

Sec. 2. TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE
REFORM; REPORT

(a) Creation. There is created the Task Force on School Exclusionary Discipline Reform. The Task Force shall make recommendations to end suspensions and expulsions for all but the most serious student behaviors and compile data regarding school discipline in Vermont public and approved independent schools in order to inform strategic planning, guide statewide and local decision making and resource allocation, and measure the effectiveness of statewide and local policies and practices.

(b) Membership. The Task Force shall be composed of the Secretary of Education and not more than 20 members appointed by the Secretary of Education, who shall be Vermont residents and a balanced representation of the following:

- (1) educators;
- (2) school administrators; (3) high school students; (4) special educators;
- (5) parents of students;
- (6) school board members; and
- (7) members of community groups working in the areas of racial justice and school discipline reform.

(c) Membership diversity. The Secretary shall seek, in making appointments to the Task Force, racial diversity in membership and shall include representation of public and approved independent schools, including therapeutic schools.

(d) Powers and duties. The Task Force shall make recommendations to end suspensions and expulsions for all but the most serious student behaviors and, taking into account the Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey issued by the Department of Health, shall perform the following tasks:

(1) review in-school services and availability of these services in various supervisory unions, approved independent schools, and regions of the State that are available to support students who would otherwise face exclusionary discipline;

(2) recommend additional or more uniform in-school services that should be available to:

(A) students who are under eight years of age where expulsion is not permitted under 16 V.S.A. § 1162 as amended by this act; and

(B) other students who would otherwise face exclusionary discipline; (3) define the most serious behaviors that, after considering all other alternatives and supports, should remain eligible for suspension or expulsion;

(4) identify best practice procedures that minimize law enforcement contacts for students facing in-school or exclusionary discipline;

(5) compile, on a school-district and approved independent schools basis, the available data and the data collection processes regarding suspensions and expulsions and compile additional data necessary to inform the work of the Task Force, including:

(A) the total number of instances of expulsions and suspensions in each grade operated by the district or approved independent school;

(B) the total number of students in each grade operated by the district or approved independent school who were expelled or suspended and the number of instances of expulsion or suspension, or both, for each student;

(C) the duration of each instance of expulsion and suspension;

(D) the infraction for which each expulsion and suspension was imposed; ~~and~~

~~(E) each instance of referral to local law enforcement authorities or the juvenile justice system, community justice center, state's attorney, Department of Children and Families, or other juvenile justice related authority;~~

~~(F) each instance in which a civil, criminal, or juvenile citation was the consequence for a school-related infraction;~~

~~(G) each instance in which an excluded student received reeducational services, as well as the duration of educational services per day, week, and month;~~

~~(H) All data specified in this subdivision in disaggregated format by, at a minimum, the following subgroups and categories: White, Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific Islander/Hawaiian Native, Low-Income/Free or Reduced Lunch, Limited English Proficient or English Language Learner, migrant, special education, students on educational plans under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, gender, sexual orientation, fostercare, homeless, and grade level.~~

~~(E)~~(I) All data specified in this subdivision cross-tabulated by, at a minimum, the following: school and district; Race, Low-Income/Free or Reduced Lunch, Limited English Proficient or English Language Learner, migrant, special education, students on educational plans under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, gender, sexual orientation, fostercare, homeless (if known), and grade level; behavior infraction code; intervention applied, including restraint and inclusion; and, educational services provided.

(6) recommend changes to the types of data collected and the data collection processes regarding suspensions and expulsions, as necessary, for the collection of all appropriate data related to school discipline; and

(7) review how other states address exclusionary discipline.

(e) Report. On or before November 30, 2021, the Task Force shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education with its findings, addressing each of its duties under subsection (d), and any recommendations for legislative action. The Agency of Education shall share the report and any related insights and best practices with Vermont educators, school administrators, policymakers, agencies, and education and advocacy organizations, and shall post the report on its website.

(f) Meetings.

(1) The Secretary of Education shall call the first meeting of the Task Force to occur on or before August 1, 2021.

(2) The Task Force shall select a chair from among its members at the first meeting.

(3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum. (4) The Task Force shall meet not more than six times.

(g) Assistance. The Task Force shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Agency of Education.

(h) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Task Force shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than six meetings of the Task Force.