



TO: Senate Education Committee

FROM: Cara Zimmerman, Director of Policy Services and Legislative Affairs,  
Vermont School Boards Association

RE: H.630 - An act relating to boards of cooperative education services

DATE: April 3, 2024

Good afternoon. I am Cara Zimmerman, Director of Policy Services and Legislative Affairs with the Vermont School Boards Association. Thank you for inviting me to testify on H.630, an act relating to boards of cooperative education services (BOCES). Our members have expressed support for initiatives that are designed to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities and to achieve cost effectiveness. This bill works to advance those goals and as such VSBA supports the bill.

We will defer to the Vermont Superintendents Association on some of the mechanics of the bill but wanted to highlight the following:

1. Under the newly created §603, Creation of Board of Cooperative Education Services; Organization; Secretary Approval, the board of directors shall be composed of one person appointed annually by each member supervisory union board and that person can be a member of the supervisory union board or the superintendent or the designee of the member supervisory union board. VSBA supports the flexibility of appointing the superintendent or designee to the board of directors.
2. Under the newly created §603, Creation of Board of Cooperative Education Services; Organization; Secretary Approval, each member of the board of directors must provide quarterly updates on the activities of the BOCES to the appointing supervisory union board in an open board meeting. School boards are responsible for providing oversight and as such we support this requirement.

3. Under the newly created §605, Financing; Budgeting; and Accounting, the BOCES board of directors shall ensure that its blanket bond covers a newly appointed treasurer before the treasurer enters upon the duties of the office, or, in lieu of a blanket bond, a BOCES may choose to provide suitable crime coverage. This is consistent with the changes in law (16 VSA §492, 16 VSA §735(f), and 24, VSA §§832, 833) that we advocated for during the 2022 legislative session and therefore support this section as drafted.
4. Under the newly created §606, Annual Report; Public Information, the board of a BOCES shall prepare an annual report concerning the affairs of the BOCES and distribute to the boards of the member supervisory unions. We support this requirement because it aligns with the VSBA resolution on the role of local school boards and allows our members to provide oversight of the BOCES.
5. The VSBA supports the timelines set out in Section 3 of the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.630.