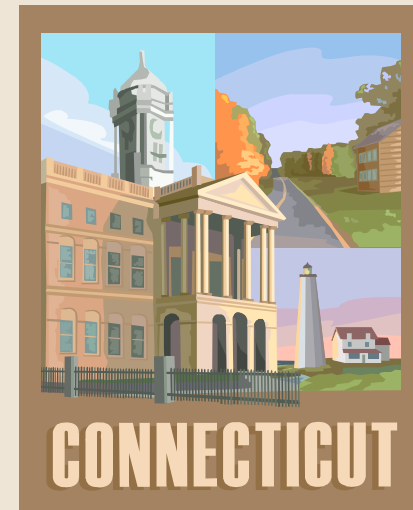


# Glossary of School Board Terms



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inside front

inside back

**Tort:** The word is derived from a Latin word meaning “twisted.” It refers to civil wrongs, other than a breach of a contract, committed against a person or a person’s property. There must always be some duty owed to the injured party that is violated for there to be liability. School districts are liable for the torts committed by school district employees during the scope of employment.

**Truancy:** Continued unauthorized absence from school by a minor student.

**Unfair Labor Practice:** Action by labor or management that violates specific provisions of state law or a negotiated agreement.

**Veto:** The disapproval of a bill by the Governor. The Governor may prevent a bill that has passed both houses from becoming law by refusing to sign the bill and, instead, returning the bill to the house of its origin with the Governor’s reasons for not signing the bill (the “veto message”). The Legislature may, however, override a veto.

**Weighting:** Weighting pupils means to take count of variations in cost of educating pupils.

**Whistle-Blower Law:** A law prohibiting discharge or any other penalty against an employee when the employee or anyone acting on the employee’s behalf reports a violation or suspected violation of local, state or federal law to a public body, or when a public body requests an employee to participate in an investigation, hearing or court action.

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# Connecticut

## Glossary of School Board Terms

**Abstention:** A statement that the board member will not vote on the motion. Since voting is through either a yes or no position, a decision not to take a position is not counted as either a yes or no vote. An abstention is acquiescence to whatever the majority wants.

**Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS):** The clinical manifestation of a dysfunction of the human immune system caused by a virus usually referred to as HTLV-III and/or Human Immuno Deficiency (HIV).

**Ad hoc:** From a Latin phrase meaning “for this special purpose.” An ad hoc committee of a board or of the Legislature is, therefore, one formed to direct attention to a single particular situation.

**Adjournment:** The closing of the meeting.

**Adjusted Equalized Net Grand List (AENGL):** Each town’s Equalized Net Grand List (ENGL) is adjusted using a measure of per capita income wealth. This income adjustment reflects the concept that a town’s ability to finance municipal services (including education) depends on both a town’s property tax base (net grand list) and on income wealth of the taxpayers of the town.

**Adjusted Equalized Net Grand List Per Capita (AENGLC):** The Adjusted Equalized Net Grand List (AENGL) of each town is divided by the population of that town to obtain a measure of property/income wealth per person. This is the definition of wealth currently used to compare towns’ ability to finance educational costs.

**Adjusted Equalized Net Grand List Per Need Pupil (AENGLNP):** The Adjusted Equalized Net Grand List (AENGL) of each town is divided by the number of need pupils (NP) in the town to obtain a measure of property/income wealth per need pupil.

3. Programs to address educational problems caused by the concentration of minority children;
4. Guidance, counseling and testing programs to implement and evaluate educational programs;
5. Programs to improve the planning, management and implementation of educational programs;
6. Inservice staff training to prepare personnel to deal with contemporary teaching and learning requirements and to assist in the teaching of educationally deprived students;
7. Programs to assist needs of children undergoing desegregation; and
8. Special projects relating to the teaching of metric education, arts education, preschool education, consumer education, youth employment program development, career education, environmental education, health education, law related education, population education, correction education, introduction of disadvantaged students to medical careers, international education, community education, gifted and talented programs, educational proficiency standards, school safety programs, ethnic heritage programs, and desegregation and advisory services.

**Title VI:** Federal legislation providing that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of or be otherwise subject to discrimination under any program receiving federal financial assistance.

**Title VII:** A federal law prohibiting discrimination against employees on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion which applies to school districts with 15 or more employees.

**Title IX:** Federal statute designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

days in one school year. For suspensions of ten days or less, the United States Supreme Court has held the student is to be entitled to be told the reason for the proposed suspension and be given an opportunity to present the student's side of the story.

**Teacher:** One who had been issued a certificate or license by the State Department of Education and is employed as an administrator, counselor, librarian, school nurse, or classroom teacher. Such certified and licensed individuals must have a certificate or license to perform the particular services for which her or she is employed.

**Tenured Teacher:** A certified teacher who has taught 40 or more consecutive months in one school district. The significance of tenure is the greater job security it provides teachers. Tenured teachers have more due process rights in employment termination than do probationary teachers.

**Title I:** Provides federal financial assistance to districts to meet the special education needs of educationally deprived children, that being children whose educational attainment is below the level appropriate for children of their age. Funding is to supplement services in reading, language arts and mathematics to identified students.

**Title II:** Federal financial assistance for schools under the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 3811 et seq., which consolidated the provisions of Titles I, II, IV, VI, VII and part of IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The law provides federal grants to develop and implement a comprehensive and coordinated program to improve elementary and secondary school instruction in basic skills or reading, math, and language arts, as formerly authorized by Title II. Chapter 2 funding includes:

1. The acquisition and utilization of school library resources, texts, other written materials, and equipment for use by students and teachers for instruction;
2. The development of programs to improve local education practices, particularly to address the education of educationally deprived children and gifted and talented children;

**Adult Education:** A program which is the extension of an accredited high school and serves students at least 18 years of age and older who are not compelled by law to attend school, although students under 18 may be part of the program if they have officially withdrawn from school, failed a course, or been expelled. A minimum number of credits must be earned to receive a State High School Diploma for Adults.

**AFDC Children:** The number of children, ages 5 to 18, from families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (Source: Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance).

**Age Discrimination in Employment Act:** Federal statute which bars adverse employment decisions when age is the determining factor for that decision, unless age is a bona fide qualification reasonably necessary for normal operations of the particular business. The law makes it illegal for any employer of 20 or more employees to establish a mandatory retirement age.

**Alternative Educational Opportunity:** A school accommodation offered unconditionally to students under age sixteen regardless of the misconduct and to students age 16 and over depending on the nature of the misconduct.

**Amicus Curiae:** A "friend of the court" who, with court permission, presents the court with information or arguments on behalf of a party in a case.

**Appropriation Bill:** A bill before the Legislature authorizing the expenditure of public money and stipulating the amount, manner and purpose for the expenditure items.

**Arbitration:** A process in solving labor-management disagreements whereby the items at issue are submitted to a third party, who hears the contentions of each side and renders a judgment on the contested issue. In binding arbitration, the parties are required to accept the decision, whereas in advisory arbitration, the parties are free to reject the arbitrator's opinion.

**Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act:** Federal statute requiring the identification of, and appropriate responses to, the presence of asbestos materials in public schools.

**Assault:** The intentional, unlawful threat to physically injure another by force under circumstances that create fear of imminent peril.

**Attendance Officers:** Each board may appoint an attendance officer, who shall be authorized to prosecute for violations of the laws relating to attendance of children and their employment.

**Audit:** An accounting of the district's financial condition, which must be made annually. The annual audit must be made at the end of the fiscal year, but a board has power to have audits made at more frequent intervals.

**Average Daily Membership (ADM):** Average Daily Membership is the average number of students in a school district. In October, a count is made of the number of students in a school district. From this measure, students are counted in their town of residence - the town that pays for their education.

**AYP:** Average yearly progress; a term used under the No Child Left Behind Act to indicate amount of progress that students must make before school/district is considered "underperforming."

**Ballot:** A motion for a secret written vote that can be made if the bylaws of the Board of Education do not already require one. The motion is not debatable and requires majority vote.

**Bargaining Unit:** An employee unit for negotiations with the board. Two units are recognized by state law, those being 1) those employed in positions requiring an administrator's certificate whose administrative and supervisory duties constitute 50% of the employee's time; 2) all employees employed in positions requiring teaching certification.

**Base Period:** The first four of the last five completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the first day of an individual's benefit year for determining unemployment compensation benefits.

**Special Sessions:** The Legislature shall hold special sessions when so called by the governor or by two-thirds of the members of the Senate and two-thirds of the members of the House.

**Staff Development:** Each district must establish staff development programs for certified teachers and administrators. A five year plan must be developed by the board with the advice and assistance of leaders.

**Standardized Test:** Same test given under similar controlled circumstances to many students.

**Standing Committee:** A permanent legislative committee that processes legislation in a designated subject.

**State Board of Education:** The governing body of the State Department of Education and vocational-technical school system of the state. The board is comprised of nine members, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly.

**Statute:** A particular law enacted by the Legislature.

**Student Teacher:** A student enrolled in a college or university for teacher training and who is jointly assigned by the institution of higher learning and the board of education to perform practice teaching in the district under the direction of a regularly employed certified teacher.

**Substitute Teacher:** An individual who takes the place of the regular teacher in the classroom, with a salary set by the board of education. No substitute may teach more than 40 days in one school district during a school year unless the substitute holds a valid teacher certificate.

**Superintendent:** The executive officer of the board of education and chief administrative officer of the school district, who is head of the daily management of the district. Such person must hold a superintendent's certificate.

**Suspension:** Students may be suspended from school for a maximum of ten consecutive days. No student may be suspended for more than 50

body of a school district is the board of education, with the superintendent being the executive officer.

**School Year:** Consists of at least 180 days of classroom instruction.

**Second:** A parliamentary device whereby the one seconding a motion agrees that the motion should come before the meeting and not that he or she necessarily favors the motion.

**Section 504:** A federal statute providing that no otherwise qualified disabled individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Whereas P.L. 94-142 is concerned with the procedures and duty of developing a free appropriate educational placement for disabled students, Section 504 is broader in scope and concerns, for example, discrimination against disabled employees and making school buildings accessible to disabled persons.

**Seniority:** Employee status in relation to other employees according to years of employment within the school district.

**Sick Leave:** All districts are required to give certified personnel 15 days/year paid sick leave. Each district's plan must include allowable accumulation of at least 150 days of sick leave.

**Special Education:** Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including classroom instruction, instruction in physical education, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. The term includes related services, if the service consists of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a disabled child.

**Special Meeting:** A board meeting other than a regular or emergency meeting in which notice has been given at least 48 hours prior to the meeting of the time, date and place of the meeting. A meeting agenda must be posted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

**Base Period Employer:** When an unemployed worker files a claim for unemployment compensation, notice of the claim is mailed to the last employer for which the claimant worked and each employer in the claimant's base period. Only employers who are in the base period will be charged for unemployment benefits paid to the claimant by the State. The base period means the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the first day of the claimant's benefit year. A benefit year is the one-year period beginning with the first day of the first week in which the claimant first files a valid claim for benefits.

**Bid:** An offer to furnish materials or services to a school district for a certain fee or charge.

**Bill:** A proposed law presented to the Legislature for approval. A bill becomes a law only after being approved by both the House and Senate and being approved by the Governor, or being passed again after the Governor's veto.

**Binding Arbitration:** The process whereby disagreements between the board and collective bargaining units are settled by an arbitrator, whose decisions are binding upon the board.

**Board of Education:** The governing body of school districts. Board powers are statutorily defined.

**Burden of Proof:** The duty of proving a fact in a dispute. If the administration is recommending the discharge of an employee, the burden of proof would be on the administration to show the truth of the reasons for the recommendation. If an employee has filed a grievance, the burden would be on the employee to establish the facts upon which the grievance is based and how those facts violate an agreement, policy, or unjust treatment of the employee.

**Call for the Question:** According to parliamentary rules, if, during discussion about a motion, a board member states that he or she "calls for the question," that member is in effect stating, "I move we vote now," on the question before the board.

**Categorical Aid:** State or federal aid that is designated for a specific use or program. Examples are: Bilingual Education Aid and Compensatory Education Aid.

**Caucus:** A meeting of members of a single political party.

**Certified Employee:** An employee serving in an instructional or educational administrative capacity must have received certification to teach or be an administrator from the State Department of Education. The three certification levels are initial, provisional and professional educator certificates.

**Child Abuse:** Mental or physical harming of a minor to a degree that is not acceptable treatment of a child.

**Children’s Internet Protection Act:** A federal law that imposes obligations on school districts and libraries as a condition of eligibility under the Communications Act of 1934 for discounted internet access, internet services and e-rate programs. Districts must provide filtering software and create policies to ensure safe use of the internet.

**Coefficient of Variation:** A statistical measure of how widely the data (expenditures, for example) varies around the average. The smaller the coefficient of variation the closer expenditures are grouped around the average. The coefficient is the standard deviation divided by the average and is expressed as a percentage.

**Comp Time:** The Fair Labor Standards Act permits employers to grant covered employees working more than 40 hours per week “comp time” instead of paying overtime wages. Comp time must be equal to one and one-half hours for each hour of work performed in excess of 40 hours per week and must allow the employee paid time off from duties. Teachers and administrators are exempt from the comp time requirements.

**Compulsory Attendance:** Required school attendance mandated by statute. Children under 18 and over 5 who have not completed four years of high school are compelled to attend a public school or receive “equivalent instruction” (which could include home instruction). It is a crime for

counseling services, and medical services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes. The term also includes school health services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.

**Remedial:** Instruction of students performing below average.

**Residency:** The residence of a student for school attendance purposes is the residence of the parents, guardian, or person having the care and custody of the child, when it is the intention that such residence is permanent, provided without pay and not for the sole purpose of obtaining school accommodations.

**Resolution:** A formal expression of the will or wish of a body.

**Resource Cost Model (RCM):** A theoretical model used to determine the relative cost of education for individual school districts.

**Revaluation:** The process whereby property in a municipality is valued by assessors.

**Robert’s Rules of Order:** A book embodying parliamentary rules, first published in 1876 by Major Henry Robert and revised since then. These rules are not law, and thus are not binding upon meetings of a board of education. If the book is used for guidance, care should be taken because most of the book deals with meetings of assemblies or conventions and only a portion of the book deals with board meetings.

**School Activity Fund:** A fund that can carry over from year to year available to handle funds of school and school organizations as the board of education determines to be desirable and can include gifts and donations.

**School Age:** Children between the ages of 5 years on or before January 1 and 21 years who have not graduated from high school are entitled to free public school attendance in the district of their residence.

**School District:** A school district is a corporate body possessing the usual powers of a corporation for corporate purposes. A district may sue and be sued, contract, and hold title to real and personal property. The governing

**Recall:** 1) The process in a reduction-in-force policy whereby a former employee who was laid off has a right to return to work with the district if, within a set time period, a vacancy arises which the former employee is qualified to fill as per the reduction policy. 2) Board Member Recall is the process whereby the election of a board member may be reconsidered under local charter provisions.

**Reduction-in-Force:** The process whereby employment is terminated because of a need to reduce the staff rather than because of any performance inadequacies of the employee.

**Regional Education Service Centers:** A regional educational service center is a public educational authority formed within a regional state planning area by four or more boards of education for the purpose of cooperative action to furnish programs and services to the member boards of education.

**Regular Meeting:** Notice of the time, date and place of regular board meetings must be given to the town clerk in writing by January 31<sup>st</sup>. A meeting agenda must be posted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

**Regular Program Local Expenditures:** Total education expenditures of a town minus expenditures (a) for transportation, special education, debt service, capital outlay, adult education, health and welfare services for non-public school children; (b) all tuition received on account of all nonresident pupils (c) Federal grants (d) state grants for education.

**Regulation:** A specific statement of something that must be done. Typically, it also tells who is going to do it and when. Formulating regulations is the superintendent's job. It is how the superintendent will carry out the intention of the board as stated in policy.

**Related Services:** Transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Related services include speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children,

parents not to send their children to school. There are special provision permitting children not to attend at ages 5 and 6, and ages 17 and 18.

**Cooperative Arrangements:** Statutory authority providing that two or more local or regional school boards may establish certain arrangements to provide school accommodations, services, programs or activities to enable such boards to carry out the duties specified in the general statutes.

**Current Education Expenditures:** Total expenditures from all sources except debt service and capital construction.

**Curriculum:** The courses and instruction offered students by the district.

**Directory Information:** Federal law provides that educational records of students are confidential and are not to be released without parental consent. However, law allows the district to designate certain items as "directory information" that can be released without prior parental consent. If a board desires to make any of the enumerated items directory information, the district must notify the parents and allow the parents a reasonable time period to inform the district that the parents do not agree to the release of any or all of the enumerated items without prior parental permission. In sum, the parents must be given the right to opt out of directory information. If no response is received from the parents objecting to the release of directory information, then the information may be distributed to the public without prior written consent. If the parents object to any of the directory information items, then as to the children of those parents, no such directory information can be released without prior written consent. Items which may be included within "directory information" include a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in sports and school activities, weight and height of members of athletic teams, attendance dates, awards received, and the most recent school attended.

**Due Process:** The Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution limits the power of the federal Government by providing that "no person

shall... be deprived of life, liberty or property, without due process of law. “ The Fourteenth Amendment limits the powers of state governments in that “no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens... nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law.” Courts have ruled the Fifth Amendment applies to the states through the Fourteenth Amendment. Thus due process applies when one is deprived of a “liberty” or “property” interest by governmental action. “Liberty” consists of inherent freedoms in a free society, such as freedoms of speech, association and religion. “Property” rights may be created by state laws, contracts or board policies and decisions. “Substantive” due process requires valid governmental reasons for the action, whereas “procedural” due process requires that the deprivation of property or liberty be accomplished by fair procedures. For example, a board would violate substantive due process by firing an employee because the worker has red hair since there would be no legitimate governmental reason in forbidding people with red hair to work in schools. If the reason for the firing is a valid governmental reason for discharging an employee, such as poor job performance, then substantive due process has been satisfied, but the board must use fair procedures in terminating employment. What process is due depends upon what a court deems is fair protection to that particular situation. Basically, procedural due process involves an opportunity to be heard at a meaningful time and in a meaningful manner.

**Durational Shortage Area Permit (DSAP):** A permit issued by the State Department of Education where an individual may be hired by a district when it is not possible to hire a teacher with appropriate certification due to shortage. To acquire a DSAP, an individual must have a bachelor’s degree, must have passed Praxis I, must have completed twelve semester hours in the subject for which the permit will be issued and must file an intent to be or actually be in a planned program leading to certification. The State Department of Education may reissue a DSAP up to two times.

**Education Cost Sharing (ECS):** A Public Act of 1988 which created a new program of state aid for education beginning in fiscal year 1989-90, as recommended by the Education Equity Study Committee (EESC) and the State Board of Education (SBE). The new grant program, called Education Cost Sharing (ECS), replaced both the Guaranteed Tax Base (GTB) and the

where the wrong done was aggravated by circumstances of violence, oppression, malice, fraud, or wanton or wicked conduct by the defendant, or else to punish the defendant for evil behavior or to make an example of him. Punitive damages are often called “exemplary” damages. Punitive damages cannot be assessed against a school district or board members sued in their official capacities, but can be awarded against board members sued as individuals when the members acted with actual intent to injure, or acted with evil notice or with reckless or callous indifference to the federally protected rights of the plaintiff.

**Pupil-Teacher Ratio:** The number of students per teacher.

**Quorum:** A majority (more than half) of all the members, or the number established in Bylaws.

**Raise a Question of Privilege:** According to parliamentary rules for assemblies, a device permitting a request or main motion relating to rights and privileges of the assembly or any of its members to be brought up for immediate consideration, because of its urgency, while business is pending. It is ruled upon by the chairman, and no vote is taken.

**Real Property:** Land and structures affixed to land.

**Reasonable Accommodation:** It is discriminatory for an employer to refuse employment to, or discharge from employment, one who cannot meet the job requirements because of a disability if the employer could make “reasonable accommodations” which would permit the applicant or employee to perform the tasks of the job.

**Reasonable Suspicion:** The constitutional standard needed for a legal search of a student and/or the student’s clothing and personal effects by a school official. The test is whether the search was justified at its inception through reasonable suspicion that the student had the item which was the reason for the search and whether, as conducted, the search was reasonably related in scope to the circumstances that justified the search in the first place.

**Percentile:** A ranking that indicates student achievement as related to other students who took the same test. A pupil who tests in the 90 percentile in math will have scored better than all but 10 of 100 students who took the math test.

**Planning Placement Team (PPT):** The body that develops an IEP (Individualized Educational Program) for a disabled student. The body consists of the parents, a certified district employee qualified to supervise special education, the child's teachers (regular and special education), and other individuals at the discretion of the parent or school.

**Point of Order:** When a member thinks the rules of the assembly are being violated, the member makes a "Point of Order" or raises "a question of order," thereby calling upon the chair of the assembly for a ruling and enforcement of the rules.

**Policy:** A written statement of district goals of courses of action or an unwritten pattern of action that is followed by district personnel and/or boards. Adopting policy is the board of education's responsibility

**Postpone:** To delay until a further time, put off.

**Post-termination Hearing:** After the initial board vote to terminate a nontenured teacher, the teacher is sent notice of that decision and told of the teacher's right to a hearing to contest the board's decision, either before the board or before a hearing panel if requested by the teacher and designated by the board.

**Professional Day:** Any day on which the faculty is engaged in educational planning and improvement of the local district or in which the faculty engages in a local, county, district or state education planning, workshop, or teachers' meeting rather than in instruction.

**Public Law 94-142:** The federal statute which insures that disabled children are provided a free appropriate public education which includes special education and related services to meet their unique needs.

**Punitive Damages:** Damages on an increased scale awarded to the plaintiff over and above what will compensate for the plaintiff's loss,

Education Enhancement Aid (EEA) grant programs (which provided a formula for distribution of funds for minimum salary aid, salary aid and teacher pupil ratio aid). The new legislation also revised the Minimum Expenditure Requirement (MER) program by setting a new definition of eligible expenditures, regular program expenditures, and by eliminating alternate MERs.

**Educational Enhancement Act (EEA):** The Education Enhancement Act, created during the 1986 legislative session, originally contained five separate grant programs: minimum salary aid, teacher salary aid, general education aid, teacher-pupil ratio aid, hold harmless aid. Funding was provided over a three year period for the first four programs and one year for the last. Funding for the programs was provided from the Educational Excellence Trust Fund which contained funds from prior General Fund surpluses.

**Educational Interests of the State:** Defined by statute as the concern that all students receive an equal educational opportunity, that school districts fund education at least at the level of the minimum expenditure requirement, that local and regional school districts provide educational opportunities for students to interact with students and teachers from other racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds to reduce isolation on such bases, and that school districts comply with all statutes pertaining to education.

**Educational Records:** Defined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, as records which are directly related to a student and are maintained by the district. The term does not include records in the sole possession of the maker which are not revealed to others except a substitute teacher.

**Effective Date:** The time when a law becomes effective.

**Emergency Meeting:** An emergency meeting may be held without 24 hours notice or the posting of an agenda. However, within 72 hours after the meeting the minutes of the emergency meeting and the circumstances necessitating the emergency meeting must be available for public inspection.

**Equal Access Act:** A federal statute providing that if the district allows noncurriculum-related secondary school student groups to meet at school during noninstructional times, then the board cannot discriminate against students wanting to similarly meet on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical or other content of the speech at such meetings. The Act has certain restrictions upon such meetings, primarily that the meetings be student initiated, not be sponsored by the school, not involve employees as participants, and not be directed, controlled or regularly attended by nonschool persons.

**Equalization Formula:** A funding formula designed to equalize the ability of towns to finance educational expenditures, irrespective of their wealth, by directing more aid to low wealth/high need towns (i.e., towns are aided in inverse proportion to their wealth).

**Equalized Net Grand List (ENGL):** ENGL is the current value of all taxable property in a town. It is used to compare the taxable wealth of each town to all other towns.

The ENGL is calculated by the state OPM, each year by comparing actual value of property – determined by property sales – to the assessed value of the property.

**Ex Officio Member:** A member, in some cases the mayor when allowed by charter, who has the right to participate in meetings and attend executive sessions.

**Equal Protection:** The Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution prohibits states from denying persons equal protection of the laws. Equal protection is triggered when the government makes distinctions or classifications of people. The court analysis to which such classifications are subjected depends upon what classification is made. If a classification is a “suspect” classification, the classification is invalid unless the government can show the classification is needed for a “compelling governmental interest.” Classifications are “suspect”, and thus subjected to the strictest judicial review, if they make racial, ethnic, or alienage distinctions or deprive one of “fundamental” rights. Courts have recognized the rights to travel, vote, and maintain privacy in family and marital matters as

**Negotiations:** Also called “collective bargaining.” The process by which representatives of the board and representatives of a recognized bargaining unit of employees meet to negotiate in good faith on wages, hours, fringe benefits and other terms and conditions of employment.

**Nepotism:** The bestowing of patronage by public officers in appointing others to positions who are related by reason of blood (consanguinity) or marital (affinity) relationship to the appointing public official. The word comes from the Italian “nepotismo,” which means “favoring of nephews,” the nephews being sons of supposedly celibate medieval churchmen, who started the practice of nepotism.

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB):** A federal law enacted in 2002 aimed at improving the performance of primary and secondary schools by increasing the standards of accountability for states, school districts, and individual schools.

**Other Health Impaired:** A disability classification for students with limited strength, vitality or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems, such as a heart condition, autism, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, or diabetes, which adversely affect a child’s educational performance.

**Overtime Pay:** Federal law requires the district to pay support employees overtime pay (or give them “compensation time”), which is one and a half times the regular wage rate of that employee, when the employee works more than 40 hours in a week.

**Parliamentary Procedure:** The governing rules for how a board will conduct its meetings set out in bylaws, often times utilizing Robert’s Rules of Order.

**Payment in Lieu of Taxes:** Payment made by the state in lieu of local property taxes.

**Per Capita Income (PCI):** This measure of wealth is the most recent U.S. Census estimate of income per person by town.

**Minimum Expenditure Requirement (MER):** A statutory requirement intended to encourage a leveling up of per pupil expenditures in towns currently at the low end of the spending scale. This provision was repealed effective July 1, 2007.

**Minutes:** The official summary of the proceedings of a board meeting, showing the manner and time of notice of the meeting, the members present and absent, the matters considered, and all actions taken by the board. For emergency meetings, the minutes must state the nature of the emergency for declaring the meeting.

**Motion:** A proposal by a member in a meeting that the board take certain action. According to Robert's Rules of Order, a motion passes upon a majority of the votes cast, a quorum being present. "When a quorum is present, a majority vote, that is a majority of the votes cast, is sufficient for the adoption of any motion that is in order. "Thus, if 3 members of a 5-member board are present (a quorum), a 2 to 1 vote passes the motion. There are few exceptions.

**Municipal Overburden:** A term often used to describe an unusually high level of non-education service need which limits the ability of towns to support as high a level of educational spending as their wealth might imply.

**National School Lunch Program:** A program which seeks to make available to students enrolled in public schools a lunch, to provide nutritionally adequate meals that are acceptable to students, and to provide assistance to participants to ensure minimum meal requirements are met. The federal government provides grants to assist districts in serving nutritious lunches to students at low cost or for free.

**Need Pupil:** Need pupil is a weighted pupil count used to reflect the higher cost of educating certain students. Each district's pupil count is increased based on the measure of high cost pupils.

**Negligence:** The omission to do something which a reasonable person, guided by those ordinary considerations which ordinarily regulate human affairs, would do, or the doing of something which a reasonable and prudent person would not do.

being "fundamental" rights. If a classification is what courts term a "nonsuspect" classification, then judicial review will hold the classification constitutional if the decision serves a valid governmental purpose.

**Errors and Omissions:** Insurance coverage for the breaking of legal duties by board members because of careless actions, mistakes or failure to act. The term does not include district responsibility for the torts (negligent acts) of district employees which cause bodily or property injury.

**Exempt Records:** Relates to public records which are exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI).

**Executive Sessions:** That portion of a school board meeting in which the board meets in closed session. Executive sessions are permitted only for reasons designated by statute, that being 1) to discuss the employment, appointment performance, evaluation, health, or dismissal of any public officer or employee; 2) strategy and negotiation with respect to pending claims and litigation; 3) security strategy or the deployment of security personnel, or devices affecting public security; 4) the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate when publicity would cause a likelihood of an increased price; or 5) any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records, or the information contained therein, which are protected under the Freedom of Information Act.

**Expulsion:** Any exclusion from school privileges for more than ten days up to one calendar year and is authorized when a student's conduct on campus or at a school-sponsored activity violates a publicized rule of the board of education, seriously disrupts the educational process or endangers persons or property. Students may be expelled for off-campus conduct under certain circumstances including possession of a firearm or deadly weapon and when a student engages in the sale or distribution of drugs.

**Fair Labor Standards Act:** Federal legislation requiring that employees be paid at least the federal minimum wage and that hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week be compensated at one and a half times the regular rate of pay. Because administrators and teachers are exempted from the law, that act applies only to support employees.

**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** A federal law passed in 1993 allowing employees meeting the eligibility requirements (employment for at least one year and at least 1250 hours actually worked in the twelve month period preceding the leave) are eligible for unpaid leave for specified purposes, the leave can extend up to twelve weeks in a twelve month period and the employer is obligated to maintain health insurance benefits during the leave period.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:** A federal statute that requires districts to keep student educational records confidential and not reveal such information without the prior written consent of the parent or student aged 18 or older.

**Free Appropriate Education:** Special education and related services for a child with a disability, which are provided at public expense in conformity with an individualized education program and meet standards set by the State Department of Education. The program must include a statement of the child's present levels of educational performance, a statement of annual goals and short-term instructional objectives, a statement of the specific special education and related services to be provided to the child, a statement of the extent to which the child will participate in regular education programs, the projected dates for starting services, and appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short-term instructional objectives are being achieved.

**Freedom of Information:** State law which requires districts to make copies of public records for the benefit of the public and to have records available for public inspection, subject to certain exceptions listed in the law.

**General Consent:** A formal vote can be avoided on routine matters where there is no opposition by using general consent.

**General Fund:** The fund which provides for education appropriations.

**Gifted and Talented Children:** Students who have shown potential abilities of high performance capability and needing differentiated or accelerated education. "Gifted child educational programs" are those special instructional programs, supportive services, unique educational

governmental entity. Lobbyists are required to register annually with the Connecticut Ethics Commission.

**Local Autonomy:** Powers given to boards of education to make their own decisions in the operation of school district.

**Mainstreaming:** The placement of a child with a disability in the "least restrictive environment," whereby the child is integrated into nonspecial education classes.

**Majority of Board:** A majority of the votes of the quorum present at a meeting is needed to pass a motion.

**Management Rights Clause:** Powers reserved to administration which are not subject to negotiations with employees. What is included within the term will be decided by procedural agreements and/or court decisions.

**Mediation:** The negotiations process by which a third party meets with contending parties and tries to reconcile their differences or persuade them to settle their disputes.

**Meetings:** The conducting of business by the board of education by a majority of members being personally together. Meetings are to be held at specified times and places, are to be convenient to the public, are to be open to the public except when permitted by law, and are to be preceded by public notice of the time and place of the meeting and the subject matters to be considered. This is more specifically defined in the law.

**Megan's Law:** An act requiring sexual offenders to register under certain statutory requirements. The list is maintained by the Department of Public Safety.

**Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR):** The statutory requirement replacing the MER to insure that a portion of a municipality's education grant increase is directed to education.

**Lay on the Table:** “ I move that we table this motion”. A motion which is used to end debate that has become lengthy or repetitious. When it is seconded, the presiding officer immediately puts the question on closing debate. If this receives a two-thirds vote, the pending motion is voted on at once without further discussion.

**Learning Disability:** A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, or mental retardation, or economic disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

**Least Restrictive Environment:** Federal law requires students with disabilities to be placed so that they can, to the extent appropriate to their individual needs and abilities, be educated with disabled students.

**Limited English Proficiency:** Relating to those not born in the United States or whose language is a language other than English, those coming from environments where a language other than English is dominant, and American Indians coming from environments where a language other than English has had a significant impact on their level of English language proficiency, and who, thereby, have difficulty in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language such that they would be denied an opportunity to successfully learn in classrooms taught in English or to successfully participate in society.

**Lobbying:** The promoting, opposing, or attempting to influence any official action.

**Lobbyist:** A person who lobbies members of the legislative, judicial, or executive branches of government to influence any legislation or official action. The term does not include any person representing himself/herself or a client in a professional capacity in a court proceeding or before any

materials, learning settings, and other services which differentiate, supplement, and support the regular educational program in meeting the needs of gifted students.

**Good Faith:** A collective bargaining term. The statutory definition is that both parties in negotiations must be willing to consider proposals in an effort to find a mutually satisfactory basis for agreement and must be willing to discuss their respective contract proposals. Further, if either party objects to the other’s contract proposals, the objecting party must support its objections with rationale.

**Good Faith Immunity:** School board members are entitled to immunity from damages when sued as individuals in cases arising from their functions as board members. The United States Supreme Court has held that members are shielded from liability for civil damages when their conduct does not violate “clearly established” statutory or constitutional rights of which a reasonable person would have known. The defense attaches to board members and employees sued as individuals and cannot be used by the school district or board members sued in their official capacity as board members, which is in effect the same as a suit against the school district.

**Governmental Immunity:** A board of education member may be immune from liability for the discretionary acts of their agents unless their alleged acts involve malice, wantonness or intent to injure, when a statute permits lawsuits and when the failure to act will subject an identifiable person to imminent harm.

**Grandfather Clause:** Section of a bill making provisions of the law inapplicable to activities or individuals involved in the subject of the legislation prior to the enactment of the new legislation.

**Grievance:** An allegation by an employee that the district or its agent has misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated board policy or agreement with employees. In general, any employee complaint about his or her job conditions.

**Grievance Procedure:** Process of answering grievances and seeking possible redress through decisions at progressively higher administrative levels and then by the board.

**Guaranteed Tax Base Formula (GTB):** A formula which provided state aid to towns in an amount equal to the difference between what the town could raise from its own resources and what it could raise at the guaranteed wealth level. This formula was replaced by the ECS in fiscal year 1989-90.

**Head Start:** A federal program providing educational programs for pre-school students from low income families.

**Heterogeneous Grouping:** Grouping students without regard to their ability.

**Immunization:** Prior to admission to school, children need medical certification that the child has received immunizations from statutorily listed illnesses. However, parents may have their children exempted from the requirement for medical or religious reasons.

**Impact Aid:** Also known as “874” money, after Public Law 81-874. Impact aid is financial assistance made by the federal government to school districts upon which federal activities have placed financial burdens by the reason that 1) ad valorem revenues available to the local district have been reduced because of acquisition of real property by the United States, thereby taking the property off the tax rolls; 2) the district educates children residing on federal property; 3) the district educates students whose parents are employed on federal property; or 4) there has been a sudden and substantial increase in school attendance as a result of federal activities. Minimum eligibility for payments for children of parents working on federal property is established by the law, there needing to be a certain number of affected students or a certain percentage of the student body who come from such families. Since the funds received are on a per eligible pupil basis, districts conduct yearly surveys of parents to determine the exact number of eligible students.

**Impact Bargaining:** A collective bargaining term used to describe the union right to demand negotiations over the impact of any changes that may affect conditions of employment.

**Impasse:** The time during the negotiations process after either side announces that agreement cannot be reached.

**In Loco Parentis:** Latin phrase meaning “in place of the parent.” A school has certain rights, such as the right to discipline a student, in the place of the parent while the student is under school supervision.

**Independent Evaluation:** Parents of a child with disabilities have the right to have an evaluation made of the child by one other than those selected by the district, and, if an independent evaluation is made, its results must be considered by the district in forming an individualized education program for the child and may be presented at any hearing regarding the child.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A written statement for a child with disabilities that is developed and implemented in accordance with P.L. 94-142 regulations. The program is developed by a placement team consisting of a certified district employee who is qualified to supervise special education, the child’s teacher (regular and special education), one or both parents, the child, if appropriate, and other individuals at the discretion of the parent or school. The program must include a statement of the child’s present levels of educational performance, a statement of annual goals and short term instructional objectives, a statement of the specific special education and related services to be provided to the child, the extent to which the child will participate in regular education programs, the projected dates for starting services, appropriate objective criteria, evaluation procedures, and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** A federal law addressing the needs of children with disabilities and protecting their right to a free and appropriate public education.