

1 Introduced by Committee on Education

2 Date:

3 Subject: Education; miscellaneous

4 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to make
5 miscellaneous changes to education law.

6 An act relating to miscellaneous changes to education law

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

8 * * * State Board of Education * * *

9 Sec. 1. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION STAFFING AND

10 COMPENSATION; STUDY COMMITTEE; REPORT

11 (a) Creation. There is created the State Board of Education Compensation
12 and Staffing Study Committee to examine, evaluate, and report on the
13 compensation and staffing needs of the State Board of Education.

14 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
15 members:

16 (1) one current member of the House of Representatives, who shall be
17 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

18 (2) one current member of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the
19 Committee on Committees;

20 (3) the Secretary of Education or designee, who shall serve as co-chair;

1 (4) the Chair of the State Board of Education or designee, who shall
2 serve as co-chair;

3 (5) the Executive Director of Racial Equity or designee;

4 (6) the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals' Association or
5 designee;

6 (7) the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents Association
7 or designee;

8 (8) the Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association or
9 designee; and

10 (9) the Executive Director of the Vermont National Education
11 Association or designee.

12 (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall evaluate the compensation and
13 staffing structure of the State Board of Education, including the following
14 issues:

15 (1) whether the State Board's current compensation and staffing
16 structure sufficiently enable the Board to carry out its duties and
17 responsibilities;

18 (2) staffing and compensation structures of Vermont State boards and
19 commissions with similar responsibilities to the State Board, including:

20 (A) appellate or quasijudicial duties;

21 (B) rulemaking authority;

1 (C) strategic planning and statewide policy development; and

2 (D) general governance and accountability oversight over a particular
3 subject matter or jurisdiction;

4 (3) whether the current compensation and staffing structure of the State
5 Board creates accessible opportunities for board membership to ensure the
6 makeup of the State Board reflects the diversity and experience of Vermont’s
7 student population; and

8 (4) additional compensation and staffing structure options for the State
9 Board.

10 (d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical,
11 and legal assistance of the Agency of Education and the Agency of
12 Administration.

13 (e) Report. On or before January 15, 2024, the Committee shall submit a
14 written report to House and Senate Committees on Education with its findings
15 and any recommendations for legislative action.

16 (f) Meetings.

17 (1) The Chair of the State Board of Education shall call the first meeting
18 of the Committee to occur on or before August 15, 2023.

19 (2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

20 (3) The Committee shall cease to exist on July 1, 2024.

21 (g) Compensation and reimbursement.

1 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
2 Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee serving in the member’s
3 capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
4 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 23 for not more than 10
5 meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the
6 General Assembly.

7 (2) Other members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem
8 compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A.
9 § 1010 for not more than 10 meetings. These payments shall be made from
10 monies appropriated to the Agency of Education.

11 (h) Appropriation. The sum of \$ 1.00 is appropriated to the Agency of
12 Education from the General Fund in fiscal year 2024 for per diem
13 compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Committee.

14 * * * Course Offerings and Academic Standards * * *

15 Sec. 2. CURRICULUM AUDIT; REPORT

16 (a) Curriculum audit. All Vermont children are entitled to substantially
17 equal educational opportunities. In order to better understand the breadth of
18 course offerings and curriculum differences across the State, the Agency of
19 Education shall contract with an independent third party to conduct and report
20 on a curriculum audit of at least four supervisory unions or supervisory
21 districts, all of which shall have a high percentage of students who are

1 approved for free and reduced-price school meals. On or before January 15,
2 2024, the Agency shall submit a copy of the report to the House and Senate
3 Committees on Education.

4 (b) Appropriation. The sum of \$200,000.00 is appropriated from the
5 General Fund to the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2024 for the purpose of
6 contracting with an independent third party to conduct a curriculum audit as
7 described in subsection (a) of this section.

8 Sec. 3. PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING; STUDY COMMITTEE

9 (a) Creation. There is created the Proficiency-Based Learning Study
10 Committee to study proficiency-based learning and proficiency-based
11 graduation requirements as they are used in Vermont, as required by the
12 Agency of Education, Education Quality Standards (CVR 22-000-003), and to
13 make recommendations for whether proficiency-based learning is the most
14 effective way to ensure Vermont students attain rigorous standards in high-
15 quality programs or whether there are other systems of instruction, assessment,
16 grading, and academic reporting that would better serve Vermont students.

17 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
18 members:

19 (1) the Secretary of Education or designee;

20 (2) the Chair of the State Board of Education or designee;

1 (3) the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals’ Association or
2 designee;

3 (4) the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents Association
4 or designee;

5 (5) the Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association or
6 designee; and

7 (6) the Executive Director of the Vermont National Education
8 Association or designee.

9 (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study proficiency-based
10 learning and proficiency-based graduation requirements, including the
11 following issues:

12 (1) the statewide implementation of proficiency-based learning and
13 proficiency-based graduation requirements and to what extent there is
14 consistency in application across all supervisory unions;

15 (2) other states’ experience with proficiency-based learning;

16 (3) alternatives to proficiency-based learning, including other systems of
17 instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting; and

18 (4) recommendations for Vermont assessment standards and the efforts
19 needed to ensure successful and substantially equal implementation across
20 Vermont.

1 (d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative, technical,
2 and legal assistance of the Vermont Agency of Education.

3 (e) Report. On or before January 15, 2024, the Committee shall submit a
4 written report to House and Senate Committees on Education with its findings
5 and any recommendations for legislative action.

6 (f) Meetings.

7 (1) The Secretary of Education or designee shall call the first meeting of
8 the Committee to occur on or before August 15, 2023.

9 (2) The Committee shall select a chair from among its members at the
10 first meeting.

11 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

12 (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on January 16, 2024.

13 * * * Postsecondary School Marketing * * *

14 Sec. 4. VERMONT POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL MARKETING

15 The sum of \$350,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the
16 Agency of Tourism and Marketing in fiscal year 2024 for the purpose of
17 marketing Vermont postsecondary schools.

18 * * * Prekindergarten Education and Out-of-State Prekindergarten Education

19 Programs * * *

20 Sec. 5. OUT-OF-STATE PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION; REPORT

1 In order to increase high-quality prekindergarten education opportunities for
2 students that live in school districts on the Vermont border, the Agency of
3 Education shall evaluate public and private prekindergarten education
4 standards and regulations in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York
5 and determine if those standards and regulations are substantially aligned with
6 the Vermont Early Learning Standards. The Agency shall also evaluate other
7 Vermont prequalification standards that may prevent a public or private
8 prekindergarten education program in these states from prequalification in
9 Vermont and determine if state regulations and oversight in those areas are
10 also substantially aligned with Vermont regulations. On or before January 15,
11 2024, the Agency shall issue a written report to the Senate and House
12 Committees on Education with its findings, including any recommendations
13 for legislative action to increase high-quality prekindergarten education
14 opportunities in school districts on the Vermont border.

15 Sec. 6. 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 66, Sec. 1 is amended to read:

16 Sec. 1. WORKING GROUP ON THE STATUS OF LIBRARIES IN
17 VERMONT; REPORT

18 (a) Creation. There is created the Working Group on the Status of
19 Libraries in Vermont to study and report on the statewide status of Vermont's
20 libraries. The Working Group is formed with the intent of strengthening and
21 supporting libraries of all sizes and improving library services for the public.

1 (b) Membership. The Working Group shall be composed of the following
2 members:

3 (1) the State Librarian;

4 (2) the President of the Vermont Library Association or designee;

5 (3) the Executive Director of the Vermont Humanities Council or
6 designee;

7 (4) three representatives of public libraries, who shall be from libraries
8 of different sizes and from different regions of the State, appointed by the State
9 Librarian;

10 (5) two representatives of public school libraries, who shall be from
11 schools of different sizes and from different regions of the State, appointed by
12 the Vermont School Library Association;

13 (6) two representatives of college and university libraries, appointed by
14 the President of the College and Special Libraries Section of the Vermont
15 Library Association; and

16 (7) one public library trustee, appointed by the President of the Friends
17 and Trustees Section of the Vermont Library Association.

18 (c) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall study:

19 (1) library services for specific segments of the Vermont population,
20 including senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, youths and children,
21 immigrant and migrant communities, and people living in poverty;

1 (2) the role that libraries play in emergency preparedness, cultural
2 diversity and inclusion, public health and safety, community identity and
3 resiliency, economic development, and access to public programs and services;

4 (3) the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on library operations and
5 services; ~~and~~

6 (4) whether current law provides adequate public safety protections for
7 libraries; and

8 ~~(4)~~(5) the current overall status of Vermont libraries, which may include
9 information related to programming, collections, facilities, technology, and
10 staffing.

11 (A) Programming. The Working Group may study the types and
12 frequency of library programs, attendance at library programs, and whether
13 library programs are meeting community needs. The study of programming
14 may include an assessment of public engagement and outreach surrounding
15 library programming as well as the opportunities for nonlibrary programs and
16 groups to access Vermont libraries.

17 (B) Collections. The Working Group may study the size and
18 diversity of library holdings and assess the strengths and gaps in materials
19 available to Vermonters. The study of collections may include an assessment
20 of how libraries may best share resources across differing libraries and

1 communities, whether libraries offer community-specific resources, and
2 whether libraries maintain special collections or historical artifacts.

3 (C) Facilities. The Working Group may study whether library
4 facilities and buildings could be improved with regard to energy efficiency,
5 accessibility, flexibility, human health and safety, historic preservation, and
6 intergenerational needs.

7 (D) Technology. The Working Group may study whether Vermont
8 libraries have sufficient access to basic technological resources, ~~cyber security~~
9 cybersecurity resources, high-speed Internet, electronic catalogs, interlibrary
10 loan and other interoperable systems, and appropriate hardware and software.

11 (E) Staff. The Working Group may study staffing levels at Vermont
12 libraries, whether staffing levels are sufficient to meet community needs,
13 whether library staff compensation and benefits are sufficient, how libraries
14 rely on volunteers, and what resources are available for workforce
15 development and training of library staff.

16 (d) Public input. As part of the study and report, the Working Group shall
17 solicit feedback from the general public and library users around the State.
18 The Working Group may examine models for library management and
19 organization in other states, including the formation of statewide service
20 networks.

1 (e) Data to be used. The data used in the analysis of library services and
2 operations may be from 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
3 Postpandemic data may also be used to assess the status of library services and
4 operations.

5 (f) Consultation with the Board of Libraries. The Working Group may
6 solicit feedback from the Board of Libraries.

7 (g) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative,
8 technical, and legal assistance of the Department of Libraries.

9 (h) Report. On or before November 1, 2023, the Working Group shall
10 submit a report to the House and Senate Committees on Education. The report
11 shall contain:

12 (1) specific and detailed findings and proposals concerning the issues set
13 forth in subsection (c) of this section, including recommendations for
14 legislative action regarding public safety protections on library property;

15 (2) recommendations for updating the statutes, rules, standards, and the
16 governance structures of Vermont libraries to ensure equitable access for
17 Vermont residents, efficient use of resources, and quality in the provision of
18 services;

19 (3) recommendations related to the funding needs of Vermont libraries,
20 including capital, ongoing, and special funding; and

1 (4) any other information or recommendations that the Working Group
2 may deem necessary.

3 (i) Meetings.

4 (1) The State Librarian shall be the Chair of the Working Group.

5 (2) The Chair shall call the first meeting of the Working Group to occur
6 within 45 days after the effective date of this act.

7 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

8 (4) The Working Group shall cease to exist on December 1, 2023.

9 (j) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Working Group
10 shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as
11 permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than 12 meetings. These
12 payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Department of
13 Libraries.

14 (k) Appropriation. The sum of \$12,000.00 is appropriated to the
15 Department of Libraries from the General Fund in fiscal year 2022 for per
16 diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the
17 Working Group.

18 * * * Driver Education * * *

19 Sec. 7. REGIONAL STUDENT DRIVER EDUCATION CLINICS; PILOT
20 PROJECT; APPROPRIATION

1 (a) Pilot program. On or before December 15, 2023, the Agency of
2 Education and the Department of Motor Vehicles, in partnership with
3 interested school districts, shall establish a regional pilot student driver clinic
4 program to provide the required minimum 6 hours of behind-the-wheel
5 instruction by a certified driver education instructor as required by State Board
6 of Education rule.

7 (1) The Agency and Department shall appoint one or more certified
8 driver education instructors who shall assist in the development of the model
9 program.

10 (2) The pilot program shall be designed to be implemented on a regional
11 level, with an adequate number of programs provided to meet the reasonably
12 anticipated needs of all public and approved independent schools participating
13 in the pilot program. The Agency and Department shall partner with
14 participating school districts to define regions.

15 (3) The pilot program shall meet all legal requirements of student driver
16 education and training programs.

17 (4) The Agency and Department shall adopt policies, procedures, and
18 guidelines necessary to implement the pilot program.

19 (b) Implementation. Regional pilot programs developed in accordance
20 with the model program created under subsection (a) of this section shall begin
21 offering student driver clinics on or before July 15, 2024.

