

1 Introduced by Committee on Education

2 Date:

3 Subject: Education; COVID-19; school districts; fiscal year 2021 budgets

4 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes, due to the
5 COVID-19 state of emergency, to provide options for establishing fiscal year
6 2021 budgets for school districts that do not have voter approved budgets.

7 An act relating to providing options for establishing fiscal year 2021 school
8 district budgets due to the COVID-19 state of emergency

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

10 Sec. 1. SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGETS

11 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, if the fiscal year
12 2021 budget of a school district has not been approved by voters on or before
13 the effective date of this act, the board of the school district may, on or before
14 June 30, 2020, select one of these options:

15 (1) request the Agency of Education to authorize an amount of
16 education spending for the school district equal to the education spending
17 amount authorized by the district's 2020 fiscal year school budget; or

18 (2) adopt the fiscal year 2021 budget, provided that:

1 (A) if the school board proposed a fiscal year 2021 budget to voters
2 that was defeated, then the budget adopted by the school board shall be less
3 than the amount of the budget that was defeated; or

4 (B) if, on or before the effective date of this act, the school board has
5 warned a fiscal year 2021 budget that has not been voted upon, then the budget
6 adopted by the school board shall be equal to or less than the amount of the
7 warned budget.

8 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary:

9 (1) if the school board requests the Agency of Education to authorize an
10 amount of education spending for fiscal year 2021 under subdivision (a)(1) of
11 this section, that shall be the amount of education spending for that fiscal year;
12 and

13 (2) if the school board adopts the 2021 fiscal year budget under
14 subdivision (a)(2) of this section, that shall be the school district's budget for
15 that fiscal year.

16 (c) In addition to the options under subsection (a) of this section, a school
17 district may vote to approve a budget or vote to reconsider or rescind an
18 approved budget in accordance with current law, provided that if the school
19 board votes to select an option under subsection (a) of this section, then,
20 notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a vote on the district's
21 2021 budget shall not be held after the board vote is taken.

1 (d) The Agency of Education shall comply with a request made under
2 subdivision (a)(1) of this section. Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 4001(6), the
3 amount authorized by the Agency of Education under subdivision (a)(1) of this
4 section shall be the “education spending” of the school district for fiscal year
5 2021 under 16 V.S.A. chapter 133.

6 (e) If a school board selects an option under subsection (a) of this section, it
7 shall determine how funds shall be expended and shall have the authority to
8 expend any other funds received from other sources, including endowments,
9 parental fundraising, federal funds, nongovernmental grants, or other State
10 funds such as special education funds paid under 16 V.S.A. chapter 101.

11 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

12 This act shall take effect on passage.