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H.259

Introduced by Representatives Burrows of West Windsor, Andriano of Orwell,
Arrison of Weathersfield, Bartholomew of Hartland, Bos-Lun
of Westminster, Brumsted of Shelburne, Campbell of St.
Johnsbury, Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs,
Christie of Hartford, Garofano of Essex, Graning of Jericho,
Harrison of Chittenden, Howard of Rutland City, Krasnow of
South Burlington, Labor of Morgan, LaBounty of Lyndon,
LaMont of Morristown, Masland of Thetford, McGill of
Bridport, Priestley of Bradford, Roberts of Halifax, Small of
Winooski, and Waters Evans of Charlotte

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Education; school boards; student members

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require school
boards that serve secondary students to add two nonvoting student members.
This bill also proposes to allow a student's experience as a nonvoting school
board member to qualify as a component of a student's flexible pathway to
graduation.

An act relating to school board student members

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

2 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 558a is added to read:

3 § 558a. STUDENT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

4 (a) Student members. In addition to the voting members authorized under
5 section 558 of this title, each school board of a district that is organized to
6 provide secondary education for its resident students shall have at least two
7 nonvoting student members who shall each serve one-year terms. A student
8 member shall have all the rights of a regular school board member regarding
9 school board business, except the right to vote or make a motion. Student
10 members shall be seated at the board table at all regular meetings but shall not
11 participate in an executive session if confidential information about fellow
12 students, school district employees, or contracts will be discussed. A school
13 district organized to provide elementary education only shall not be required to
14 include student representation on its school board, but student participation is
15 encouraged.

16 (b) Appointment. A student member shall be a resident of the school
17 district the student wishes to serve. Student members shall be appointed by the
18 voting members of the school board based on applications submitted by
19 interested students, on a form developed and maintained by the school board.
20 Applications must be received by the board's March reorganizational meeting,
21 with a vote to appoint student members occurring in June. Students in grade

1 seven may apply in anticipation of advancing to grade eight the following
2 school year. Each school board shall develop an application process policy, in
3 accordance with section 563 of this title.

4 (c) Student member duties. The duties of a student school board member
5 shall include:

6 (1) attending all school board meetings, with a maximum of two
7 excused absences annually;

8 (2) representing all resident students within the district;

9 (3) presenting to the school board specific proposals and opinions from
10 students and ensuring such proposals are placed on the school board agenda in
11 accordance with school board procedures;

12 (4) keeping students informed of the business of the school board;

13 (5) participating as a nonvoting member of board subcommittees;

14 (6) providing input on all policy and budgeting matters; and

15 (7) working to ensure meetings of the school board are a place for
16 others, especially students, to be heard.

17 (d) Training. Student members shall receive specialized training on board
18 policy and procedures, Robert's Rules of Order, the history of the board, past
19 and present issues, past actions taken, and any other information the board
20 deems relevant to the success of the student member. Students shall receive
21 copies of the agenda and any relevant materials prior to each meeting in the

1 same manner as voting members receive such materials. Student members
2 shall also be eligible to participate in all training opportunities offered to
3 voting members.

4 (e) Flexible pathways. Service as a student school board member under
5 this section shall qualify as an applied or work-based learning opportunity for
6 secondary students to pursue flexible pathways to graduation under section 941
7 of this title.

8 (f) Compensation. Student members shall receive the same compensation
9 as voting members.

10 Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 941 is amended to read:

11 16 V.S.A. § 941. FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS INITIATIVE

12 * * *

13 (b) The Secretary shall develop, publish, and regularly update guidance, in
14 the form of technical assistance, sharing of best practices and model
15 documents, legal interpretations, and other support designed to assist school
16 districts:

17 * * *

18 (3) to create opportunities for secondary students to pursue flexible
19 pathways to graduation that:

20 (A) increase aspiration and encourage postsecondary continuation of
21 training and education;

1 (B) are an integral component of a student's personalized learning
2 plan; and

3 (C) include:

4 (i) applied or work-based learning opportunities, including career
5 and career technical education and internships and service as a school board
6 member under section 558a of this title;

7 * * *

8 Sec. 3. TRANSITION

9 School boards of districts that are organized to provide secondary education
10 shall develop and implement a student member application and process policy
11 pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 558a(a) not later than January 1, 2024. Such school
12 boards shall appoint two student members not later than June 30, 2024 for the
13 2024–2025 school year.

14 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

15 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.