

1 H.698

2 Introduced by Representative Turner of Milton

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Education; school districts; budgets; education spending; student  
6 performance

7 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to require the commissioner of  
8 education to develop nationally informed guidelines to assist school boards to  
9 develop budgets for clearly defined categories of education spending and to  
10 require the school board to make the guidelines available to the electorate prior  
11 to voting the budget at the district's annual meeting. This bill would also  
12 require the commissioner to develop a system to measure and rank each school  
13 district's annual percentage change in student performance on standardized  
14 testing as compared to its annual percentage change in education spending.  
15 Annually, the 10 most highly ranked districts would receive a grant of  
16 \$50,000.00 each. The per-pupil increase in spending for each of the 10 most  
17 poorly ranked districts would be considered excess spending for purposes of  
18 determining its district spending adjustment.

19 An act relating to guidelines for developing school budgets and to education  
20 costs and student performance

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

2 \* \* \* Budgeting Guidelines \* \* \*

3 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 212 is amended to read:

4 § 212. COMMISSIONER'S DUTIES GENERALLY

5 The commissioner shall execute those policies adopted by the state board in  
6 the legal exercise of its powers and shall:

7 \* \* \*

8 (18) Develop and annually update and publish guidelines to assist  
9 school boards to develop budgets for education spending on a per-pupil basis  
10 divided into clearly defined spending categories and based upon nationally  
11 recognized best practices and national and regional trends.

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

13 § 563. POWERS OF SCHOOL BOARDS; FORM OF VOTE IF BUDGET

14 EXCEEDS BENCHMARK AND DISTRICT SPENDING IS ABOVE  
15 AVERAGE

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

18 \* \* \*

19 (10) Shall prepare and distribute to the electorate, not less than ten days  
20 prior to the district's annual meeting, a report of the conditions and needs of  
21 the district school system, including the superintendent's, supervisory union

1 treasurer's, and school district treasurer's annual report for the previous school  
2 year, the balance of any reserve funds established pursuant to 24 V.S.A.  
3 § 2804, a summary of the town auditor's report as to fiscal years which are  
4 audited by town auditors as required by 24 V.S.A. § 1681, a summary of the  
5 public accountant's report as to fiscal years which are audited by a public  
6 accountant, a copy of the commissioner's current guidelines developed  
7 pursuant to § 212(18) of this title, and a notice of the time and place where the  
8 full report of the town auditor or the public accountant will be available for  
9 inspection and copying at cost. Each town auditor's and public accountant's  
10 report shall comply with 24 V.S.A. § 1683(a). At a school district's annual  
11 meeting, the electorate may vote to provide notice of availability of the report  
12 required by this subdivision to the electorate in lieu of distributing the report.  
13 If the electorate of the school district votes to provide notice of availability, it  
14 must specify how notice of availability shall be given, and such notice of  
15 availability shall be provided to the electorate at least 30 days before the  
16 district's annual or special meeting.

17 \* \* \* Education Costs and Student Performance \* \* \*

18 Sec. 3. 16 V.S.A. § 217 is added to read:

19 § 217. EDUCATION COSTS AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

20 (a) The commissioner shall develop and implement a system to measure  
21 each school district's annual percentage change in student performance on

1 standardized testing as compared to its annual percentage change in education  
2 spending. The commissioner will annually rank each school district based on  
3 the best increase in student performance for the greatest decrease or lowest  
4 increase in education spending.

5 (b) Annually, the commissioner shall publish the school district rankings  
6 together with data detailing each district's budgeted education spending,  
7 annual percentage change in education spending, test scores, and annual  
8 percentage change in test scores.

9 (c) Annually, the commissioner shall pay from the education fund a grant  
10 of \$50,000.00 each to the 10 most highly ranked districts.

11 (d) The per-equalized-pupil amount of the increase in education spending  
12 for each of the 10 most poorly ranked districts shall be considered excess  
13 spending for purposes of determining its district spending adjustment pursuant  
14 to 32 V.S.A. § 5401(12) and (13).

15 \* \* \* Effective Dates \* \* \*

16 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES; IMPLEMENTATION

17 (a) This act shall take effect on passage.

18 (b) The commissioner of education shall develop the measurement system  
19 required in Sec. 3 of this act by September 1, 2012 and shall publish the first  
20 set of rankings required by that section on or before July 1, 2013.