1	H.461
2	An act relating to making miscellaneous changes in education laws
3	It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
4	* * * Shared School District Data Management System * * *
5	Sec. 1. 2018 (Sp. Sess.) Acts and Resolves No. 11, Sec. E.500.1, as amended
6	by 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 72, Sec. E.500.5, 2021 Acts and Resolves No.
7	66, Sec. 15, and 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.500.2, is further
8	amended to read:
9	Sec. E.500.1. SHARED SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA
10	MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
11	(a) Not later than December 31, 2024, all Vermont supervisory unions,
12	supervisory districts, school districts, and independent technical center districts
13	shall utilize the same school finance and financial data management system.
14	The system shall be selected by the Agency of Education per State
15	procurement guidelines. [Repealed.]
16	* * *
17	Sec. 2. 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 66, Sec. 16, as amended by 2022 Acts and
18	Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.500.3, is further amended to read:
19	Sec. 16. PAUSE SUSPENSION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF SHARED
20	SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL DATA MANAGEMENT
21	SYSTEM

1	Notwithstanding Sec. E.500.1 of 2018 (Sp. Sess.) Acts and Resolves No.
2	11, as amended, the <u>mandatory</u> implementation of the Shared School District
3	Data Management System (SSDDMS) shall be paused until July 1, 2023
4	permanently suspended, provided that:
5	(1) the Agency of Education and its contractor for implementation of the
6	system shall continue to support existing users and any new adopters, as of the
7	date of enactment of this act, of the system; and , within the confines of the
8	existing contract.
9	(2) a supervisory union, supervisory district, school district, or
10	independent technical center district may implement or leave SSDDMS during
11	the pause period after consultation with the Agency of Education and upon
12	approval by its governing body. [Repealed.]
13	Sec. 3. REPEAL
14	2021 Acts and Resolves No. 66, Sec. 17, as amended by 2022 Acts and
15	Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.500.4 (Agency of Education report on the
16	implementation of the Shared School District Data Management System), is
17	repealed.
18	* * * National Guard Tuition Benefit Program * * *
19	Sec. 4. 16 V.S.A. § 2857 is amended to read:
20	§ 2857. VERMONT NATIONAL GUARD TUITION BENEFIT PROGRAM

1	(a) Program creation. The Vermont National Guard Tuition Benefit
2	Program (Program) is created, under which a member of the Vermont National
3	Guard (member) who meets the eligibility requirements in subsection (c) of
4	this section is entitled to the following tuition benefit for up to full-time
5	attendance:
6	(1) For courses at any Vermont State College institution or the
7	University of Vermont and State Agricultural College (UVM), the benefit shall
8	be the in-state residence tuition rate for the relevant institution.
9	(2) For courses at any eligible Vermont private postsecondary
10	institution, the benefit shall be the in-state tuition rate charged by UVM.
11	(3) For courses at an eligible training institution offering nondegree,
12	certificate training, or continuing education programs, the benefit shall be the
13	lower of the institution's standard tuition or the in-state tuition rate charged by
14	UVM.
15	(4) For courses at a non-Vermont approved postsecondary education
16	institution approved for federal Title IV funding where the degree program is
17	not available in Vermont, the benefit shall be the in-state tuition rate charged
18	by UVM.
19	* * *

1	* * * Home Study Program * * *
2	Sec. 5. 16 V.S.A. § 166b is amended to read:
3	§ 166b. HOME STUDY PROGRAM
4	(a) Enrollment notice. A home study program shall send a written
5	enrollment notice to the Secretary whenever it intends to enroll a child.
6	Enrollments in home study programs shall expire on July 1. If a home study
7	program intends to re-enroll a child for the following school year, a new notice
8	under this section is required and may be submitted at any time after March 1.
9	A parent or legal guardian shall send the Secretary annual notice of intent to
10	enroll the parent's or legal guardian's child in a home study program at least
11	10 business days prior to commencing home study. Such notice shall be
12	submitted via a form developed by the Agency of Education. A notice under
13	this subsection shall include the following:
14	(1) The name; age; and date, month, and year of birth of the child.
15	(2) The names, mailing addresses, <u>e-mail addresses</u> , town of legal
16	residence, and telephone numbers of the all parents or guardians of the child
17	with legal custody who are legally authorized to make educational decisions
18	for the student.
19	(3) For each child enrolled during the preceding year, any assessment of
20	progress required under subsection (d) of this section. An attestation that the

academic progress of each child enrolled in a home study program will be

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1	assessed at the end of each school year and that the parent or guardian will
2	maintain the record of such assessments. Permitted means of assessment shall
3	include:
4	(A) a standardized assessment, which may be administered by the
5	local school district or a testing service, or administered in a manner approved
6	by the testing company;
7	(B) a review of the student's progress by an individual who holds a
8	current Vermont teacher's certificate;
9	(C) a parent or guardian report and portfolio to include a summary of
10	what the student learned during the school year and at least four samples of
11	student work;
12	(D) grades from an online academy or school; or
13	(E) evidence of passing of the GED.
14	(4) For each child not previously enrolled in a Vermont public school or
15	Vermont home study program, independent professional evidence on regarding
16	whether the child has a disability. A comprehensive evaluation to establish
17	eligibilities for special education is not required, but may be ordered by a
18	hearing officer after a hearing under this section documented disability and
19	how the disability may affect the student's educational progress in a home
20	study program.

1	(5) Subject to the provisions of subsections (k) and (l) of this section, for
2	each child being enrolled for the current year, a detailed outline or narrative
3	that describes the content to be provided in each subject area of the minimum
4	course of study, including any special services or adaptations to be made to
5	accommodate any disability. Methods and materials to be used may be
6	included but are not required. An attestation that each child being enrolled in
7	home study will be provided the equivalent of at least 175 days of instruction
8	in the minimum course of study per year, specifically:
9	(A) for a child who is younger than 13 years of age, the subject areas
10	listed in section 906 of this title;
11	(B) for a child who is 13 years of age or older, the subject areas listed
12	in subdivisions 906(b)(1), (2), (4), and (5) of this title; or
13	(C) for students with documented disabilities, a parent or guardian
14	must attest to providing adaptations to support the student in the home study
15	program.
16	(6) The names, addresses, telephone numbers, and signatures of the
17	persons who will provide ongoing instruction in each subject area of the
18	minimum course of study, as defined in subsection (i) of this section.
19	[Repealed.]
20	(7) The signatures of all eustodial parents or guardians with legal
21	<u>custody</u> who are legally authorized to make educational decisions for the

1	student. In the alternative, the parent seeking enrollment may provide
2	attestation of sole primary educational decision-making authority.
3	(b) Notice to home study programs Enrollment. Within 14 10 business
4	days of receiving an following submission of a complete enrollment notice, the
5	Secretary or designee shall send the home study program a written
6	acknowledgment of receipt, which shall constitute sufficient enrollment
7	verification for purposes of section 1121 of this title. The acknowledgment
8	shall include a determination:
9	(1) either that the enrollment notice is complete and no further
10	information is needed, or specifically identifying information required under
11	subsection (a) of this section which is missing. If information is missing, the
12	home study program shall provide the additional information in writing within
13	14 days; and [Repealed.]
14	(2) either that the child may be enrolled immediately or that the child
15	may be enrolled 45 days after the enrollment notice was received. At any time
16	before the child may be enrolled, the Secretary may order that a hearing be
17	held. After notice of such a hearing is received, the child shall not be enrolled
18	until after an order has been issued by the hearing officer to that effect.
19	[Repealed.]
20	(c) Enrollment reports Withdrawal. Each home study program shall notify
21	the Secretary within seven days of the day that any student ceases to be

enrolled in the program. Within ten days of receiving any enrollment report,
the Secretary shall notify the appropriate superintendent of schools The parent
or guardian shall notify the Secretary in writing within 10 business days
following the date that any student is withdrawn from the student's home study
program.
(d) Progress assessment. Each home study program shall assess annually
the progress of each of its students. Progress shall be assessed in each subject
area of the minimum course of study, as defined in subsection (i) of this
section, by one or more of the following methods:
(1) A report in a form designated by the Secretary, by a teacher licensed
in Vermont. In determining the form of the report, the Secretary shall consult
with parents who have provided home study programs for their children.
Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the Secretary to consult
with parents on an individual basis regarding the form of a teacher report.
(2) A report prepared by the student's parents or instructor, or a teacher
advisory service report from a publisher of a commercial curriculum, together
with a portfolio of the student's work that includes work samples to
demonstrate progress in each subject area in the minimum course of study.
(3) The complete results of a standardized achievement test approved by
the Secretary, administered in a manner approved by the testing company, and

1	scored in accordance with this subdivision. In selecting the list of tests to be
2	approved, the Secretary shall:
3	(A) Consult with parents who have provided home study programs for
4	their children. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the
5	Secretary to consult with parents on an individual basis regarding the test to be
6	administered as a progress assessment for their own home study programs.
7	(B) Select at least four tests to be scored by a testing company, and at
8	least four tests to be administered and scored by a teacher licensed in Vermont
9	who is not the parent or legal guardian of the student. [Repealed.]
10	(e) Hearings before enrollment. If the Secretary has information that creates
11	a significant doubt about whether a home study program can or will provide a
12	minimum course of study for a student who has not yet enrolled, the Secretary
13	may call a hearing. At the hearing, the home study program shall establish that
14	it has complied with this section and will provide the student with a minimum
15	course of study. [Repealed.]
16	(f) Hearings after enrollment. If the Secretary has information that
17	reasonably could be expected to justify an order of termination under this
18	section, he or she may call a hearing. At the hearing, the Secretary shall
19	establish one or more of the following:
20	(1) the home study program has substantially failed to comply with the
21	requirements of this section;

1	(2) the home study program has substantially failed to provide a student
2	with the minimum course of study;
3	(3) the home study program will not provide a student with the minimum
4	course of study. [Repealed.]
5	(g) Notice and procedure. Notice of any hearing shall include a brief
6	summary of the material facts and shall be sent to each parent or guardian and
7	each instructor of the student or students involved who are known to the
8	Secretary. The hearing shall occur within 30 days of the day that notice is
9	given or sent. If a notice concerns a child not yet enrolled in a home study
10	program, enrollment shall not occur until an order has been issued after the
11	hearing. The hearing shall be conducted by an impartial hearing officer
12	appointed by the Secretary from a list approved by the State Board. At the
13	request of the child's parent or guardian, the hearing officer shall conduct the
14	hearing at a location in the vicinity of the home study program. [Repealed.]
15	(h) Order following hearing. After hearing evidence, the hearing officer
16	shall enter an order within ten working days. If the child is not enrolled, the
17	order shall provide that the child be enrolled or that enrollment be disallowed.
18	If the child is enrolled, the order shall provide that enrollment be continued or
19	that the enrollment be terminated. An order shall take effect immediately.
20	Unless the hearing officer provides for a shorter period, an order disallowing or
21	terminating enrollment shall extend until the end of the following school year,

1	as defined in this title. If the order is to disallow or terminate the enrollment, a
2	copy shall be given to the appropriate superintendent of schools, who shall take
3	appropriate action to ensure that the child is enrolled in a school as required by
4	this title. Following a hearing, the Secretary may petition the hearing officer to
5	reopen the case only if there has been a material change in circumstances.
6	[Repealed.]
7	(i) The minimum course of study required under this section shall be
8	provided every school year, and the educational content provided shall be
9	adapted in each area of study to the age and ability of each child and to any
10	disability of the child. Nothing in this section requires that a home study
11	program follow the program or methods used by the public schools. In this
12	section, "minimum course of study" means:
13	(1) For a child who is younger than 13 years of age, the subject areas
14	listed in section 906 of this title.
15	(2) For a child who is 13 years of age or older, the subject areas listed in
16	subdivisions 906(b)(1), (2), (4), and (5) of this title, and other subject areas
17	selected by the home study program. The child's progress in the elective areas
18	shall not be subject to the annual progress assessment. [Repealed.]
19	(j) Waiver. After the filing of the enrollment notice or at a hearing, if the
20	home study program is unable to comply with any specific requirements due to

deep religious conviction shared by an organized group, the Secretary may

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waive such requirements if he or she the Secretary determines that the educational purposes of this section are being or will be substantially met.

- (k) A Vermont home study program that has successfully completed the last two consecutive school years of home study with any enrolled child, provided those two years fall within the most recent five years, shall not thereafter be required to submit an annual detailed outline or narrative describing the content of the minimum course of study. For the purposes of this subsection, successful completion of a home study program shall mean that, in each of the two consecutive years, the program has not been disallowed by order of a hearing officer, the previously enrolled student made progress commensurate with age and ability in all subject areas of the minimum course of study, and the home study program has otherwise complied with the requirements of this section. Annual notice. A parent or guardian who has provided a complete enrollment notice as described in subsection (a) of this section shall notify the Secretary on or before the start of each following year of the parent's or guardian's intention to continue to provide instruction through a home study program via a form provided by the Agency of Education. This notice shall be provided at least 10 business days prior to the intended start date of the home study program.
- (l) A home study program that has successfully completed two consecutive school years of home study as defined in subsection (k) of this section shall not

1	be exempt from any other requirements of this section and shall annually
2	submit a description of special services and adaptations to accommodate any
3	disability of the child consistent with subsection (i) of this section. In addition,
4	the program shall submit a detailed outline or narrative describing the content
5	to be provided in each subject area of the minimum course of study as part of
6	its enrollment notice for each child who is 12 years of age at the time the
7	enrollment notice is submitted. [Repealed.]
8	* * * Vermont Ethnic and Social Equity Standards Advisory
9	Working Group * * *
10	Sec. 6. 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 1, Sec. 1, as amended by 2021 Acts and
11	Resolves No. 66, Sec. 12 and 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 185, Sec. E.500.6,
12	is further amended to read:
13	Sec. 1. ETHNIC AND SOCIAL EQUITY STANDARDS ADVISORY
14	WORKING GROUP
15	* * *
16	(d) Appointment and operation.
17	* * *
18	(D) The Working Group shall cease to exist on July 1, 2023
19	<u>September 1, 2023</u> .
20	(g) Duties of the Working Group.

1	(1) The Working Group shall review standards for student performance
2	adopted by the State Board of Education under 16 V.S.A. § 164(9) and, on or
3	before December 31, 2022 June 30, 2023, recommend to the State Board
4	updates and additional standards to recognize fully the history, contributions,
5	and perspectives of ethnic groups and social groups. These recommended
6	additional standards shall be designed to:
7	* * *
8	(i) Duties of the State Board of Education. The Board of Education shall,
9	on or before December 31, 2022 December 31, 2023, consider adopting ethnic
10	and social equity studies standards into standards for student performance
11	adopted by the State Board under 16 V.S.A. § 164(9) for students in
12	prekindergarten through grade 12, taking into account the report submitted by
13	the Working Group under subdivision (g)(1) of this section.
14	Sec. 7. ACT 1 TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP
15	(a) Creation. There is created the Act 1 Technical Advisory Group
16	(Advisory Group) to provide ongoing assistance regarding the work of the
17	Ethnic and Social Equity Standards Advisory Working Group (Working
18	Group), created by 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 1, as amended.
19	(b) Membership. The Technical Advisory Group shall be composed of the
20	following 12 active members of the Working Group as of August 31, 2023,
21	designated or appointed by the following organizations:

1	(1) the Chairperson of the Working Group, the designee of the Vermont
2	Human Rights Commission;
3	(2) the Vice Chairperson of the Working Group, the designee of the
4	Vermont-National Education Association;
5	(3) the designee of the Vermont School Boards Association;
6	(4) the designee of the Vermont Superintendents Association;
7	(5) the designee of the Vermont Principals' Association with expertise
8	in the development of school curriculum;
9	(6) the designee of the Vermont Curriculum Leaders Association;
10	(7) the Vermont Coalition for Ethnic and Social Equity in Schools
11	appointee member from Outright Vermont;
12	(8) the Vermont-based, college-level faculty expert in ethnic studies;
13	(9) the designee of the Vermont Office of Racial Equity;
14	(10) the student appointee from Montpelier High School;
15	(11) the designee of the Vermont Independent Schools Association; and
16	(12) the designee of the Agency of Education.
17	(c) Powers and duties. The Advisory Group shall provide assistance to the
18	General Assembly, the Agency of Education, and the State Board of Education
19	on the following recommendations made by the Working Group:
20	(1) proposed revisions and comments to Agency of Education, State
21	Board Rule 2000 Education Quality Standards (CVR 22-000-003);

1	(2) recommended updates and additional standards for student
2	performance proposed to the State Board of Education pursuant to 2019 Acts
3	and Resolves No. 1, Sec. 1, subdivision (g)(1);
4	(3) policy recommendations submitted to the General Assembly; and
5	(4) any other recommendations submitted to the General Assembly or
6	State Board of Education.
7	(d) Assistance. The Advisory Group shall have the assistance of the
8	Agency of Education for the purposes of scheduling meetings.
9	(e) Meetings.
10	(1) The Chair of the Advisory Group shall be the Chair of the Working
11	Group as of August 31, 2023. If a member resigns before the Advisory Group
12	ceases to exist, the organization impacted by the resignation shall have the
13	authority to appoint a replacement member in consultation with the Advisory
14	Group. The Advisory Group shall meet as needed.
15	(2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.
16	(3) The Advisory Group shall cease to exist on January 31, 2024.
17	Sec. 8. [Deleted.]
18	* * *Union School District Board Member Nominating Petitions * * *
19	Sec. 9. 16 V.S.A. § 711 is amended to read:
20	§ 711. VOTE TO ELECT INITIAL MEMBERS OF THE UNION SCHOOL
21	DISTRICT BOARD

1	* * *
2	(d) Proposed unified union school district. Subject to the provisions of
3	subsections 706(c) (existing union school districts) and 708(b) (necessary and
4	advisable school districts) of this chapter, the voters of each school district
5	identified as "necessary" or "advisable" shall vote whether to elect initial board
6	members of a proposed unified union school district, as follows:
7	* * *
8	(3) At-large representation. When representation on the board of a
9	proposed unified union school district is not apportioned or allocated to the
10	potential towns within the proposed district pursuant to subdivision (1)
11	(proportional to town population) or (2) (modified at-large) of this subsection
12	and the board member is elected at-large:
13	(A) The voters of one or more school districts identified as
14	"necessary" to formation of the proposed unified union school district shall file
15	a petition nominating a candidate for the office of unified union school district
16	board member at-large. A petition shall be valid only if:
17	* * *
18	(iii) the petition is signed by at least 60 voters residing in one or
19	more school districts identified as "necessary" to the formation of the proposed

unified union school district or one percent of the legal voters residing in the

1	combined "necessary" school districts that would form the proposed unified
2	union school district, whichever is less;
3	* * *
4	(e) Proposed union elementary or union high school district. Subject to the
5	provisions of subsections 706(c) (existing union school districts) and 708(b)
6	(necessary and advisable school districts) of this chapter, the voters of each
7	school district identified as "necessary" or "advisable" shall vote whether to
8	elect initial board members of the proposed union school district, as follows:
9	* * *
10	(3) At-large representation. When representation on the board of a
11	proposed union elementary or union high school district board is not
12	apportioned or allocated to the potential member districts pursuant to
13	subdivision (1) (proportional to town population) or (2) (modified at large) of
14	this subsection and the board member is elected at-large:
15	(A) The voters of one or more school districts identified as
16	"necessary" to the formation of the proposed union school district shall file a
17	petition nominating a candidate for the office of union school district board
18	member at-large. A petition shall be valid only if:
19	* * *
20	(iii) the petition is signed by at least 60 voters residing in one or
21	more school districts identified as "necessary" to the formation of the proposed

1	union school district or one percent of the legal voters residing in the combined
2	"necessary" school districts that would form the proposed union school district
3	whichever is less;
4	* * *
5	Sec. 10. 16 V.S.A. § 730 is amended to read:
6	§ 730. UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS;
7	NOMINATION AND ELECTION; BOND
8	(a) If by Australian ballot. The provisions of this subsection (a) shall apply
9	to a unified union school district that conducts elections for board membership
10	by Australian ballot.
11	* * *
12	(2) Modified at-large model: allocation to town; at-large representation.
13	(A) When membership on the board of a unified union school district
14	is allocated to each town within the district, but the allocation is not closely
15	proportional to the town's relative population and the board member is elected
16	at-large, the voters residing in any one or more of the towns within the district
17	may file a petition nominating a candidate for board membership under the
18	"modified at-large" model. A petition is valid only if:
19	* * *

1	(iii) the petition is signed by at least 60 voters residing in the
2	unified union school district or one percent of the legal voters in the district,
3	whichever is less;
4	* * *
5	(3) At-large representation.
6	(A) When membership on a unified union school district board is not
7	apportioned or allocated pursuant to subdivision (1) (proportional to town
8	population) or (2) (modified at-large) of this subsection (a) and the board
9	member is elected at large, the voters residing in any one or more of the towns
10	within the district may file a petition nominating a candidate for at-large board
11	membership. A petition is valid only if:
12	* * *
13	(iii) the petition is signed by at least 60 voters residing in the
14	unified union school district or one percent of the legal voters in the district,
15	whichever is less;
16	* * *
17	Sec. 11. 16 V.S.A. § 748 is amended to read:
18	§ 748. UNION ELEMENTARY AND UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
19	BOARD MEMBERS; NOMINATION AND ELECTION; BOND

1	(a) If by Australian ballot. The provisions of this subsection (a) shall apply
2	to a union elementary or union high school district that conducts elections for
3	board membership by Australian ballot.
4	* * *
5	(2) Modified at-large model: allocation to town; at-large representation
6	(A) When membership on the board of a union elementary or union
7	high school district is allocated to each member district, but the allocation is
8	not closely proportional to the member district's population and the board
9	member is elected at-large, the voters residing in any one or more of the
10	member districts may file a petition nominating a candidate for board
11	membership under the "modified at-large" model. A petition is valid only if:
12	* * *
13	(iii) the petition is signed by at least 60 voters residing in the
14	union elementary or union high school district or one percent of the legal
15	voters in the district, whichever is less;
16	* * *
17	(3) At-large representation.
18	(A) When membership on the board of a union elementary or union
19	high school district is not apportioned or allocated pursuant to subdivision (1)
20	(proportional to town population) or (2) (modified at-large) of this subsection
21	(a) (Australian ballot) and the board member is elected at large, the voters

1	residing in any one or more of the member districts may file a petition
2	nominating a candidate for at-large board membership. A petition is valid only
3	if:
4	* * *
5	(iii) the petition is signed by at least 60 voters residing in the
6	union elementary or union high school district or one percent of the legal
7	voters in the district, whichever is less;
8	* * *
9	* * * Effective Dates * * *
10	Sec. 12. EFFECTIVE DATES
11	(a) Secs. 6 (Ethnic and Social Equity Standards Advisory Working Group)
12	and this section shall take effect on passage.
13	(b) Sec. 7 (Act 1 Technical Advisory Group) shall take effect on September
14	<u>1, 2023.</u>
15	(c) All other sections shall take effect on July 1, 2023.