

AOE Testimony: DR 20-0777 - An act relating to the powers and duties of the State Board of Education

Testimony To: Senate Committee on Education
Respectfully Submitted by: Daniel M. French, Ed.D., Secretary of Education
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Policy Recommendation

It is important to reconsider the role of the State Board of Education relative to the functions of the Agency of Education as a result of Act 98 of 2012.

The Agency went through some restructuring last year to better align its organizational structures to the requirements of its policy and regulatory work. As a result of that work, Agency staff engaged in a mission/vision process which yielded an agency “Purpose Statement”.

The Agency of Education implements state and federal laws, policies, and regulations so that all Vermont learners have equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities. The Agency accomplishes this mission through the provision of leadership, support, and oversight of Vermont’s public education system.

A central goal of this work was to obtain better organizational coherence. I believe similar logic should be employed in a re-evaluation of the role of the State Board relative to the Agency’s work. Specifically, I believe there are two logical criteria that should be utilized in this evaluation:

- **Policy Coherence** – Vermont’s education system needs better policy coherence to address our complex societal needs and to ensure all students have access to a high quality education. I define policy coherence as there being a tighter connection between statute, regulation, and technical guidance.
- **Policy Accountability** – Like other departments and agencies in the Executive Branch, the General Assembly needs to be able to hold the Agency of Education accountable for the implementation of education policies and laws.