

<b>Act Number:</b>	09-082	
<b>Bill Number:</b>	6567	
<b>Senate Pages:</b>	2417-2429	<b>13</b>
<b>House Pages:</b>	3022-3024	<b>3</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	Education: 536-537, 540-542, 610, 613-614, 914, 920-921	<b>11</b>
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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2009**

**VOL. 52  
PART 8  
2344 - 2636**

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Thank you, Senator McKinney. Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. And I'd also like to thank Senator McKinney for joining in on the leadership of passing this bill, which I'm confident we're about to do. But with that, Mr. President, I would -- if there's no further comment, ask that the bill be moved to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

If there's no objection, the bill will be added to the Consent Calendar.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 16, Calendar Number 627, AN ACT HB6567  
CONCERNING READMISSION OF STUDENTS, Favorable Report of the Education Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I move adoption of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the House.

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Questions on passage of the bill? Senator  
Gaffey, will you remark?

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Thank you, thank you, Mr. President. I shall,  
thank you very much. And Senator McKinney just  
mentioned Representative Lyddy, who has been a very  
active member on the Education Committee and  
Representative Lyddy actually is the proponent and the  
sponsor of this bill and brought this issue to our  
attention. What this bill will do, Mr. President and  
Members of the Circle, would prohibit a school  
district from not allowing a student who had been  
committed -- committed an expellable offense and wound  
up in a residential placement for at least a year.  
And once the student would like to come back to  
school, after being in that residential placement,  
that the student not be expelled for the same offense.  
It's sort of a -- it's a double jeopardy situation.  
And this bill would prohibit school districts from  
expelling that student for the same offense upon  
wanting to reenter the school district after spending  
the year out in the residential placement. Thank you,  
Mr. President.

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THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Gaffey. Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I rise in support of the bill, but if I could, just for clarification, because I think this is a new issue for, well, at least I'll just speak for myself, a new issue for me. If I could, just for clarification ask a question or two of the proponent.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Through you, Mr. President. Senator Gaffey, is it my understanding that, in this situation, you mentioned a student may commit an expellable offense, but, through you, there would not be any expulsion hearing or process that was initiated by the school district? We're talking about a student who has left the school to go into a different facility as part of a punishment for this expellable offense. Through you, Mr. President; is that correct?

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Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Yes, through you, Mr. President, to Senator McKinney, that is my understanding. That the student has committed an offense that would be, under state statute, considered whether on school grounds or off school grounds, to be seriously disruptive to the educational process, and/or endangered persons or property, and thus, found him or herself in a residential facility for a year. That would be the situation and not necessarily a situation where you would have an expulsion hearing prior to the student being ordered to a residential facility. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, and through you, Mr. President. Senator Gaffey, in general, if the student is expelled from school, could you please help me out with understanding whether it's a year or two later, can that student reapply for admission to the school? What is our current law with the student who's

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expelled from a school, through you, Mr. President?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Mr. President, of course, there's a long hearing process when a student commits an expellable offense. And to be -- I'm going to have to stand at ease for a second, just to glance at my notes as far as what the requirement is as far as a student returning under other situations but I'll yield to Senator McKinney, if he wishes the floor.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. I guess -- maybe if I give you the reason for the question. I'm trying to find out if this -- if a student who is expelled from school has the opportunity, after a certain period of time, to come back to school, then, in other words, this period in a residential facility -- we're treating the period in the residential facility similar to if someone had been expelled, that's my question, through you, Mr. President.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Senator McKinney is absolutely correct. What the law states currently is you cannot expel a student for more than one year. So this bill lines up perfectly with that current statute. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you and my last question, although I'm running the risk of being wrong on one, is, I think, stating the obvious. Obviously, if a person that's been in a residential facility comes back into school and commits a new offense, there's nothing that would prevent the school from then, if the school deems the offense warrants expulsion, moving for expulsion in that case? Through you, Mr. President; is that correct?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

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Through you, Mr. President, in response to Senator McKinney, that's absolutely correct. If it's a new offense, the whole process starts all over again.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Mr. President, thank you very much and I thank Senator Gaffey.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Mr. President. Just a quick question through you to the proponent of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Mr. President. Can you define a residential placement for me real quick? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. A residential placement, for instance, I'll give you an example,

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could be the Connecticut Juvenile Training Center. If a child has gotten into trouble, violated a law, which is, certainly, an expellable offense because it's destructive of the educational process, either on school grounds or off school grounds, and is ordered by the Court to go to CJTS for a year, that would be the type of facility that this bill is aimed at.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Mr. President. So, my understanding then, if a person is referred to a residential placement, they, typically, would have broken the law; is that correct? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey, is that true?

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Through you, Mr. President. Certainly, there are and can be instances of that. The other examples of placements would be DCF placements. So, there may or may not be any violation of law. Through you, Mr. President.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Mr. President. So if this person breaks the law and is placed in a residential placement and then wants to come back to school, and I apologize if you were -- went over this with Senator McKinney, but that means that there is no way for the school to have another, let's say, interview or hearing or a sit-down or some type of opportunity to speak with this person again before they reenter the school. Because according to this law, they cannot disrupt that, they're automatically allowed, is that true? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Through you, Mr. President. Senator Kane, it's up to a year you can expel a child. You can't expel a child longer than a year. So, if they came back sooner than the year's time was up, the school would certainly be entitled to undergo a process of hearings of expulsion. But what this says is, if you've been

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out for a year, you're allowed to come back and you're not going to be subject to the double jeopardy of being expelled for the exact offense that you've been placed in a residential treatment facility for.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Mr. President. I understand that, I do. My question, though, is you know, how would a school board or a school, more specifically, know that this child, this person was -- has changed their ways, so to speak, as opposed to, prior to being, let's say, arrested, to use the example that Senator Gaffey gave, how would the school board know, without talking to that child one more time, before they are allowed back at school? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Through you, Mr. President. There's nothing here that prevents the school district personnel from talking to any child. What this says is that you

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cannot prohibit the student from reentering school.  
There's nothing prohibiting conversation from going on  
between the teachers, administrators and any  
particular student that's in this type of situation.  
Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Mr. President. But if that is true,  
then why have a conversation with the child or  
student, because you can't prohibit them from coming  
back anyway? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gaffey.

SENATOR GAFFEY:

Well, Mr. President, through you, I'm answering  
the Senator's question. He gave me a "what if." And  
I answered the question. The plain reading of the  
bill, again, prohibits a district from disallowing a  
student that has served a 180 day expulsion from  
reentering the school for the same reason that they  
were expelled for in the first place. So, you know,  
I'd be glad to answer any more "what-if" questions,

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but I think I was asked that and I answered it.

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Mr. President. I thank the Senator for his answers. I will be voting in opposition to this bill because I don't believe that we're giving the schools an opportunity to make that decision. And we're taking that decision out of their hands and we are telling them that they cannot prevent this person, this child from coming back into the school district. And so I think this is something of local control, that local school boards should be able to decide on their own. And again, this is another issue where government is trying to control everything and trying to tell us how to run our lives. And I will be voting in opposition to this bill. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Kane. Any other comment on the bill? Mr. Clerk, please announce the roll call vote and the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

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

THE CHAIR:

Have all Senators voted? Have all Senators voted? The machine will be locked and I will ask the Clerk to call the tally.

THE CLERK:

The motion is on passage of House Bill 6567.

Total Number Voting	33
Those voting Yea	31
Those voting Nay	2
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Call the next item. The bill is passed. Mr. Clerk, would you call the next item?

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 17, Calendar Number 634, File Number 164 and 949, House Bill 6544, AN ACT SIMPLIFYING PROCEDURES FOR EARLY CHILD CARE AND EARLY

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calendar, number -- Calendar 585. Would you call that please?

THE CLERK:

On page 2, Calendar 585, substitute for Senate Bill Number 1040, AN ACT CONCERNING CHANGES TO CERTAIN REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION STATUTES, favorable report of the committee on planning and development.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The distinguished deputy Majority Leader Representative Olson.

REP. OLSON (46th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Good afternoon.

REP. OLSON (46th):

Mr. Speaker, I rise to move that Calendar Number 585 be removed from the consent calendar.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

So ordered.

Mr. Clerk, would you please call Calendar 478.

THE CLERK:

On page 18, Calendar 478, substitute for House Bill Number 6567, AN ACT CONCERNING READMISSION OF STUDENTS, favorable report of the committee on

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education.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The gentleman from Newtown, Representative Lyddy.

REP. LYDDY (106th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The question is on acceptance and passage. Will you explain the bill please, sir.

REP. LYDDY (106th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this bill moves to address a double jeopardy situation that some of our students face when they commit an expellable offense and are sent to a DCF facility as a result of that offense. When a student commits an expellable offense and completes an out of district residential placement, often times that placement does not count towards the initial expulsion. And upon readmission to the school, the student is then expelled from the original offense adding to time away from school. I urge my colleagues to adopt this bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the

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bill? Will you remark further on the bill? If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take their seats. The machine will be open.

THE 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.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Have all the members voted? Is your vote properly recorded? If so, the machine will be locked. The Clerk will take the tally. And the Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 6567.

Total Number Voting	147
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	128
Those voting Nay	19
Those absent and not voting	4.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The bill is passed.

Mr. Clerk, will you please call Calendar 570.

THE CLERK:

On page 25, Calendar 570 a substitute for Senate

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**EDUCATION  
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1:30 P.M.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Right. Well thank you for bringing that to our attention. Any questions?  
Representative Bartlett.

REP. BARTLETT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just wanted to let you know that the Public Health Committee did pass a EpiPen bill provision which allows the students to you know have that on their person you know as just listening to your testimony I thought that would be important. I think it'll be coming to this Committee next.

But that's -- that will be an improvement in terms of what's available to our children in the schools so they don't have to go back to the nurse or you know not have it with them in case they have a reaction to something. So just wanted to let you know that. Thank you.

HELEN JAFFE: Thank you.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Thank you. Any further questions? Thank you very much for your testimony. Abby Anderson followed by Peggy Roell. Is Peggy here? You're next Peggy.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: Good evening.

SENATOR GAFFEY: Good evening.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: Abby was pulled away unexpectedly. I work with her at the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance. With your permission I'd like to sit in her place if that's alright.

SENATOR GAFFEY: You can identify yourself for the record.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: I can identify myself and I will. My name is Lara Herscovitch. I'm Senior Policy

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Analyst at the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance. The Alliance has a mission that's twofold; first is to keep children and youth out of the juvenile and criminal justice systems in the first place and second for those who do end up in either system to advocate for those systems to be fair, safe, and effective.

I'm here to talk about three different bills and I'll be quick. I don't have basketball tickets as the earlier gentleman said but I will still hurry through. First is House Bill 6567, an act concerning readmission of students. The Alliance supports the intention of this bill but believes that the language of it must be modified to meet the goal.

The goal is to prevent schools from expelling students who have already spent time out of their district for the same offense. So a young person who goes to CJTS or goes to a residential program, goes back to school 18 months later and finds themselves expelled. The current language leaves all discretion about this decision up to the individual school district and we are recommending proposed substitute language which you have in my written testimony.

If the student who committed the expellable offense seeks to reenter the district after being in an out-of-district placement as a result of the same offense, the district must allow the student to reenroll and cannot move to expel the student for the same offense. As you all know individuals who finish high school are much more likely to become successful adults. And when students like this come back into their school find themselves expelled, not getting credit for the time that they've served in an alternate educational placement. They're much more likely to drop out.

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1:30 P.M.

Someone suggested -- I think it was in an Appropriations public hearing that the bill would apply to the districts who are actually abusing the use of out-of-school suspension. For example -- pick your percentage but a school that has more than X percent of their students out -- in out-of-school suspension is obviously abusing the privilege of using that sort of a tool and maybe that this legislation should be geared towards schools that are abusing that tool.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: I think it would -- it would help ameliorate the misunderstandings about the law to set some sort of benchmark and how we come across and find a perfect benchmark I don't know exactly.

REP. HEINRICH: Right.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: But I think that that does make sense and sort of would set a good tangible goal for districts to try to reach. Of course we'd still want them to be below whatever that benchmark is. But I do think that that would help some of the kind of media frenzy that has been going on about this I think incorrectly being called an unfunded mandate and things like that.

REP. HEINRICH: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. FLEISHCMANN: Thank you. Representative Bartlett.

REP. BARTLETT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm trying to wrap my head around the readmission --

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LARA HERRCOVITCH: Yes.

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REP. BARTLETT: -- bill. And so --

LARA HERSCOVITCH: So are we.

REP. BARTLETT: So are you? Oh good.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: It's an amazing issue. Truly.

REP. BARTLETT: So as it stands now if you get expelled and you're sent to an alternative school what is the policy? You can't - you can't come back to this school after a year or something?

LARA HERSCOVITCH: The policy is that it's up to your school. So if you commit an offense and you get and you get arrested and you get sent to say CJTS or a residential placement for let's say 18 months --

REP. BARTLETT: Okay.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: You go back to school. You show up at school and say okay I'm ready to be back. I've gotten -- I've been in school for 18 months at this residential placement. I'm -- I left as freshman, now I think I'm a mid-semester sophomore. I mean two things are going on. We're not here to talk about the first one today. The first one is they're getting credit in every case for the time -- for the educational things that they've served. But that's another conversation for another day.

The second issue is that in some cases the school has the right -- right now the way the law is written -- the school has the right to then expel the student for the same offense. So you've just served 18 months, you get -- you go to school and the school expels you. Well guess -- you're going to drop out.

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REP. BARTLETT: So who decides how long -- if you're expelled from school, who decides how long you go to this alternative setting? Is that a judge or --

LARA HERSCOVITCH: The court.

REP. BARTLETT: -- is that the school board-- the local school board?

LARA HERSCOVITCH: It's the court. It's the court.

REP. BARTLETT: The court decides?

LARA HERSCOVITCH: The school then holds an expulsion hearing and in that expulsion hearing then they can decide about the expulsion portion of it. So in essence you're doing time twice for one offense

REP. BARTLETT: Okay. So this bill as it's written if you went for 18 months to wherever you would be able to -- you automatically have reentry into the school.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: The school would have to let you back in. Yeah.

REP. BARTLETT: Okay. I like that. Thank you.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Other comments or questions from members of the Committee? If not, thank you very much for your time and your testimony.

LARA HERSCOVITCH: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Peggy Roell to be followed by Chris Wilson.

construction for new interdistrict magnet schools. We asked you before to look at how that's defined because we have some existing interdistrict magnet schools that will be renovated and we'd like you to look carefully at that definition.

For several other bills, House Bill 6567 on the readmission of students -- for students who in lieu of expulsion are for an alternative educational opportunity and then the bill mandates that they return to their original school. We'd ask that you look closely at giving a district an ability to evaluate whether the alternative educational opportunity has been a success or not.

If the student hasn't taken it seriously it may be that being placed back at the original schools is not the right placement and this bill doesn't have any flex in it for those kinds of situations and we think that it should. That would be our suggestion there.

On House Bill 6569 on the reporting of school graduation rates. We'd -- we'd ask that you continue to look at students enrolled and participating in adult education diploma programs. That so long as they are attending school in adult ed that they not be considered drop-outs. Certainly if they drop out of adult ed that's a different situation but given the economic circumstances now and going forward for the next few years there are some students who -- who do go into adult ed. We also ask something that was raised earlier that alternative school opportunities be defined. We already provide a number of them in New Haven.

If you have alternative school opportunities and a student requests on and you know you need

RICHARD THERRIEN: Okay.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: That being said, any comments or questions from -- Jason Bartlett.

REP. BARTLETT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The readmission bill which is something I've -- new to me. I kind of have a problem with your answer I think. Because I just don't see you know if someone is -- is expelled I really don't see the school system just subjectively letting -- if they don't have to -- letting that child back in. I really just don't see it.

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I see most principals seeing that child as a former problem and one that they would rather not reengage in and that's the end of that. I mean how do you see them -- how do you see a system where you know that kid really has a shot of coming back? If he complete the course and he graduated from wherever he was sent to, why shouldn't he have a second chance?

SUSAN WEISSELBERG: The language of the bill says -- it talks about a program, and alternative educational opportunity in lieu of expulsion. And our concern that if a student goes to a program, doesn't take it seriously, doesn't attend, doesn't participate well and doesn't take advantage of it that then that student comes back to the original school without the alternative educational opportunity having been a successful alternative. That's the kind of situation we're talking about.

REP. BARTLETT: It was my understanding from earlier testimony and the Chairs can maybe shed some light here but that the child was expelled and part of the -- part of leaving that school was he was ordered to go to wherever, to some other course. And the bill is meant to address after

he goes -- the court orders him to go for 12 months or 18 months or whatever it is and after he completes that getting back into the mainstream school. That's what my understanding of this was. And you know obviously if he wasn't expelled in the first then you -- you would have to start from scratch at that point which makes no sense.

SUSAN WEISSELBERG: I think our concern is that if that's the intent of the bill, what you've described, that's not what it says. And what it says I think creates the difficult situation for a school district where as I described a student goes to an alternative educational opportunity, doesn't take it seriously and perhaps their home school is not the best place for them to go back to if they haven't treated it seriously. I suspect every situation is different but the one you're describing is not the one as described in the language in the bill and that's what we were testifying to, the language in the bill.

REP. BARTLETT: Okay.

SUSAN WEISSELBERG: Certainly it could --

REP. BARTLETT: We'll look at the language -- I'll look at the language.

SUSAN WEISSELBERG: That -- we'd really appreciate that because I think that this really can tie the hand of a school district. You need to look at whether there needs to be a transition program and you need the ability to evaluate the alternative educational opportunity and that's what we're asking for.

REP. BARTLETT: Okay. Thanks.

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STANDING  
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**EDUCATION  
PART 3  
627 - 925**

**2009**



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TESTIMONY OF  
THE CONNECTICUT JUVENILE JUSTICE ALLIANCE  
FOR THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
REGARDING

H.B. 6567 AN ACT CONCERNING READMISSION OF STUDENTS  
S.B. No. 830 AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS  
REGARDING EDUCATION (Sec. 17) delaying for two years the implementation of in-  
school suspension guidelines  
H.B. 5769 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL DROPOUTS

MARCH 9, 2009

This testimony is submitted by Lara Herscovitch, Senior Policy Associate at the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance (Alliance). The Alliance is a statewide, non-profit organization that works to reduce the number of children and youth entering the juvenile and criminal justice system, and advocates a safe, effective and fair system for those involved.

The Alliance supports the intention of Bill No. 6567 concerning the readmission of students, but believes the language of the bill must be modified to meet this goal. The Alliance believes that legislation is necessary in order to prevent schools from expelling students who have already spent time out of the district for the same offense, i.e. they were in jail (16 & 17) or they were in DCF care (residential or CJTS) and are now coming home and trying to come back to school.

The language of section 2 of this bill, as currently written, would only apply to students who are over 16 and have been expelled before. Students who were eligible for an alternative education program could still be denied readmission. We have attached proposed substitute language here:

(NEW) (2) If the student who committed the expellable offence seeks to re-enter the district after being in an out of district placement as a result of the same offense, the district must allow the student to re-enroll and cannot move to expel the student for that offense.

Students simply cannot learn when they are not in school. We all know that individuals who finish high school are much more likely to become successful adults. When students face multiple barriers to school re-entry after an out of district placement they are likely to become discouraged and drop out of school entirely.

Regarding S.B. 830, the Alliance strongly opposes the Governor's proposal to delay implementation of the in-school suspension changes until 2011. There are many misunderstandings of this legislation, which was intended to prevent the inappropriate out-of-school suspensions.

*Myth:* Schools can never use out-of-school suspensions as part of their disciplinary procedure.

*Fact:* The law states that school's can out-of-school suspend if the pupil poses a danger to

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*New Haven Public Schools*

March 9, 2009

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON  
VARIOUS BILLS**

Dr. Reginald Mayo  
Superintendent  
Administrative Offices  
Gateway Center  
54 Meadow Street 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
New Haven, CT  
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Senator Gaffey, Rep. Fleischmann, Members of the Education Committee, my name is Susan Weisselberg, speaking on behalf of New Haven Superintendent of Schools Dr. Reginald Mayo concerning a number of bills before you today.

In brief, we support House Bill No. 6571, AAC Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Issues in Connecticut.

We have concerns about Senate Bill No. 944, AAC a Plan for Academic and Personal Success for Every Middle and High School Student, House Bill No. 6565, AAC Humane Education, House Bill No. 6567, AAC Readmission of Students, House Bill No. 6569, AAC Reporting of School Graduation Rates, and the Governor's Bill, No. 830, AAC the Governor's Recommendations Regarding Education.

**Of the bills we support:**

- House Bill No. 6571, AAC Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Issues in Connecticut. This makes sense and would be helpful for us as well as other school districts. In fact, we would suggest referring the proposals in House-Bill No. 6565, AAC Humane Education, to the Connecticut Academy for Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology.

**Of the bills where we have concerns:**

- Senate Bill No. 944, AAC a Plan for Academic and Personal Success for Every Middle and High School Student: New Haven Public Schools supports the efforts to modify and reform secondary schools, especially to improve graduation rates and ensure the academic and personal success of every student. Nonetheless, we are concerned that this plan contains several unfunded mandates that would be difficult to implement at the district level that would meet that goal:
  - 1) An education preparing students for the 21st century should include the mandated study of world language, which is not included in the plan;
  - 2) We support the increased requirements for mathematics and science courses, but have concerns about some of the specific courses required:
    - Algebra II for every student, and an end of course exam;
    - We support Biology as a required course, but have concerns.

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about using this as the basis for an end of course exam. Chemistry is an important course for all students to take, and may be more appropriate. There also needs to be flexibility to allow schools that offer a high quality specialized science program, such as our magnet Sound School, and other vo-ag schools.

With additional science and technology courses, the State will need to examine certification to make sure that those teachers are available as this has historically been a shortage area.

With additional science and technology courses, there will need to be additional funding to purchase equipment and labs.

- 3) Of great concern is the plan to keep the CAPT test in the middle of 10th grade in Science, Math, Reading and Writing, and also to test those subjects with end of course exams, some of which would typically be given in the same year (Biology, Geometry, English II). There needs to be specification that the end of course exam and model curriculum match the performance standards of the curriculum for the CAPT test, and, if possible, students should not be required to take two high stakes tests in the same year.
  - 4) To ensure that all students have detailed individualized plans will require an investment in retraining and hiring pupil specialists, such as guidance counselors, especially in the middle school.
- **House Bill No. 6565, AAC Humane Education.** Unlike some other added curriculum proposals, at least this one is linked to the availability of third party funding. We already have a district policy allowing opt out for general courses like Biology, but for Anatomy we state that it is a fundamental part of the course in the description. Therefore, if a high school student signs up for the course it is a problem to then later allow the student to opt out. Most of our aquaculture school courses in that subject area do involve animal experimentation, which are again fundamental to the courses. Given our concerns, we would suggest referring this proposal to the Connecticut Academy for Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology for further examination of these issues.
  - **House Bill No. 6567, AAC Readmission of Students,** has the admirable goal of readmitting a pupil to the pupil's original school after participation in an alternative educational opportunity in lieu of expulsion, and specifies that a district cannot expel the pupil for conduct which resulted in the pupil's participation in the alternative educational opportunity. We have several questions and concerns regarding the implementation of the bill that may require some clarification in its language.
    - 1) The bill should provide an opportunity for a school district to review the success of the alternative educational opportunity. Would the school district have the ability to review and recommend additional options, such as a different alternative educational opportunity, a transitional placement, or even expulsion if the student has not taken the first alternative placement seriously in terms of attendance and participation?
    - 2) Also, there is the implication of another unfunded mandate to provide programs at a school district's expense in addition to homebound instruction that provides for educational opportunities in lieu of expulsion.