

1 H.755

2 SHORT FORM

3 Introduced by Representative Scheuermann of Stowe

4 Referred to Committee on

5 Date:

6 Subject: Education; governance; education funding; taxation

7 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to make changes to the structure of
8 education governance and finance while ensuring substantial equality of
9 educational opportunity for all students throughout Vermont.

10 (1) The bill would eliminate existing supervisory unions and replace
11 them with 14 or 15 education districts (“EDs”). The boundaries of the new
12 EDs would be roughly the same as the current regional technical center
13 districts. If the voters of a current school district approved, the current school
14 district could seek permission from the commissioner of education to join a
15 different ED.

16 (2) The bill would replace local school district boards with advisory
17 councils, which would focus on academic policy and educational quality.

18 (3) Each ED would assume the powers, responsibilities, assets, and
19 liabilities of the current school districts and supervisory unions within its
20 boundaries. Among other things, the ED would be responsible for:

1 (A) all aspects of special education, including the hiring of special
2 educators, the assignment of their services to schools within the ED, and the
3 development of individualized education plans (“IEP”); provided, however,
4 that each student’s IEP team shall consist of those individuals required by state
5 board of education rule 2363.4 and representatives from the ED;

6 (B) the purchase and distribution of supplies to all schools within the
7 ED;

8 (C) financial and student data management for all schools within the
9 ED;

10 (D) transportation services; and

11 (E) the hiring of all educators, administrators, and staff employed
12 within the ED, with contracts negotiated and executed at the ED level.

13 (4) The bill would provide students with the option to attend any
14 elementary or secondary school within the district. Each ED would work with
15 its advisory councils to develop procedures to ensure that no school exceeds its
16 capacity. The bill would also create a transition period during which any
17 student attending a school outside the ED would be permitted to complete his
18 or her education at that school.

19 (5) Differences among schools would be respected. In order to facilitate
20 school choice, however, each ED would work with its advisory councils

1 toward the goal of adopting common standards, requirements, curriculum, and
2 scheduling to the extent possible.

3 (6) Within two months after formation, the new ED would be required
4 to complete an inventory of all existing special education services available at
5 schools within the ED. The ED would develop a proposal for a more efficient
6 way to deliver services and allocate resources within the ED pursuant to
7 guidelines to be developed by the state board of education. The ED would
8 provide both the inventory and the proposal to the commissioner of education
9 for review.

10 (7) The department would create, maintain, and make available to the
11 public current data from the EDs, including:

12 (A) the total cost of providing special education services within each
13 ED;

14 (B) a breakdown of special education costs by disability category;
15 and

16 (C) measurable academic and other outcomes for students with IEPs.

17 (8) The department would develop and publicize guidelines related to:

18 (A) best practices for both the cost and the provision of special
19 education services that are based upon the proposals provided by EDs pursuant
20 to subdivision (6) and the data collected pursuant to subdivision (7) of this
21 statement of purpose;

