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S.138

Senator Hashim moves that the Senate concur in the House proposal of amendment with further proposal of amendment as follows:

First: By adding a new section to be Sec. 5a. to read as follows:

Sec. 5a. WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT PROTECTIONS FROM
HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION IN SCHOOLS

(a) Legislative intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly that students should have equal legal protections from harassment and discrimination as provided to Vermont citizens in the workplace and other sites of public accommodations.

(b) Working Group on Student Protections from Harassment and Discrimination in Schools; creation. There is created the Working Group on Student Protections from Harassment and Discrimination in Schools to study and give recommendations for how to address harassment and discrimination experienced by students.

(1) Membership. The Working Group shall be composed of the following members:

(A) the Secretary of Education or designee;

(B) the Executive Director of the Vermont Human Rights Commission or designee;

1 (C) the Executive Director of the Vermont Network Against
2 Domestic and Sexual Violence or designee;

3 (D) the Executive Director of the Vermont Education Association or
4 designee;

5 (E) the Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards
6 Association or designee;

7 (F) the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals' Association or
8 designee;

9 (G) the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents'
10 Association or designee;

11 (H) the Executive Director of Outright Vermont or designee;

12 (I) the Executive Director of Racial Equity or designee;

13 (J) the Executive Director of the Vermont chapter of the National
14 Association of Social Workers or designee; and

15 (K) the Executive Director of Vermont Legal Aid.

16 (2) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall study the current
17 protections for students against harassment and discrimination in schools and
18 make recommendations for legislative action to ensure Vermont students have
19 the same protections from harassment and discrimination as provided to
20 Vermont citizens in the workplace and other sites of public accommodations.
21 The Working Group's recommendations shall include:

1 (A) eliminating the severe and pervasive standard for harassment and
2 discrimination for students in educational institutions;

3 (B) compulsory educational attendance requirements for students
4 who have been victims of harassment; and

5 (C) the resources required for schools to develop harassment
6 prevention initiatives as well as supports for students who have experienced
7 harassment.

8 (3) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative,
9 technical, and legal assistance of the Agency of Education.

10 (4) Report. On or before November 15, 2023, the Working Group shall
11 submit a written report to the House Committees on General and Housing and
12 on Education and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing
13 and General Affairs and on Education with its findings and any
14 recommendations for legislative action.

15 (5) Meetings.

16 (A) The Secretary of Education shall call the first meeting of the
17 Working Group to occur on or before July 15, 2023.

18 (B) The Working Group shall select a chair from among its members
19 at the first meeting.

20 (C) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

21 (D) The Working Group shall cease to exist on February 1, 2024.

1 Second: In Sec. 6, effective dates, by striking out subsection (a) in its
2 entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

3 (a) This section and Secs. 5 and 5a shall take effect on July 1, 2023.