

No. 98. An act relating to creating an agency and secretary of education and clarifying the purpose of the state board.

(H.440)

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. chapter 49 is added to read:

CHAPTER 49. EDUCATION

§ 2701. AGENCY AND SECRETARY CREATED

There is created an agency of education that shall be under the direction and supervision of a secretary of education.

§ 2702. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

(a) With the advice and consent of the senate, the governor shall appoint a secretary of education from among no fewer than three candidates proposed by the state board of education. The secretary shall serve at the pleasure of the governor.

(b) The secretary shall report directly to the governor and shall be a member of the governor's cabinet.

(c) At the time of appointment, the secretary shall have expertise in education management and policy and demonstrated leadership and management abilities.

Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 161 is amended to read:

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

The state board shall consist of ten members. Two of the members shall be secondary students, one of whom shall be a full member and the other of whom shall be a junior member who may not vote. All members shall be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. In the appointment of the nonstudent members ~~consideration,~~ priority shall be given to the selection of ~~such persons as shall adequately represent all sections of the state~~ with a demonstrated commitment to ensuring quality education for Vermont students. To the extent possible, the members shall represent geographically diverse areas of the state. The secretary shall serve on the state board as a nonvoting member.

* * *

Sec. 3. 16 V.S.A. § 163 is amended to read:

§ 163. ~~OFFICE~~ STAFF; MEETINGS

(a) ~~The office of the board shall be the office of the commissioner of education~~ The board shall be supported by adequate staff, who shall report to the board.

(b) The board shall meet monthly and shall hold special meetings as required for the performance of its duties. The times and places for regular and

special meetings shall be designated by the ~~chairman~~ chair of the board. The ~~chairman~~ chair shall call a special meeting upon the written request of any two members.

Sec. 4. 16 V.S.A. § 164 is amended to read:

§ 164. STATE BOARD, GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES

The state board shall ~~have supervision over, and management of the department of education and the public school system, except as otherwise provided; and shall~~ evaluate education policy proposals, including timely evaluation of policies presented by the governor and secretary; engage local school board members and the broader education community; and establish and advance education policy for the state of Vermont. In addition to other specified duties, the board shall:

* * *

(4) ~~Biennially or as required by the governor cause to be prepared a budget for all money to be expended by the department of education~~ Review and comment on an agency budget prepared by the secretary for the governor.

* * *

(10) ~~Establish an information clearinghouse and accessible database to help districts share information about educational programs and practices which improve student performance. Educational programs and practices~~

~~include those designed to create and sustain a safe learning environment.~~

[Repealed.]

* * *

~~(19) Develop, in consultation with the secretary of state, and make available to school boards, sample ballot language for items which may be voted on by Australian ballot and for which no statutory language exists.~~

[Repealed.]

* * *

(21) Report annually to the governor and the general assembly on the progress the board has made on the development of education policy for the state.

Sec. 5. 16 V.S.A. § 212(18), (19), (20), and (21) are added to read:

(18) Establish an information clearinghouse and accessible database to help districts share information about educational programs and practices that improve student performance. Educational programs and practices include those designed to create and sustain a safe learning environment.

(19) Develop, in consultation with the secretary of state, and make available to school boards sample ballot language for issues that may be decided by Australian ballot and for which no statutory language exists.

(20) Prepare a budget for the agency and submit it to the governor after review by the state board.

(21) Annually, prior to September 1, present the governor's education policy priorities to the state board.

Sec. 6. REPEAL

16 V.S.A. § 211 (appointment of commissioner by board of education; commissioner's reports to board) is repealed.

* * * Transition * * *

Sec. 7. AGENCY OF EDUCATION; SECRETARY OF EDUCATION;
POWERS AND DUTIES

On January 1, 2013:

(1) the secretary of education shall assume all the powers, duties, rights, and responsibilities of the commissioner of education; provided, however, that if a secretary appointed by the governor has not assumed office by January 1, 2013, then the commissioner or acting commissioner of the department on that date shall continue to perform the duties until the day on which the secretary assumes office; and

(2) the agency of education shall assume all the powers, duties, rights, and responsibilities of the department of education.

Sec. 8. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL; PREPARATION OF A DRAFT BILL

On or before January 15, 2013, the legislative council shall prepare and submit a draft bill to the house and senate committees on education that makes statutory amendments of a technical nature and identifies all statutory sections

that the general assembly must amend substantively to effect the intent of this act.

Sec. 9. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This section and Secs. 7 (assumption of powers and duties) and 8 (legislative council) of this act shall take effect on passage.

(b) Secs. 1 (creation of agency), 2 (secretary as nonvoting member of board), and 6 (repeal of board's power to appoint commissioner) of this act shall take effect on January 1, 2013.

(c) Secs. 3 (board staff), 4 (board duties), and 5 (secretary's duties) of this act shall take effect on April 1, 2013.

Approved: May 3, 2012