

State Board of Education, March 20, 2024 – Item H

Legislative Update

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Agenda

- **Where We Are**
- **Bills that Made Crossover**
 - H.630 – BOCES
 - H.873 – PCBs
 - H.874 – Miscellaneous Education
 - H.871 – School Construction
 - S.167 – Miscellaneous Education
 - S.204 – Literacy
 - S.284 – Student Cell Phone Use
 - S.304 – Career and Technical Education Programs
- **Education Spending and Budget Matters**



Where We Are

Current Status

- Last week was “crossover,” the deadline for bills must leave their original committee of origin.
- This week is crossover for money bills, including the budget.
- Significant floor time as both chambers move bills through the process and hand them off to the other body.
- Rough “halfway point,” expect adjournment in mid-May.



Bills That Made Crossover

H.630 | BOCES

An act relating to boards of cooperative education services

- Establishes “Boards of Cooperative Education Services” as voluntary, member funded and driven shared service organizations for Supervisory Unions.
- BOCES would, among other things, provide extraordinary special education services, apply for state, federal and local grants, provide professional development, offer procurement services, etc.
- Number of BOCES capped at 7 statewide.

H.873 | PCBs

An act relating to financing the testing for and remediation of the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in schools

- Clarifies what AOE and Agency of Natural Resources' (ANR) roles are in the testing, remediation and payment process.
- Establishes a process to fund PCB testing based on appropriated funding.
- Absent available funding for testing, exempts schools from the school to funding requirement until a comprehensive funding plan is established.

H.874 | Miscellaneous Education

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to education law

- **Sections 1-4** repeal the High School Completion Program (HSCP) and makes technical corrections to the State's adult education programs to sweep in those students who were previously served under HSCP
- **Section 5-7** continues the funding for the Community Schools Program by reallocating funding from HSCP
- **Section 8** requires districts to include military related options in career development and postsecondary planning resources
- **Section 9** outlines intent language to review the Flexible Pathways Initiative as whole to ensure effective, high-quality experiences and outcomes
- **Section 10** establishes State collaboration with Vermont colleges to report back on the career and settlement behaviors of students attending Vermont institutions
- **Section 11** takes language regarding the Uniform Chart of Accounts out of session law and puts it into statute, codifying current practice

H.871 | School Construction

An act relating to the development of an updated State aid to school construction program

- Creates a Facilities Master Plan Grant Program to support districts in developing a construction master plan.
- It requires the AOE to work with Buildings and General Services (BGS) to establish a list of prequalified consultants for districts to use.
- Establishes a State Aid for School Construction work group to continue charting a path towards a statewide school construction aid program.

S.167 | Miscellaneous Education

An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to education law

- **Section 1** increases the prequalification threshold of the public construction bid statute in Title 16 from \$500,000 to \$2 million.
- **Section 2** makes technical changes to remove closed postsecondary schools from 16 V.S.A. § 176(d).
- **Section 3** extends the implementation deadline for Emergency Operations Plans established in Act 29 of 2023.
- **Section 4** establishes a one-time data collection reporting requirement for on how Holocaust education is taught PreK – Grade 12 in Vermont school systems.
- **Section 5** expands access to virtual learning and allows districts to count fully virtual students in average daily membership.
- **Section 7** restores a hearing process to the Home Study statute under 16 V.S.A. § 166b.

S. 204 | Literacy

An act relating to reading assessment and intervention

- Establishes a reading assessment requirement for kindergarten through grade three, with reading screeners identified by the Agency of Education.
- Updates existing statutory requirements on comprehensive reading plans.
- Establishes literacy professional learning requirements for new and current Vermont educators.
- Requires AOE to review educator preparation requirements and make recommendations to VSBPE for updates to rules.
- Extends the Advisory Council on Literacy and adds two new members.

S.284 | Student Cell Phone Use

An act relating to the use of electronic devices and digital and online products in schools

- S.284 is a bill that requires the Agency to develop of model policy pertaining to the use of cellphones and electronic devices in schools.
- As written, the model policy is not required to be adopted by schools.

S. 304 | Career Technical Education (CTE)

An act relating to Vermont's career and technical education programs

- Requires school districts to provide career enrichment and exposure to middle school students, and pre-tech and exploratory CTE courses in Grades 9 and 10.
- Requires school district adoption of a comprehensive career development policy, developed by AOE.
- Adds intent language that CTE be included in future school facilities or school construction legislation.
- Shifts oversight functions and rulemaking authority from the SBE to the Secretary of Education
- Requires program alignment with postsecondary education for several key programs.



Questions?