

1 Introduced by Representatives Christie of Hartford, Clarkson of Woodstock,  
2 Devereux of Mount Holly, and Sweaney of Windsor

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Education; secondary schools; elementary schools; student-to-adult  
6 ratios

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require  
8 minimum student-to-teacher, student-to-school-level administrator, and  
9 student-to-district-level staff ratios by July 1, 2018. The bill would provide tax  
10 incentives for district compliance with all three the ratios before that date and  
11 would impose tax penalties for failure to comply with any one of the ratios  
12 after that date.

13 An act relating to requiring minimum student-to-adult ratios in public  
14 schools and school districts

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

16 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 4004 is added to read:

17 § 4004. MINIMUM STUDENT-TO-ADULT RATIOS; FAILURE TO

18 COMPLY

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

1           (1) “Teacher” means any person licensed to be employable as a teacher  
2           who is employed as a teacher by a school district or supervisory union and is  
3           providing direct instruction to students in one or more elementary or secondary  
4           grades.

5           (2) “Administrator” means any person employed as a principal, assistant  
6           principal, special education director, essential early education director, or Title  
7           I coordinator.

8           (3) “Staff” means all paid personnel employed by a school district and  
9           all teachers as defined in subdivision (1) of this subsection, but shall exclude:

10           (A) central office personnel;

11           (B) operations and maintenance personnel;

12           (C) transportation personnel;

13           (D) food service personnel; and

14           (E) enterprise or community service operations personnel.

15           (b) Student-to-district staff ratio. For each public school district, the ratio  
16           of the number of students to FTE staff employed in the district shall not be  
17           smaller than 10:1.

18           (c) Student-to-school-level administrator ratio. For each school operated  
19           by a public school district, the ratio of the number of students to FTE  
20           school-level administrators employed in the school shall not be smaller than  
21           100:1.

1        (d) Student-to-teacher ratio. Except as provided in subsection (e), for each  
2        school operated by a public school district, the ratio of the number of students  
3        to full-time-equivalent (FTE) teachers in any class offered by the school shall  
4        not be smaller than 15:1.

5        (e) Applicability.

6            (1) The provisions of subsection (d) shall not apply to a class providing  
7        services solely to students:

8            (A) with an individualized education program; or

9            (B) who are English language learners.

10          (2) The provisions of subsection (d) shall not apply to a class  
11        exclusively or primarily offering instruction in:

12            (A) physical education;

13            (B) a foreign language;

14            (C) driver education; or

15            (D) the fine arts.

16          (3) The provisions of subsection (d) shall not apply to a course of  
17        independent study.

18          (4) For purposes of subsection (d), an elementary school class consisting  
19        of students in two or more grades shall be considered as one class.

1           (5) For grades 7 through 12, subsection (d) shall apply only to classes  
2           offered in the four core subject areas of English, mathematics, science, and  
3           social studies.

4           (6) The provisions of subsection (d) shall not apply to classes offered by  
5           a career technical education center, except for classes in the four core subject  
6           areas identified in subdivision (5).

7           (f) In each year that a school district fails to meet one or more of the three  
8           ratios required in this section, it shall be subject to a tax penalty in the next  
9           fiscal year calculated as follows:

10           (1) The numbers for any of the three ratios that did not meet the required  
11           ratio, aggregated to the district level, shall be compared to the required ratios to  
12           obtain the percentage by which each actual ratio is below the required ratio.

13           (2) Each percentage calculated in subdivision (1) shall be multiplied by  
14           one-third.

15           (3) The district's tax rate shall be increased by the percentage or the sum  
16           of the percentages calculated in subdivision (2).

17       Sec. 2. EARLY COMPLIANCE WITH RATIOS; INCENTIVES

18           (a) A school district that meets or exceeds all three ratios required in Sec. 1  
19           of this act in fiscal year 2017 or fiscal year 2018 shall receive a tax incentive in  
20           the first fiscal year following the year of compliance, calculated as follows:

1           (1) The numbers for each of the three ratios, aggregated to the district  
2           level, shall be compared to the required ratios to obtain the percentage by  
3           which each actual ratio exceeds the required ratio.

4           (2) Each percentage calculated in subdivision (1) shall be multiplied by  
5           one-third.

6           (3) The district's tax rate shall be reduced by the sum of the three  
7           percentages calculated in subdivision (2).

8           (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, a district that met or  
9           exceeded all three required ratios in fiscal year 2016 shall not be eligible for an  
10          incentive under this section.

11          Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATES

12          (a) Sec. 1 shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

13          (b) Sec. 2 shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

14          (c) This section shall take effect on July 1, 2015.