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H.191

As introduced with one addition in yellow

DR15-1034; Secs. 9–10 – Proposed Replacement (Rep Manwaring)

An act relating to Small School Competitive Grants Programs

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

Sec. **9**. 16 V.S.A. § 4017 is added to read:

§ 4017. SMALL SCHOOL SUPPORT COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “Average grade size” means the two-year average enrollment divided by the number of grades taught in the district on October 1. For purposes of this calculation, kindergarten and prekindergarten programs shall be counted together as one grade.

(2) “Eligible school district” means a school district that operates at least one school and has an average grade size of 20 or fewer.

(3) “Geographic isolation” means that the Secretary has determined, on an annual basis, that the driving times, distances, and travel routes are an obstacle to transporting students, consistent with the methodology used by the Secretary in response to 2009 Acts and Resolves No. 153, Sec. 21(1). A determination by the Secretary of whether a district is geographically isolated under this section shall be final.

1 (4) “School district” means a town, city, incorporated, interstate, or
2 union school district or a joint contract school established under subchapter 1
3 of chapter 11 of this title.

4 (b) Small schools support competitive grant program. Annually, the
5 Secretary shall award small schools support grants on a competitive basis to
6 eligible school districts that have applied for the grant. When evaluating and
7 prioritizing grant applications, the Secretary’s considerations shall include:

8 (1) the relative geographic isolation of the school district;

9 (2) the district’s student to staff ratios;

10 (3) the extent to which there is excess capacity in neighboring districts;

11 (4) the district’s geographic proximity to other districts in which there is
12 excess capacity; and

13 (5) the district’s demonstrated intent to consolidate its governance
14 structure with one or more other districts; and

15 (6) other criterion designed to assist the districts to understand the
16 realities of continuing to operate in the current structure and still achieve high
17 quality outcomes for students.

18 (c) Annually, the General Assembly shall appropriate from the Education
19 Fund the total amount available for grants awarded under this section.

20 (d) The Board shall adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to
21 administer this section.

1 Sec. 2. REPEAL

2 16 V.S.A. § 4015 (small school support) is repealed.

3 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATES

4 (a) Sec. 1 shall take effect on July 1, 2016 and shall apply to grants made
5 for fiscal year 2017 and after.

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

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