



Vermont
Superintendents
Association



To: Representative David Sharpe, Chair, House Education Committee
From: VSBA, VSA, VCSEA, VPA
Re: Proposed Strike All Language for Special Education Funding Bill
Date: February 5, 2018

Dear Rep. Sharpe,

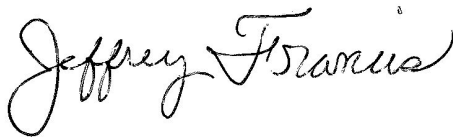
As requested by the Committee, representatives from our four associations met this morning to develop an outline for a possible strike all to the Committee's special education funding bill. We recommend that the substitute language include the following elements:

- 1) Findings - based on the DMG and UVM reports
- 2) Establish that it is the policy of the state of Vermont to move to a census-based funding model for special education in FY 2021. Full implementation of the model will occur over three years.
- 3) Establish that the goal of moving to a census-based funding model is to both achieve efficiencies and improve service for children and families.
- 4) Establish a Working Group
 - **Charge** - develop a detailed implementation plan that includes analysis of the following issues, plus any additional issues identified by the working group:
 - Evaluate different funding models and assumptions used in the UVM study and make a recommendation regarding which funding assumptions/model to use
 - Recommend weights to account for factors such as poverty; ELL; proximity to community based mental health services; rurality
 - Develop staffing plan at the AOE to support changes in practice
 - Identify key transition tasks
 - Develop a detailed implementation plan that incorporates both funding and instructional practice change
 - Recommend changes to statute or regulation needed to accomplish the transition
 - Develop a plan to step down state funding contribution, informed by the impact of DMG implementation
 - Conduct a full analysis and make recommendations re: a 2-tier extraordinary cost reimbursement model

- **Resources** - The Agency of Education shall provide logistical support to the work group. The group will receive briefings and technical assistance from UVM and DMG, and will be supported by a facilitator with expertise on special education funding and systems. The group shall also have access to a special education attorney.
- **Membership** - In selecting representation to the working group, Associations should consider professional experience and expertise of the members of the group as well as the characteristics and region of the systems represented. The goal is to have a well-balanced working group reflecting system characteristics and professional expertise.
 - VCSEA selects two practitioners
 - VPA selects one practitioner
 - VSA selects one practitioner
 - NEA selects one practitioner
 - A representative of Vermont Legal Aid's Disability Law Project
 - VASBO selects two representatives
 - Executive Directors for VCSEA, VSA, VPA, VSBA, VNEA serve and/or select a designee
 - AOE has three representatives (one with management authority for special education practices; one with financial responsibility; one with program responsibility)
- **Timing of Report** - Working group shall have an initial meeting upon enactment of the legislation and shall meet no less than monthly with an interim report issued by November 1, 2018. The interim report shall include the group's recommendation re: funding model and assumptions. A final report with additional recommendations will be issued by September 15, 2019.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with these suggested changes. Please let us know if you have any questions or would like us to come and present this concept to the Committee.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Francis, Vermont Superintendents Association



Nicole Mace, Vermont School Boards Association

Jay Nichols

Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Traci Sawyers'.

Traci Sawyers, Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators