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H.353

Introduced by Representatives Toof of St. Albans Town and Stone of  
Burlington

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Education; course of study; hate speech; racial equity

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the Agency of Education to develop a model curriculum to teach against hate speech and hateful imagery and symbols and to enable students to recognize discrimination. This bill also proposes to require the Agency of Education to develop a model racial equity policy for school districts and for school districts to adopt racial equity policies based on the model policy.

An act relating to racial equity in school districts

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 913 is added to read:

§ 913. MODEL CURRICULUM FOR EDUCATION AGAINST HATE  
SPEECH, HATEFUL IMAGERY, AND DISCRIMINATION

(a) The Secretary shall develop a model curriculum for elementary and secondary schools to teach against hate speech and hateful imagery and

1 symbols and to enable students to recognize discrimination. The curriculum  
2 shall include best practices for teaching these concepts.

3 (b) The Secretary shall:

4 (1) Provide trainings for school personnel on the model curriculum and  
5 best practices described in subsection (a). Each superintendent shall determine  
6 the content, duration, and frequency of training on issues of hate speech,  
7 hateful imagery and symbols, and the recognition of discrimination for the  
8 districts in the superintendent's supervisory union.

9 (2) Provide teaching materials that are appropriate to the age and  
10 learning ability of the students.

11 (3) Provide technical assistance to the local school districts for  
12 implementation of the curriculum.

13 (4) Encourage coordination of effort with existing community resources.

14 Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 563 is amended to read:

15 § 563. POWERS OF SCHOOL BOARDS; FORM OF VOTE

16 The school board of a school district, in addition to other duties and  
17 authority specifically assigned by law:

18 \* \* \*

19 (33) Shall develop, adopt, and ensure implementation of a racial equity  
20 policy that shall be at least as stringent as the model policy developed by the  
21 Secretary. Any school board that fails to adopt one or more of these policies

1 shall be presumed to have adopted the most current model policy or policies  
2 published by the Secretary.

3 Sec. 3. MODEL RACIAL EQUITY POLICY

4 On or before July 1, 2024, the Agency of Education shall develop and  
5 publish a model racial equity policy for school districts. In developing the  
6 model policy, the Agency shall work with stakeholder groups and the Ethnic  
7 and Social Equity Standards Advisory Working Group created under 2019  
8 Acts and Resolves No. 1.

9 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES

10 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023, except Sec. 2, which shall take  
11 effect on July 1, 2024.