



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 21, 2026

Home Education Must Be “Equivalent” to Public School: Lawmakers

Home educators in Connecticut are officially in the government’s crosshairs. In fact, under a new bill moving through the legislature, parents will need approval from child protection services to homeschool. And they will have to prove to bureaucrats that they are providing “equivalent instruction” to that offered by the government-school system. Only about a third of children in the state’s public schools are even “proficient” in reading or math, [federal data show](#). Suicide, mental problems, and other issues are off the charts and rising among government-educated children, too. So, it was not immediately clear why anyone would want homeschoolers to be subjected to “equivalent instruction.”



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The bill purports to require that every parent must send their child to a government school. The only exception is if the parent or guardian can “show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools,” the text of the Connecticut legislation declares.

Lawmakers lambasted the provision. “What is equivalent instruction? Is it equivalent to Prospect’s education, Bridgeport, Waterbury, Greenwich, Darien, East Haddam? I don’t know,” argued Ranking Member Rep. Lezlye Zupkus, a Republican. Democrats on the committee dismissed the concerns.

To prove that parents are giving their children “equivalent instruction,” the statute purports to require that they keep records for three years. They are also required to provide a demonstration of their child’s work to government. Ultimately, the state Department of Education will provide “guidance” regarding what all of it means.

Senator Heather Somers, also a Republican, warned this was a scheme to force homeschool families to do the same thing as government schools. “By homeschooling being evaluated and really being pushed to public school standards, this bill is pressuring families to mirror the public school system,” she explained, echoing other critics.

The demands are especially ironic considering how well homeschoolers tend to do compared to their government-schooled peers. “Every single homeschooler that I’ve had the privilege of meeting, their kids are smarter,” Sen. Somers said. “They’re graduating early from high school. Some of them are taking college courses or actually getting two years of college before they even turn 18.”

The elephant in the room — the fact that the government is horrifically failing the children already in its school system — did not escape notice. “People are withdrawing their kids, they’re quitting their jobs, because they don’t feel their kids are safe in public school,” observed Representative Tina Courpas, a Republican. “To me, that is so basic.”



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Lawmakers should focus on fixing the government's schools. "If this committee did nothing else for the next two years other than make our public school safe, that would be a big win," the lawmaker continued. "But this bill doesn't address that problem. Instead, it cuts off people's options to solve a problem that this state has created for them."

Under the new legislation that has already cleared several important hurdles, the homeschooling community in the state would also need to be cleared by Child Protective Services (CPS) to obtain permission to homeschool. The Home School Legal Defense Association says this is a major change.

"One of the most troubling aspects of the proposal is the idea that parents could need permission from a child welfare agency before teaching their own children at home," noted Ralph Rodriguez, associate attorney for HSLDA. "That represents a significant shift in how homeschooling families are treated under the law."

Lawmakers, too, were perplexed by the decision to get the CPS involved in approving homeschooling. "The child advocate ... stated publicly yesterday to me in a hearing that she agrees the real cause of these tragic events is a catastrophic failure of the Department of Children and Families," said Education Committee Ranking Member Sen. Eric Berthel, referring to two tragic cases in which children died despite child-welfare officials being involved.

"All of this begs the question: Why would we want DCF to be involved at all in the monitoring or regulation of homeschoolers when the agency has demonstrated they cannot handle the cases they are already monitoring?" added Sen. Berthel. Other critics suggested the bill against homeschoolers was an effort to blame innocent people for the failures of government.

The homeschool legislation, [House Bill 5468](#), drew enormous opposition from families across the state. There were thousands of written testimonies submitted against the bill. Hundreds of parents and opponents also went to the Capitol to speak out. All Republicans and even some Democrats opposed the bill, too.

Blasting the "draconian measure" designed to bring all families under the control of government, attorney Deborah Stevenson with National Home Education Legal Defense said any legislators supporting it must be removed from office. "All in all, it is an unconstitutional power grab," she said.

Forcing parents to get "approval" to educate their own children is "obnoxious and obscene, and a violation of the parents' fundamental right to the upbringing and education of their child," Stevenson added. The data collection and sharing without even consent of parents is also wrong, she said.

"It violates federal law in its data sharing provisions; it removes the presumption of innocence; it violates due process, equal protection, and search and seizure provisions of our federal and state Constitutions and places a child on a parent's fundamental rights," continued Stevenson in her [stinging analysis of the bill](#).

"Astoundingly, it overturns 376 years of precedent and the fundamental right and duty of parents to instruct their own children," she said. "This is a heinous display of cowardice, immorality, and utter disdain and shredding of our federal and State Constitutions.... This bill is a disgusting power play by unscrupulous, control hungry politicians."

Even some state agencies and local government officials expressed concerns. The Department of Children and Families, which will be required under the bill to sign off before parents can have permission to home educate, said it would be "impossible" for it to process the applications at "current



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staffing levels.”

Originally, it appeared that the bill had failed. But despite the loud and overwhelming opposition by thousands who spoke out against it, the legislation ultimately passed through the Joint Education Committee after a handful of lawmakers changed their votes. The bill had only about 50 supporters who spoke or submitted written testimony in favor.

The legislative attack on homeschooling was, at least in part, a response to a report last year from the state’s so-called “Office of the Child Advocate” calling for regulation. Among other recommendations, the report suggested a new law requiring “that the parent and child appear annually to provide enrollment documentation.”

The OCA, responding to the two deaths of children last year, also called for every child outside the government school system to be “independently evaluated annually for academic progress.” The report suggested there should also be “initial and periodic assurances that the child is in good health.”

The attack on homeschooling freedom in Connecticut comes amid [a broader assault in Democrat-led states](#) and [leftist media outlets](#). From Illinois and New Jersey to Minnesota and beyond, Democrat lawmakers, powerful special interests, United Nations agencies, and left-leaning establishment “news” organizations have declared war on home education and parental rights.

However, there have also been encouraging developments. In New Hampshire, for example, lawmakers passed a bill removing virtually all administrative requirements currently in place for homeschooling families, including the requirement to notify the state when parents decide to educate their children at home. Storm clouds are clearly gathering on the horizon as forces hostile to Christianity, parental authority, and individual liberty coalesce in a bid to squash home education. With the exodus from government schools accelerating nationwide, totalitarians know time is short. Homeschoolers, private schools, and all who support liberty must be on guard.

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