

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 H.454

2 Sec. 1. FINDINGS; INTENT; PLAN

3 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

4 (1) In 1997, the first piece of law the General Assembly enacted in
5 response to the Brigham decision stated, “[t]he right to public education is
6 integral to Vermont’s constitutional form of government and its guarantees of
7 political and civil rights...[and] fundamental for the success of Vermont’s
8 children in a rapidly-changing society and global marketplace as well as the
9 State’s own economic and social prosperity.” 16 V.S.A. § 1.

10 (2) From the very first attempt at creating a basic frame of government,
11 Vermont’s founders chose to include a right to public education, the only
12 governmental service included in Vermont’s first Constitution of 1777.

13 (3) As the U.S. Supreme Court stated in Brown v. Board of Education,
14 347 U.S. 483 (1954), “education is perhaps the most important function of
15 state and local governments...[i]t is required in the performance of our most
16 basic public responsibilities...[i]t is the very foundation of good citizenship.”

17 (4) The most enduring legacy of *Brigham v. State*, 166 Vt. 246 (1997) is
18 the State’s responsibility to ensure substantially equal educational
19 opportunities for all Vermont students.

20 (5) The education system is still reeling from the effects of a global
21 pandemic, yet the same challenges that have faced Vermont’s education

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 system remain. Thirty to 40 years ago, Vermont educated more than 110,000
2 students each year. Today, there are approximately 84,000 students in the
3 public education system. Many schools have lost a significant number of
4 students and, with them, the ability to offer robust services and programs at
5 every school. Vermont's youth need to be prepared for a rapidly evolving
6 future.

7 (6) Vermonters deserve an exceptional educational system that is stable
8 and predictable and where a student's home address does not dictate the
9 quality of education they receive. School district size and boundaries, school
10 size, and class size are all influential factors in shaping the quality of
11 instruction and overall student outcomes. The effectiveness of our schools
12 depends on teacher quality, resource availability, and the unique strengths of
13 local communities. Change in our educational system is needed. Systems are
14 made of people, so change must come carefully and thoughtfully, with
15 meaningful engagement by all Vermonters.

16 (b) Intent; plan.

17 (1) To ensure each student is provided substantially equal educational
18 opportunities that will prepare them to thrive in a 21st-century world, it is the
19 intent of the General Assembly to work strategically, intentionally, and
20 thoughtfully to ensure that each incremental change made to Vermont's public

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 education system provides strength and support to its only constitutionally
2 required governmental service.

3 (2) It is further the intent of the General Assembly to:

4 (A) in the 2026 session:

5 (i) enact new, larger school district boundaries that would be
6 effective July 1, 2027;

7 (ii) enact updates to career and technical education governance
8 systems, both at the local and statewide levels, that are reflective of the larger
9 public education governance transformation to new, larger school districts;

10 (iii) create a coordinated and coherent statewide strategy for career
11 and technical education that is responsive to students and the State's workforce
12 needs and that provides opportunities for more integration between career and
13 technical education and traditional high school work;

14 (iv) enact student-centered updates to career and technical
15 education funding within a foundation formula that does not create competition
16 between sending schools and career and technical education programs for
17 available funds; and

18 (v) begin the process to create voting wards within each school
19 district to ensure school board membership is apportioned in such a manner as
20 to achieve substantially equal weighting of the votes of all voters in the
21 election of school board members;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (B) provide or enable the provision of the necessary staffing,
2 resources, and support to the Agency of Education, the Secretary of State’s
3 Office, town clerks, and other integral parties to the election system to hold the
4 first school board member elections within the newly created school districts in
5 a special election in March 2028; and

6 (C) provide or enable the provision of the necessary staffing,
7 resources, and support to the Agency of Education, State Board of Education,
8 and other integral parties to ensure that the necessary guidance and funding is
9 in place to allow for a smooth and successful transition between the operation
10 of Vermont’s current 119 school districts to the new, larger school districts,
11 with new school districts assuming responsibility for the education of all
12 resident students on July 1, 2029.

13 * * * Commission on the Future of Public Education * * *

14 Sec. 2. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 183, Sec. 1 is amended to read:

15 Sec. 1. THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC

16 EDUCATION; REPORTS

17 (a) Creation. There is hereby created the Commission on the Future of
18 Public Education in Vermont. The right to education is fundamental for the
19 success of Vermont’s children in a rapidly changing society and global
20 marketplace as well as for the State’s own economic and social prosperity.

21 The Commission shall study the provision of education in Vermont and make

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 recommendations for a statewide vision for Vermont’s public education system
2 to ensure that all students are afforded substantially equal educational
3 opportunities in an efficient, sustainable, and stable education system. The
4 Commission shall also make recommendations for the strategic policy changes
5 necessary to make Vermont’s educational vision a reality for all Vermont
6 students.

7 (b) Membership. The Commission shall be composed of the following
8 members and, to the extent possible, the members shall represent the State’s
9 geographic, gender, racial, and ethnic diversity:

- 10 (1) the Secretary of Education or designee;
11 (2) the Chair of the State Board of Education or designee;
12 (3) the Tax Commissioner or designee;
13 (4) one current member of the House of Representatives, appointed by
14 the Speaker of the House;
15 (5) one current member of the Senate, appointed by the Committee on
16 Committees;
17 (6) one representative from the Vermont School Boards Association
18 (VSBA), appointed by the VSBA Executive Director;
19 (7) one representative from the Vermont Principals’ Association (VPA),
20 appointed by the VPA Executive Director;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (8) one representative from the Vermont Superintendents Association
2 (VSA), appointed by the VSA Executive Director;

3 (9) one representative from the Vermont National Education
4 Association (VTNEA), appointed by the VTNEA Executive Director;

5 (10) one representative from the Vermont Association of School
6 Business Officials (VASBO) with experience in school construction projects,
7 appointed by the President of VASBO;

8 (11) the Chair of the Census-Based Funding Advisory Group, created
9 under 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173;

10 (12) the Executive Director of the Vermont Rural Education
11 Collaborative; and

12 (13) one representative from the Vermont Independent Schools
13 Association (VISA), appointed by the President of VISA.

14 (c) Steering group. On or before July 1, 2024, the Speaker of the House
15 shall appoint two members of the Commission, the Committee on Committees
16 shall appoint two members of the Commission, and the Governor shall appoint
17 two members of the Commission to serve as members of a steering group. The
18 steering group shall provide leadership to the Commission and shall work with
19 a consultant or consultants to analyze the issues, challenges, and opportunities
20 facing Vermont's public education system, as well as develop and propose a
21 work plan to formalize the process through which the Commission shall seek

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 to achieve its final recommendations. The formal work plan shall be approved
2 by a majority of the Commission members. The steering group ~~shall form a~~
3 ~~subcommittee of the Commission to address education finance topics in greater~~
4 ~~depth and~~ may form one or more additional subcommittees of the Commission
5 to address ~~other~~ key topics in greater depth, as necessary. ~~The steering group~~
6 ~~may appoint non-Commission members to the education finance~~
7 ~~subcommittee. All other subcommittees shall be composed solely of~~
8 ~~Commission members.~~

9 (d) Collaboration and information review.

10 (1) The Commission ~~shall~~ may seek input from and collaborate with key
11 stakeholders, as directed by the steering group. At a minimum, the
12 Commission shall consult with:

13 (A) the Department of Mental Health;

14 (B) the Department of Labor;

15 (C) the President of the University of Vermont or designee;

16 (D) the Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges Corporation or
17 designee;

18 (E) a representative from the Prekindergarten Education
19 Implementation Committee;

20 (F) the Office of Racial Equity;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (G) a representative with expertise in the Community Schools model
2 in Vermont;

3 (H) the Vermont Youth Council;

4 (I) the Commission on Public School Employee Health Benefits; and

5 (J) an organization committed to ensuring equal representation and
6 educational equity.

7 (2) The Commission shall also review and take into consideration
8 existing educational laws and policy, including legislative reports the
9 Commission deems relevant to its work and, at a minimum, 2015 Acts and
10 Resolves No. 46, 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173, 2022 Acts and Resolves
11 No. 127, and 2023 Acts and Resolves No. 76.

12 (e) Duties of the Commission. The Commission shall study Vermont's
13 public education system and make recommendations to ensure all students are
14 afforded quality educational opportunities in an efficient, sustainable, and
15 equitable education system that will enable students to achieve the highest
16 academic outcomes. The result of the Commission's work shall be a
17 ~~recommendation for a statewide vision for Vermont's public education system,~~
18 ~~with recommendations for the policy changes necessary to make Vermont's~~
19 ~~educational vision a reality~~ recommendations for the State-level education
20 governance system, including the roles and responsibilities of the Agency of

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 Education and the State Board of Education. In creating and making its
2 recommendations, the Commission shall engage in the following:

3 (1) Public engagement. The Commission shall conduct not fewer than
4 14 public meetings to inform the work required under this section. At least one
5 meeting of the Commission as a whole or a subcommittee of the Commission
6 shall be held in each county. The Commission shall publish a draft of its final
7 recommendations on or before October 1, 2025, solicit public feedback, and
8 incorporate such feedback into its final recommendations. When submitting its
9 final recommendations to the General Assembly, the Commission shall include
10 all public feedback received as an addendum to its final report. The public
11 feedback process shall include:

12 (A) a minimum 30-day public comment period, during which time
13 the Commission shall accept written comments from the public and
14 stakeholders; and

15 (B) a public outreach plan that maximizes public engagement and
16 includes notice of the availability of language assistance services when
17 requested.

18 (2) Policy considerations. In developing its recommendations, the
19 Commission shall consider and prioritize the following topics:

20 (A) Governance, resources, and administration. The Commission
21 shall study and make recommendations regarding education governance at the

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 State level, including the role of the Agency of Education in the provision of
2 services and support for the education system. Recommendations under this
3 subdivision (A) shall include, at a minimum, the following:

4 (i) whether changes need to be made to the structure of the
5 Agency of Education, including whether it better serves the recommended
6 education vision of the State as an agency or a department;

7 (ii) what are the staffing needs of the Agency of Education;

8 (iii) whether changes need to be made to the composition, role,
9 and function of the State Board of Education to better serve the recommended
10 education vision of the State;

11 (iv) what roles, functions, or decisions should be a function of
12 local control and what roles, functions, or decisions should be a function of
13 control at the State level, including whether there should be a process for the
14 community served by an elementary school to have a voice in decisions
15 regarding school closures and, if so, recommendations for what that process
16 shall entail; and

17 (v) ~~the effective integration of career and technical education in~~
18 ~~the recommended education vision of the State~~ how to maintain and improve
19 community engagement and local decision-making with transitional and new
20 school boards and how to improve voter turnout for school elections

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 throughout the creation and implementation of new school districts and a new
2 school funding formula;

3 (B) ~~Physical size and footprint of the education system. The~~
4 ~~Commission shall study and make recommendations regarding how the unique~~
5 ~~geographical and socioeconomic needs of different communities should factor~~
6 ~~into the provision of education in Vermont, taking into account and building~~
7 ~~upon the recommendations of the State Aid to School Construction Working~~
8 ~~Group. Recommendations under this subdivision (B) shall include, at a~~
9 ~~minimum, the following:~~

10 (i) ~~an analysis and recommendation for the most efficient and~~
11 ~~effective number and location of school buildings, school districts, and~~
12 ~~supervisory unions needed to achieve Vermont's vision for education,~~
13 ~~provided that if there is a recommendation for any change, the~~
14 ~~recommendation shall include an implementation plan;~~

15 (ii) ~~an analysis of the capacity and ability to staff all public~~
16 ~~schools with a qualified workforce, driven by data on class size~~
17 ~~recommendations;~~

18 (iii) ~~analysis of whether, and if so, how, collaboration with~~
19 ~~Vermont's postsecondary schools may support the development and retention~~
20 ~~of a qualified educator workforce;~~

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 ~~(iv) an analysis of the current town tuition program and whether,~~
2 ~~and if so, what, changes are necessary to meet Vermont's vision for education,~~
3 ~~including the legal and financial impact of funding independent schools and~~
4 ~~other private institutions, including consideration of the following:~~

5 ~~(I) the role designation, under 16 V.S.A. § 827, should play in~~
6 ~~the delivery of public education; and~~

7 ~~(II) the financial impact to the Education Fund of public dollars~~
8 ~~being used in schools located outside Vermont; and~~

9 ~~(v) an analysis of the current use of private therapeutic schools in~~
10 ~~the provision of special education services and whether, and if so, what,~~
11 ~~changes are necessary to meet Vermont's special education needs, including~~
12 ~~the legal and financial impact of funding private therapeutic schools.~~

13 The
14 Commission shall study and make recommendations regarding how larger,
15 consolidated school districts shall operate, including how school boards in
16 larger, consolidated school districts can operate efficiently and effectively and
17 still maintain connection to local communities throughout each district.

18 ~~(C) The role of public schools. The Commission shall study and~~
19 ~~make recommendations regarding the role public schools should play in both~~
20 ~~the provision of education and the social and emotional well-being of students.~~
21 ~~Recommendations under this subdivision (C) shall include, at a minimum, the~~
 ~~following:~~

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (i) ~~how public education in Vermont should be delivered;~~

2 (ii) ~~whether Vermont's vision for public education shall include~~

3 ~~the provision of wraparound supports and collocation of services;~~

4 (iii) ~~whether, and if so, how, collaboration with Vermont's~~

5 ~~postsecondary schools may support and strengthen the delivery of public~~

6 ~~education; and~~

7 (iv) ~~what the consequences are for the Commission's~~

8 ~~recommendations regarding the role of public schools and other service~~

9 ~~providers, including what the role of public schools means for staffing,~~

10 ~~funding, and any other affected system, with the goal of most efficiently~~

11 ~~utilizing State funds and services and maximizing federal funding. [Repealed.]~~

12 (D) ~~Education finance system. The Commission shall explore the~~

13 ~~efficacy and potential equity gains of changes to the education finance system,~~

14 ~~including weighted educational opportunity payments as a method to fund~~

15 ~~public education. The Commission's recommendations shall be intended to~~

16 ~~result in an education funding system designed to afford substantially equal~~

17 ~~access to a quality basic education for all Vermont students in accordance with~~

18 ~~State v. Brigham, 166 Vt. 246 (1997). Recommendations under this~~

19 ~~subdivision (D) shall include, at a minimum, the following:~~

20 (i) ~~allowable uses for the Education Fund that shall ensure~~

21 ~~sustainable and equitable use of State funds;~~

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 ~~(ii) the method for setting tax rates to sustain allowable uses of the~~
2 ~~Education Fund;~~

3 ~~(iii) whether, and if so, what, alternative funding models would~~
4 ~~create a more affordable, sustainable, and equitable education finance system~~
5 ~~in Vermont, including the consideration of a statutory, formal base amount of~~
6 ~~per pupil education spending and whether school districts should be allowed to~~
7 ~~spend above the base amount;~~

8 ~~(iv) adjustments to the excess spending threshold, including~~
9 ~~recommendations that target specific types of spending;~~

10 ~~(v) the implementation of education spending caps on different~~
11 ~~services, including administrative and support services and categorical aid;~~

12 ~~(vi) how to strengthen the understanding and connection between~~
13 ~~school budget votes and property tax bills;~~

14 ~~(vii) adjustments to the property tax credit thresholds to better~~
15 ~~match need to the benefit;~~

16 ~~(viii) a system for ongoing monitoring of the Education Fund and~~
17 ~~Vermont's education finance system, to include consideration of a standing~~
18 ~~Education Fund advisory committee;~~

19 ~~(ix) an analysis of the impact of healthcare costs on the Education~~
20 ~~Fund, including recommendations for whether, and if so, what, changes need~~
21 ~~to be made to contain costs; and~~

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 ~~(x) implementation details for any recommended changes to the~~
2 ~~education funding system.~~ [Repealed.]

3 (E) Additional considerations. The Commission may consider any
4 other topic, factor, or issue that it deems relevant to its work and
5 recommendations.

6 (f) Reports. The Commission shall prepare and submit to the General
7 Assembly the following:

8 (1) a formal, written work plan, which shall include a communication
9 plan to maximize public engagement, on or before September 15, 2024;

10 (2) a written report containing its preliminary findings and
11 recommendations, including short-term cost containment considerations for the
12 2025 legislative session, on or before December 15, 2024; and

13 (3) a written report containing its final findings and recommendations
14 ~~for a statewide vision for Vermont's public education system and the policy~~
15 ~~changes necessary to make that educational vision a reality~~ based on its
16 analysis of the State-level governance topics contained in subdivision (e)(2)(A)
17 of this section, on or before December 1, 2025; ~~and~~

18 ~~(4) proposed legislative language to advance any recommendations for~~
19 ~~the education funding system on or before December 15, 2025.~~

20 (g) Assistance. The Agency of Education shall contract with one or more
21 independent consultants or facilitators to provide technical and legal assistance

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 to the Commission for the work required under this section. For the purposes
2 of scheduling meetings and providing administrative assistance, the
3 Commission shall have the assistance of the Agency of Education. The
4 Agency shall also provide the educational and financial data necessary to
5 facilitate the work of the Commission. School districts shall comply with
6 requests from the Agency to assist in data collections.

7 (h) Meetings.

8 (1) The Secretary of Education shall call the first meeting of the
9 Commission to occur on or before July 15, 2024.

10 (2) The Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore shall
11 jointly select a Commission chair.

12 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

13 (4) Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Vermont's Open
14 Meeting Law pursuant to 1 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 2.

15 (5) The Commission shall cease to exist on December 31, 2025.

16 (i) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Commission shall
17 be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as
18 permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than 30 meetings, including
19 subcommittee meetings. These payments shall be made from monies
20 appropriated to the Agency of Education.

21 * * * School District Redistricting * * *

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 **Sec. 3. SCHOOL DISTRICT REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE; REPORT**

2 (a) Creation. There is created the School District Redistricting Task Force
3 to recommend new school district boundaries and configurations to the
4 General Assembly.

5 (b) Membership. The Task Force shall be composed of the following
6 members:

7 (A) Nonlegislative members. There shall be five nonlegislative
8 members, all of whom shall have extensive experience working within the
9 Vermont public education system. Appointing authorities shall coordinate to
10 ensure that, to the extent possible, each of the five nonvoting members
11 represents a different geographic region of the State.

12 (i) Two members, appointed by the Speaker of the House, one of
13 whom shall be a retired or former Vermont superintendent of a supervisory
14 union with multiple member school districts and one of whom shall be either a
15 retired or former Vermont school business manager or a retired or former
16 school board member.

17 (ii) Two members, appointed by the Committee on Committees,
18 one of whom shall be a retired or former Vermont superintendent and one of
19 whom shall be a retired or former Vermont school business manager.

20 (iii) One member, appointed by the Governor, who shall be a
21 retired or former Vermont superintendent.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (B) Legislative members. There shall be four legislative members.

2 (i) Two current members of the House of Representatives, not all
3 from the same political party nor from the same school district, who shall be
4 appointed by the Speaker of the House.

5 (ii) Two current members of the Senate, not all from the same
6 political party nor from the same school district, who shall be appointed by the
7 Committee on Committees.

8 (c) Powers and duties. In consultation with the Commission on the Future
9 of Public Education, the Task Force shall study and consider different
10 configurations for school district consolidation and propose not more than
11 three options for new school district boundaries. At least one boundary
12 proposal recommendation shall consider the use of supervisory unions and
13 supervisory districts, allow for the continuation of a tuitioning system that
14 provides continued access to independent schools that have served geographic
15 areas that do not operate public schools for the grades served by the
16 independent schools, and to the extent practical, not separate geographic areas
17 that contain nonoperating school districts as such districts exist on July 1,
18 2025.

19 (1) Proposed new school districts shall not have an average daily
20 membership of more than 8,000 prekindergarten through grade 12 students.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (2) Proposed new school districts shall also be, to the greatest extent
2 possible, grand list and pupil count balanced, demographically equitable,
3 logistically feasible, and create the least amount of disruption to students as
4 possible.

5 (3) In creating the proposed districts, the Task Force shall consider:

6 (A) current school district and town boundaries and other historic and
7 current community connections, including access to regional services for
8 students, such as designated agencies;

9 (B) geographic barriers, including mountains and rivers;

10 (C) population distribution;

11 (D) location, capacity, and the facility condition index score of
12 current school buildings;

13 (E) transportation and employment patterns and practices;

14 (F) grand list values and current education spending;

15 (G) student demographics;

16 (H) the debt, liabilities, and assets of current school districts;

17 (I) staffing levels and salary scales; and

18 (J) any other factor the Task Force deems relevant.

19 (K) increasing equitable access to educational opportunity;

20 (L) maximizing opportunities for modern, regional middle and high
21 schools, with the least disruption to students;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (M) providing access to education for their resident students in
2 grades kindergarten through 12;

3 (N) providing access to career and technical education (CTE) for all
4 eligible students;

5 (O) to the extent practical, not separating towns within school
6 districts as those boundaries exist on July 1, 2025;

7 (P) to the extent practical, the availability of regional services for
8 students, such as designated agencies, and how those services would integrate
9 into the new proposed school district boundaries;

10 (Q) to the extent practical, creating school districts with a minimum
11 average daily membership of approximately 4,000 students; and

12 (R) to the extent practical, historic attendance patterns in geographic
13 areas that do not operate public schools at all grade levels from kindergarten
14 through grade 12.

15 (4) The report of the Task Force shall include detailed maps for each
16 proposal, which shall include:

17 (A) boundaries of the new proposed school districts;

18 (B) average daily membership for the new proposed school districts;

19 (C) grand list value of the new proposed school districts;

20 (5) The Task Force may consider and make recommendations for the
21 optimal location of schools, including CTE programs.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (d) Public input. The Task Force shall hold not fewer than two public
2 hearings to receive and consider feedback from members of the public
3 regarding school district consolidation and proposed boundaries and shall work
4 closely with the Commission on the Future of Public Education’s public
5 engagement process to maximize public input regarding the development of
6 the proposed new school district boundaries.

7 (e) Assistance. The Task Force shall have the administrative, technical,
8 and legal assistance of the Agency of Digital Services, Vermont Center for
9 Geographic Information. The Task Force may also retain the services of one
10 or more independent third parties to provide contracted resources as the Task
11 Force deems necessary.

12 (f) Report and maps. On or before December 1, 2025, the Task Force shall
13 submit a written report to the House Committees on Education and on
14 Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committees on
15 Education and on Government Operations with its proposals for new
16 consolidated school district boundaries. The report shall include how each
17 proposal meets the requirements contained in subdivisions (c)(1) and (2) of this
18 section, how the considerations in subdivision (c)(3) of this section factored
19 into each proposal, and the pros and cons of each proposal. The detailed maps
20 required under subdivision (c)(4) of this section shall also be included with the
21 report.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (i) average daily membership for each proposed school district for
2 the 2023–2024 school year;

3 (ii) the member towns for each school district;

4 (iii) the location of public schools and nontherapeutic approved
5 independent schools that are eligible to receive public tuition as of July 1,
6 2025, and the grades operated by each of those schools;

7 (iv) the five-year facility condition index score for each school;

8 (v) PCB testing score for each school; and

9 (vi) 10-year change in enrollment between 2014 and 2024 for each
10 school.

11 (g) Meetings.

12 (1) The member appointed by the Governor shall call the first meeting
13 of the Task Force to occur on or before August 15, 2025.

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

16 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

17 (4) The Task Force shall cease to exist on June 30, 2026.

18 (h) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Task Force shall be
19 entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted
20 under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than eight meetings. These payments
21 shall be made from monies appropriated to the Agency of Digital Services.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (i) Appropriation. The sum of \$100,000.00 is appropriated to the Agency
2 of Digital Services from the General Fund in fiscal year 2026 to hire one or
3 more consultants pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

4 * * * School District Voting Ward Task Force * * *

5 **Sec. 4. SCHOOL DISTRICT VOTING WARD WORKING GROUP;**
6 **REPORT; MAPS**

7 (a) Creation. There is created the School District Voting Ward Working
8 Group to create voting district wards within the new school districts
9 contemplated by this act, to ensure school board membership is apportioned in
10 such a manner as to achieve substantially equal weighting of the votes of all
11 voters in the choice of school board members.

12 (b) Membership. The Working Group shall be composed of the following
13 members who shall have substantial understanding of Vermont geography,
14 trade, travel, social interaction, and Vermont's public education system:

15 (1) the Secretary of State or designee, who shall be the chair;

16 (2) three members, who shall be appointed by the Vermont Municipal
17 Clerk Treasurer Association;

18 (3) two members, appointed by the Vermont School Boards
19 Association; and

20 (4) the Director of the Vermont Center for Geographic Information or
21 designee.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (c) Powers and duties. On or before October 15, 2025, the Working Group
2 shall consult with the School District Redistricting Task Force created in Sec. 3
3 of this act to gain an understanding of the status of the work of the Task Force
4 and to determine whether the Task Force has one or more boundary proposals
5 ready for the Working Group to begin the work of creating voting wards.
6 Using the boundary proposals of the Task Force, the Working Group shall,
7 following the principles of apportionment followed by the legislative
8 apportionment board, make recommendations to the General Assembly to
9 achieve voting districts within each school district that are compact,
10 contiguous, and drawn to achieve substantially equal weighting of votes and
11 that meet the requirements of applicable State and federal law. If at any time
12 during the work of the Working Group the General Assembly enacts new
13 school district boundaries, or it appears clear the General Assembly is focused
14 on only one proposal, the Working Group shall focus its work and
15 recommendations to align with the work of the General Assembly. The
16 Working Group's recommendations shall include:
17 (1) the optimal number of school board members per school board to
18 maximize public representation and democratic input while maintaining
19 effective school board size; and
20 (2) boundaries for school district voting wards within each school
21 district, with alternative options if necessary, including detailed maps clearly

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 and unambiguously delineating ward boundaries that respect current municipal
2 boundary lines.

3 (d) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative,
4 technical, and legal assistance of the Secretary of State's office and the
5 technical assistance of the Agency of Digital Services, Vermont Center for
6 Geographic Information. The Working Group may contract for such expert
7 services as may be necessary to carry out its duties.

8 (e) Meetings.

9 (1) The Secretary of State shall call the first meeting of the Task Force
10 to occur on or before August 15, 2025.

11 (2) The Secretary of State shall be the chair.

12 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

13 (4) The Task Force shall cease to exist on June 30, 2026.

14 (f) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Working Group
15 shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as
16 permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than 10 meetings. These
17 payments shall be made from monies appropriated to the Secretary of State's
18 office.

19 * * * Class Size Minimums * * *

20 Sec. 5. SCALE; INTENT

[House]

[new or needs attention]

It is the intent of the General Assembly to transform education in Vermont by leveraging attainable and research-based scale to increase equity of opportunity and promote efficiency and affordability.

Sec. 6. 16 V.S.A. § 165 is amended to read:

§ 165. EDUCATION QUALITY STANDARDS; EQUAL EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES; INDEPENDENT SCHOOL MEETING
EDUCATION QUALITY STANDARDS

(a) In order to carry out Vermont’s policy that all Vermont children will be afforded educational opportunities that are substantially equal in quality, each Vermont public school, including each career technical center, shall meet the following education quality standards:

* * *

(9) The school complies with average class size minimum standards; provided, however, that when class size minimums apply to content areas, an individual class may be smaller than the minimum average. As used in this subdivision, “content area” means a group of courses within a specific licensing endorsement area.

(A) Class size standards.

(i) The average class size minimum for kindergarten and first grade classes shall be 10 students.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (ii) The average class size minimum for grades two through five
2 shall be 12 students.

3 (iii) The average class size minimum for grades six through eight
4 in all required content areas shall be 15 students.

5 (iv) The average class size minimum for grades nine through 12 in
6 all required content area classes shall be 18 students.

7 (v) Multiage classrooms for grades kindergarten through eight
8 shall be limited to two grade levels per classroom.

9 (vi) Prekindergarten, career and technical education, flexible
10 pathways, terminal courses, advanced placement courses, courses that require
11 specialized equipment, and driver's education classes shall be excluded from
12 the class size minimum requirements in this subdivision (9). Small group
13 services for the purpose of providing special education, supplemental or
14 targeted academic intervention, or English learner instruction shall also be
15 excluded from the class size minimum requirements in this subdivision (9).

16 (vii) Class sizes shall not exceed the maximum occupancy limits
17 established by local and State fire codes, including egress and safety
18 requirements.

19 (B) Waivers. If a school board determines that it operates a school
20 that is unable to comply with the class size minimum standards due to
21 geographic isolation, or a school has developed an implementation plan to

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 meet the standards contained in this subdivision (9) that may include
2 consolidation or merger, the school board may ask the State Board of
3 Education to grant it waiver from this subdivision (9). The State Board shall
4 define what qualifies as geographic isolation in its rules adopted pursuant to
5 subdivision (a)(3) of this section. The State Board's decision shall be final.

6 (C) State Board action. If the Secretary determines that a school is
7 not meeting the class size minimum standards set forth in this subdivision (9)
8 over the course of three consecutive school years, the Secretary may
9 recommend to the State Board one or more of the actions listed in subsection
10 (b) of this section, regardless of whether the school is meeting all other
11 education quality standards. The State Board shall then follow the procedure
12 of subsection (c) of this section.

13 (b) Annually, the Secretary shall determine whether students in each
14 Vermont public school are provided educational opportunities substantially
15 equal to those provided in other public schools. If the Secretary determines
16 that a school is not meeting the education quality standards listed in subsection
17 (a) of this section or that the school is making insufficient progress in
18 improving student performance in relation to the standards for student
19 performance set forth in subdivision 164(9) of this title, ~~he or she~~ the Secretary
20 shall describe in writing actions that a district must take in order to meet either
21 or both sets of standards and shall provide technical assistance to the school. If

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 the school fails to meet the standards or make sufficient progress within two
2 years ~~of~~ following the determination, the Secretary shall recommend to the
3 State Board one or more of the following actions:

4 (1) the Agency continue to provide technical assistance for one more
5 cycle of review;

6 (2) the State Board adjust supervisory union boundaries or
7 responsibilities of the superintendency pursuant to section 261 of this title;

8 (3) the Secretary assume administrative control of an individual school,
9 school district, or supervisory union, including budgetary control to ensure
10 sound financial practices, only to the extent necessary to correct deficiencies;

11 (4) the State Board close an individual school or schools and require that
12 the school district pay tuition to another public school or an approved
13 independent school pursuant to chapter 21 of this title; or

14 (5) the State Board require two or more school districts to consolidate
15 their governance structures.

16 (c) The State Board, after offering the school board an opportunity for a
17 hearing, shall either dismiss the Secretary's recommendation or order that one
18 or more of the actions listed in subsection (b) of this section be taken. The
19 action ordered by the State Board shall be the least intrusive consistent with the
20 need to provide students attending the school substantially equal educational

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

opportunities. A school board aggrieved by an order of the State Board may
appeal the order in accordance with the Rules of Civil Procedure.

* * *

(e) If the Secretary determines at any time that the failure of a school to
meet the education quality standards listed in subsection (a) of this section is
severe or pervasive, potentially results in physical or emotional harm to
students or significant deprivation of equal education opportunities, and the
school has either unreasonably refused to remedy the problem or its efforts
have proved ineffective, ~~he or she~~ the Secretary may recommend to the State
Board one or more of the actions listed in subsection (b) of this section. The
State Board shall then follow the procedure of subsection (c) of this section.

* * *

(g) In addition to the education quality standards provided in subsection (a)
of this section, each Vermont school district shall meet the school district
quality standards adopted by rule of the Agency of Education regarding the
business, facilities management, and governance practices of school districts.
These standards shall include a process for school district quality reviews to be
conducted by the Agency of Education. Annually, the Secretary shall publish
metrics regarding the outcomes of school district quality reviews.

Sec. 7. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH EDUCATION QUALITY

STANDARDS; STATE BOARD ACTION

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 Notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 165(b)(4) and (5) and any other provision of
2 law to the contrary, the State Board shall be prohibited from ordering school
3 district consolidation or school consolidation if a school fails to comply with
4 class size minimum education quality standards and the resulting consolidation
5 would result in school construction costs in excess of the applicable district's
6 capital reserve account until the General Assembly establishes new school
7 district boundaries and takes further action regarding the consequences for
8 failure to meet education quality standards.

9 * * * Agency and State Board Rules and Reports * * *

10 Sec. 8. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION; RULES; REPORT

11 (a) Rules.

12 (1) The State Board of Education shall initiate rulemaking to amend the
13 Education Quality Standards rule 2000 series, Agency of Education, Education
14 Quality Standards (22-000-003), pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25:

15 (A) on or before August 1, 2026, to ensure compliance with the class
16 size minimum standards set pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 165(a)(9); and

17 (B) on or before July 1, 2027, to adopt standards for statewide
18 graduation requirements based on standards adopted by the State Board and
19 recommendations from the Agency of Education, which shall take effect
20 beginning in the 2027–2028 school year for the graduating class of 2031 and
21 every graduating class thereafter.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (2) On or before August 1, 2026, the State Board of Education shall
2 initiate rulemaking to amend the approved independent school rule 2200 series,
3 Agency of Education, Independent School Program Approval (22-000-004),
4 pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25, to require approved independent schools that
5 intend to accept public tuition to comply with the class size minimum
6 standards set pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 165(a)(9). The amendments shall also
7 create a process for review by the State Board for failure to meet the class size
8 minimum requirements and the corresponding actions the Board may take for
9 such noncompliance; provided, however, that the Board shall provide an
10 approved independent school a substantially similar opportunity to come into
11 compliance with class size minimum standards that it would provide to a
12 public school.

13 (b) Report. On or before December 1, 2025, the State Board of Education
14 shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on
15 Education with proposed standards for schools to be deemed “small by
16 necessity.”

17 Sec. 9. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; SCHOOL CALENDAR;

18 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS; REPORT

19 (a) Statewide graduation requirements. On or before January 1, 2026, the
20 Agency of Education shall recommend to the State Board of Education

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

standards for statewide graduation requirements based on standards adopted by the State Board.

(b) Statewide school calendar.

(1) On or before January 15, 2027, the Secretary of Education shall develop and publish a statewide calendar for the public schools of the State, including career and technical centers, that shall be in effect in the 2028–2029 academic year and after.

(2) On or before January 15, 2027, the Secretary shall present to the House and Senate Committees on Education a list of the statutory amendments necessary to effect the intent of this subsection.

(c) Report. On or before December 1, 2025, the Agency of Education shall submit a written report and recommended legislative language, as applicable, to the House and Senate Committees on Education with the following:

(1) In consultation with educators and administrators, a proposed implementation plan for statewide financial data and student information systems.

(2) Recommendations for a school construction division within the Agency of Education, including position descriptions and job duties for each position within the division, a detailed description of the assistance the division would provide to the field, and the overall role the Agency would play within a State aid to school construction program.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (3) A progress report regarding the development of clear, unambiguous
2 guidance that would be provided to school officials and school board members
3 regarding the business processes and transactions that would need to occur to
4 facilitate school district mergers into larger, consolidated school districts,
5 including the merging of data systems, asset and liability transfers, and how to
6 address collective bargaining agreements for both educators and staff. The
7 report shall include a detailed description of how the Agency will provide
8 support and consolidation assistance to the field in each of these areas and an
9 estimate of the costs associated with such work.

10 (4) In consultation with superintendents, directors of therapeutic
11 independent schools, special education directors, and, in the opinion of the
12 Agency, other experts, recommendations for the need for cooperative
13 education services and the oversight of therapeutic schools within the school
14 governance framework both at a State and local level.

15 Sec. 10. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION; REVIEW OF RULES;

16 APPROPRIATION

17 (a) The State Board of Education shall review each rule series the State
18 Board is responsible for and make a determination as to the continuing need
19 for, appropriateness of, or need for updating of said rules. On or before
20 December 1, 2026, the State Board of Education shall submit a written report
21 to the House and Senate Committees on Education with its recommendation

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 for rules that are no longer needed and a plan to update rules that are still
2 necessary, including the order in which the Board proposes to update the rules
3 and any associated costs or staffing needs.

4 (b) The sum of \$200,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the
5 Agency of Education in fiscal year 2026 to provide the State Board of
6 Education with the contracted resources necessary to review and update the
7 Board's rules.

8 * * * School Closure * * *

9 Sec. 11. PROHIBITION ON SCHOOL CLOSURE AND TRANSITION TO
10 PAYING TUITION

11 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a school district
12 shall be prohibited from closing an existing public school and then providing
13 for the education of its resident students by paying tuition for its students to
14 attend a public or approved independent school chosen by the parents of the
15 district's students. If a school district that closes an existing public school is
16 unable to provide for the education of its affected resident students in a
17 different school or schools operated by the district, the school district shall
18 provide for the education of its resident students by designating three or fewer
19 public schools to serve as the public school or schools of the district.
20 Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, if designation is required
21 pursuant to this subsection, the designation process contained in 16 V.S.A.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 § 827 shall apply to schools operating grades kindergarten through grade 12, or
2 any subset of grades therein.

3 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, if a school district closes
4 a public school in a geographically isolated area, as defined by the State Board
5 of Education, and is unable to provide for the education of its affected resident
6 students in a different school or schools operated by the district, the school
7 district may petition the State Board of Education for a determination as to
8 whether there is a reasonably accessible public school to designate. If the State
9 Board finds there is no reasonably accessible public school to designate, the
10 applicable school district may provide for the education of its affected resident
11 students by offering tuition pursuant to 16 V.S.A. chapter 21.

12 * * * State Aid to School Construction * * *

13 Sec. 12. 16 V.S.A. § 3440 is added to read:

14 § 3440. STATEMENT OF POLICY

15 It is the intent of this chapter to encourage the efficient use of public funds
16 to modernize school infrastructure in alignment with current educational needs.
17 School construction projects supported by this chapter should be developed
18 taking consideration of standards of quality for public schools under section
19 165 of this title and prioritizing cost, geographic accessibility, 21st century
20 education facilities standards, statewide enrollment trends, and capacity and
21 scale that support best educational practices. Further, it is the intent of this

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 chapter to encourage the use of existing infrastructure to meet the needs of
2 Vermont students. Joint construction projects between two or more school
3 districts and consolidation of buildings within a district where feasible and
4 educationally appropriate are encouraged.

5 Sec. 13. 16 V.S.A. § 3442 is added to read:

6 § 3442. STATE AID FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

7 The Agency of Education shall be responsible for implementing the State
8 Aid for School Construction Program according to the provisions of this
9 chapter. The Agency shall be responsible for:

10 (1) reviewing all preliminary applications for State school construction
11 aid and issuing an approval or denial in accordance with section 3445 of this
12 chapter;

13 (2) adopting rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 pertaining to school
14 construction and capital outlay, including rules to specify a point prioritization
15 methodology and a bonus incentive structure aligned with the legislative intent
16 expressed in section 3440 of this title;

17 (3) including as part of its budget submitted to the Governor pursuant to
18 subdivision 212(21) of this title its annual school construction funding request;

19 (4) developing a prequalification and review process for project delivery
20 consultants and architecture and engineering firms specializing in

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 prekindergarten through grade 12 school design, renovation, or construction
2 and maintaining a list of such prequalified firms and consultants;

3 (5) providing technical assistance and guidance to school districts and
4 supervisory unions on all phases of school capital projects;

5 (6) providing technical advice and assistance, training, and education to
6 school districts, supervisory unions, general contractors, subcontractors,
7 construction or project managers, designers, and other vendors in the planning,
8 maintenance, and establishment of school facility space;

9 (7) maintaining a current list of school construction projects that have
10 received preliminary approval, projects that have received final approval, and
11 the priority points awarded to each project;

12 (8) collecting, maintaining, and making publicly available quarterly
13 progress reports of all ongoing school construction projects that shall include,
14 at a minimum, the costs of the project and the time schedule of the project;

15 (9) recommending policies and procedures designed to reduce
16 borrowing for school construction programs at both State and local levels;

17 (10) conducting a needs survey at least every five years to ascertain the
18 capital construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and other capital needs for
19 all public schools and maintaining such data in a publicly accessible format;

20 (11) developing a formal enrollment projection model or using
21 projection models already available;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (12) encouraging school districts and supervisory unions to investigate
2 opportunities for the maximum utilization of space in and around the district or
3 supervisory union;

4 (13) collecting and maintaining a clearinghouse of prototypical school
5 plans, as appropriate, that may be consulted by eligible applicants;

6 (14) retaining the services of consultants, as necessary, to effectuate the
7 roles and responsibilities listed within this section; and

8 (15) notwithstanding 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), annually on or before December
9 15, submitting a written report to the General Assembly regarding the status
10 and implementation of the State Aid for School Construction Program,
11 including the data required to be collected pursuant to this section.

12 Sec. 14. 16 V.S.A. § 3443 is added to read:

13 § 3443. STATE AID FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION ADVISORY

14 BOARD

15 (a) Creation. There is hereby created the State Aid for School Construction
16 Advisory Board, which shall advise the Agency on the implementation of the
17 State Aid for School Construction Program in accordance with the provisions
18 of this chapter, including the adoption of rules, setting of statewide priorities,
19 criteria for project approval, and recommendations for project approval and
20 prioritization.

21 (b) Membership.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (1) Composition. The Board shall be composed of the following eight
2 members:

3 (A) four members who shall serve as ex officio members:

4 (i) the State Treasurer or designee;

5 (ii) the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services or
6 designee;

7 (iii) the Executive Director of the Vermont Bond Bank or
8 designee; and

9 (iv) the Chair of the State Board of Education or designee; and

10 (B) four members, none of whom shall be a current member of the
11 General Assembly, who shall serve four-year terms as follows:

12 (i) two members, appointed by the Speaker of the House, each of
13 whom shall have expertise in education or construction, real estate, or finance
14 and one of whom shall represent a supervisory union; and

15 (ii) two members, appointed by the Committee on Committees,
16 each of whom shall have expertise in education or construction, real estate, or
17 finance and one of whom shall be an educator.

18 (2) Members with four-year terms.

19 (A) A member with a term limit shall serve a term of four years and
20 until a successor is appointed. A term shall begin on January 1 of the year of
21 appointment and run through December 31 of the last year of the term. Terms

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 of these members shall be staggered so that not all terms expire at the same
2 time.

3 (B) A vacancy created before the expiration of a term shall be filled
4 in the same manner as the original appointment for the unexpired portion of the
5 term.

6 (C) A member with a term limit shall not serve more than two
7 consecutive terms. A member appointed to fill a vacancy created before the
8 expiration of a term shall not be deemed to have served a term for the purpose
9 of this subdivision (C).

10 (c) Duties. The Board shall advise the Agency on the implementation of
11 the State Aid for School Construction Program in accordance with the
12 provisions of this chapter, including:

13 (1) rules pertaining to school construction and capital outlay;

14 (2) project priorities;

15 (3) proposed legislation the Board deems desirable or necessary related
16 to the State Aid for School Construction Program, the provisions of this
17 chapter, and any related laws;

18 (4) policies and procedures designed to reduce borrowing for school
19 construction programs at both State and local levels;

20 (5) development of a formal enrollment projection model or the
21 consideration of using projection models already available;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (6) processes and procedures necessary to apply for, receive, administer,
2 and comply with the conditions and requirements of any grant, gift,
3 appropriation of property, services, or monies;

4 (7) the collection and maintenance of a clearinghouse of prototypical
5 school plans that may be consulted by eligible applicants and recommended
6 incentives to utilize such prototypes;

7 (8) the determination of eligible cost components of projects for funding
8 or reimbursement, including partial or full eligibility for project components
9 for which the benefit is shared between the school and other municipal and
10 community entities;

11 (9) development of a long-term vision for a statewide capital plan in
12 accordance with needs and projected funding;

13 (10) collection and maintenance of data on all public school facilities in
14 the State, including information on size, usage, enrollment, available facility
15 space, and maintenance;

16 (11) advising districts on the use of a needs survey to ascertain the
17 capital construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and other capital needs for
18 schools across the State; and

19 (12) encouraging school districts and supervisory unions to investigate
20 opportunities for the maximum utilization of space in and around the district or
21 supervisory union.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (d) Meetings.

2 (1) The Chair of the State Board of Education shall call the first meeting
3 of the Board to occur on or before September 1, 2025.

4 (2) The Board shall select a chair from among its members at the first
5 meeting.

6 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

7 (4) The Board shall meet not more than six times per year.

8 (e) Assistance. The Board shall have the administrative, technical, and
9 legal assistance of the Agency of Education.

10 (f) Compensation and reimbursement. Members of the Board shall be
11 entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted
12 under 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for not more than six meetings per year.

13 (g) Report. On or before December 15, 2025, the Board shall submit a
14 written report to the House Committees on Education and on Ways and Means
15 and the Senate Committees on Education and on Finance on recommendations
16 for addressing the transfer of any debt obligations from current school districts
17 to future school districts as contemplated by Vermont's education
18 transformation.

19 Sec. 15. PROSPECTIVE REPEAL OF STATE AID FOR SCHOOL

20 CONSTRUCTION ADVISORY BOARD

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 16 V.S.A. § 3443 (State Aid for School Construction Advisory Board) is
2 repealed on July 1, 2035.

3 Sec. 16. 16 V.S.A. § 3444 is added to read:

4 § 3444. SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AID SPECIAL FUND

5 (a) Creation. There is created the School Construction Aid Special Fund,
6 to be administered by the Agency of Education. Monies in the Fund shall be
7 used for the purposes of:

8 (1) awarding aid to school construction projects under section 3445 of
9 this title;

10 (2) awarding grants through the Facilities Master Plan Grant Program
11 established in section 3441 of this title;

12 (3) funding administrative costs of the State Aid for School
13 Construction Program; and

14 (4) awarding emergency aid under section 3445 of this title.

15 (b) Funds. The Fund shall consist of:

16 (1) any amounts transferred or appropriated to it by the General
17 Assembly;

18 (2) any amounts deposited in the Fund from the Supplemental District
19 Spending Reserve; and

20 (3) any interest earned by the Fund.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 Sec. 17. 16 V.S.A. § 3445 is added to read:

2 § 3445. APPROVAL AND FUNDING OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

3 PROJECTS

4 (a) Construction aid.

5 (1) Preliminary application for construction aid. A school district
6 eligible for assistance under section 3447 of this title that intends to construct
7 or purchase a new school, or make extensive additions or alterations to its
8 existing school, and desires to avail itself of State school construction aid shall
9 submit a written preliminary application to the Secretary. A preliminary
10 application shall include information required by the Agency by rule and shall
11 specify the need for and purpose of the project.

12 (2) Approval of preliminary application.

13 (A) When reviewing a preliminary application for approval, the
14 Secretary shall consider:

15 (i) regional educational opportunities and needs, including school
16 building capacities across school district boundaries, and available
17 infrastructure in neighboring communities;

18 (ii) economic efficiencies;

19 (iii) the suitability of an existing school building to continue to
20 meet educational needs; and

21 (iv) statewide educational initiatives.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (B) The Secretary may approve a preliminary application if:

2 (i)(I) the project or part of the project fulfills a need occasioned

3 by:

4 (aa) conditions that threaten the health or safety of students

5 or employees;

6 (bb) facilities that are inadequate to provide programs

7 required by State or federal law or regulation;

8 (cc) excessive energy use resulting from the design of a

9 building or reliance on fossil fuels or electric space heat; or

10 (dd) deterioration of an existing building; or

11 (II) the project results in consolidation of two or more school

12 buildings and will serve the educational needs of students in a more cost-

13 effective and educationally appropriate manner as compared to individual

14 projects constructed separately;

15 (ii) the need addressed by the project cannot reasonably be met by

16 another means;

17 (iii) the proposed type, kind, quality, size, and estimated cost of

18 the project are suitable for the proposed curriculum and meet all legal

19 standards;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (iv) the applicant achieves the level of “proficiency” in the school
2 district quality standards regarding facilities management adopted by rule by
3 the Agency; and

4 (v) the applicant has completed a facilities master planning
5 process that:

6 (I) engages robust community involvement;

7 (II) considers regional solutions;

8 (III) evaluates environmental contaminants; and

9 (IV) produces a facilities master plan that unites the applicant’s
10 vision statement, educational needs, enrollment projections, renovation needs,
11 and construction projects.

12 (3) Priorities. Following approval of a preliminary application and
13 provided that the district has voted funds or authorized a bond for the total
14 estimated cost of a project, the Agency, with the advice of the State Aid for
15 School Construction Advisory Board, shall assign points to the project as
16 prescribed by rule of the Agency so that the project can be placed on a priority
17 list based on the number of points received.

18 (4) Request for legislative appropriation. The Agency shall submit its
19 annual school construction funding request to the Governor as part of its
20 budget pursuant to subdivision 212(21) of this title. Following submission of
21 the Governor’s recommended budget to the General Assembly pursuant to

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 32 V.S.A. § 306, the House Committee on Education and the Senate
2 Committee on Education shall recommend a total school construction
3 appropriation for the next fiscal year to the General Assembly.

4 (5) Final approval for construction aid.

5 (A) Unless approved by the Secretary for good cause in advance of
6 commencement of construction, a school district shall not begin construction
7 before the Secretary approves a final application. A school district may submit
8 a written final application to the Secretary at any time following approval of a
9 preliminary application.

10 (B) The Secretary may approve a final application for a project
11 provided that:

12 (i) the project has received preliminary approval;

13 (ii) the district has voted funds or authorized a bond for the total
14 estimated cost of the project;

15 (iii) the district has made arrangements for project construction
16 supervision by persons competent in the building trades;

17 (iv) the district has provided for construction financing of the
18 project during a period prescribed by the Agency;

19 (v) the project has otherwise met the requirements of this chapter;

20 (vi) if the proposed project includes a playground, the project
21 includes a requirement that the design and construction of playground

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 equipment follow the guidelines set forth in the U.S. Consumer Product Safety
2 Commission Handbook for Public Playground Safety; and

3 (vii) if the total estimated cost of the proposed project is less than
4 \$50,000.00, no performance bond or irrevocable letter of credit shall be
5 required.

6 (C) The Secretary may provide that a grant for a high school project
7 is conditioned upon the agreement of the recipient to provide high school
8 instruction for any high school pupil living in an area prescribed by the Agency
9 who may elect to attend the school.

10 (D) A district may begin construction upon receipt of final approval.
11 However, a district shall not be reimbursed for debt incurred due to borrowing
12 of funds in anticipation of aid under this section.

13 (6) Award of construction aid.

14 (A) The base amount of an award shall be 20 percent of the eligible
15 debt service cost of a project. Projects are eligible for additional bonus
16 incentives as specified in rule for up to an additional 20 percent of the eligible
17 debt service cost. Amounts shall be awarded annually.

18 (B) As used in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (6), “eligible debt
19 service cost” of a project means the product of the lifetime cost of the bond
20 authorized for the project and the ratio of the approved cost of a project to the
21 total cost of the project.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (b) Emergency aid. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section,
2 the Secretary may grant aid for a project the Secretary deems to be an
3 emergency in the amount of 30 percent of eligible project costs, up to a
4 maximum eligible total project cost of \$300,000.00.

5 Sec. 18. 16 V.S.A. § 3446 is added to read:

6 § 3446. APPEAL

7 Any municipal corporation as defined in section 3447 of this title aggrieved
8 by an order, allocation, or award of the Agency of Education may, within 30
9 days, appeal to the Superior Court in the county in which the project is located.

10 Sec. 19. TRANSFER OF RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; TRANSFER OF
11 RULES

12 (a) The statutory authority to adopt rules by the State Board of Education
13 pertaining to school construction and capital outlay adopted under 16 V.S.A.
14 § 3448(e) and 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 is transferred from the State Board of
15 Education to the Agency of Education.

16 (b) All rules pertaining to school construction and capital outlay adopted by
17 the State Board of Education under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 prior to July 1, 2026
18 shall be deemed the rules of the Agency of Education and remain in effect until
19 amended or repealed by the Agency of Education pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter
20 25.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (c) The Agency of Education shall provide notice of the transfer to the
2 Secretary of State and the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules in
3 accordance with 3 V.S.A. § 848(d)(2).

4 Sec. 20. REPEALS

5 (a) 16 V.S.A. § 3448 (approval of funding of school construction projects;
6 renewable energy) is repealed on July 1, 2026.

7 (b) 16 V.S.A. § 3448a (appeal) is repealed on July 1, 2026.

8 * * * Schools Eligible to Receive Public Tuition * * *

9 Sec. 21. 16 V.S.A. § 828 is amended to read:

10 § 828. TUITION TO APPROVED SCHOOLS; AGE; APPEAL

11 (a) A school district shall not pay the tuition of a student except to:

12 (1) a public school; located in Vermont;

13 (2) an approved independent school; that:

14 (A) is located in Vermont;

15 (B) is approved under section 166 of this title on or before July 1,

16 2025;

17 (C) is located within either:

18 (i) a supervisory district that does not operate a public school for
19 some or all grades as of July 1, 2024; or

20 (ii) a supervisory union with one or more member school districts
21 that does not operate a public school for some or all grades as of July 1, 2024;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (D) had at least 40 percent of its student enrollment composed of
2 students attending on a district-funded tuition basis pursuant to chapter 21 of
3 this title during the 2023–2024 school year; and

4 (E) complies with the minimum class size requirements contained in
5 subdivision 165(a)(9) of this title and State Board rule; provided, however, that
6 if a school is unable to comply with the class size minimum standards due to
7 geographic isolation or a school has developed an implementation plan to meet
8 the class size minimum requirements, the school may ask the State Board to
9 grant it a waiver from this subdivision (E), which decision shall be final;

10 (3) an independent school meeting education quality standards;

11 (4) a tutorial program approved by the State Board;

12 (5) an approved education program; or

13 (6) ~~an independent school in another state or country approved under the~~
14 ~~laws of that state or country, that complies with the reporting requirement~~
15 ~~under subsection 4010(c) of this title; a public school located in another state;~~
16 or

17 (7) a therapeutic approved independent school located in Vermont or
18 another state or country that is approved under the laws of that state or country.

19 (b) ~~nor shall payment~~ Payment of tuition on behalf of a person shall not be
20 denied on account of age.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (c) Unless otherwise provided, a person who is aggrieved by a decision of a
2 school board relating to eligibility for tuition payments, the amount of tuition
3 payable, or the school the person may attend, may appeal to the State Board
4 and its decision shall be final.

5 (d) As used in this section, “therapeutic approved independent school”
6 means an approved independent school that limits enrollment for publicly
7 funded students residing in Vermont to students who are on an individualized
8 education program or plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of
9 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, or who are enrolled pursuant to a written agreement
10 between a local education agency and the school or pursuant to a court order.

11 Sec. 22. TUITION TRANSITION

12 A school district that pays tuition pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A.
13 chapter 21 in effect on June 30, 2025 shall continue to pay tuition on behalf of
14 a resident student enrolled for the 2024–2025 school year in or who has been
15 accepted for enrollment for the 2025–2026 school year by an approved
16 independent school subject to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. § 828 in effect on
17 June 30, 2025, until such time as the student graduates from that school.

18 * * * State-Level Governance * * *

19 Sec. 23. STATE-LEVEL GOVERNANCE; INTENT

20 It is the intent of the General Assembly to consolidate structures and
21 systems that are foundational to the administration of education and to ensure

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 that the State Board of Education is the independent, transparent, and public
2 facing body for public education and to ensure the Board maintains its ability
3 provide an important outlet for the public to engage in the rulemaking process
4 and regularly provide public comment regarding the state of Vermont's
5 education system.

6 Sec. 24. 16 V.S.A. § 161 is amended to read:

7 § 161. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION; APPOINTMENT OF
8 MEMBERS; TERM; VACANCY

9 The State Board shall consist of ~~ten~~ 10 members. Two of the members shall
10 be secondary students, one of whom shall be a full member and the other of
11 whom shall be a junior member who may not vote. ~~All~~ Eight members,
12 including the two student members, shall be appointed by the Governor with
13 the advice and consent of the Senate. One member shall be appointed by the
14 Speaker of the House and one member shall be appointed by the Senate
15 Committee on Committees. In the appointment of the nonstudent members,
16 priority shall be given to the selection of persons with a demonstrated
17 commitment to ensuring quality education for Vermont students. To the extent
18 possible, the members shall represent the State's geographic, gender, racial,
19 and ethnic diversity. The Secretary shall serve on the State Board as a
20 nonvoting member.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (1) Upon the expiration of the respective terms of those members of the
2 Board previously appointed, excluding the student members, the ~~Governor~~
3 appointing authority that made the initial appointment to the expired term
4 shall, biennially in the month of February with the advice and consent of the
5 Senate, as applicable, appoint members for terms of six years. The terms shall
6 begin March 1 of the year in which the appointments are made. A member
7 serving a term of six years shall not be eligible for reappointment for
8 successive terms.

9 (2) In the event of any vacancy occurring in the membership of the
10 Board, the ~~Governor~~ appointing authority that made the initial appointment to
11 the vacated term shall fill the vacancy with a qualified person whose
12 appointment shall be for the unexpired portion of the term.

13 (3) Biennially, the Board shall choose a member of the Board to be its
14 chair.

15 (4) Annually, using an application process that is open and accessible to
16 all eligible students, the Governor shall appoint a Vermont secondary school
17 student who will continue to be a secondary student for at least two years
18 following taking office, to serve on the State Board for two years, beginning on
19 July 1 of the year of appointment. The student member shall not vote during
20 the first year and shall be a full and voting member during the second year of
21 ~~his or her~~ the student's term.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 Sec. 25. TRANSITION PERIOD APPOINTMENTS; STATE BOARD OF
2 EDUCATION

3 (a) Members currently serving on the State Board of Education may
4 continue to serve for the duration of the term to which they were appointed.

5 (b) Beginning on July 1, 2025, as terms of currently serving members
6 expire, appointments of successors shall be made in accordance with the
7 considerations and appointment authority contained in 16 V.S.A. § 161.

8 (1) The Speaker of the House shall make the first appointment to a
9 vacant or expired seat that occurs after July 1, 2025 and shall make any
10 subsequent appointments to fill the vacated or expired term for that same seat
11 after the initial transition period appointment.

12 (2) The Senate Committee on Committees shall make the second
13 appointment to a vacant or expired seat that occurs after July 1, 2025 and shall
14 make any subsequent appointments to fill the vacated or expired term for that
15 same seat after the initial transition period appointment.

16 (3) The Governor shall make the third appointment, with the advice and
17 consent of the Senate, to a vacant or expired seat that occurs after July 1, 2025
18 and shall make any subsequent appointments to fill the vacated or expired term
19 for that same seat after the initial transition period appointment.

20 (c) Once the first three appointments after July 1, 2025 are made in
21 accordance with subsection (b) of this section, the Governor shall make all

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 subsequent appointments for the remaining five non-student seats, with the
2 advice and consent of the Senate, in accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 161.

3 Sec. 26. 16 V.S.A. § 162 is amended to read:

4 § 162. REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBERS

5 After notice and hearing, the Governor may remove a member of the State
6 Board for incompetency, failure to discharge ~~his or her~~ the member's duties,
7 malfeasance, illegal acts, or other cause inimical to the welfare of the public
8 schools; and in case of such removal, ~~he or she~~ the appointing authority that
9 made the initial appointment shall appoint a person to fill the unexpired term.

10 * * * Calculation of Tuition * * *

11 Sec. 27. 16 V.S.A. § 823 is amended to read:

12 § 823. ~~ELEMENTARY~~ TUITION

13 (a) Tuition for ~~elementary~~ students shall be paid by the district in which the
14 student is a resident. The district shall pay ~~the full tuition charged its students~~
15 ~~attending a public elementary school~~ to a receiving school an amount equal to
16 the base amount contained in subdivision 4001(16) of this title multiplied by
17 the sum of one and any weights applicable to the resident student under section
18 4010 of this title, for each resident student attending the receiving school. If a
19 ~~payment made to a public elementary school is three percent more or less than~~
20 ~~the calculated net cost per elementary pupil in the receiving school district for~~
21 ~~the year of attendance, the district shall be reimbursed, credited, or refunded~~

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 ~~pursuant to section 836 of this title. Notwithstanding the provisions of this~~
2 ~~subsection or of subsection 825(b) of this title, the boards of both the receiving~~
3 ~~and sending districts may enter into tuition agreements with terms differing~~
4 ~~from the provisions of those subsections, provided that the receiving district~~
5 ~~must offer identical terms to all sending districts, and further provided that the~~
6 ~~statutory provisions apply to any sending district that declines the offered~~
7 ~~terms.~~

8 (b) ~~Unless the electorate of a school district authorizes payment of a higher~~
9 ~~amount at an annual or special meeting warned for the purpose, the tuition paid~~
10 ~~to an approved independent elementary school or an independent school~~
11 ~~meeting education quality standards shall not exceed the least of:~~

12 ~~(1) the average announced tuition of Vermont union elementary schools~~
13 ~~for the year of attendance;~~

14 ~~(2) the tuition charged by the approved independent school for the year~~
15 ~~of attendance; or~~

16 ~~(3) the average per pupil tuition the district pays for its other resident~~
17 ~~elementary students in the year in which the student is enrolled in the approved~~
18 ~~independent school. [Repealed.]~~

19 Sec. 28. REPEALS

20 16 V.S.A. §§ 824 (high school tuition), 825 (maximum tuition rate;
21 calculated net cost per pupil defined), 826 (notice of tuition rates; special

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 education charges), and 836 (tuition overcharge or undercharge) are repealed
2 on July 1, 2029.

3 * * * Special Education Delivery * * *

4 Sec. 29. STATE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION DELIVERY; AGENCY OF
5 EDUCATION; REPORT

6 (a) On or before September 1, 2025, the Agency of Education shall submit
7 a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education, the House
8 Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Committee on Finance
9 addressing the factors contributing to growth in extraordinary special education
10 reimbursement costs. The report shall include detailed information regarding
11 the current state of special education delivery in Vermont, including an update
12 on the implementation of special education changes enacted pursuant to 2018
13 Acts and Resolves No. 173 (Act 173). The report shall include a description of
14 the current state of support for students with disabilities in Vermont and
15 recommended changes to structure, practice, and law with the goal of:

16 (1) improving the delivery of special education services and managing
17 the rising extraordinary special education costs as Vermont's special education
18 finance system transitions from a census block grant to a weight for special
19 education costs;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (2) ensuring better, more inclusive services in the least restrictive
2 environment in a way that makes efficient and effective use of limited
3 resources while resulting in the best outcomes;

4 (3) responding to the challenges of fully implementing Act 173 and the
5 lessons learned from implementation efforts to date;

6 (4) ensuring that the delivery of special education is responsive to
7 student needs; and

8 (5) addressing drivers of growth of extraordinary expenditures in special
9 education.

10 (b) The report shall include:

11 (1) An analysis of the costs of and services provided for students with
12 extraordinary needs in specialized settings, separated by school-district-
13 operated specialized programs, independent nonprofit programs, and
14 independent for-profit programs. The report shall include a geographic map
15 with the location of all specialized programs within the State of Vermont, as
16 well as the following information for each individual specialized program:

17 (A) disability categories served;

18 (B) grade levels served;

19 (C) the number of students with IEPs and the average duration of
20 time each student spent in the program over the last 10 years;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (D) average cost per pupil, inclusive of extraordinary spending and
2 any costs in excess of general tuition rates;

3 (E) years of experience, training, and tenure of licensed special
4 education staff;

5 (F) a review of the findings of all investigations conducted by the
6 Agency of Education; and

7 (G) a review of the Agency’s public assurance capabilities, with
8 respect to special education programs in all settings, and an analysis of the
9 effectiveness of current oversight or rule, and recommended changes if needed.

10 (2) An evaluation of the state of implementation of Act 173, including
11 examples of where implementation has been successful, where it has not, and
12 why.

13 (3) Identification of drivers of accelerating costs within the special
14 education system.

15 (4) Identification of barriers to the success of students with disabilities.

16 (5) A description of how specialized programs for students with
17 extraordinary needs operated by school districts, independent nonprofit
18 schools, and independent for-profit schools are funded, with an analysis of the
19 benefits and risks of each funding model.

20 (6) An assessment of whether Vermont’s current special education laws
21 ensure equitable access for all students with disabilities to education alongside

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 their peers in a way that is consistent with the Vermont education quality
2 standards for public schools and the right to a free appropriate public education
3 (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C.
4 §§ 1400–1482.

5 (7) A review of the capacity of the Agency to support and guide school
6 districts on the effective support of students with disabilities, as well as
7 compliance with federal law, which shall include:

8 (A) a review of final reports of investigations conducted by the
9 Agency in school-district-operated specialized programs, independent
10 nonprofit programs, and independent for-profit programs in the previous 10
11 years and an evaluation of what practices could reduce adverse findings in
12 these settings;

13 (B) an assessment of the ability of the State to ensure State resources
14 are used in the most efficient and effective way possible to support the success
15 of students with disabilities and their access to a free and appropriate public
16 education;

17 (C) a review of any pending and recent federal findings against the
18 State or school districts, as well as progress on corrective actions;

19 (D) a review of the Agency’s staffing and capacity to review and
20 conduct monitoring and visits to schools, especially independent settings;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 (E) a description of the process and status of reviews and approvals
2 of approved independent schools that provide special education and therapeutic
3 schools; and

4 (F) recommendations for whether the Agency has capacity to ensure
5 timely review of approved independent schools and provide sufficient
6 oversight for specialized programs in nonprofit independent schools and for-
7 profit independent schools.

8 (8) Recommendations for needed capacity at the Agency to provide
9 technical assistance and support to school districts in the provision of special
10 education services.

11 (9) An analysis of whether more strategic support for better primary first
12 instruction and more successful implementation of Act 173 needs to be in
13 place for a weighted funding model for special education to succeed, including
14 a suggested transition timeline, with indicators, to be incorporated into the
15 Agency's strategic plan.

16 (10) If warranted, a review of options for changes to practice, structure,
17 and law that ensure students with disabilities are provided access to quality
18 education, in the least restrictive environment, in a cost-effective way that is
19 consistent with State and federal law, which may include a review of the
20 possible role of BOCES and the impact of larger districts on effective, high-
21 quality support for students with disabilities.

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 Sec. 30. SPECIAL EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN; AGENCY OF
2 EDUCATION

3 (a) Strategic plan. In consultation with the State Advisory Panel on Special
4 Education established under 16 V.S.A. § 2945, the Agency of Education shall
5 develop a three-year strategic plan for the delivery of special education
6 services in Vermont. The strategic plan shall include unambiguous measurable
7 outcomes and a timeline for implementation. The strategic plan shall be
8 informed by the analysis and findings of the report required of the Agency
9 under Sec. 29 of this act and be designed to ensure successful implementation
10 of 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 173 (Act 173) and provide the supports and
11 processes that need to be in place for the transition to a weighted funding
12 model for special education to succeed, including a suggested transition
13 timeline, with benchmarks for success. The strategic plan shall also include
14 contingency recommendations for special education funding in the event
15 federal special education funding under the Individuals with Disabilities
16 Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400–1482, is no longer available or transitions
17 to a system that requires more planning and management on the part of the
18 State to ensure funds are distributed equitably.

19 (b) Reports.

20 (1) On or before December 1, 2025, the Agency shall submit the three-
21 year strategic plan created pursuant to subsection (a) of this section to the

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

House and Senate Committees on Education, the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Committee on Finance.

(2) On or before December 1 of 2026, 2027, 2028, and 2029, the Agency shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education, the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Committee on Finance with a detailed update on the Agency's implementation of its strategic plan and any recommendations for legislative changes needed to ensure a successful transition to a weighted funding model and continued successful implementation of Act 173.

Sec. 31. POSITION; AGENCY OF EDUCATION

(a) Establishment of one new permanent, classified position is authorized in the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2026, to support development and implementation of the three-year strategic plan required under Sec. 30 of this act.

(b) The sum of \$150,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Education's base budget in fiscal year 2026 for the purposes of funding the position created in subsection (a) of this section. The Agency shall include funding for this permanent position in their annual base budget request in subsequent years.

* * * Agency of Education Transformation Support * * *

Sec. 32. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; TRANSFORMATION

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

1 **APPROPRIATION**

2 The sum of \$3,400,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the
3 Agency of Education in fiscal year 2026 to support education transformation
4 work as follows:

5 (1) \$200,000.00 to support school boards transitioning to new
6 governance models as contemplated in this act;

7 (2) \$562,500.00 for positions established in Sec. 33 of this act; and

8 (3) \$2,637,500.00 for contracted services to support school districts with
9 administrative activities relating to consolidation, including accounting, budget
10 and operational practice, and to support education quality activities including
11 the alignment of curricula, instructional materials, and teaching activities.

12 **Sec. 33. EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION; POOL POSITIONS**

13 The General Fund appropriation in Sec. 32 of this act shall fund five limited
14 service classified positions taken from the position pool. The pool positions
15 shall be used to establish the following limited service classified positions at
16 the Agency of Education in fiscal year 2026 to support education
17 transformation work:

18 (1) one Business Operations Support Specialist;

19 (2) one Data Integration Support Specialist;

20 (3) one Curriculum and Education Quality Standards Integration
21 Specialist;

[Senate] [House] [new or needs attention]

- 1 (4) one Learning and Teaching Integration Specialist; and
- 2 (5) one School Facilities Field Support Specialist.