

* * * School District Redistricting * * *

Sec. 3. SCHOOL DISTRICT REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE; REPORT

[passage]

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

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

(1) the Director of the Vermont Center for Geographic Information;

(2) the Chair of the Vermont School Boards Association or designee;

(3) the Secretary of Education or designee;

(4) the Chair of the Vermont Superintendents Association or designee;

(5) the Chair of the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies or designee;

(6) one member, appointed by the Speaker of the House, with expertise in education data analysis;

(7) one member, appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees, with expertise in GIS analysis; and

(8) the chair of the Commission on the Future of Public Education or designee.

1 (c) Powers and duties. In consultation with the Commission on the Future
2 of Public Education, the Task Force shall study and consider different
3 configurations for school district consolidation and propose not fewer than
4 three options for new school district boundaries.

5 (1) Proposed new school districts shall total between 12 and 25 districts,
6 each with not fewer than 3,000 prekindergarten through grade 12 students and
7 not more than 8,000 prekindergarten through grade 12 students.

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

12 (3) Each proposed new school district shall include within its boundaries
13 at least one career and technical education (CTE) center currently operated by
14 a public school board, with such CTE centers transitioning to being operated
15 by the school board of the new proposed district.

16 (4) Each new proposed district shall be designed to maximize student
17 access to public schools in all regions of the State and reduce reliance on
18 tuitioning students to independent schools, with opportunities for modern
19 regional middle and high schools.

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

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

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

5 (C) population distribution;

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

8 (E) transportation and employment patterns and practices;

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

10 (G) student demographics;

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

12 (I) staffing levels and salary scales; and

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

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

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

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

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

19 (D) the pros and cons for each proposal.

20 (7) The Task Force shall hold not fewer than two public hearings to
21 receive and consider feedback from members of the public regarding school

1 district consolidation and proposed boundaries and may coordinate with the
2 Commission on the Future of Public Education’s public engagement process to
3 maximize public input regarding the development of the proposed new school
4 district boundaries.

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

10 (e) Report and maps. On or before November 1, 2025, the Task Force shall
11 submit a written report to the House Committees on Education and on
12 Government Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committees on
13 Education and on Government Operations with its proposals for new
14 consolidated school district boundaries. The report shall include how each
15 proposal meets the requirements contained in subdivisions (c)(1) and (2) of this
16 section, how the considerations in subdivision (c)(5) of this section factored
17 into each proposal, and the pros and cons of each proposal. The detailed maps
18 required under subdivision (c)(6) of this section shall also be included with the
19 report.

1 (f) Meetings.

2 (1) The Chair of the Vermont School Boards Association shall call the
3 first meeting of the Task Force to occur on or before July 15, 2025.

4 (2) The Director of the Vermont Center for Geographic Information and
5 the Chair of the Vermont School Boards Association shall be co-chairs.

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

7 (4) The Task Force shall cease to exist on May 31, 2026.

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

12 (h) Appropriation. The sum of \$100,000.00 is appropriated to the Office of
13 Legislative Counsel from the General Fund in fiscal year 2026 to hire one or
14 more consultants pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

15 * * * CTE Weights * * *

16 Sec. 4. CTE WEIGHT; JOINT FISCAL OFFICE; REPORT [passage]

17 (a) The Joint Fiscal Office shall contract with a contractor with expertise in
18 Vermont's education funding system to provide recommended cost factor
19 weights for the provision of career and technical education derived from an
20 updated analysis that uses the education cost function models originally
21 developed for the 2019 Study of Pupil Weights in Vermont's Education

1 Funding Formula. Recommended weights shall take into consideration the
2 current delivery models for career and technical education and may include
3 tiered weights and FTE student counts. The contractor shall submit final CTE
4 weight recommendations on or before December 15, 2025.

5 (b) The sum of \$25,000.00 is appropriated to the Joint Fiscal Office from
6 the General Fund in fiscal year 2026 to hire a consultant to recommend CTE
7 weights pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

8 * * * Transitional School Boards * * *

9 Sec. 18. TRANSITIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS; TRANSITION GRANTS

10 [July 1, 2025 contingent upon the creation of new school districts]

11 (a) Definitions. As used in this section:

12 (1) “Base amount” means a per pupil amount of \$15,033.00, which shall
13 be adjusted for inflation annually on or before November 15 by the Secretary
14 of Education. As used in this subdivision, “adjusted for inflation” means
15 adjusting the base dollar amount by the National Income and Product Accounts
16 (NIPA) implicit price deflator for state and local government consumption
17 expenditures and gross investment published by the U.S. Department of
18 Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, from fiscal year 2025 through the
19 fiscal year for which the amount is being determined, and rounding upward to
20 the nearest whole dollar amount.

1 (2) “Forming districts” means all school districts, including union
2 school districts, that are located within the geographical boundaries of a new
3 school district created by the General Assembly during the 2026 session, prior
4 to the operational date of the new school district.

5 (3) “New school district” means a larger, consolidated school district
6 created by the General Assembly during the 2026 session.

7 (4) “New school district school board” means the elected school board
8 of a new school district.

9 (5) “Operational date” means the date on which the new school district
10 will assume full and sole responsibility for the education of all resident
11 students in the grades for which it is organized.

12 (b) Creation of transitional school boards. On or before January 1, 2027, a
13 transitional school board shall be formed for each new school district created
14 by the General Assembly during the 2026 session. Each transitional school
15 board shall be composed of the chair of each school board from each of the
16 forming districts, as such school boards existed on December 31, 2026;
17 provided, however, that by majority vote the board of a forming district may
18 designate another board member to serve on the transitional board instead of
19 the chair.

20 (c) Initial meeting of transitional board. The superintendent of the
21 supervisory union with the forming district with the highest average daily

1 membership shall convene the first meeting of the transitional board to occur
2 not later than 14 days after the organizational meeting of the new school
3 district. The agenda for the first meeting of the transitional board shall include
4 the election by the transitional board members of:

5 (1) one of their members to serve as chair of the transitional board; and

6 (2) one of their members to serve as clerk of the transitional board.

7 (d) Duties and authority of transitional board. During the period of its
8 existence, the transitional board shall serve as the new district's school board
9 and shall perform all functions required of and all authority granted to the
10 transitional board and the new school district school board, including:

11 (1) preparing a fiscal year 2029 budget for the new school district;

12 (2) following the principles of apportionment followed by the legislative
13 apportionment board, create voting districts within each new school district
14 that are compact, contiguous, and drawn to achieve substantially equal
15 weighting of votes and that meet the requirements of applicable State and
16 federal law to allow for initial elections of the new school district school board
17 members to occur in March 2028; and

18 (3) performing all necessary transitional processes, including:

19 (A) the transitional processes enumerated in 16 V.S.A. § 716;

20 (B) the hiring of a superintendent; and

1 (C) any other business process necessary to ensure the new school
2 district is ready to assume the full and sole responsibility for the education of
3 all resident students in the grades for which it is organized on July 1, 2028.

4 (e) New school district school board. The transitional board shall cease to
5 exist and the new school district school board shall be solely responsible for
6 the governance of the new school district upon the swearing in of all new
7 school district school board members, which shall occur within 14 days after
8 the initial election of new school district school board members in March 2028.

9 (f) Transition facilitation grants.

10 (1) Upon notice of formation of a transitional school board pursuant to
11 subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary of Education shall pay the
12 transitional school board of each new school district a transition facilitation
13 grant from the Education Fund equal to the lesser of:

14 (A) five percent of the base amount, as defined in subdivision (a)(1)
15 of this section, multiplied by the greater of either the combined enrollment or
16 the average daily membership of the forming districts on October 1, 2026; or

17 (B) \$250,000.00.

18 (2) Grants awarded under this subsection shall be used by new school districts
19 for the legal and other consulting services necessary ensure new school
20 districts are fully operational on July 1, 2028.