

State Board of Education, August 9, 2023 – Item F

2023 Legislative Summary

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Agenda

- **Session Themes**
- **Bills Passed**
 - School Safety
 - Workforce
 - Universal Meals
 - Home Study
 - Governance Changes Votes
 - Childcare
 - School Construction Task Force
 - Educator Workforce Provisions (in budget)
 - Independent School Moratorium
- **Outlook for Next Year**
 - Additional School Safety Changes
 - Harassment, Hazing and Bullying



Session Themes

Session Themes

- Safety, Health and Facilities
- Restraint and Seclusion
- Independent Schools



Bills Passed

Act 29 | School Safety

- Codifies in statute commonly used school safety best practices. The act directs AOE to work with state government and stakeholders to ensure proper implementation of the act.
- Updates existing section of law on Fire and Emergency Preparedness Drills to add options based response drills.
- Adds sections on:
 - Emergency Operations Plans
 - Access Control and Visitor Management
 - Behavioral Threat Assessment Teams (BTAs)
- Also creates a Working Group on Student Protections from Harassment and Discrimination (Section 5a)

Act 55 | Workforce

- The act creates a new, comprehensive framework for the approval, operation, and regulation of apprenticeship programs through the Department of Labor.
- Updates the standards for apprenticeships and aligns them with career pathways

Act 64 | Universal Meals

- Makes the previous one-year universal meals program permanent for public and approved independent schools
- Creates the universal meals supplement and amends the eligibility requirements for the local foods incentive grant program
- Appropriates \$29 million from the Education Fund to fund the program in FY2024.

Act 76 | Childcare

- Makes changes to the way childcare is delivered in the State of Vermont. Has some “preparatory” provisions related to PreK PreK
- PreK Implementation Committee and Plan
- PreK Model Contract
- PreK Pupil Weight report by December 1, 2023
- Contingent changes to weighted Long Term Membership and Per Pupil Education Spending weights
- Requirement for AOE to develop a plan to elevate PreK leadership



Act 66 | H. 461 (Miscellaneous Ed)

Home Study (Act 66)

- **Section 5** makes important updates to the state's Home Study Program to reduce the administrative burden on the Agency:
 - Streamline enrollment process
 - Shift from required assessment to attestation of assessment
 - Repeal unused or rarely used provisions and requirements

SU/SD Governance Changes (Act 66)

- **Secs. 9 - 11:** make amendments to the sections of law governing the number of signatures required on a nominating petition for a union school district board member position under 16 V.S.A. chapter 11. Instead of needing 60 signatures on a petition, candidates need EITHER 60 signatures or the equivalent of one percent registered voters in their district.



Act 78 (Big Bill)

Independent School Moratorium

- **Sec. E.511.1** prohibits the State Board of Education from approving an application for an approved independent school until further direction from the General Assembly

School Construction Task Force

- **Sec. E. 131.1** creates The School Construction Aid Task Force to examine, evaluate, and report on issues relating to school construction aid

Educator Workforce Provisions

- **Sec. F.1** suspends teacher licensing fees during fiscal year 2024-2029. During this time, the estimated fees that would've been collected will be accounted for through General Funds.
- **Sec. F.2** tasks the Agency with collecting educator demographics and reporting this information annually.



Outlook for Next Year

Next Year

- Updates to School Safety Law passed in 2023 Session
- Restraint and seclusion and school climate
- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
- School construction
- Student mental health continues to be a major issue in schools and driver of legislative conversations



Questions