looking at is all reflection of how that individual school or teacher is performing their responsibilities.

And I think that if we begin to look at segments, and separate out, as Tom Mooney pointed out, that one mediator did not feel that the competency instrument was a valid instrument. I think it's beginning to take away some of the direction that the administrator will have when they look at the comprehensiveness of an individual.

So, we are supportive of the particular recommendations that Tom Mooney has suggested, and if you have questions on that after I'm finished, I would be glad to answer that.

The second point, I think, is probably more important, and that is -- and it may be a technicality, but the issue of teacher competency isn't related just to a final evaluation. If you have an incident that occurs, that is of such a

severe nature in judgment, during a school year, or immoral character, you have to act upon that at that point.

You cannot wait for a final evaluation to make that determination. So, what we are interested in looking at, is that the final evaluation should reflect the improvement of instruction. If there are issues that have to be dealt with in the classroom, student management, that's very important.

But if there's an issue that effects the well being of the student, and the environment of the school, you don't have a choice but to act upon it immediately. And I would ask for your consideration, when you look at this bill, that the particular level of competency be defined. Not just in instructional terms, but be defined in how that feature is acted on behalf of the school and the system. Thank you very much.

REP. CLEMONS: Questions from either side. I think we're going to -- Representative Green.

REP. GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I want to try to understand an evaluation of a teacher, in terms of competency, with the role of the administrator. If, for example, I might find that in a school system or a particular department, two or three teachers might be "declared incompetent", do you see any relationship with the role of that administrator, in terms of whether or not they were incompetent because they were supervising those teachers that may have been?

ROLFE WENNER: I think it works both ways. There's the Peter Principle is alive and well when you talk about educational systems, and there are administrators who are incompetent. And when they get into evaluations, that may be reflective of how they perceive it.

I would say the majority of the administrators, most of them, particularly with the use of the competencies, do a fairly solid job on documenting the indicators of how a teacher is successful or

not successful. And I think that that can be measured to a certain extent, if those instruments are utilized.

But to say that it's foolproof, is probably not necessarily an accurate statement. I do believe, though, for the most part, when you go before litigation, or you go before a court hearing, that if you have used the proper evaluation techniques, and have had the documentation, the administrator has been in the class, and it's designed to improve.

You're not really designed to dismiss a teacher. And that's the difference. If you go through a dismissal process on the basis of instruction, you're dealing with a very different set of components. If you're dealing with improvement, that's what the evaluation documents should be. It should not be punitive.

It should be cooperative, and it should be collegial. And I think that's how most administrators tend to use it. If there is abuse, then obviously that will have to go through the courts and through the process there. But I think for the most part, the evaluation system, especially in the state of Connecticut, are at least on solid ground.

REP. GREEN: Did you say what town you were superintendent of?

ROLFE WENNER: I'm superintendent of Amity school system, which is Orange, Woodbridge and Bethany.

REP. GREEN: Okay. Can you describe to me maybe, then, might you have department heads, vice principals and principals?

ROLFE WENNER: Right. That's correct.

REP. GREEN: As sort of administrators?

ROLFE WENNER: Anyone who has the 092 certificate can sign off on final evaluations.

REP. GREEN: Okay. I guess I'm trying to get at who -- who -- who evaluates the administrators?

ROLFE WENNER: The superintendent.

REP. GREEN: The superintendent.

ROLFE WENNER: Right.

REP. GREEN: Do you do that every year?

ROLFE WENNER: Yes. Written evaluations. They have a chance to respond. If they don't agree, they can put it in writing, but they do get a written evaluation every year.

REP. GREEN: In your evaluation of administrators, by any chance do you seek out their subordinates or the people that work under them, for any opinion of whether or not they have a comment as to the skills of the administrator?

ROLFE WENNER: I think that's a very good point. It's a very delicate situation, however I think any superintendent or any principal, if he or she doesn't know her staff and know their capabilities, it certainly comes to the forefront very quickly. I could tell you right now which department chairmen are the most effective. Which principals do an outstanding job on their evaluations.

And I could tell you which ones I think need a little help. That's knowing your schools, knowing your system, and I've been in large systems, and I've also been in relatively small ones. I think it really depends upon how you know your staff, and how you're perceived as a credible person, as a credible leader.

But I think one of the things that I do insist upon is that every position in our district is evaluated, including coaches, athletic directors, secretaries, custodians, right down the line. Written evaluation on every single person.

REP. GREEN: In your evaluation of your administrators, do you ask the teachers or anyone that works under

them, maybe their perception or their opinion on whether or not that person performs the job to what --

ROLFE WENNER: Not through a formal process of asking or soliciting questions, but I have a pretty good understanding of how teachers perceive the role, because each coordinator is expected to do X amount of evaluations of their staff. If the staff has questions on those evaluations, they can appeal it up to my level.

And so I have a pretty good understanding right now of how people perceive certain individuals. Now, the athletic director, we do seek information from other sources, so there are positions that we do kind of ask coaches and other people for. Teachers that evaluate an administrator, I think it tends to be informal.

Madam Chairman, may I just make one more comment, please? I just wanted to comment on a very different subject, and that's the concept of adding additional courses. I think there has to be a real clear understanding that when you're adding programs, and particularly the way they're being tested, on the CAP tests and now moving into the CMT, you're not just talking about a singular course.

You're talking about an integrated approach. You're talking about interdisciplinary. And I think that that's something that I haven't heard as much as I would like to see occur. It's not just adding a civics course, it's adding an integrated program in social studies that covers civics skills that you want to have covered.

And I think that's an important distinction, because I would agree with some of the comments that were made earlier. I think the elementary curriculum is really overcrowded, how we test for it and how we separate it out. But the secondary level, the emphasis really is on integration and interdisciplinary.

That's how the CAP test is set up. And I think you

can integrate civics skills into social studies programs. I'm not sure I want to call it a separate course and say just call it civics, because I think you tend to lose some of the impact of having it connected to other subjects. Thank you.

REP. CLEMONS: Thank you. Representative Matiello has -
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REP. MATIELLO: Thank you. I thank you for coming to testify. I appreciate it. I was very interested in the colloquy that just took place, because Representative Green, you know, one of my main concerns, and it's almost a limitation of the bill, a visible limitation, that the bill is just about teacher dismissal law, and it's not.

In fact, I think it's more about the evaluation process than it is about the teacher dismissal. It tries to link those two, the statute dealing with evaluation and the ultimate decision that may be made on some teachers, to dismiss them. But all decisions, all evaluations are based on state standards of competencies that are produced, and that is the document that I share with my colleagues here today.

And if we spent that kind of time, that kind of investment in these, there ought not to be -- there's only going to be subjectivity of the term incompetence in our dismissal law, but there ought not to be no basis of relevancy in making decisions at that point. And so it is my hope that this actually stimulates the evaluation process.

ROLFE WENNER: Right.

REP. MATIELLO: Either by making administrators feel that their job is more important. You know, the job of evaluating is more important than it's ever been.

ROLFE WENNER: Right.

REP. MATIELLO: And that they take these guidelines very seriously, not just because they've got to dismiss

every teacher out there. That shouldn't be the motivation. But when it comes to that point, that -- that again, it's all linked together. There's a foundation, a basis upon which we're making these decisions, and -- so it's really a comment, but I thank you for coming here because it really is more about that, but --

ROLFE WENNER: Inherently -- inherently, there are two separate processes. The evaluation system is designed to improve instruction in the majority of your staff, that works effectively. If you're going to use the evaluation system to terminate a teacher, you have to go through a whole different set of variables, process, set of improvement plan, mentor.

And I think having been through teacher dismissal, including tenure teachers, the documentation, and the help, the improvement, the process, is so much more involved. It really takes you almost two full years to terminate a tenure teacher based on incompetency. And that's really what you're referring to. The evaluation is one part of it, but it's certainly not the driving force.

REP. MATIELLO: But just -- there's many grounds on which you would dismiss a teacher.

ROLFE WENNER: Yes. Right.

REP. MATIELLO: I mean, I am just talking about the word incompetence, and it should take more than one evaluation to determine whether someone is incompetent.

ROLFE WENNER: Right. Right.

REP. MATIELLO: And there is progressive discipline that's required. You have to demonstrate that you've tried to intervene. All those things we're not abandoning here. Again, I think just trying to link the two statutes makes sense.

ROLFE WENNER: Right.

REP. MATIELLO: For the cases that Tom Mooney brought

up, you know, we're going to take a look at that. There is -- in those cases, I did ask do they just seek dismissal on the basis of incompetence, and I'm told it's not. That they will site two or three grounds, do insufficient cause.

ROLFE WENNER: Right. Right.

REP. MATIELLO: And so we'll need to work through that particular issue, but I think this is about making the term incompetence better -- clearer defined, not narrowing it so that it's not useful.

ROLFE WENNER: Thank you. I agree.

REP. MATIELLO: Okay. Thank you.

ROLFE WENNER: Thank you.

REP. CLEMONS: Thank you.

ROLFE WENNER: Thank you very much.

REP. CLEMONS: Representative Green.

REP. GREEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I just have to respond to a couple of things. And my colleague, Representative Matiello, had me think about some other things, in terms of -- and I guess I do want to -- I want to focus on the ability to evaluate, whether it's for incompetency or whatever, but I think who evaluates and how they do it is very important. On what the result may be.

Can you give me an idea of what the average number of hours a "administrator" might have in training to -- what is an effective evaluation? How do you do that? What do they go through to learn that?

ROLFE WENNER: That's a good question. I think you're going to find it ranges from the minimal certification requirements, to maybe one or two times a person goes into the classroom once a year, to very intensive observations, to an extensive process.

I think one of the difficulties in the state of

Connecticut is that the evaluation system of teachers, and even administrators, is all over the lot. You're going to find where it's a part of every school, in some cases where it's an expected process, and I've see evaluations written I didn't think that the administrator had been in the classroom.

So, you're going to see a continuum where you're going to see a level of skills. In our particular district, we go through every year, we bring in evaluations. We cross out the name of the individual, and I have each administrator critique on the basis of the competencies, what that evaluation is saying.

Does it offer levels of improvement, does it offer suggestions? We put a lot of faith in the issue of evaluations, because it's an important process. We spend a lot of time with it. And I expect my administrative staff to be in at least -- at least once, twice a semester, in every teacher's classroom.

REP. GREEN: Okay. Help me understand, you have a department head of, say, math. Would you -- and they have an administrative certificate. Would that department head of math, at some time -- or do they have the ability to evaluate a science teacher?

ROLFE WENNER: If they have the cross-certification, they could. I think, also, sometimes we use a mentor system in where a science teacher who may not be certified, but could also be very helpful to that particular teacher. It may be a classroom management issue. But may not be a content question on math or science. We'll bring in a science teacher who can work with that particular person.

So, the evaluation, as long as they have the certificate, then they can go in and almost evaluate any class. If they're going to write on the content, then I think it has to be the person that's subject-matter specific.

REP. GREEN: So, you think that an administrator to have a particular certificate in a particular field is probably best able to evaluate that personnel who is teaching that?

ROLFE WENNER: In the content area.

REP. GREEN: In the content area.

ROLFE WENNER: But we have -- all our administrators supervise staff in the many different disciplines, and they have to make a final evaluation, and they're not necessarily knowledgeable about the content. That's where a department head or a coordinator may come in and help out, but certainly, anyone who has been trained in the evaluation process, should be available to help out in the entire district, as far as evaluation of staff. I have all my central office staff, for example. They're involved in evaluation of staff.

REP. GREEN: Your central office staff is involved in the evaluation of different school personnel staff?

ROLFE WENNER: Yeah. Teachers, and they give me feedback on administrators.

REP. GREEN: Okay. So, you feel it's okay for someone outside that school where a particular teacher is working, that they may be able to come in and also observe, and possibly make some evaluations?

ROLFE WENNER: That's right.

REP. GREEN: Even if that's once or twice a year going to that school?

ROLFE WENNER: Yeah. Right. If they've been trained, and they know the indicators, and they know how to use the competency instrument, the only question might be if they're going to be evaluating an advanced teacher, and they don't necessarily know the high level math, then I bring in a math teacher. But certainly the skills and the supervision, the observation, the use of the instruments, they should be able to do that.

REP. GREEN: And one final question. Who provides your administrators -- well, do you -- do you suggest that there's some continuing education that needs to happen for your administrators to continue to get better at evaluating?

ROLFE WENNER: Yes. Absolutely.

REP. GREEN: And do you provide that for your staff? Your administrators?

ROLFE WENNER: Yes. I --

REP. GREEN: And how many hours a year, whatever is --

ROLFE WENNER: Okay. Absolutely, and we spend at least two full days during the summer reviewing and critiquing the evaluations, and then we have kind of a mid-year evaluation of where people are, particularly if there's someone who's coming up for tenure. So, it's an ongoing process, and we all go through it.

I go through it with them. We sit down, we look at particular evaluations, we look at the competencies, we look at our school goals, we look at where we're trying to achieve. And I think we have -- we do a pretty solid job. I have 14 people who can evaluate almost basically, on cycle, probably 75, 80 people each year, who are in intensive cycle, and that means that they're really under the whole full roof.

But every year, everybody has to set objectives. The objectives are assessed, and they're written up into the final evaluations.

REP. GREEN: Thank you. I just -- I guess I have -- I just want to switch topics for a minute. He didn't comment on it, but I'd just like his opinion on another bill. There's a bill to increase the mandatory school age attendance. Are you familiar with that bill? Are you aware of it?

HB 5276

ROLFE WENNER: Yes, I'm familiar with it.

REP. GREEN: Can you just, maybe, share very briefly

REP. BLACKWELL: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a quick question. If the biobus is going to go to a single school for a week's time, how many students and teachers would be served in that week's time?

JERRY COLLINS: I think the issue would depend on how the curriculum in each school was set up. The bus itself, as I understand it, would be able to hold a group of students of up to about 20 to 25 at a time. The experiments would be arranged so that the students wouldn't necessarily need to be in the bus the entire time.

Depending upon what they were doing, they could go in, begin the experiment, and then materials would either be processed, or they would come back at a later point in time. Or, materials might actually be able to go in to the classroom. So, we think of it more as a resource for a large number of people coming through, rather than a smaller group of people being in it for the entire week.

REP. BLACKWELL: So, maybe 25 students per exercise, but for the entire weeks worth of school --

JERRY COLLINS: There could be several exercises going on. Yes. And again, it would depend upon the level of the student and the particular curriculum package that was being presented at the time.

REP. BLACKWELL: Okay. Thank you. And thank you, Madam Chair.

JERRY COLLINS: Thank you very much.

REP. CLEMONS: Thank you. Patricia McCarthy.

PATRICIA MCCARTHY: Good afternoon, Representative Clemons, Senator Gaffey, members of the committee.

I am Patrice McCarthy, representing the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education. CABE has submitted written testimony to you on all of the bills of concern to us today. I would just briefly, in my oral comments, like to emphasize several of those issues.

CABE does support HB5275, AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER

HB 5224
HR 5276
SB 155
SB 284
HB 5321

COMPETENCY, which incorporates a number of concepts that CBE has supported for many years. It clearly makes a stronger connection between teacher evaluation and the determination of competence. And we think that's a very positive development.

We would suggest, and you've heard earlier testimony on this, that we make sure that we don't prevent a determination of incompetence based on some behaviors that would not necessarily be observable during a classroom observation, but would place students or the school in jeopardy, and therefore should be grounds for termination based on teacher incompetence. And I think you have suggested language that you'll be working on.

We also support HN5224, which would take teacher sick leave out of the statute and put it where all other working conditions are, which is at the collective bargaining table. I would respectfully disagree with the testimony of the CEA, that is unnecessarily brings conflict to the bargaining table.

There are so many other issues already on the table, that I certainly don't think this is the one that creates conflict. We support HB5276, which would raise the mandatory age of school attendance to age 18, or completion of high school, unless the parents consented to the students' withdrawal. However, we do point out that this, alone, won't address the problem that we're all trying to get at.

We need resources to try and entice these students to remain in school, in addition to the legislative clout that this would provide. And some of the examples are alternative programs, school to career programs. Those need to be supported, because right now we have a problem with kids being truant at age 12 and 14, and we're not able to recapture them, even though the law clearly says they should be in school.

We support SB155, which addresses the need for full day kindergarten in priority school districts, and most importantly addresses one of the biggest

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Patrice Mc Carthy

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TESTIMONY
Before The Education Committee
on

SB 155, AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDING FOR FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN IN PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

SB 158, AN ACT CONCERNING THE TASK FORCE TO STUDY HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOLS

SB 284 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PAYMENTS AND THE SURPLUS

SB 5224 AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHERS SICK LEAVE

SB 5275 AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER COMPETENCY

HB5276 AN ACT CONCERNING MANDATORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AGE

The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education appreciates the opportunity to provide input to you on a number of the issues before the Committee today.

HB 5275 Teacher Competency

This bill supports a concept that Connecticut Association of Boards of Education has long advocated, by tying teacher performance based on the State Department of Education guidelines to a determination of incompetence. The connection between teacher evaluation and a determination of competence will be strengthened by this bill. We are concerned, however, that the bill as drafted is too limited. We strongly urge you to add language to the bill to address issues of incompetence which would not be connected to classroom observation such as instances of poor judgement or inappropriate conduct. This additional language is extremely important, because competent performance as a teacher involves other areas not observable in classroom performance, including parent communication, student assessments, peer relationships, etc.

HB 5224 Teacher Sick Leave

CABE strongly supports this bill, which would remove the statutory mandate of 15 days of sick leave a year for teachers, and would provide that the issue would be a subject of bargaining. It is appropriate that this issue, like all other working conditions, be resolved at the bargaining table.

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SB 156 (Raised) An Act Concerning the Sixth Grade State-wide Mastery Examination
SB 5275 (Raised) An Act Concerning Teacher Competency
SB 284 (Raised) An Act Concerning School Construction Payments and the Surplus
HB 5321 (Raised) An Act Concerning School Construction
Testimony of Daria M. Plummer, President
Connecticut Education Association
Education Committee
February 24, 2000

Good afternoon Senator Gaffey and Representative Staples. I am Daria Plummer, an elementary educator from South Windsor and President of the Connecticut Education Association. I am here today to comment on four bills.

The first is **Senate Bill 156 An Act Concerning the Sixth Grade State-wide Mastery Examination**, which would add three components - science, information technology, and citizenship - to the existing sixth grade mastery test. We have serious concerns about this bill and would offer the following perspective:

The *Common Core of Learning*, as adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education in March, 1998, and used by all school districts, clearly outlines skills in the areas of science and information technology that students should acquire in elementary, middle, and high school, and describes characteristics of citizenship that students should demonstrate. In this respect, the *Common Core* can help educators design meaningful curricula and curricular links. But testing our students in these areas is unnecessary and, in some ways, inappropriate, for reasons such as these:

→ Finally, adding three components to the sixth grade mastery test will require that more testable 'curricula' be added in **all** elementary grades, since these are skills and concepts that must be developed over time. The elementary curriculum is already far too overloaded, and impossible for any teacher to effectively teach. With the emphasis on language arts and math, little time is left for other subjects teachers are already expected to teach: science, social studies, art, music, physical education, world languages, health and substance abuse prevention, character education, penmanship, and violence prevention, to name just a few. Time must be spent, and appropriately so, on the already identified state mandates. School first and foremost must be about fostering a lifelong love and yearning for learning. It must never, never be about testing for discrete subject knowledge every one or two years. Everything that schooling stands for is being reduced nationwide – and in Connecticut – to quantitative testable chunks. Let us not further this mania.

The second bill I would like to comment on is HB No. 5275 An Act Concerning Teacher Competency. We support this bill since it directs districts to focus on the teacher performance guidelines developed by the state when making a determination of incompetence. We would take this one step further, however, and include the language we have proposed which would make the grievability of an individual's evaluation a mandatory subject of collective bargaining. We remain the only class of public employees who do not have the right to bargain over this. This is inequitable and an injustice.

Raised Bill No. 284 An Act Concerning School Construction Payments and the Surplus is a prudent use of surplus monies. We would only ask that the legislature demonstrate similar fiscal prudence regarding the unfunded liability of the teachers' retirement fund.

Better Teachers Better Schools

As any business knows, a prepared and professional workforce is essential to the success of an enterprise. Education is no exception. It is difficult to create good schools without good teachers, and at a time when students are expected to meet higher standards, good teaching should not be left to chance. By all accounts, the \$2,000 fee for National Board Certification is a wise investment of teacher-development dollars.

The National Board Certification focus on students connects teacher professional development to where it will make a difference...in the classroom working with children.

"Whenever we have a chance to help teachers improve, to help teachers with their professional development, and to recognize them for a job well done, we are, in turn, positively impacting the learning environment for our children," says Harold Fisher, former president of the National School Boards Association.

Systemic Impact

Teachers are not the only beneficiaries. National Board Certification has a positive systemic effect, encouraging school districts to create professional development programs designed around the National Board's standards and certification process. Similarly, teacher preparation programs are using the National Board's standards as models of accomplished teaching for future teachers. States are aligning their licensure requirements with National Board standards and using the National Board Certification process as a means for teachers to fulfill re-licensure and continuing education requirements.

What You Can Do

Will National Board Certification make a difference in the quality of your schools? You bet! As a policymaker, you can support National Board Certification for the teachers in your state or locale. National Board Certification cuts to the core of education reform by focusing attention where it must be...in the classroom, with teachers and students. There is no finer legacy you can leave than ensuring a first-class education is available for all children. There is no wiser investment you can make than an investment in the future.

Here are some actions you can take through policy, legislation, and budget allocations:

- Fund the \$2,000 certification fee or provide other fee supports to assist candidates.
- Provide financial compensation to those who complete and/or achieve National Board Certification.
- Recognize participation in National Board Certification as fulfillment of re-licensure and continuing education requirements.
- Make National Board Certification the preferred path to lead teacher positions and other roles of significant responsibility that demand greater expertise.
- Provide license portability.
- Provide technical assistance for teachers who stand for certification.
- Fund candidate support networks.

“Improving student learning depends on one thing to start with — a quality teacher.”

— James B. Hunt, Jr.
Governor, State of North Carolina

“National Board Certification is a critical component in improving America’s schools because it works to improve education where learning happens — in the teacher’s classroom.”

— Marc Racicot
Governor, State of Montana

“The core of accountability is in the classroom”

— Gillian Brinkley
Principal, Willard Model School
Norfolk, Virginia

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NATIONAL BOARD
CERTIFICATION

Investing
in the
Future
WHAT POLICYMAKERS CAN DO

National Board
FOR PROFESSIONAL
TEACHING STANDARDS

(485275)

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The future of our communities, our states – indeed, of the nation – turns on education.

We must prepare students for the challenges of a world that is becoming ever more technologically advanced, globally smaller, more economically competitive, and culturally complex.

Policymakers understand what parents have always known: that teaching is the most important element of successful learning. Excellent teaching makes the critical difference not only to the futures of individual children but to America's future as well. Fortunately, state and local policymakers now have a way, through National Board Certification, to develop and reward the accomplished teachers needed to build competitive, world-class schools.

Founded in 1987, the private, nonprofit National Board for Professional Teaching Standards sets high and rigorous standards for accomplished teaching and offers an objective yet demanding assessment to Board-certify experienced teachers who meet those standards. The first cadre of National Board Certified Teachers was announced in 1994.

Momentum is growing. In nearly every state, efforts are under way to encourage National Board Certification.

National Board Certification

Teaching is a complex undertaking. In addition to knowledge of subject matter, accomplished teachers must know how children grow and develop. And they must command a broad range of teaching strategies.

National Board Certification is a process designed to certify teachers so that they, like professionals in other fields, can achieve distinction by meeting rigorous standards of performance. This national system is endorsed by an impressive coalition of opinion leaders – including both Democratic and Republican governors and legislators, state and local school boards, teacher unions, teacher educators, and education organizations. It is shaping reforms that build quality assurance into the teaching profession.

Teachers who choose to seek National Board Certification complete a demanding demonstration of their knowledge and skills. At their schools they develop a portfolio including student work samples, videotapes of lessons, and reflective commentary about their progress and problems in helping students learn. All of this takes place in the classroom, with the focus on good teaching and student learning. Candidates take part in lengthy written assessment exercises, again measuring their performance against the established standards.

National Board Certification concentrates education reform efforts on the heart of the matter – the teacher. "Every effort in education geared toward improved student learning depends on one thing to start with – a quality teacher," explains James B. Hunt, Jr., governor of North Carolina and founding chair of the National Board. "National Board Certified Teachers are true professionals at the top of their fields who can prepare children for the challenges of the future by providing them with a top quality education."

Local and Voluntary

Although National Board Certification is nationwide in scope, it is not a federal program. The independent, nonprofit National Board is governed by a board of local and state educators, community leaders, policymakers, and teachers, a majority of whom teach in neighborhood schools every day. Development work is funded through grants from private foundations, corporations, and the federal government. The first federal grant was awarded in 1991 under George Bush and has been renewed annually.

Unlike mandatory state licensing for teachers, National Board Certification is completely voluntary. It is an option available to experienced teachers and is not a requirement for employment. The National Board strongly opposes any effort to make National Board Certification mandatory.

While voluntary, many states and local school districts are encouraging National Board Certification as an essential investment in teachers' professional development and in our children's futures. "Making sure children receive the best possible education is one of my highest priorities. That's why I, as Governor, was eager to support National Board Certification," affirms U.S. Senator George V. Voinovich. "In Ohio, we are committed to hiring and keeping the nation's best teachers. National Board Certification is the tool that makes it easy."

Call 1-800-22TEACH for the National Board's State and Local Action Report, or visit our web site at <http://www.nbpts.org>.

Support for the National Board

The National Board has received significant support from associations critical to its professional and political success. Its work has been endorsed by:

- American Association of School Administrators
- American Educational Research Association
- American Federation of Teachers
- Association of Colleges and Schools of Education in State Universities and Land Grant Colleges and Affiliated Private Universities
- Association of Teacher Educators
- Council for American Private Education
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- Council of Great City Schools
- International Reading Association
- National Alliance of Black School Educators
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Schools
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Education Association
- National Governors' Association
- National Middle School Association
- National School Boards Association



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FEE SUPPORT

STATES

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Nevada
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

LOCAL DISTRICTS

- Anderson, IN.
- Anderson 1 Dist., SC
- Apache Junction, AZ
- Arlington Hts., IL
- Bangor, ME
- Beaufort County, SC
- Berkeley, CA
- Berkeley County, SC
- Bloomington Co., IL
- Bloomington, MN
- Boston, MA
- Bowie City, MD
- Broward County, FL

- Carbondale, KS
- Cave Creek, AZ
- Charleston County, SC
- Chesterfield County, SC
- Chicago, IL
- Corpus Christi, TX
- Coventry, RI
- Crowley, LA
- Deer Valley, AZ
- Denver, CO
- Dexter, MI
- Dillon 3, SC
- Douglas Co., CO
- Eagle Point, OR
- Exeter-W. Greenwich, RI
- Farmington, MI
- Florence 5, SC
- Fort Mill, SC
- Gallup, NM
- Great Falls, MT
- Greenville County, SC
- Hampton, SC
- Hattiesburg, MS
- Jericho, NY
- Johnson City, TN
- Kashunamuit, AK
- Knoxville, TN
- Lancaster County, SC
- Lexington 1, SC
- Lincoln, NE
- Madawaska, ME
- Madison, AZ
- Marion Dist. 1, SC
- Marion Dist. 3, SC
- Marlboro County, SC
- Meridan, MS
- Milbank, SD
- Markle, IL
- Minnetonka, MN
- Moundsview, MN
- Newport, RI
- Newtown, CT
- Palatine, IL
- Payson, AZ
- Peoria, AZ
- Philadelphia, PA
- Phoenix Union, AZ
- Phoenix Elem., AZ
- Pocatello, ID
- Poway, CA
- Prince George's County, MD
- Richland 2 Dist., SC
- Robbinsdale, MN
- Rochester, NY
- Rock Hill, SC
- Roundup, MT
- San Antonio, TX
- San Diego, CA
- Santa Paula, CA
- Sweetwater County, WY
- Tempe, AZ
- Tolland, CT
- Topsham, ME
- Vancouver, WA
- Ventura, CA
- Washington, AZ
- Walnut, CA
- Waterford, CT
- Wayne County, MI
- Westcliffe, CO
- West Warwick, RI
- Wilcox, AZ
- Wood County, WV
- York 4 Dist., SC
- Ypsilanti, MI

LICENSE PORTABILITY

STATES

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado

- Florida
- Georgia
- Iowa
- Kentucky
- Michigan
- Montana

- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Oklahoma
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina

**Incentives vary by state and locality.
Please refer to the latest State & Local Action Report.*

SALARY SUPPLEMENTS

STATES

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- California
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Massachusetts
- Mississippi
- Montana
- Nevada
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin

LOCAL DISTRICTS

- Allegany County, NY
- Anchorage, AK
- Anderson 1, SC
- Apache Junction, AZ
- Beaufort County, SC
- Billings, MT
- Bloomfield Hills, MI
- Bloomington, IL
- Boston, MA
- Brandywine, DE
- Britten's Neck 3, SC
- Broward Co., FL
- Calvert County, MD
- Cave Creek, AZ
- Chandler, AZ

- Cherokee Dist., SC
- Chesapeake, VA
- Cincinnati, OH
- Clarke County, GA
- Columbia, MO
- Corpus Christi, TX
- Coventry, RI
- Dade County, FL
- Danville, VT
- Detroit, MI
- Dillon, CO
- Dillon 3, SC
- Douglas County, CO
- Dysart, AZ
- Eagle Point, OR
- Exeter/W. Greenwich, RI
- Fairbanks No. Star, AK
- Farmington, MI
- Gallup, NM
- Gilcrest, CO
- Glendale, CA
- Glendale Union HS, AZ
- Grand Junction, CO
- Greenwood, SC
- Gresham, OR
- Hammond, IN
- Hampton, SC
- Indian River Co., FL
- Jericho, NY
- Kings Mountain, NC
- Klawock, AK
- Kyrene, AZ
- Lancaster County, SC
- Laramie County, WY
- Lexington, SC
- Lincoln, NE
- Lincoln County, NC
- Long Beach, CA
- Los Angeles, CA
- Madawaska, ME
- Madison, Ariz.
- Manassas, VA
- Maplewood/N. St. Paul/Oakdale, MN
- Milbank, SD
- Minneapolis, MN
- Montgomery County, MD
- Moore County, NC
- Nash County, NC
- Nettleton, AR
- New Orleans, LA
- New Paltz, NY
- Newton, KS
- New York City, NY
- Orange County, NC
- Page, AZ
- Palm Beach Co., FL
- Paradise Valley, AZ
- Payson, AZ
- Petaluma, CA
- Piedmont, CA
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Plainwell, MI
- Polk County, NC
- Poway, CA
- Powell, WY
- Prince George's Cty, MD
- Richland 2 Dist., SC
- Robbinsdale, MN
- Rock Hill, SC
- Roundup, MT
- San Antonio, TX
- San Diego, CA
- Santa Paula, CA
- Scituate, RI
- Scottsdale, AZ
- St. Mary's County, MD
- St. Paul, MN
- Sweetwater County, WY
- Tomsham, ME
- Ventura, CA
- Virginia Beach, VA
- Wells River, VT
- Westcliffe, CO
- West Warwick, RI
- Winooski, VT
- Wood County, WV

LICENSE RENEWAL/CEU'S

STATES

- Arizona
- Colorado
- Florida
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Iowa

- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana

- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Virginia

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1999/2000 CANDIDATES AS OF DECEMBER 6, 1999

8,572 in Total

STATE	TOTAL
Alabama	164
Alaska	12
Arizona	39
Arkansas	70
California	819
Colorado	42
Connecticut	26
Delaware	49
District of	10
Florida	1433
Georgia	106
Hawaii	4
Idaho	154
Illinois	176
Indiana	45
Iowa	84
Kansas	22
Kentucky	59
Louisiana	52
Maine	20
Maryland	77
Massachusetts	172
Michigan	40
Minnesota	65
Mississippi	549
Missouri	28
Montana	12
Nebraska	18
Nevada	58
New Hampshire	4
New Jersey	39
New Mexico	18
New York	78
North Carolina	1939
North Dakota	5
Ohio	670
Oklahoma	196
Oregon	34
Pennsylvania	25
Rhode Island	33
South Carolina	716
Tennessee	14
Texas	40
Utah	18
Vermont	3
Virginia	156
Washington	81
West Virginia	38
Wisconsin	36
Wyoming	24

UNION AFFILIATION	TOTAL
AET	843
NEA	4386
None	2441
Other	639
Unknown	263

ETHNICITY	TOTAL
African American	983
Asian	106
Caucasian	7051
Hispanic	286
Native American	75
Not Gridded on App	71

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THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

• Serving Education in Connecticut since 1921 •

REACTIONS TO LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

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Assistant Executive Director

Anthony C. Mosa
Assistant Executive Director

Karen Nastri
Assistant Executive Director

Ann H. Malafronte
Director of Unified Sports

J. Robert Ford
Director of Development

AFFILIATED WITH:

- The National Association of Secondary School Principals
- The National Middle School Association
- The New England League of Middle Schools
- The Early Childhood Education Council

The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) respectfully offers its opinions on several bills currently being considered by the 2000 Connecticut Legislature.

HB 5274

HB 5276

SB 158

SB 156

The Connecticut Association of Schools represents close to 1000 elementary and secondary schools in Connecticut, providing a variety of services to member schools, including the provision of professional development activities and the supervision and regulation of inter-school student activities. The Association operates through committees and boards composed of volunteer school administrators. One of these committees, the Legislation Committee, has the responsibility to express legislative concerns and opinions of member school administrators-opinions obtained through an annual survey of the membership and discussions at the committee level.

As a result, the CAS Legislative Committee represents the CAS membership in providing the following opinions. Further information may be obtained through the committee chair, Dr. Larry Nocera, assistant principal of Glastonbury High School or Tom Galvin, CAS assistant executive director.

5317AAC Revisions to the Education Statutes

CAS supports steps to assure the prompt delivery of educational records when a student transfers to a new school. It is very difficult to program well for a new student without the student's records at hand. This should be a priority within a registrar's office.

CAS does not recommend requiring a crisis response drill, but the option of substituting one for a fire drill provides an appropriate choice for a school desiring this experience.

5318AAC Professional Educator Certificate Renewal Fee

CAS prefers not to see the addition of anything that might be perceived as even a minor disincentive to obtain a professional certificate in these times of teacher/administrator shortages. Helping to pay for National Certification, stipends to mentors and funds for minority teacher recruitment are, however, worthy of attention.

5275AAC Teacher Competency

Administrators need more help in the implementation of effective dismissal procedures for incompetent teachers. The standardization of the basic definition of competence in teacher evaluation using the State Department of Education teacher performance guidelines would help. The teacher will know what the state-wide standards of competence are and the administrator will be able to set teaching

expectations based on these standards. Ambiguity in determining just what constitutes competence would be reduced resulting in improved evaluation procedures which should reduce the incidence of incompetent teaching. The goal of an evaluation procedure is to improve teaching and learning. The use of a standard definition of competency in evaluations should result in the improvement of the performance of a marginal teacher. In those few cases where even the use of standards do not improve the performance of a teacher to a level of competence, the standards should be helpful in a dismissal process since a more objective judgment of a teacher's competence may be made.

5274AAC Requiring a Civics Course for High School Graduation

We support the knowledge of civics by our high school students. Whether to accomplish this goal a separate course is needed is more problematical since there could be unnecessary disruptions in how the school's credits, courses and curriculum are organized. Better to require that instruction in civics, including a study of the Constitution and government at all levels, be included in the social studies curriculum of all schools. This could also be implemented sooner than 2004.

5276AAC The Mandatory School Attendance Age

In the world of the new millennium, we all agree that all students should at a minimum either graduate from high school or remain in school until age 18. Accomplishing this, especially with students who are disillusioned with school, is more easily said than done. Sanctions could be applied such as not allowing a student who leaves school to have a driver's license, but this measure would not reach all students, especially many in the inner city. Therefore, while CAS does not object to this legislation or with related sanctions, we feel a more realistic course would be to increase the numbers and kinds of programs which would motivate students to remain in school, either in conjunction with this legislation or as a replacement. Students at this age need programs which have direct meaning to them such as career academies, work-study programs with instruction implemented in alternate ways (e.g. classes in the mall near the work site), and individually tailored programs incorporating internships. Without the provision of new and alternate programs, administrators could be saddled with more discipline and attendance issues which will do little to address the problem of drop-outs and diminish resources for school operation.

158AAC A Task Force to Study Health and Physical Education

If such a bill is passed, CAS would like to offer its services to recommend administrators to serve on this task force. We would be more than willing to participate.

156AAC The Sixth Grade State-Wide Mastery Examination

We raise the question whether everything that is in the curriculum should eventually be part of state-wide testing. We recommend that schools be expected