

## **Connecticut Education Laws and Regulations**

### **Regional Vocational Agriculture Centers**

#### **Sec. 10-64. Establishment of regional vocational agriculture centers.**

(a) Any local or regional board of education may enter into agreements with other such boards of education to establish a regional vocational agriculture center in conjunction with its regular public school system, provided such center shall have a regional vocational agriculture consulting committee which shall advise the operating board of education but shall have no legal authority with respect to such center. Such agreements may include matters pertaining to the admission of students, including the establishment of a reasonable number of available program acceptances and the criteria for program acceptance. Each board of education shall appoint to said committee two representatives, who have a competent knowledge of agriculture or aquaculture, as appropriate, and who need not be members of such board.

(b) No new vocational agriculture center shall be approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to section 10-65, during the three-year period from July 1, 1993, to June 30, 1996, except that the State Board of Education may approve such a center if it is to be operated by the board of education of a local or regional school district with fifteen thousand or more resident students, as defined in subdivision (19) of section 10-262f. If a new regional vocational agriculture center is established for a school district pursuant to this subsection, any resident student of such school district who, during the school year immediately preceding the initial operation of such center, was enrolled in grades 10 to 12, inclusive, in a regional vocational agriculture center operated by another local or regional board of education, may continue to be reenrolled in such regional vocational agriculture center.

(c) For purposes of this section and sections 10-65 and 10-66, the term "vocational agriculture" includes vocational aquaculture and marine-related employment.

#### **Sec. 10-65. Grants for constructing and operating vocational agriculture centers. Tuition charges.**

Each local or regional school district operating a regional vocational agriculture center approved by the State Board of Education for program, educational need, location and area to be served shall be eligible for the following grants:

(1) In accordance with the provisions of chapter 173, the net eligible costs, in a lump sum, of constructing, acquiring, renovating and equipping approved facilities to be used for such vocational agriculture center, for the expansion or improvement of existing facilities or for the replacement or improvement of equipment therein, and

(2) subject to the provisions of section 10-65b, in an amount equal to seven hundred dollars per student for every secondary school student who was enrolled in such center on October first of the previous year.

The board of education operating a vocational agriculture center may charge, subject to the provisions of section 10-65b, tuition for a school year in an amount not to exceed one hundred two per cent of the foundation level pursuant to subdivision (7) of section 10-262f, per student for the fiscal year in which the tuition is paid, except that such board may charge tuition for

(1) students enrolled under the shared-time arrangement on a pro rata basis and

(2) special education students which shall not exceed the actual costs of educating such students minus the amounts received pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section and subsection (c) of this section. Any tuition paid to such board for special education students in excess of the tuition paid for non-special education students shall be reimbursed pursuant to section 10-76g. In addition to the grants described in subsection (a) of this section, within available appropriations, (1) each local or regional board of education operating a vocational agriculture center in which more than one hundred and fifty of the students in the prior year school year were out-of-district students shall be eligible to receive, a grant in an amount equal to five hundred dollars for every secondary school student enrolled in such center on October first of the previous year. (2) on and after July 1, 2000, if a local or regional board of education operating a vocational agriculture center that received a grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, no longer qualifies for such a grant, such board or regional board of education shall receive a grant in an amount determined as follows: (A) For the first fiscal year such board of education does not qualify for a grant under said subdivision (1), a grant in the amount equal to four hundred dollars for every secondary school student enrolled in its vocational agriculture center on October first of the previous year, (B) for the second year successive fiscal year such board of education does not qualify, a grant in an amount equal to three hundred dollars for every such secondary school student enrolled in such center on said date, (C) for the third successive fiscal year such board of education does not qualify, a grant in an amount equal to two hundred dollars for every such secondary school student enrolled in such center on said date, and (D) for the fourth successive fiscal year such board of education does not so qualify, a grant in an amount equal to one hundred dollars for every such secondary school students enrolled in such center on said date, and (3) each local or regional board of education operating a vocational agriculture center which does not receive a grant pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection shall receive a grant in an amount equal to sixty dollars for every secondary school students enrolled in such center on said date.

1) If there are any remaining funds after the amount of the grants described in subsections (a) and (c) of this section are calculated, within available appropriations, each local or regional board of education operating a vocational agriculture center shall be eligible to receive a grant in an amount equal to one hundred dollars for each student enrolled in such center on October first of the previous year.

(2) If there are any remaining funds after the amount of the grants described in subdivision (1) of this subsection are calculated, within available appropriations, each local or regional board of education operating a vocational agriculture center that had more than one hundred and fifty out-of-district student enrolled in such center on October first of the previous school year shall be eligible to receive a grant based on the ratio of the number of out-of-district students enrolled in all vocational agricultural centers that had in excess of one hundred and fifty out-of-district students enrolled on said date.

**Sec. 10-65a. Plan to increase racial and ethnic diversity.**

Each local and regional board of education which operates a vocational agriculture center shall establish and implement a five-year plan to increase racial and ethnic diversity at such center. The plan shall reasonably reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the area of the state in which the center is located. Each local or regional board of education which operates a vocational agriculture center shall conduct an annual study to ascertain the educational and vocational activities in which graduates of such center are engaged five years after graduation and shall submit the study to the State Board of Education.

**Sec. 10-65b. Provision of student's nonagricultural academic courses shared-time arrangements.**

A local or regional board of education which operates a regional vocational agriculture center shall provide to each student enrolled in such center all of the student's nonagricultural academic courses, provided that any such board which, on or before July 1, 1993, entered into an agreement to offer shared-time arrangements and any such board which operates a regional vocational aquaculture program may offer or continue to offer such shared-time arrangement unless the Commissioner of Education determines that such shared-time arrangements are not in substantial compliance with the provisions of sections 10-64 and 10-65 and any regulations adopted pursuant to section 10-66. For purposes of this section and said section 10-65, "shared-time arrangements" means the enrollment of students in a regional vocational agriculture center while such students receive nonagricultural academic courses in a school district under the jurisdiction of a local or regional board of education other than the board of education operating such center.

**Sec. 10-66. Regulations.**

The State Board of Education may adopt, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, such regulations as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this part and to insure reasonable economy in the vocational agriculture centers.

**Sec. 10-97. Transportation to vocational schools.**

Any local or regional board of education which does not furnish vocational agricultural training approved by the State Board of Education shall designate a school or schools having such a course approved by the State Board of Education as the school which any person may attend who has completed an elementary school course through the eighth grade. The board of education shall pay the tuition and reasonable and necessary transportation of any person under the age of twenty-one years of age who is not a graduate of a high school or vocational school and who attends the designated schools, provided transportation services may be suspended in accordance with the provisions of section 10-233c. Each such board's reimbursement percentage pursuant to section 10-266m for expenditures in excess of eight hundred dollars per pupil incurred in the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1987, and in each fiscal year thereafter, shall be increased by an additional twenty percentage points.

Any local or regional board of education which transports students to a state or state-approved vocational secondary school, or school furnishing vocational agriculture training shall be reimbursed for a portion of such pupil transportation annually in accordance with the provisions of section 10-266m, and the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section relating to reimbursement percentages, provided the reimbursement for transportation costs to a school furnishing vocational agriculture training shall not exceed an amount equal to such reimbursement of the costs of transporting such pupils to the school

furnishing a full program of vocational agricultural training nearest to the sending school district at the time of the pupil's initial enrollment in the program.

The parents or guardian of any student or any veteran over twenty-one who is denied the reasonable and necessary transportation required in this section may appeal such lack of transportation in the same manner as is provided in sections 10-186 and 10-187. For purposes of this section, a local or regional board of education shall not be required to expend for transporting a student to a regional vocational-technical school or a vocational-agriculture center an amount greater than the foundation as defined in subdivision (9) of section 10-262f, except that a board of education shall continue to pay the reasonable and necessary costs of transporting a student who is enrolled in such a school or center on July 1, 1996, until such student completes the program at such school or center.

**Sec. 10-220d. Student recruitment by regional and interdistrict specialized schools and programs.**

Recruitment of athletes prohibited. Each local and regional board of education shall provide full access to regional vocational-technical schools, regional vocational agricultural centers, interdistrict magnet schools, charter schools and interdistrict student attendance programs for the recruitment of students attending the schools under the board's jurisdiction, provided such recruitment is not for the purpose of interscholastic athletic competition.

**Sec. 10-285** provides for a reversion to the state of a building which was purchased or constructed with state funds if it ceases to be used for the purpose for which the grant was provided within twenty years of the date of approval of the project by the general assembly. While this provision does not specifically speak of vocational agriculture equipment, in the past we have indicated an interest in gaining assurances from districts, which have closed centers, that equipment purchased with state money will be used for the benefit of students within the school district or that, if surplus, would be assigned to another vocational agriculture center.

**REGULATIONS OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**CONCERNING OPERATING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS**

**EFFECTIVE AUGUST 21, 1978**

**Sec. 10-64-1. Consulting committee.**

The regional vocational agriculture consulting committee shall be called into session no less than two times per year to review and assist in evaluating the program. Official copies of minutes shall be kept on file.

**Sec. 10-64-2. Full-year program.**

The program shall operate on a full-year basis to allow for occupational instruction and the supervision of student occupational experience the sec programs. The staff shall be employed in such a manner as to ensure proper coverage of the twelve-month program.

### **Sec.10-65-2. Use of facilities and equipment.**

The facilities and equipment funded by the State of Connecticut shall be used for vocational agriculture education.

### **Sec. 10-65-3. Out-of-school youth and adults.**

Provisions shall be made for the upgrading and retraining of out-of-school youth and adults who are established or about to be become established in agriculture or related occupations. On-the-job supervision shall be an integral part of the adult instructional program.

### **Sec. 10-65-4. Staffing.**

(a) The program should maintain a total staff to student ratio of one certified staff member for not more than 35 full-time students (or equivalent of part-time students.) This does not set an individual class size, except that laboratory situations should not exceed a 15/1 student-teacher ratio in order to ensure a safe educational experience.

(b) Supportive staff such as clerical, custodial, and teacher substitute shall be provided to ensure that the professional staff will be free to carry on the purposes of the program and to ensure desirable standards of health and safety.

(a) A certified staff member shall be designated as administrator at each regional vocational agriculture center (department chairperson, head teacher, director, or other appropriate title).

### **Sec. 10-65-5. Informing students.**

The operating board of education in cooperation with the vocational agriculture staff shall maintain an information program whereby all students of sending schools are informed of the availability of the vocational agriculture program.

### **Sec. 10-65-6.**

Admission and retention. Admission and retention policies for vocational agriculture programs at the secondary school level.

(a) Applicants shall have successfully completed at least the eighth grade for ninth grade admission. (Students may apply for transfer into the program beyond ninth grade. Admittance shall be determined on an individual basis.)

(b) Applicants shall indicate an interest in agriculture as a career and shall agree to participate in a supervised, occupational experience program.

(c) The vocational agriculture staff shall have the responsibility to recommend students for acceptance into the vocational agriculture program.

(d) Any student denied admission to a program of vocational agriculture or who is about to be dismissed from such a program shall be given an opportunity to request an informal review of his/her case before a Review Committee at a Regional Vocational Agriculture Center. The Review Committee shall be composed of at least, but not limited to the following representation: a member of the vocational agriculture staff, an administrator from the school where the vocational agriculture program operates, a member of the operating board of education or their administrative representative, a member of the sending board of education or their administrative representative, and a member of the regional vocational agriculture consulting committee. Such student may make a request in writing, to the proper vocational agriculture center, addressed to the administrator responsible for such center, for a review of his or her case. Any such request shall be made within 15 days of such action. The said committee shall conduct such review within 20 days of receipt of such request. The committee through the operating board of education shall within 10 days of such review, notify in writing, the student, and the sending board of education of its decision. This decision shall be final and binding upon all parties.

#### **Sec. 10-65-7. Occupational experience.**

(a) Vocational agriculture students at all grade levels shall have a planned, supervised, occupational-experience program in agriculture which relates to the student's goals and abilities. The program shall be in addition to regularly scheduled class activities.

(b) Tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade vocational agriculture classes shall be scheduled no less than 320 minutes per week. Time must be blocked to allow for laboratory, shop, and fieldwork.

#### **Sec. 10-65-8. Future Farmers of America.**

The Future Farmers of America Program is an integral part of the vocational agriculture program and all vocational agriculture teachers shall be involved. Statement of Purpose: Section 10-66 of the General Statutes authorizes the State Board of Education to establish regulations relative to sections 10-64 and 10-65 establishing, operating and financing regional vocational agriculture programs. These regulations are proposed to aid local education agencies in carrying out the purposes of the legislation, to ensure reasonable economy, and to provide measurable direction and relevance for programs of vocational agriculture.