

BILL AS INTRODUCED AND AS PASSED BY SENATE

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2 Introduced by Senator Mullin

3 Referred to Committee on Education

4 Date: January 3, 2012

5 Subject: Education; supervisory unions; consolidation

6 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to direct the state board of education
7 to consolidate supervisory unions into 16 supervisory unions with
8 approximately the same boundaries as the technical center regions.

9 An act relating to consolidation of supervisory unions

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

11 ~~Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 261 is amended to read:~~

12 ~~§ 261. ORGANIZATION AND ADJUSTMENT OF SUPERVISORY~~
13 ~~UNIONS~~

14 ~~(a) The state board shall review on its own initiative or when requested as~~
15 ~~per subsection (b) of this section and may regroup the organize school districts,~~
16 ~~except for interstate school districts, into 16 supervisory unions of the state or~~
17 ~~create new supervisory unions in such manner as to afford increased efficiency~~
18 ~~or greater convenience and economy and to facilitate K-12 curriculum~~
19 ~~planning and coordination as changed conditions may seem to require that, to~~

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1 ~~the extent possible, shall follow the same boundaries as the technical center~~
2 ~~service regions created pursuant to section 1531 of this title, to promote~~
3 ~~increased efficiency, convenience, and cost-effectiveness, and to facilitate~~
4 ~~K-12 curriculum planning.~~

5 (b) Any school district ~~which~~ that has so voted at its annual school district
6 meeting, if ~~said~~ the meeting has been properly warned regarding such a vote,
7 may apply to the state board of education for adjustment of the ~~existing~~
8 supervisory union of which it is a component district. The state board shall
9 give timely consideration to such requests and may regroup the school districts
10 of the area so as to ensure reasonable supervision of all public schools ~~therein~~.

11 (c) ~~The state board may designate any school district, including a unified~~
12 ~~union district, as a supervisory district if it will offer schools in grades K-12~~
13 ~~and is large enough to support the planning and administrative functions of a~~
14 ~~supervisory union. [Repealed.]~~

15 (d) Upon application by a supervisory union board, the state board may
16 waive any requirements of chapter 5 or 7 of this title with respect to the
17 supervisory union board structure, board composition, or board meetings, or
18 the staffing pattern of the supervisory union, if it can be demonstrated that such
19 a waiver will result in efficient and effective operations of the supervisory
20 union, will not result in any disproportionate representation, and is otherwise
21 ~~in the public interest.~~

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1 ~~Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 262 is amended to read:~~

2 § 262. MEETINGS SUPERVISORY UNION BOARD; ELECTION OF
3 OFFICERS

4 (a) ~~Within thirty days from the date a supervisory union is established by~~
5 ~~the state board, the commissioner or his or her designee shall call a meeting of~~
6 ~~the school directors of the school districts in the supervisory union. The~~
7 ~~number of directors shall be determined and directors shall be elected~~
8 ~~according to section 266 of this title. Within 30 days thereafter, the~~
9 ~~commissioner or his or her designee shall call a meeting and the board shall~~
10 ~~elect a chairman, and other necessary officers to serve until the first regular~~
11 ~~annual election of officers. The school board of each school district within the~~
12 ~~state, except interstate school districts, shall select from its current membership~~
13 ~~one or more representatives to its supervisory union board as follows:~~

14 (1) The school board of a district that employs no teacher shall select
15 one representative.

16 (2) All other school boards shall select:

17 (A) One member if fewer than 4,000 people live in the district.

18 (B) Two members if more than 3,999 and fewer than 8,000 people
19 live in the district.

20 (C) Three members if more than 7,999 people live in the district.

21 * * *

1 ~~Sec. 3. REPEAL~~

2 ~~16 V.S.A. § 266 (school board having more than one member) is repealed.~~

3 Sec. 4. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

4 ~~(a) The state board of education shall publish proposed supervisory union~~
5 ~~boundaries developed in the manner and for the purposes set forth in Sec. 1 of~~
6 ~~this act on or before September 1, 2012. The board shall provide an~~
7 ~~opportunity for written public comment following publication of the proposal.~~
8 ~~The board shall announce the final boundaries of the new supervisory unions~~
9 ~~("new supervisory unions") on or before January 1, 2013.~~

10 ~~(b) The new supervisory unions are established on July 1, 2013, and all~~
11 ~~previously existing supervisory unions shall cease to exist.~~

12 ~~(c) Within 30 days after the state board of education announces the new~~
13 ~~supervisory unions under subsection (a) of this section, the school board of~~
14 ~~each school district within the state, except interstate school districts, shall:~~

15 ~~(1) select from its current membership representatives to the board of~~
16 ~~the new supervisory union pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A.~~
17 ~~§ 262(a); and~~

18 ~~(2) shall submit to the state board of education the names of the~~
19 ~~representatives.~~

20 ~~(d) Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, within 15 days~~
21 ~~after the state board receives notification that every school district within the~~

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1 ~~boundaries of a new supervisory union has selected representatives, the~~
2 commissioner or the commissioner's designee shall call an initial meeting of
3 the representatives to that new supervisory union to elect a chair and other
4 necessary officers to serve until the new supervisory union's first annual
5 election of officers.

6 (e) After the initial meeting required in subsection (d) of this section, each
7 group of representatives selected in subsection (c) of this section is authorized
8 to and shall conduct business through June 30, 2013 for the limited purposes of
9 organizing and transitioning to the new supervisory union and may enter into
10 any necessary agreements for those purposes. On July 1, 2013, the
11 representatives shall be the directors of the board of the new supervisory union
12 until the new supervisory union's first annual election of officers.

13 (f) Nothing in this act shall affect the validity of any contract entered into
14 by a supervisory union or school district prior to July 1, 2013.

15 Sec. 5. STATUTORY REVISION

16 On or before January 1, 2013, legislative council staff shall prepare a draft
17 bill incorporating any statutory amendments necessary to effect transition to
18 and operation of the new supervisory unions.

19 Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

20 (a) Secs. 1, 2, and 3 of this act shall take effect on July 1, 2013.

21 (b) This section and Secs. 4 and 5 of this act shall take effect on passage.

Sec. 1. SUPERVISORY UNION SIZE AND STRUCTURE

(a) The secretary of administration or designee, in consultation with the commissioner of education or designee, shall explore the purpose, structure, duties, and authority of supervisory unions and design a revised structure based roughly on existing technical center service regions that results in no more than three supervisory unions within each region. The primary purpose of any design shall be to improve education quality. The secretary shall analyze the feasibility of the revised structure and shall develop a plan of transition. Among other things, the secretary shall:

(1) consider the optimal size of supervisory unions, in terms of geography and numbers of students, technical centers, schools, and school districts served;

(2) consider structural elements, such as:

(A) management models;

(B) staffing, including the most appropriate way to address existing contracts, staff consolidation, and salary equalization;

(C) special education services;

(D) financial and other data collection and management systems;

(E) transportation, including ownership of buses, merger of systems, and consolidation of routes;

(F) supervisory union boards, including structure, selection of members, district representation, and the purpose, authority, and membership of executive committees;

(G) supervisory union budgets, including the manner in which they are adopted and the method by which costs are assessed to the member districts;

(H) ownership of real and personal property;

(I) ability to borrow money; and

(J) alignment of curricula and calendars;

(3) consider ways in which the department and state board of education would support transition to a proposed structure; and

(4) estimate both the financial cost of transitioning to and the potential savings in the proposed structure.

(b) By January 15, 2013, the secretary shall report to the senate and house committees on education on the work required by this section. The secretary

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shall also provide recommendations for legislative action necessary to implement its proposed plan.