

1 H.290

2 Introduced by Representatives Christie of Hartford, Clarkson of Woodstock,  
3 Devereux of Mount Holly, Sweaney of Windsor, Higley of  
4 Lowell, Hubert of Milton, Lewis of Berlin, and Townsend of  
5 South Burlington

6 Referred to Committee on

7 Date:

8 Subject: Education; secondary schools; elementary schools; student-to-adult  
9 ratios

10 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require  
11 minimum student-to-teacher, student-to-school-level-administrator, and  
12 student-to-district-level-staff ratios by July 1, 2018. The bill would provide tax  
13 incentives for district compliance with all three the ratios before that date and  
14 would impose tax penalties for failure to comply with any one of the ratios  
15 after that date.

16 An act relating to requiring minimum student-to-adult ratios in public  
17 schools and school districts

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

1 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 4004 is added to read:

2 § 4004. MINIMUM STUDENT-TO-ADULT RATIOS; FAILURE TO  
3 COMPLY

4 (a) Definitions. As used in this section:

5 (1) “Teacher” means any person licensed to be employable as a teacher  
6 who is employed as a teacher by a school district or supervisory union and is  
7 providing direct instruction to students in one or more elementary or secondary  
8 grades.

9 (2) “Administrator” means any person employed as a principal, assistant  
10 principal, special education director, essential early education director, or Title  
11 I coordinator.

12 (3) “Staff” means all paid personnel employed by a school district and  
13 all teachers as defined in subdivision (1) of this subsection, but shall exclude:

14 (A) central office personnel;

15 (B) operations and maintenance personnel;

16 (C) transportation personnel;

17 (D) food service personnel; and

18 (E) enterprise or community service operations personnel.

19 (b) Student-to-district-staff ratio. For each public school district, the ratio  
20 of the number of students to FTE staff employed in the district shall not be  
21 smaller than 10:1.

1        (c) Student-to-school-level-administrator ratio. For each school operated  
2        by a public school district, the ratio of the number of students to FTE  
3        school-level administrators employed in the school shall not be smaller  
4        than 100:1.

5        (d) Student-to-teacher ratio. Except as provided in subsection (e), for each  
6        school operated by a public school district, the ratio of the number of students  
7        to full-time-equivalent (FTE) teachers in any class offered by the school shall  
8        not be smaller than 15:1.

9        (e) Applicability.

10        (1) The provisions of subsection (d) of this section shall not apply to a  
11        class providing services solely to students:

12                (A) with an individualized education program; or

13                (B) who are English language learners.

14        (2) The provisions of subsection (d) of this section shall not apply to a  
15        class exclusively or primarily offering instruction in:

16                (A) physical education;

17                (B) a foreign language;

18                (C) driver education; or

19                (D) the fine arts.

20        (3) The provisions of subsection (d) of this section shall not apply to a  
21        course of independent study.

1           (4) For purposes of subsection (d) of this section, an elementary school  
2           class consisting of students in two or more grades shall be considered as  
3           one class.

4           (5) For grades 7 through 12, subsection (d) of this section shall apply  
5           only to classes offered in the four core subject areas of English, mathematics,  
6           science, and social studies.

7           (6) The provisions of subsection (d) of this section shall not apply to  
8           classes offered by a career technical education center, except for classes in the  
9           four core subject areas identified in subdivision (5) of this subsection.

10          (f) In each year that a school district fails to meet one or more of the three  
11          ratios required in this section, it shall be subject to a tax penalty in the next  
12          fiscal year calculated as follows:

13           (1) The numbers for any of the three ratios that did not meet the required  
14           ratio, aggregated to the district level, shall be compared to the required ratios to  
15           obtain the percentage by which each actual ratio is below the required ratio.

16           (2) Each percentage calculated in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall  
17           be multiplied by one-third.

18           (3) The district's tax rate shall be increased by the percentage or the sum  
19           of the percentages calculated in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

1       Sec. 2. EARLY COMPLIANCE WITH RATIOS; INCENTIVES

2           (a) A school district that meets or exceeds all three ratios required in Sec. 1  
3       of this act in fiscal year 2017 or fiscal year 2018 shall receive a tax incentive in  
4       the first fiscal year following the year of compliance, calculated as follows:

5           (1) The numbers for each of the three ratios, aggregated to the district  
6       level, shall be compared to the required ratios to obtain the percentage by  
7       which each actual ratio exceeds the required ratio.

8           (2) Each percentage calculated in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall  
9       be multiplied by one-third.

10          (3) The district's tax rate shall be reduced by the sum of the three  
11       percentages calculated in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

12          (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, a district that met or  
13       exceeded all three required ratios in fiscal year 2016 shall not be eligible for an  
14       incentive under this section.

15       Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATES

16          (a) Sec. 1 shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

17          (b) Sec. 2 shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

18          (c) This section shall take effect on July 1, 2015.