



To: Senate Education

From: Jay Nichols , Executive Director

Date: 2/23/23

Subject: Draft 1.1 of Committee Bill, DR #23-909: An act relating to miscellaneous changes to education law.

*The Vermont Principals' Association supports school leaders to improve the equity and quality of educational opportunities for all students.*

Officially, for the record, Jay Nichols, Executive Director of the Vermont Principals' Association. These are my initial thoughts on Draft 1.1 of the Miscellaneous Education Committee Bill broken down by sections of the bill.

#### *Section 1: State Board Compensation Study*

We fully support. Further, we believe for our State Board to be effective it needs to have appropriate levels of staffing support. We also think the composition of the Board should be analyzed. The vast majority of students in Vermont are served in public schools; it seems that the composition of the Board should be more aligned with those ratios than the recent composition of the Board might indicate. As we all know, representation matters and having more proportional representation on the State Board supports equity.

#### *Section 2: Statewide Course offerings*

My only concern is making sure the AOE has the resources necessary to accomplish everything federal law requires them to do and anything additionally required by the State of Vermont. I continually worry about the capacity of the AOE to successfully function at the level necessary to be truly successful in providing oversight and providing appropriate levels of support for the field.

### *Section 3: Study on Proficiency Based Learning Study Committee*

The Agency of Education has renewed leadership in this area with the portrait of a graduate work and practitioner's around the state continue to iterate, revise and improve their systems and approaches. We do not feel this is necessary nor a good use of time without appropriations for continued development and implementation.

### *Section 4: Remote Teacher Grant Program*

We support this concept as an option when there is no other viable option available. We would like to see what type of program can be implemented in Vermont and would like to encourage use of the Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative as an option.

### *Section 5: Post Secondary School Marketing*

As you have heard from me in earlier testimony in regards to the Teach in Vermont Campaign that the VPA has coined, we are very hopeful that this comes to fruition in some meaningful form.

### *Section 6: Pre Kindergarten Education*

Instead of commenting directly on the provisions of Section 6 I would like to state publicly once again that it is time for Vermont to step up our game in public education and provide full day universal early kindergarten within our public schools for all four year olds. If we are really serious about improving reading skills of students, providing appropriate levels of social and emotional support for students as well as academic readiness experiences then now is the time to be bold.

### *Section 7: Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont*

No comment on this section.