Substitute Senate Bill No. 379

Public Act No. 10-76

AN ACT CONCERNING VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) (a) (1) The State Board of Education shall not close or suspend operations of any regional vocational-technical school for more than six months unless the board (A) holds a public hearing at the school that may be closed or whose operations may be suspended, (B) develops and makes available a comprehensive plan for such school in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, and (C) an affirmative vote of the board is taken at a meeting duly called. Such public hearing shall be held after normal school hours and at least thirty days prior to the vote of the board pursuant to subparagraph (C) of this subdivision.

(2) If the closure or suspension of school operations extends beyond the period set forth in the comprehensive plan described in subsection (b) of this section, the board shall (A) hold another public hearing at a location in the town in which the school is located, after normal school hours and at least thirty days prior to the vote of the board pursuant to subparagraph (C) of this subdivision, (B) develop and make available a new comprehensive plan for such school in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, and (C) an affirmative vote of the board is taken at a meeting duly called.

(b) The State Board of Education shall develop a comprehensive plan regarding the closure or suspension of operation of any regional vocational-technical school prior to the public hearing described in subsection (a) of this section. Such comprehensive plan shall include, but not be limited to, (1) an explanation of the reasons for the school closure or suspension of operations, including a cost-benefit analysis of such school closing or suspension of operations, (2) the length of the school closure or suspension of operations, (3) the financial plan for the school during the closure or suspension of operations, including, but not limited to, the costs of such school closure or suspension of operations, (4) a description of the transitional phase to school closure or suspension of operations and a description of the transitional phase to reopening the school, (5) an explanation of what will happen to students currently enrolled at such school during the school closure or suspension of operations, including, but not limited to, available regional vocational-technical schools for such students to attend and transportation for such students to such schools, (6) an explanation of what will happen to school personnel during the school closure or suspension of operations, including, but not limited to, employment at other schools, and (7) an explanation of how the school building and property will be used during the school closure or suspension of operations. The State Board of Education shall provide for the mailing of such comprehensive plan to parents and guardians of students enrolled at the school and to school personnel employed at such school, and make such comprehensive plan available on the school's web site at least fourteen days prior to the public hearing described in subsection (a) of this section.

(c) The State Board of Education shall be responsible for transporting any student enrolled in a regional vocational-technical school that is closed or whose operations are suspended pursuant to this section to another regional vocational-technical school during such period of closure or suspension of operations, and the board shall be

responsible for the costs associated with such transportation.

Sec. 2. Section 10-1 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2010*):

(a) (1) Prior to July 1, 1998, the State Board of Education shall consist of nine members. On and after July 1, 1998, but prior to July 1, 2010, the State Board of Education shall consist of eleven members, two of whom shall be nonvoting student members.

(2) On and after July 1, 2010, but prior to April 1, 2011, the State Board of Education shall consist of thirteen members, at least two of whom shall have experience in manufacturing or a trade offered at the regional vocational-technical schools or be alumni of or have served as educators at a regional vocational-technical school and two of whom shall be nonvoting student members. Only those members with experience in manufacturing or a trade offered at the regional vocational-technical schools or are alumni of or have served as educators at a regional vocational-technical school shall be eligible to serve as the chairperson for the regional vocational-technical school subcommittee of the board.

(3) On and after April 1, 2011, the State Board of Education shall consist of thirteen members, (A) at least two of whom shall have experience in manufacturing or a trade offered at the regional vocational-technical schools or be alumni of or have served as educators at a regional vocational-technical school, (B) at least one of whom shall have experience in agriculture or be an alumni of or have served as an educator at a regional agricultural science and technology education center, and (C) two of whom shall be nonvoting student members. Only those members described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision shall be eligible to serve as the chairperson for the regional vocational-technical school subcommittee of the board.

(b) The Governor shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the General Assembly, the members of said board, provided each student member (1) is on the list submitted to the Governor pursuant to section 10-2a, (2) is enrolled in a public high school in the state, (3) has completed eleventh grade prior to the commencement of his term, (4) has at least a B plus average, and (5) provides at least three references from teachers in the school he is attending. **[**Nine**]** The nonstudent members shall serve for terms of four years commencing on March first in the year of their appointment. The student members shall serve for terms of one year commencing on July first in the year of their appointment. The Commissioner of Higher Education shall serve as an ex-officio member without a vote. Any vacancy in said State Board of Education shall be filled in the manner provided in section 4-19.

Sec. 3. Section 10-95h of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2010*):

[There is established a state-wide advisory committee, which shall meet at least semiannually, to (1) identify emerging state and national workforce needs and trade technology programs for the regional vocational-technical school system to meet such needs; (2) identify the workforce skills that will be needed for the next thirty years and ensure that the curriculum of the regional vocational-technical school system is incorporating such skills into the regional vocational-technical schools; (3) ensure that all students who graduate from the regional vocational-technical school system have communication, leadership, teamwork and problem-solving skills, in addition to expertise in a trade technology; (4) assess the adequacy of the resources available to the regional vocational-technical school system as the system develops and refines programs to meet existing and emerging workforce needs; and (5) advise and make recommendations to the State Board of Education to carry out the provisions of subdivisions (1) to (4), inclusive, of this section. The committee shall

consist of nineteen members as follows: (A) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall be representatives of business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and manufacturing firms with five hundred or more full-time employees; (B) two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall be a representative of business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and manufacturing firms with five hundred or more full-time employees and one of whom shall be a teacher in the regional vocational-technical school system; (C) one appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives who shall be a representative of business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and manufacturing firms with more than fifty, but fewer than five hundred full-time employees; (D) one appointed by the majority leader of the Senate who shall be a representative of business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and manufacturing firms with more than fifty, but fewer than five hundred full-time employees; (E) one appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives who shall be a representative of business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and manufacturing firms with more than fifty, but fewer than five hundred full-time employees; (F) one appointed by the minority leader of the Senate who shall be a representative of business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and manufacturing firms with fifty or fewer full-time employees; (G) two persons appointed by the Governor who shall be representatives of business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief

operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and manufacturing firms with fifty or fewer full-time employees; (H) the Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee; (I) the Labor Commissioner, or the commissioner's designee; (J) the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, or the commissioner's designee; (K) a representative from the Office of Workforce Competitiveness; (L) the chairperson of the State Board of Education, or the chairperson's designee; and (M) the cochairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education. The committee membership shall reflect the state's geographic, racial and ethnic diversity.**]**

(a) Not later than November thirtieth each year, the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, higher education and employment advancement and labor shall meet with the superintendent of the regional vocational-technical school system, the director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness, the Labor Commissioner and such other persons as they deem appropriate to consider the items submitted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(b) On or before November fifteenth, annually:

(1) The director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness and the Labor Commissioner shall each submit the following to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, higher education and employment advancement and labor: (A) Information identifying general economic trends in the state; (B) occupational information regarding the public and private sectors, such as continuous data on occupational movements; and (C) information identifying emerging regional, state and national workforce needs over the next thirty years.

(2) The superintendent of the vocational-technical school system shall submit the following to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, higher education and employment advancement and labor: (A) Information ensuring that the curriculum of the regional vocational-technical school system is incorporating those workforce skills that will be needed for the next thirty years, as identified by the director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness and the Labor Commissioner in subdivision (1) of this subsection, into the regional vocational-technical schools; (B) information regarding the employment status of students who graduate from the regional vocational-technical school system; (C) an assessment of the adequacy of the resources available to the regional vocational-technical school system as the system develops and refines programs to meet existing and emerging workforce needs; and (D) recommendations to the State Board of Education to carry out the provisions of subparagraphs (A) to (C), inclusive, of this subdivision.

Sec. 4. Section 3-20f of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2010*):

(a) Notwithstanding section 3-20, to the extent there is a sufficient balance of bonds approved by the General Assembly pursuant to any bond act for the purposes of agricultural land preservation programs established pursuant to section 22-26cc or 22-26jj, but not allocated by the State Bond Commission, said commission shall vote on whether to authorize the issuance of at least five million dollars of such bonds for the purposes described in said sections at each of said commission's regularly scheduled meetings occurring in August and February of each year. If no meeting is held in said months, said commission shall vote on whether to authorize the issuance of such bonds at its next regularly scheduled meeting. To the extent there is a sufficient balance of bonds so approved by the General Assembly and there are pending

agricultural land preservation transactions in excess of five million dollars, the Commissioner of Agriculture may request, and the State Bond Commission shall vote on whether to authorize the issuance of, bonds in excess of five million dollars. To the extent the balance of bonds so approved by the **[**legislature**]** General Assembly is below five million dollars at the time of said commission's August or February meetings, said commission shall vote on whether to authorize the issuance of the remaining balance of such bonds.

(b) Notwithstanding section 3-20, to the extent there is a sufficient balance of bonds approved by the General Assembly pursuant to any bond act for the purposes of general maintenance and trade and capital equipment for any school in the regional vocational-technical school system, but not allocated by the State Bond Commission, said commission shall vote on whether to authorize the issuance of at least two million dollars of such bonds for such maintenance and equipment at each of said commission's regularly scheduled meetings occurring in August and February of each year. If no meeting is held in said months, said commission shall vote on whether to authorize the issuance of such bonds at its next regularly scheduled meeting. To the extent there is a sufficient balance of bonds so approved by the General Assembly and there are pending general maintenance and trade and capital equipment transactions in excess of two million dollars, the superintendent of the regional vocational-technical school system may request, and the State Bond Commission shall vote on whether to authorize the issuance of, bonds in excess of two million dollars. To the extent the balance of bonds so approved by the General Assembly is below two million dollars at the time of said commission's August or February meetings, said commission shall vote on whether to authorize the issuance of the remaining balance of such bonds.

Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) On or before July 15, 2010, and annually thereafter, the State Board of Education shall arrange for the

inspection, in accordance with the provisions of section 14-282a of the general statutes, of those school busses, as defined in section 14-275 of the general statutes, in operation in the regional vocational-technical school system.

Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) (a) On and after July 1, 2010, the State Board of Education shall replace any school bus that (1) is twelve years or older and is in service at any regional vocational-technical school, or (2) has been subject to an out-of-service order, as defined in section 14-1 of the general statutes, for two consecutive years for the same reason.

(b) On or before July 1, 2011, and annually thereafter, the superintendent of the regional vocational-technical school system shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education and finance, revenue and bonding a report on the replacement of school buses in service in the regional vocational-technical school system, pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. Such report shall include the number of school buses replaced in the previous school year and a projection of the number of school buses anticipated to be replaced in the upcoming school year.

Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, and each fiscal year thereafter, the budget for the regional vocational-technical school system shall be a separate budgeted agency from the Department of Education.

Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) (a) The superintendent of the regional vocational-technical school system shall biannually submit the operating budget and expenses for each individual regional vocational-technical school, in accordance with section 11-4a of the

general statutes, to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, the director of the legislative Office of Fiscal Analysis and to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education.

(b) The superintendent of the regional vocational-technical school system shall make available and update on the regional vocational-technical school system web site and the web site of each regional vocational-technical school the operating budget for the current school year of each individual regional vocational-technical school.

Sec. 9. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) On or before July 1, 2011, the State Board of Education shall develop recommendations regarding the definition of region for purposes of attendance in the regional vocational-technical school system. The board shall submit such recommendations, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education.

Approved May 18, 2010