

1 Introduced by Committee on Education

2 Date:

3 Subject: adult education; adult diploma; menstrual products; postsecondary
4 schools

5 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to make several
6 amendments to education law, including:

7 (1) repealing the High School Completion Program and making changes
8 to the State’s adult education and literacy program;

9 (2) continuing the funding for the community schools program created
10 under 2021 Acts and Resolves No. 67;

11 (3) requiring school districts to include military-related options in career
12 development and postsecondary planning resources as part of the Flexible
13 Pathways Initiative and a student’s personalized learning plan;

14 (4) requiring the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation to include
15 information regarding all military-related options available for postsecondary
16 planning and financial aid opportunities in all planning resources it produces;

17 (5) requiring a report on the postgraduation career and settlement
18 behaviors of students attending Vermont colleges and universities; and

19 (6) codifying the requirement that supervisory unions use the Uniform
20 Chart of Accounts to report all school finance data.

1 An act relating to miscellaneous changes in education laws

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

3 * * * Flexible Pathways * * *

4 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 945 is amended to read:

5 § 945. ~~ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM; GENERAL EDUCATIONAL~~
6 ~~DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM~~ ADULT EDUCATION AND
7 SECONDARY CREDENTIAL PROGRAM

8 (a) The Secretary shall maintain an Adult Diploma Program (ADP), which
9 shall be an assessment process administered by the Agency through which ~~an~~
10 ~~individual~~ any Vermont resident who is at least ~~20~~ 16 years of age; who has
11 not received a high school diploma; and who is not enrolled in a public or
12 approved independent school, post-secondary institution, or home study
13 program can receive a local high school diploma granted by one of the
14 Program's participating high schools.

15 (b) The Secretary shall maintain a General Educational Development
16 (GED) Program, which it shall administer jointly with the GED testing service
17 and approved local testing centers and through which ~~an adult individual a~~
18 Vermont resident who is at least 16 years of age ~~and~~; who has not received a
19 high school diploma; and who is not enrolled in secondary public or approved
20 independent school, post-secondary institution, or home study program can

1 receive a secondary school equivalency certificate based on successful
2 completion of the GED tests.

3 (c) The Secretary may provide additional programs designed to address the
4 individual needs and circumstances of adult students, particularly students with
5 the lowest levels of literacy skills.

6 (d) The diagnostic portion of the Program referenced in subsection 4011(f)
7 of this title shall be used as a tool to evaluate the educational needs of and
8 skills gained by individual students, but shall not be used to exclude
9 individuals from the Program or to condition payments to local education and
10 literacy providers on student performance on such diagnostics.

11 Sec. 2. REPEAL

12 16 V.S.A. § 943 (High School Completion Program) is repealed.

13 Sec. 3. 16 V.S.A. § 4011 is amended to read:

14 § 4011. EDUCATION PAYMENTS

15 (a) Annually, the General Assembly shall appropriate funds to pay for
16 statewide education spending and a portion of a base education amount for
17 each adult ~~diploma~~ education and secondary credential program student.

18 * * *

19 (f) Annually, the Secretary shall pay to a ~~department or agency~~ local adult
20 education and literacy provider, as defined in section 942 of this title, that
21 provides an adult ~~diploma~~ education and secondary credential program an

1 amount equal to 26 percent of the base education amount for each student who
2 ~~completed~~ completes the diagnostic ~~portion~~ portions of the program, based on
3 an average of the previous two years.

4 * * *

5 Sec. 4. 16 V.S.A. § 944 is amended to read:

6 § 944. DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

7 * * *

8 (b) Students.

9 (1) A Vermont resident who has completed grade 10 but has not
10 received a high school diploma is eligible to participate in the Program if:

11 (A) the student:

12 (i) is enrolled in:

13 (I) a Vermont public school, including a Vermont career
14 technical center;

15 (II) a public school in another state or an approved independent
16 school that is designated as the public secondary school for the student's
17 district of residence; or

18 (III) an approved independent school in Vermont to which the
19 student's district of residence pays publicly funded tuition on behalf of the
20 student; or

1 implementing community school programs. In determining which eligible
2 recipients shall receive funding, the Secretary shall take into account relative
3 need, based on the extent to which community school program services are
4 needed and the extent to which the eligible recipient seeks to offer them.

5 (2) In determining which eligible recipients shall receive funding and
6 the amount of funding and to advance the principles for Vermont’s trauma-
7 informed system of care under 33 V.S.A. § 3401, the Secretary of Education
8 shall collaborate with the Director of Trauma Prevention and Resilience
9 Development and the Vermont Child and Family Trauma Work Group.

10 (3) The Agency of Education shall inform all eligible recipients of the
11 availability of funding under this act and, for those eligible recipients most in
12 need of this funding, shall educate these eligible recipients on community
13 school programs and their benefits. The Agency of Education shall also advise
14 all eligible recipients of other sources of funding that may be available to
15 advance the purpose of this act.

16 (d) Use of funding.

17 (1) A recipient of funding under this act shall use the funding to:

18 (A) if a needs and assets assessment has not been conducted within
19 the prior three years that substantially conforms with the requirements in this
20 subdivision, then, in collaboration with the site-based leadership team, conduct
21 a needs and assets assessment that includes:

- 1 (i) where available, and where applicable, student demographic,
2 academic achievement, and school climate data, disaggregated by major
3 demographic groups, including race, ethnicity, English language proficiency,
4 students with individualized education plans, and students eligible for free or
5 reduced-price lunch status;
- 6 (ii) access to and need for integrated student supports;
- 7 (iii) access to and need for expanded and enriched learning time
8 and opportunities;
- 9 (iv) school funding information, including federal, State, local,
10 and private education funding and per-pupil spending, based on actual salaries
11 of personnel assigned to the eligible school;
- 12 (v) information on the number, qualifications, and stability of
13 school staff, including the number and percentage of fully certified teachers
14 and rates of teacher turnover; and
- 15 (vi) active family and community engagement information,
16 including:
- 17 (I) family and community needs based on surveys, information
18 from public meetings, or information gathered by other means;
- 19 (II) measures of family and community engagement in the
20 eligible schools, including volunteering in schools, attendance at back-to-
21 school nights, and parent-teacher conferences;

1 (III) efforts to provide culturally and linguistically relevant
2 communication between schools and families; and

3 (IV) access to and need for family and community engagement
4 activities;

5 (B) hire a community school coordinator to, in collaboration with the
6 site-based leadership team, develop and implement community school
7 programs or designate a community school coordinator from existing
8 personnel and, in collaboration with the site-based leadership team, augment
9 work already being performed to develop and implement community school
10 programs; and

11 (C) if the recipient has not fully implemented positive behavioral
12 integrated supports under 16 V.S.A. § 2902, provide professional development
13 to staff on positive behavioral integrated supports and implement those
14 supports.

15 (2) A recipient of funding under this act may use the funding to, in
16 collaboration with the site-based leadership team, develop and implement a
17 plan to improve literacy outcomes and objectively assess those outcomes.

18 (3) If a needs and assets assessment has not been conducted under
19 subdivision (1)(A) of this subsection within the prior three years, the first year
20 of funding shall be used to conduct the needs and assets assessment of the
21 school to determine what is necessary to develop community school programs

1 and an action plan to implement community school programs. **During the**
2 **second and third subsequent years of the funding**, the community school
3 coordinator shall, in collaboration with the site-based leadership team, oversee
4 the implementation of community school programs.

5 (e) Evaluation.

6 (1) At the end of each year of funding, each recipient shall undergo an
7 evaluation designed by the Agency of Education using its equity lens tool.

8 (2) On or before each of December 15, **2022 and 2024 and 2025**, the
9 Agency of Education shall report to the General Assembly and the Governor
10 on the impact of the funding under this act. The report shall be made publicly
11 available on the Agency of Education’s website.

12 (f) Ability to operate as a community school. Any school district or school,
13 regardless of whether it receives funding under this act, may function as a
14 community school as defined in this section.

15 Sec. 6. APPROPRIATION; COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

16 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of 16 V.S.A. § 4025 to the contrary, the
17 sum of \$1,900,000.00 is appropriated from the Education Fund to the Agency
18 of Education in fiscal year 2025 for the purpose of providing funding to school
19 districts for the community schools program created under 2021 Acts and
20 Resolves No. 67 Sec. 3, as amended by Sec. 5 of this act.

21 (b) The Agency of Education may set aside:

1 (1) not more than one percent of the funds appropriated under
2 subsection (a) of this section for informational and technical assistance, such as
3 the availability and use of funding for eligible recipients as defined under 2021
4 Acts and Resolves No. 67, Sec. 3, as amended by Sec. 5 of this act; and

5 (2) not more than two percent of the funds appropriated under
6 subsection (a) of this section for the evaluations required under 2021 Acts and
7 Resolves No. 67, Sec. 3, as amended by Sec. 5 of this act.

8 Sec. 7. 16 V.S.A. § 941 is amended to read:

9 § 941. FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS INITIATIVE

10 (a) There is created within the Agency a Flexible Pathways Initiative:

11 (1) to encourage and support the creativity of school districts as they
12 develop and expand high-quality educational experiences that are an integral
13 part of secondary education in the evolving 21st ~~Century~~ century classroom;

14 (2) to promote opportunities for Vermont students to achieve
15 postsecondary readiness through high-quality educational experiences that
16 acknowledge individual goals, learning styles, and abilities; and

17 (3) to increase the rates of secondary school completion and
18 postsecondary continuation and retention in Vermont.

19 (b) The Secretary shall develop, publish, and regularly update guidance, in
20 the form of technical assistance, sharing of best practices and model

1 documents, legal interpretations, and other support designed to assist school
2 districts:

3 (1) ~~to~~ To identify and support secondary students who require additional
4 assistance to succeed in school and to identify ways in which individual
5 students would benefit from flexible pathways to graduation;

6 (2) ~~to~~ To work with every student in grade ~~7~~ seven through grade 12 in
7 an ongoing personalized learning planning process that:

8 (A) identifies the student’s emerging abilities, aptitude, and
9 disposition;

10 (B) includes participation by families and other engaged adults;

11 (C) guides decisions regarding course offerings and other high-
12 quality educational experiences; ~~and~~

13 (D) identifies career and postsecondary planning options using
14 resources provided pursuant to subdivision (4) of this subsection (b); and

15 ~~(D)~~(E) is documented by a personalized learning plan;

16 (3) ~~to~~ To create opportunities for secondary students to pursue flexible
17 pathways to graduation that:

18 (A) increase aspiration and encourage postsecondary continuation of
19 training and education;

20 (B) are an integral component of a student’s personalized learning
21 plan; and

1 (C) include:

2 (i) applied or work-based learning opportunities, including career
3 and career technical education and internships;

4 (ii) virtual learning and blended learning;

5 (iii) dual enrollment opportunities as set forth in section 944 of
6 this title;

7 (iv) early college programs as set forth in subsection 4011(e) of
8 this title; and

9 ~~(v) the High School Completion Program as set forth in section~~
10 ~~943 of this title; and [Repealed.]~~

11 ~~(vi) the Adult Diploma Program and General Educational~~
12 ~~Development Program~~ adult education and secondary credential opportunities
13 as set forth in section 945 of this title; and.

14 (4) ~~to~~ To provide students, beginning ~~no~~ not later than in grade 7 seven,
15 with career development and postsecondary planning resources to ensure that
16 they are able to take full advantage of the opportunities available within the
17 flexible pathways to graduation and to achieve their career and postsecondary
18 education and training goals. Resources provided pursuant to this subdivision
19 shall include information regarding the admissions process and requirements
20 necessary to proceed with any and all military-related opportunities.

1 (c) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as discouraging or
2 limiting the authority of any school district to develop or continue to provide
3 educational opportunities for its students that are otherwise permitted,
4 including the provision of Advanced Placement courses.

5 (d) An individual entitlement or private right of action shall not arise from
6 creation of a personalized learning plan.

7 Sec. 8. 16 V.S.A. § 2828 is added to read:

8 § 2828. PLANNING RESOURCES

9 The Corporation shall include information regarding all military-related
10 options available for postsecondary planning and financial aid opportunities in
11 all planning resources it produces.

12 Sec. 9. REVIEW OF FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS; INTENT

13 It is the intent of the General Assembly to continue to review the Flexible
14 Pathways Initiative under Title 16, chapter 23, subchapter 2, to ensure the
15 Initiative provides sustainable and effective high-quality educational
16 experiences that increase rates of secondary school completion and
17 postsecondary continuation in Vermont.

18 * * * Career and Settlement Behaviors of Postsecondary Graduates* * *

19 Sec. 10. POSTGRADUATION CAREER AND SETTLEMENT

20 BEHAVIORS OF STUDENTS ATTENDING VERMONT

21 POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS; REPORT

1 (a) On or before July 1, 2025, the Agencies of Education and of Commerce
2 and Community Development and the Department of Labor, in consultation
3 with Vermont’s public and private postsecondary education institutions, shall
4 issue a written report to the General Assembly on the postgraduation career
5 and settlement behaviors of students attending Vermont colleges and
6 universities. At a minimum, the report shall include:

7 (1) an analysis and discussion of why Vermont is last in the country in
8 percentage of college students who stay in the same state in which the school
9 they graduated from is located;

10 (2) information on the types of degrees most commonly attained at
11 Vermont-based postsecondary education institutions;

12 (3) a discussion of the obstacles preventing graduates from staying in
13 Vermont, including whether housing options factor into settlement decisions;
14 and

15 (4) a comprehensive plan to increase the percentage of Vermont
16 graduates who plan to live and work in Vermont for at least five years
17 postgraduation, which shall include the following initiatives:

18 (A) better college-career pipelines between higher education
19 institutions and employers in Vermont;

20 (B) expanding career counseling and career development services on
21 campuses, focused on Vermont industries and companies;

