



2021 Legislative Update

This update summarizes legislation adopted during the 2021 regular legislative session, which ended on June 9, 2021, as well as the special session that occurred the following week, that impacts CCIC member institutions.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The legislature approved a two-year, \$46.4 billion biennium budget bill, [Special Act 21-15](#), on Wednesday, June 9th. It increases spending by 2.6% in FY 22 and 3.9% in 2023. With some bipartisan support, the budget relies heavily on federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, focusing on providing municipal aid, education funding, increased funding for nonprofit providers, and no additional tax increases.

As to budget matters directly impacting the independent colleges, the budget includes a \$40 million allocation from the state's American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) funding to the [Roberta Willis Scholarship Program \(RWSP\)](#) over the biennium, in addition to the program's annual appropriation of \$33 million. When combined with the Program's annual appropriation, total funding for RWSP will be \$53 million for FY 22 and FY 23, a 30% increase from FY 21. The ARP money is earmarked for need-based grants within the Scholarship Program, which flows directly to higher education institutions to allocate, based on the [percentage of eligible students in the state enrolled at the institution](#).

The budget also increases municipal aid by a \$120 million as a result of the new "[Tiered PILOT](#)" program, which the legislature adopted upon passage of [Public Act 21-3](#) in March.

In addition, the budget allocates \$70 million in FY 22 to support the Governor's Workforce initiatives, such as implementing the [Strategic Plan of the Governor's Workforce Council](#). Additionally, \$20,000,000 in bond funds were allocated for the "Career ConnectCT" workforce training programs.

The [College Corps](#) program, supported by Fairfield University, received full funding. This program, which came out of a working group from the CT Presidents' Council, trained and placed nearly 400 CT college students to work at state-supported summer enrichment programs around the state.

The state budget also provided funding for the [Debt-Free Community College program](#), \$14 million and \$15 million for FY 22 and FY 23 respectively, using a portion of the surplus funds accumulated by the state in FY 21. CSCU will receive proceeds from a new online lottery program -- iLottery -- to fund this program in the future.

A summary of funding levels for relevant programs is below. Additional items included in the budget are highlighted through-out the legislative summary.

Budget Line Item	FY 21	FY 22 Budgeted	FY 23 Budgeted
Reimbursement for Private Tax-Exempt Property (PILOT for Colleges and Hospitals) (OPM)	\$109,889,443	\$108,998,308	\$108,998,308
Tiered PILOT (NEW)		\$66,400,000	\$80,000,000
Roberta Willis Scholarship Program (OHE)	\$40,483,732*	\$53,388,637**	\$53,388,637**
Minority Advancement Program (OHE)	\$1,619,090	\$1,619,251	\$1,625,187
Minority Teacher Incentive Program (OHE)	\$570,134	\$570,134	\$570,134
Governor's Workforce Initiatives		\$70,000,000**	
Debt-Free Community College (CSCU)		\$14,000,000	\$15,000,000
Enhanced Student Retention at Community Colleges (CSCU)**		\$6,500,000	\$6,500,000
College Corps**		\$3,000,000	

*Includes allocation from Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER)

**Includes allocation from American Rescue Plan Act stabilization fund

	FY 21	FY 22/FY 23 (estimate)	% Increase FY 21 to FY 22
Roberta Willis Scholarship Program -- Total	\$40,483,732*	\$53,388,637**	30%
Roberta Willis Scholarship Program -- Need Based Aid	\$30,458,658	\$43,576,977	43%
Roberta Willis Scholarship Program -- Need Based Aid to Students Attending CCIC Members	\$5,089,298	\$7,486,524	47%

KEY LEGISLATION THAT PASSED

Impacting Independent Colleges and Universities

PA 21-2: AN ACT CONCERNING PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2023, is the “implementer” bill passed during the special session which seeks to provide language to implement the state budget and also includes a number of provisions from other bills, and revisions to bills, from the Regular Session. Of note to the independent colleges, this bill:

- PROGRAM APPROVAL:** Removes the cap on the number of programs that are exempt from academic program approval by the Office of Higher Education (OHE) for non-profit institutions of higher education meeting specific standards laid out in statute for FY 22 and FY 23. In FY 24, the cap resumes but the number of programs that an institution may introduce without going through the review process will increase to fifteen programs a year. (**§ 265**)

- **CTPASS:** Requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) commissioner to establish the CTPass program by January 1, 2022, to allow certain employees, clients, students, or customers of an approved class for an eligible organization – including higher education institutions -- to use certain public transit services without cost or at reduced cost. The bill requires DOT to post an application to the program and authorizes DOT to negotiate contracts of varying terms with eligible organizations as long as the contracts do not result in increased administrative costs for DOT. (**§ 259**)
- **AUTOMATIC ADMISSION PROGRAM:** Requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education to establish the Connecticut Automatic Admission Program by April 2022 for full-time first-year Connecticut students into in-person bachelor’s degree programs. Private, non-profit institutions of higher education in Connecticut that meet certain standards may participate in the Automatic Admission Program by entering into an MOU with CSCU and paying a fee of \$25,000 or the cost to participate, whichever is less. (**§ 258**)

PA 21-45: AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION REGARDING PRIVATE OCCUPATIONAL SCHOOLS AND CLOSURE PLANS OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- The bill requires independent colleges and universities to submit a closure plan to OHE by January 1, 2022, describing the institution’s specific plans as to 1) how such institution will respond to a natural disaster, pandemic, data security threat or other catastrophic event that impacts the operations of such institution, and (2) how such institution will manage student records, provide a continuity of education for enrolled students and administer student financial aid and refunds. **An independent institution of higher education that is regionally accredited may comply with the requirements of this subsection by submitting to said office the same closure plan that the institution submitted to the regional accreditation agency. (§ 8)**
- The bill further requires any independent institution of higher education that plans to close permanently submit a written notice to the Office of Higher Education not later than thirty days after the governing board of such institution authorizes such closure. (**§ 8**)

Impacting Higher Education Generally

PA 21-132: AN ACT CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION, combines a number of pieces of legislation that came out of the Higher Education Committee, including:

- **COLLEGE CREDIT FOR MILITARY TRAINING:** Requires each higher education institution’s governing body to review and update its policies on awarding college credit for a student’s military training, coursework, and education. (**§ 1**)
- **PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAM OFFICE TASK FORCE:** Establishes a 16-member task force to study the possible establishment of a Postsecondary Prison Education Program Office. (**§ 2**)
- **CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH** (previously **HB 6461**)
 - Requires certain higher education institutions, by January 1, 2022, to establish a mental health coalition to assess the presence of mental health services and programs; (**§ 3**)
 - Requires the OHE executive director and DMHAS commissioner, in consultation with an epidemiologist or other student mental health specialist, to jointly offer training

- workshops for best practices for the assessment and provision of mental health services and programming at institutions of higher education; (§ 4)
- Requires institutions of higher education that lacks resources on campus for the provision of mental health services to students to maintain a memorandum of understanding with at least one community-based mental health care provider; (§ 5)
- Requires each institution’s governing board to adopt, and update as necessary, a student mental health policy by January 1, 2021. (§ 6)
- **NAME, IMAGE & LIKENESS:** Allows student athletes to earn compensation through an endorsement contract or employment in an activity unrelated to any intercollegiate athletic program, pursuant to each institution of higher education’s policy, which must be adopted by September 1, 2021. (§ 14) (this date was moved out to January 1, 2022 in a subsequent bill)

PA 21-2: AN ACT CONCERNING PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2023, is the “implementer”

bill, passed during the special session, which seeks to provide language to implement the state budget but also includes a number of other bills and revisions to bills from the Regular Session. Of note to higher education institutions generally:

- **NAME, IMAGE & LIKENESS:** The bill makes two changes to the language passed in HB 6402, described above: 1) It includes clear language that no student athlete may receive compensation for NIL as part of recruitment and 2) it gives institutions until January 1, 2022 to adopt a policy authorizing student athletes to earn compensation through NIL. (§ 146)
- **OFFICE OF WORKFORCE STRATEGY:** The bill creates the Office of Workforce Strategy to develop and implement a state workforce strategy, in consultation with the Governor’s Workforce Council (§ 203+). It also allocates \$70 million in ARP funding for Workforce Development (§306).
- **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS:** Requires each Connecticut employer with 100 or more employees to notify their employees who live in the state by December 1, 2021, and annually for the next three years, about (1) whether the employer offers an education assistance program and (2) if one is offered, the benefits included and how an employee may enroll. (§ 260)
- **STUDENT INFORMATION PROTECTIONS:** Exempts specified student information from disclosure under FOIA; prohibits the sharing of higher education student applications and immigration status with federal immigration authorities; and establishes conditions upon which the information **may** be disclosed. (§ 263)
- **CREDENTIAL DATABASE:** Requires OHE’s executive director, by January 1, 2023 and in consultation with the advisory council outlined in the bill, to create a database of the credentials offered in Connecticut. Institutions and training providers are required to submit to OHE the minimum data points to be included in the database beginning July 1, 2024. (§ 264)
- **CHESLA LOANS FOR CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS:** Authorizes CHESLA to expand loan eligibility to enrollment in a high-value certificate program that is noncredit and sub-baccalaureate. (§ 273)

PA 21-81: AN ACT CONCERNING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES, makes various changes related to the handling of sexual misconduct on campus at higher education institutions. Principally, it:

- Prohibits a higher education institution from taking disciplinary action against students or employees for violating the institution’s drug or alcohol policy, if they, in good faith and regardless of whether they were the alleged victim, report or disclose an alleged sexual misconduct incident that occurred during, or was connected to, the policy violation.
- Establishes a 20-member Council on Sexual Misconduct Climate Assessments to report every two years to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, starting by January 1, 2022.
- Requires the council to, among other things, develop a list of data points for higher education institutions to collect using sexual misconduct climate assessments and establish guidelines for implementing the assessments.
- Requires higher education institutions to, every two years, (a) conduct a sexual misconduct climate assessment and distribute it to enrolled students, starting by March 1, 2023, and (b) report to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee and higher education institutions on the assessment results.

PA 21-6: AN ACT CONCERNING IMMUNIZATIONS, eliminates the religious exemption from immunization requirements for individuals attending public and private schools, including higher education institutions. The bill grandfather’s students with a religious exemption that are currently enrolled in a Connecticut institution of higher education. The changes to students attending higher education institutions are effective upon passage, April 28, 2021. DPH is required, by October 1, 2021, to develop and post on its website a medical exemption certificate for use by physicians, PAs, and APRNs.

PA 21-23: AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORIZATION, LICENSING AND REGULATION OF ONLINE CASINO GAMING, RETAIL AND ONLINE SPORTS WAGERING, FANTASY CONTESTS, KENO AND ONLINE SALE OF LOTTERY TICKETS, establishes new frameworks for legalizing and regulating (1) in-person and online sports wagering, (2) online casino gaming, (3) in-person and online keno, (4) online lottery draw games other than keno, and (5) fantasy contests. In particular, for higher education:

- The bill defines “**Sporting event**” to *generally* include a sporting or athletic event sponsored by a higher education institution’s intercollegiate athletic program or an association of intercollegiate athletic programs as well as “e-sports” (i.e., electronic sports and competitive video games played as a game of skill) events but **does not include intercollegiate sporting, athletic, and e- sport events that involve a Connecticut intercollegiate team** unless (1) four or more intercollegiate teams are involved and (2) wagers on the tournament are based on the outcome of all the tournament’s games. (§ 1, definition #27)
- To read a full summary of the bill, click [here](#).

PA 21-1: AN ACT CONCERNING RESPONSIBLE AND EQUITABLE REGULATION OF ADULT-USE CANNABIS, this bill makes numerous changes related to criminal justice, licensing, employment, tax, traffic enforcement, and other laws to establish legal adult recreational use of cannabis. In particular, for higher education institutions:

- The bill allows individuals age 21 or older to possess, use, or otherwise consume cannabis and cannabis products, effective July 1, 2021. It generally limits possession to (1) 1.5 ounces of cannabis plant material and five ounces of such material in a locked container in the person’s residence or locked vehicle glove box or trunk or (2) equivalent cannabis product amounts or

combined amounts. It erases certain cannabis-related criminal convictions, in some cases automatically and in others upon the person's petition.

- Starting July 1, 2023, the bill allows any individual age 21 or older to cultivate up to three mature and three immature cannabis plants in his or her primary residence, if the plants are kept secure from anyone else.
- Establishes a Social Equity Council to promote and encourage full participation in the cannabis industry by people from communities disproportionately harmed by cannabis prohibition. The Council must, among other things:
 1. Enter into contracts to carry out its purposes, including contracts or agreements with Connecticut Innovations, Incorporated; the state system of higher education's constituent units; regional workforce development boards; and community development financial institutions.
 2. Develop a cannabis business accelerator program, in partnership with the Department of Consumer Protection and DECD, to provide technical assistance to participants by partnering them with a cannabis establishment. The council may partner with a state public college or university to develop the program c
 3. Develop a workforce training program to further equity goals, ensure cannabis establishments have access to a well-trained employee applicant pool, and help individuals who live in a disproportionately impacted area find employment in the cannabis industry, in partnership with higher education institutions and other partners (§ 39).
 4. Manage the Social Equity and Innovation Fund created under the bill with funds appropriated for (1) access to business capital, (2) technical assistance for business start-ups and operations, (3) workforce education, and (4) community investments Social Equity and Innovation Fund (§ 128).
- Prohibits a positive drug test result that solely indicates a specified metabolite of THC from being proof that an individual is impaired by cannabis without other additional evidence (§ 93).
- Generally prohibits a student's drug test that yields a positive result only for a specified metabolite of THC from being the only basis for an educational institution to refuse to enroll or continue to enroll, or otherwise punish, the student. The bill makes an exception in cases where (1) failing to do so would put the institution in violation of a federal contract or cause it to lose federal funding or (2) the student is being drug tested as required by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the penalizing action taken is required by NCAA policies. (§ 95).
- Generally bans public and private higher education institution from (1) revoking any financial aid or student loans or (2) expelling a student, only for use or possession of less than:
 1. Four ounces of cannabis plant material;
 2. An equivalent amount of cannabis product, defined as (a) 20 grams of cannabis concentrate or (b) any other cannabis product or products with up to 2,000 milligrams of THC; or
 3. An equivalent amount of a combination of cannabis and cannabis product, as described above.

This ban does not apply if (1) complying with the bill would violate federal law or a federal contract or (2) failing to take those actions would jeopardize the educational institution's federal funding. (§ 96).

- As a reminder, colleges and universities that receive federal funding are required to comply with federal law which includes the federal Drug Free Schools and Campuses Act which mandates that institutions of higher education have a drug-free campus policy in order to continue to receive federal funding.
- For a complete bill summary, click [here](#).

SA 21-21: AN ACT CONCERNING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION RELATED TO THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY, requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Board of Trustees of The University of Connecticut to each conduct a study assessing whether the workforce needs of the insurance industry are met by the programs of study offered by the public institutions of higher education under each board's governance.

PA 21-130: AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENT LOAN SERVICERS, requires federal student loan servicers to annually register with the Department of Banking (DOB), rather than obtain licensure as current law requires.

PA 21-190: AN ACT CONCERNING THE FEDERAL STUDENT LOAN BORROWERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2019, requires private student loan servicers to provide certain information to private student loan borrowers and cosigners regarding (1) borrower and cosigner rights and responsibilities, (2) cosigner release eligibility, and (3) the cosigner release application process. Further:

- The bill prohibits any student loan servicer licensee or control person from engaging in an abusive act or practice when servicing a student loan, as described in the federal Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (P.L. 111-203).
- The bill also expands the definition of "servicing" in state student loan servicer law to include (1) maintaining account records for and communicating with a student loan borrower during the period when no scheduled loan payments are required and (2) interacting with a student loan borrower to facilitate the loan, including assisting to prevent them from defaulting on loan obligations.

PA 21-62: AN ACT REQUIRING A STUDY BY THE CONNECTICUT HIGHER EDUCATION SUPPLEMENTAL LOAN AUTHORITY, ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP TO STUDY CERTAIN ISSUES CONCERNING FINANCING FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND ESTABLISHING THE ALLIANCE DISTRICT TEACH

- Requires the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) to establish an Alliance District Teacher Loan Subsidy Program to subsidize interest rates on CHESLA loans to teachers employed in alliance districts, subject to available funding. It establishes a separate account to hold program funds.
- Additionally, the bill expands the types of education assistance programs that CHESLA may offer to include other forms of financial assistance, in addition to grants and loans as under current law. It also makes a conforming change to a provision on CHESLA's authority to establish guidelines, criteria, and procedures for its education assistance program.
- It requires CHESLA to study (1) how and whether to expand access to its loan programs to additional student loan borrowers, including those who have been previously denied a loan, and (2) how its student loans compare in certain respects to those of other lenders.

- The bill establishes a 12-member post-secondary education financing working group to (1) assist CHESLA in preparing the report described above and (2) study and recommend ways to improve access to and equity in education financing for post-secondary education.

PA 21-184: AN ACT REQUIRING THE REPORTING OF INCIDENTS THAT RESULTED IN SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURIES OR DEATH AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, adds a new reporting requirement to the annual uniform campus crime report that all Connecticut colleges and universities prepare. It renames the report the “uniform campus crime and safety incident report” and requires the institutions’ reports to include the number of accidents that occurred in the immediately preceding calendar year on the property that they own or control and result in (1) serious physical injury and (2) death. This property includes campuses or dormitories in another country that an institution owns or controls for purposes of an international studies or international exchange program (i.e., study abroad).

PA 21-111: AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER PURPOSES, ESTABLISHING THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND 2030 BOARD, AUTHORIZING STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS AND MAKING

- Authorizes \$64.2 million in bonds over a five-year period, from FY 22 to FY 26, to recapitalize **CTNext’s innovation place program (§§ 92-94)**.
- Authorizes \$46.1 million in bonds over a five-year period a new **research faculty recruitment and hiring program at UConn (§§ 99-100)**.
- Establishes the **Connecticut Baby Bond Trust program**, administered by the state treasurer, and authorizes up to \$600 million in bonds for the program. Under this program, the treasurer must create accountings for babies born on or after July 1, 2021, whose births were covered under HUSKY and (2) deposit \$3,200 into each designated beneficiary’s account at birth. Eligible expenditures generally include those for education, home-buying, business investments, and personal financial investments (§§ 103-111).
- Authorizes up to \$875 million in bonds for a five-year bonding program known as the **Community Investment Fund** to fund qualifying projects and grants in distressed communities; establishes a 21-member board to make funding recommendations under the program; authorizes an additional \$1.25 billion of bonds for the program that is contingent on agreement between the governor and board and the legislature reauthorizing the program; beginning in FY 22, requires \$125 million of the funds available for the state’s Economic Action Plan to be reserved for specified projects meeting specified criteria, including:
 1. Workforce development, mental health services, educational programming, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training, youth services programming, or physical, intellectual, and developmental disability services;
 2. The potential to directly impact community enrichment programs for, or related to, financial literacy, home ownership opportunity, free or reduced tuition for vocational training schools, academic scholarships, seniors’ and veterans’ services, and arts and culture; or
 3. The potential to directly impact youth and adult enrichment programs for, or related to, “earn while you learn” programs, paid internships, or summer youth programming. (§ 112)

PA 21-199: AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES, makes the following changes to the education statutes:

- Requires boards of education to adopt a policy to improve the completion rates for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) among grade 12 students or students in adult education programs (§ 6);
- Requires SDE to publish and make available on its website the annual FAFSA student completion rate for the graduating class of each high school and each school district (§ 8);
- Requires the education commissioner to establish a working group to develop ways to improve student FAFSA completion rates (§ 9); and
- Allows the education commissioner to make recommendations to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the Education Committee about policies to make higher education more affordable (§ 12).

PA 21-46: AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL EQUITY AND THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

- Requires the Youth Suicide Advisory Board (YSAB) and the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) to jointly administer an evidence-based youth suicide prevention training program in each local and district health department and offer it at least once every three years, starting by July 1, 2022 (§ 6);
- Starting on and after January 1, 2022, the bill expands the continuing education requirements for certain healthcare professionals to include at least two hours of training and education on (1) screening for posttraumatic stress disorder, suicide risk, depression, and grief and (2) suicide prevention training. The requirement applies to: physician assistants; physical therapists; 3. occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants; registered nurses and licensed practical nurses; behavior analysts; certified community health workers; and emergency medical responders, emergency medical technicians, or emergency medical instructors (§§ 2-9);
- By law, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, an independent social worker, or a marital and family therapist may provide outpatient mental health treatment to a minor without the consent or notification of a parent or guardian at the request of the minor under certain conditions. Current law requires a mental health provider to notify the minor that the consent, notification, or involvement of a parent or guardian is required to continue treatment after the sixth session, unless it would be seriously detrimental to the minor's well-being. The bill allows minors to request and receive as many outpatient mental health treatment sessions as necessary without the consent or notification of a parent or guardian (§ 6);
- Establishes a task force to study the comprehensive needs of children in the state and the extent to which such needs are being met by educators, community members and
- local and state agencies. Higher education has an appointment on this task force (§ 30).

PA 21-171: AN ACT CONCERNING ISSUES RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND SERVICES IN CONNECTICUT

- Creates a 13-member early childhood workforce development needs task force, including making recommendations for legislation related to early childhood educator preparation requirements as

well as creating a new early childhood teacher license or credential jointly issued by SDE and **OEC (§ 2)**; and

- Expands eligibility for Care 4 Kids child-care subsidies to include people enrolled or participating in certain postsecondary education and workforce training programs (**§ 3**).

Impacting Teacher Preparation Programs (Public and Private)

PA 21-168: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE TO ANALYZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS GOVERNING DYSLEXIA INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING, makes the following changes in state laws governing teacher preparation programs, teacher certification, and elementary student reading proficiency assessments:

- Establishes an Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities (“the office”) in the State Department of Education (SDE) to verify whether teacher preparation programs and teacher certification applicants comply with requirements in state law relating to dyslexia instruction and training (**§§ 1-4**);
- Bars the State Board of Education (SBE) from approving any teacher preparation programs, beginning September 1, 2022, until the office verifies that the program complies with state law relating to dyslexia instruction and training (**§ 3**);
- Requires SDE to issue a teaching certificate to any level of applicant (initial, provisional, or professional), beginning September 1, 2023, if the office verifies that he or she has fulfilled certain literacy training and education requirements (**§ 4**);
- Allows applicants for certain teaching certification endorsements to substitute student teaching experience for supervised practicum hours (**§ 5**);
- Requires the office to provide guidance to higher education institutions and other teacher preparation program providers about how to verify whether practicum hour supervisors have obtained certain qualifications (**§ 6**);
- Requires SDE to revise previously developed reading assessments for grades kindergarten through three to include new methodologies for measuring reading proficiency (**§ 7**);
- Allows SDE to partner with a public college or university to establish a data center to guide the department and boards of education in the use and effectiveness of reading assessments (**§ 7**);
- Requires each local or regional board of education to develop a voluntary family history questionnaire to help identify students who are at risk of reading proficiency challenges (**§ 8**); and
- Requires SDE to report to legislative committees about the (a) progress of the office’s establishment and staffing, (b) results of the verification of teacher preparation programs and teacher certificate applicants’ compliance with state law, and (c) guidance given to boards of education about the administration of reading assessments (**§§ 9 & 10**).
- To read the complete bill summary, click [here](#).

PA 21-2: AN ACT CONCERNING PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2023, is the “implementer” bill passed during the special session which seeks to provide language to implement the state budget but

also includes a number of other bills and revisions to bills from the Regular Session. Of note to teacher preparation programs:

- Requires SDE to study strategies for easing the barrier of Praxis II to teaching candidates. include, but not be limited to, a review of current assessment requirements for educator certification, candidate first-time pass rates, best attempt pass rates, candidate access to and use of free-retake policy, and alternative multiple measure pathways to demonstrate content-area mastery for certification. Not later than January 1, 2023, the department shall submit a report on its findings and any recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. ([§ 384](#)).

Impacting Economic Development

[SA 21-24: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP](#), seeks to establish a manufacturing technology working group to ensure that manufacturers in the state have a clear road map for the lean application and integration of Industry 4.0 technology into their product development and production processes. CCIC has an appointment on this group.

Impacting Labor & Employment

[PA 21-189: AN ACT REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO RECALL CERTAIN LAIDOFF WORKERS IN ORDER OF SENIORITY](#), requires hotels, lodging houses, food service contractors, and building service enterprises with at least 15 employees to meet certain requirements related to recalling certain employees laid off between March 10, 2020, and May 1, 2022. Among other things, these employers must notify laid-off employees about available positions for which they are qualified and offer the positions to those with the most seniority at the employment site. To read the complete bill summary, click [here](#).

[PA 21-27: AN ACT CONCERNING BREASTFEEDING IN THE WORKPLACE](#), establishes certain criteria for employer-provided areas used by employees to express breast milk. Existing law requires employers to make reasonable efforts to provide a room or other location near the employee's work area, other than a toilet stall, where an employee can express her milk in private during a meal or break period. The bill further requires that, as long as there is no undue hardship, this area must (1) be free from intrusion and shielded from the public while the employee expresses milk; (2) include or be near a refrigerator or employee-provided portable cold storage device in which the employee can store her breast milk; and (3) have access to an electrical outlet.

[PA 21-2: AN ACT CREATING A RESPECTFUL AND OPEN WORLD FOR NATURAL HAIR](#), makes it an illegal practice to (1) discriminate based on a person's hair texture and protective hairstyle in employment, public accommodations, housing, credit practices, union membership, and state agency practices or (2) deprive any person of any rights secured or protected by the Connecticut Constitution or the United States Constitution. It does so by specifying that the term "race" includes ethnic traits historically associated with race, including hair texture and protective hairstyles. Under the bill, "protective hairstyles" include wigs, headwraps, and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists,

Bantu knots, afros, and afro puffs. It adds this protection to those afforded under the existing human rights law under the jurisdiction of the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO).

PA 21-30: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGE FOR A VACANT POSITION, requires employers to provide job applicants and employees with the wage range of their positions. The bill further amends the law to require equal pay for comparable work rather than equal work. "Employer" is defined as any individual, corporation, limited liability company, firm, partnership, voluntary association, joint stock association, the state and any political subdivision thereof and any public corporation within the state using the services of one or more employees for pay.

SA 21-10: AAC A WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PIPELINE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, requires DECD to incorporate into the state workforce strategy a plan to establish a workforce development pipeline program for persons with disabilities, which shall incentivize businesses to provide training programs, offer modified interviews and reserve market-rate, full-time jobs for persons with disabilities. The plan shall be developed no later than November 1, 2021 and implemented no later than July 1, 2022.

PA 21-119: AN ACT INCENTIVIZING THE ADOPTION OF CYBERSECURITY STANDARDS FOR BUSINESSES, would prevent businesses from being subject to punitive damages in civil court if they have adopted a framework within the bill. The framework adopted will be dependent on the size, scope, and industry of the entity. The business has six months to comply with changes in the standards. "Business" means any individual or sole proprietorship, partnership, firm, corporation, trust, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, joint stock company, joint venture, association or other legal entity through which business for profit or not-for-profit is conducted. To read the complete bill summary, click [here](#).

Other Bills of Interest

PA 21-3 AN ACT MITIGATING ADVERSE TAX CONSEQUENCES RESULTING FROM EMPLOYEES WORKING REMOTELY DURING COVID-19, AND CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OF LIENS ON THE PROPERTY OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE BENEFICIARIES AND A THREE-TIERED GRANTS IN LIEU OF TAXES PROGRAM, among other things, establishes a minimum reimbursement rate for PILOT grants and a method for prorating the grants when appropriations are not enough to fund the full grant amounts; requires OPM to disburse from MRSA an amount sufficient to fund the prorated PILOT grants. To read the complete bill summary, click [here](#).

PA 21-115: AN ACT CONCERNING CLIMATE CHANGE, authorizes all municipalities, rather than just certain ones, to establish a municipal stormwater authority. The bill:

- Expands the authorities' powers to assess fees on both taxable and non-taxable real property and specifies the process by which municipal legislative bodies approve such fees.
- Requires a partial fee reduction for property owners who use certain stormwater best management practices.

PA 21-82: AN ACT REQUIRING BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR CERTAIN EMPLOYEES OF YOUTH CAMPS, Starting October 1, 2022, requires youth camps licensed by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to require prospective employees age 18 or older to submit to comprehensive background checks if they are applying for positions that provide care or involve unsupervised access to any child in the youth camp.

PA 21-59: AN ACT CONCERNING DATA PRIVACY BREACHES, expands the data breach notification law to apply to additional types of information and cover additional individuals who keep this information. It extends the data breach notification requirements to include anyone who owns, licenses, or maintains computerized data that includes personal information (data managers), rather than just those who do so in the ordinary course of doing business in the state, as under current law. To read the complete bill summary, click [here](#).

PA 21-35: AN ACT EQUALIZING COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS TO MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC, declares racism a public health crisis in Connecticut and includes provisions related to racial disparities in public health, health care services, pandemic preparedness, and other related topics. The bill:

- Establishes a Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health, to document and make recommendations to decrease the effect of racism on public health. The Commission is tasked to make recommendations concerning the following: (1) Structural racism in the state's laws and regulations impacting public health; (2) racial disparities in the state's criminal justice system and its impact on the health and well-being of individuals and families; (3) racial disparities in access to the resources necessary for healthy living; (4) racial disparities in health outcomes; (5) the impact of zoning restrictions on the creation of housing disparities and such disparities' impact on public health; (6) racial disparities in state hiring and contracting processes; and (7) any suggestions to reduce the impact of the public health crisis of racism within the vulnerable populations.
- Requires the commission, as part of the strategic plan, to determine the percentages of racial disparity in the state in four areas, including education, and declares it as the state's goal to attain at least a 70% reduction in racial disparities in these areas.
- Requires OHE to evaluate and report on the recruitment and retention of people of color in health care preparation programs at the public colleges in the state and the inclusion of cultural humility in these programs (**§ 7**).

PA 21-9: AN ACT CONCERNING TELEHEALTH, modifies requirements for the delivery of telehealth services and insurance coverage of these services until June 30, 2023. Among other things, it:

- Expands the types of health providers authorized to provide telehealth services;
- Allows certain telehealth providers to provide telehealth services using audio-only telephone, which current law prohibits;
- Allows certain telehealth providers to use additional information and communication technologies in accordance with federal requirements (e.g., certain third-party video communication applications, such as Apple Facetime);
- Authorizes the Department of Public Health (DPH) commissioner to temporarily modify, waive, or suspend certain regulatory requirements to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the public health;

- Establishes requirements for telehealth providers seeking payment from uninsured or underinsured patients;
- Requires insurance coverage for telehealth services and prohibits providers reimbursed for services from seeking payment from an insured patient beyond cost sharing;
- Prohibits (a) insurance policies from excluding coverage for a telehealth platform selected by an in-network provider and (b) carriers from reducing reimbursement to a provider because services are provided through telehealth instead of in-person; and
- Permits physicians and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to certify a qualifying patient’s use of medical marijuana and provide follow-up care using telehealth if they comply with other statutory certification and recordkeeping requirements. They may do so notwithstanding existing laws, regulations, policies, or procedures on medical marijuana certifications.

PA 21-52: AN ACT PROHIBITING THE IMPORT, SALE AND POSSESSION OF AFRICAN ELEPHANTS, LIONS, LEOPARDS, BLACK RHINOCEROS, WHITE RHINOCEROS AND GIRAFFES

- This bans importing, possessing, selling, offering for sale, or transporting in Connecticut a specimen (dead or alive) of any of six types of African animals, which the bill collectively refers to as the “big six African species,” unless covered by the bill’s exemptions. It applies to certain elephants, lions, leopards, giraffes, and two species of rhinoceros.
- The bill contains several exemptions, including for a specimen that 1) federal law or a federal permit expressly allows for the possession of (see BACKGROUND) or (2) is already legally in the state or distributed to a beneficiary or heir as long as the owner or distribute timely obtains a certificate of possession. Further, the ban also does not apply to fossils, ivory, or the following under certain conditions: circuses; museums; educational, scientific, or zoological institutions; taxidermy services; or motion picture, television, or digital media production companies.

Key Legislation that Died

HB 5108: AN ACT REQUIRING PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A POLICY REGARDING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION ON CAMPUS

HB 5464: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TAX CREDIT FOR PROVIDERS OF CLINICAL NURSING EXPERIENCES

SB 824: AA REQUIRING TRAINING FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BOARDS OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES' BUDGET AND AUTHORITY TO MERGE OR CLOSE INSTITUTIONS