



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 599**

February Session, 2010

Substitute Senate Bill No. 379

*Senate, April 20, 2010*

The Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding reported through SEN. DAILY of the 33rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## **AN ACT CONCERNING VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.**

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

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 Section 10-95 of the general statutes is repealed and the  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

3 (a) The State Board of Education may establish and maintain a state-  
4 wide system of regional vocational-technical schools offering full-time,  
5 part-time and evening programs in vocational, technical and  
6 technological education and training. The board may make regulations  
7 controlling the admission of students to any such school. The  
8 Commissioner of Education, in accordance with policies established by  
9 the board, may appoint and remove members of the staffs of such  
10 schools and make rules for the management of and expend the funds  
11 provided for the support of such schools. The board may enter into  
12 cooperative arrangements with local and regional boards of education,  
13 private occupational schools, institutions of higher education, job  
14 training agencies and employers in order to provide general education,

15 vocational, technical or technological education or work experience.

16 (b) If the New England Association of Schools and Colleges places a  
17 regional vocational-technical school on probation or otherwise notifies  
18 the superintendent of the vocational-technical school system that a  
19 regional vocational-technical school is at risk of losing its accreditation,  
20 the Commissioner of Education shall notify the joint standing  
21 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
22 relating to education of such placement or problems relating to  
23 accreditation.

24 (c) The State Board of Education shall establish specific achievement  
25 goals for students at the vocational-technical schools at each grade  
26 level. The board shall measure the performance of each vocational-  
27 technical school and shall identify a set of quantifiable measures to be  
28 used. The measures shall include factors such as performance on the  
29 state-wide tenth grade mastery examination under section 10-14n,  
30 trade-related assessment tests, dropout rates and graduation rates.

31 (d) The State Board of Education shall not close or suspend  
32 operations of any regional vocational-technical school for more than  
33 six months unless the board (1) holds a public hearing at any school  
34 that may be closed or whose operations may be suspended, and (2) an  
35 affirmative vote of the board is taken at a meeting duly called. Such  
36 public hearing shall be held after normal school hours and at least  
37 thirty days prior to the vote of the board described in subdivision (2) of  
38 this subsection.

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

41 (a) Prior to July 1, 1998, the State Board of Education shall consist of  
42 nine members. On and after July 1, 1998, but prior to July 1, 2010, the  
43 State Board of Education shall consist of eleven members, two of  
44 whom shall be nonvoting student members. On and after July 1, 2010,  
45 the State Board of Education shall consist of eleven members, at least  
46 two of whom shall have experience in manufacturing or a trade

47 offered at the regional vocational-technical schools or be alumni of or  
48 have served as educators at a regional vocational-technical school and  
49 two of whom shall be nonvoting student members. Only those  
50 members with experience in manufacturing or a trade offered at the  
51 regional vocational-technical schools or are alumni of or have served  
52 as educators at a regional vocational-technical school shall be eligible  
53 to serve as the chairperson for the regional vocational-technical school  
54 subcommittee of the board.

55 (b) The Governor shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the  
56 General Assembly, the members of said board, provided each student  
57 member (1) is on the list submitted to the Governor pursuant to section  
58 10-2a, (2) is enrolled in a public high school in the state, (3) has  
59 completed eleventh grade prior to the commencement of his term, (4)  
60 has at least a B plus average, and (5) provides at least three references  
61 from teachers in the school he is attending. Nine members shall serve  
62 for terms of four years commencing on March first in the year of their  
63 appointment. The student members shall serve for terms of one year  
64 commencing on July first in the year of their appointment. The  
65 Commissioner of Higher Education shall serve as an ex-officio member  
66 without a vote. Any vacancy in said State Board of Education shall be  
67 filled in the manner provided in section 4-19.

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

70 [There is established a state-wide advisory committee, which shall  
71 meet at least semiannually, to (1) identify emerging state and national  
72 workforce needs and trade technology programs for the regional  
73 vocational-technical school system to meet such needs; (2) identify the  
74 workforce skills that will be needed for the next thirty years and  
75 ensure that the curriculum of the regional vocational-technical school  
76 system is incorporating such skills into the regional vocational-  
77 technical schools; (3) ensure that all students who graduate from the  
78 regional vocational-technical school system have communication,  
79 leadership, teamwork and problem-solving skills, in addition to

80 expertise in a trade technology; (4) assess the adequacy of the  
81 resources available to the regional vocational-technical school system  
82 as the system develops and refines programs to meet existing and  
83 emerging workforce needs; and (5) advise and make recommendations  
84 to the State Board of Education to carry out the provisions of  
85 subdivisions (1) to (4), inclusive, of this section. The committee shall  
86 consist of nineteen members as follows: (A) Two appointed by the  
87 speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall be representatives  
88 of business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief  
89 operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry,  
90 service and manufacturing firms with five hundred or more full-time  
91 employees; (B) two appointed by the president pro tempore of the  
92 Senate, one of whom shall be a representative of business, holding the  
93 title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the  
94 equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and  
95 manufacturing firms with five hundred or more full-time employees  
96 and one of whom shall be a teacher in the regional vocational-technical  
97 school system; (C) one appointed by the majority leader of the House  
98 of Representatives who shall be a representative of business, holding  
99 the title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or  
100 the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and  
101 manufacturing firms with more than fifty, but fewer than five hundred  
102 full-time employees; (D) one appointed by the majority leader of the  
103 Senate who shall be a representative of business, holding the title of  
104 chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the  
105 equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and  
106 manufacturing firms with more than fifty, but fewer than five hundred  
107 full-time employees; (E) one appointed by the minority leader of the  
108 House of Representatives who shall be a representative of business,  
109 holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating  
110 officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service  
111 and manufacturing firms with more than fifty, but fewer than five  
112 hundred full-time employees; (F) one appointed by the minority leader  
113 of the Senate who shall be a representative of business, holding the  
114 title of chief executive officer, president, chief operating officer or the

115 equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry, service and  
116 manufacturing firms with fifty or fewer full-time employees; (G) two  
117 persons appointed by the Governor who shall be representatives of  
118 business, holding the title of chief executive officer, president, chief  
119 operating officer or the equivalents thereof, drawn from key industry,  
120 service and manufacturing firms with fifty or fewer full-time  
121 employees; (H) the Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's  
122 designee; (I) the Labor Commissioner, or the commissioner's designee;  
123 (J) the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, or  
124 the commissioner's designee; (K) a representative from the Office of  
125 Workforce Competitiveness; (L) the chairperson of the State Board of  
126 Education, or the chairperson's designee; and (M) the cochairpersons  
127 and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General  
128 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education. The  
129 committee membership shall reflect the state's geographic, racial and  
130 ethnic diversity.]

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

139 (b) On or before November fifteenth, annually:

140 (1) The director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness and the  
141 Labor Commissioner shall each submit the following to the joint  
142 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
143 matters relating to education, higher education and employment  
144 advancement and labor: (A) Information identifying general economic  
145 trends in the state; (B) occupational information regarding the public  
146 and private sectors, such as continuous data on occupational  
147 movements; and (C) information identifying emerging regional, state

148 and national workforce needs over the next thirty years.

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

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

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

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

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

209 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) On or before July 15, 2010, and  
210 annually thereafter, the State Board of Education shall arrange for the  
211 inspection, in accordance with the provisions of section 14-282a of the  
212 general statutes, of those school busses, as defined in section 14-275 of  
213 the general statutes, in operation in the regional vocational-technical  
214 school system.

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

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

233       Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) For the fiscal year ending June  
234 30, 2011, and each fiscal year thereafter, the budget for the regional  
235 vocational-technical school system shall be a separate budgeted agency  
236 from the Department of Education.

237       Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) (a) The superintendent of the  
238 regional vocational-technical school system shall biannually submit the  
239 operating budget and expenses for each individual regional  
240 vocational-technical school, in accordance with section 11-4a of the  
241 general statutes, to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and  
242 Management, the director of the legislative Office of Fiscal Analysis  
243 and to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
244 cognizance of matters relating to education.

245       (b) The superintendent of the regional vocational-technical school  
246 system shall make available and update on the regional vocational-  
247 technical school system web site and the web site of each regional

248 vocational-technical school the operating budget for the current school  
 249 year of each individual regional vocational-technical school.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2010</i>	10-95
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2010</i>	10-1
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2010</i>	10-95h
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2010</i>	3-20f
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2010</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2010</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2010</i>	New section

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

Section 8 was rewritten for clarity.

**ED**            *Joint Favorable Subst. C/R*

FIN

**FIN**            *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

## **OFA Fiscal Note**

### **State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 11 \$</b>	<b>FY 12 \$</b>
Education, Dept.	GF - Cost	Minimal	Minimal
State Technical High Schools	GO Bonds - Cost	Potential Significant	Potential Significant
Treasurer, Debt Serv.	GF - Cost	Potential	Potential
State Technical High Schools	GF - Cost	Potential Significant	Potential Significant

Note: GF=General Fund; GO Bonds=General Obligation Bonds

**Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

The bill makes various changes concerning vocational-technical (VT) schools.

**Section 1** requires the State Board of Education to hold a public hearing if they have intentions of suspending operations of a VT school for more than six months. This will result in a minimal cost associated with holding a public hearing, or public meeting.

**Sections 2 and 3** have no fiscal impact.

**Section 4** requires that, when there is an aggregate balance of bonds authorized but unallocated for general maintenance and capital and trade equipment for any VT school, the State Bond Commission must vote at its August and February meetings annually on whether to allocate at least \$2 million from those authorizations. This section could result in additional bond allocations of at least \$2 million, plus the cost of debt service.

**Section 5** requires school buses for the VT system to be inspected prior to July 15 of each school year, and is not anticipated to result in a

fiscal impact.

**Section 6** requires VT school buses to be replaced if they are twelve years or older, or if they have been on an out-of-service order for two or more consecutive years. This could result in an acceleration of costs to the VT system; an average school bus costs approximately \$75,000-\$100,000.

**Sections 7 and 8** have no fiscal impact.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 379****AN ACT CONCERNING VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.****SUMMARY:**

This bill makes a number of changes to the laws affecting state vocational-technical (V-T) schools. It changes what the State Board of Education (SBE) must do in order to close or suspend a V-T school, including requiring a public hearing and a vote on the matter. It requires at least two members of the SBE to have V-T school or manufacturing experience. It also requires an annual meeting to consider workforce needs and V-T curriculum.

It requires the state Bond Commission to vote on authorized but unallocated V-T bond funds when the balance of these bonds reaches a certain threshold.

The bill also requires:

1. the state to replace any V-T school bus that is 12 years old or more or that has been ordered out of service by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for two years in a row for the same problem;
2. the SBE to arrange for V-T school buses to be inspected by DMV by July 15, 2010 and annually thereafter; and
3. starting with FY 11, the V-T system to be a separate budgeted agency from the State Department of Education (SDE). Currently; it is part of SDE's budget.

The bill also makes other changes regarding reporting to committees of the General Assembly.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2010 except the provision regarding annual inspection of buses is effective upon passage.

**§ 1 — REQUIRED STEPS BEFORE CLOSING OR SUSPENDING A VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL**

The bill requires the SBE to take a vote at a duly called meeting in order to close or suspend operations at a V-T school for more than six months. The bill requires SBE to hold a public hearing at the school after school hours at least 30 days before taking a vote on the proposed suspension or closure. Current law does not set a procedure for closing or suspending a school.

**§ 2 — V-T SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES ON THE SBE**

The bill requires that starting July 1, 2010 the SBE must include at least two members who (1) have experience in manufacturing or in a trade taught in the V-T system or (2) be alumni of or have served as educators at a V-T school. It also requires one of these members to chair the SBE's vocational-technical school subcommittee. Under current law, there is no requirement for any board member to have V-T school-related or manufacturing experience (See COMMENT).

**§ 3 — ANNUAL MEETING TO CONSIDER V-T CURRICULUM AND WORKFORCE NEEDS**

The bill requires the Education, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, and Labor committees to meet annually, by November 30, with the V-T system superintendent, the Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) director, the labor commissioner, and other appropriate people to consider information each official must submit to the committees by November 15 annually.

The submissions must include information on:

1. general economic trends in the state;
2. occupational movements in the public and private sectors;
3. emerging state, regional, and national workforce needs for the next 30 years;

4. workforce skills that will be needed over the next 30 years and how to ensure that the V-T school curriculum is incorporating those skills;
5. the employment status of V-T school graduates;
6. the adequacy of resources available to the V-T system; and
7. recommendations to SBE for V-T school curriculum changes.

The bill eliminates the existing statewide V-T school system advisory council that is charged with considering many of these same issues. The council has 19 members, 10 appointed by the governor and legislative leaders, and represent businesses of various sizes; the commissioners of education, labor, economic and community development or their designees; an OWC representative; the SBE chairperson or designee; and the Education Committee's co-chairs and ranking members. Although current law requires the council to meet at least twice a year to assess the issues listed above, it has not met for some time.

#### **§ 4 — ACTION ON UNALLOCATED V-T SCHOOL BONDS**

The bill requires that, when there is enough of an aggregate balance of bonds authorized but unallocated for general maintenance and capital and trade equipment for any V-T school, the State Bond Commission vote at its August and February meetings annually on whether to allocate at least \$2 million from those authorizations. If there is no meeting held in those months, the commission must vote at its next regularly scheduled meetings.

If, at the time of the commission's August and February meetings, pending general maintenance and trade and capital equipment transactions exceed \$2 million, the bill allows the V-T system superintendent to ask for, and requires the bond commission to vote on, whether to allocate more than \$2 million. If the unallocated balance is less than \$2 million, the commission must vote on whether to allocate the remaining unallocated balance.

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**§ 6 — BUS REPLACEMENT**

Starting July 1, 2010, the bill requires the SBE to replace any V-T school bus that is 12 years old or older or any bus that has been ordered out of service by DMV for two years in a row for the same problem. The provision on replacing buses that DMV has ordered out of service for two years in a row for the same problem does not specify that it applies only to V-T buses. But SBE does not buy buses for any district other than the statewide V-T school district.

It requires the V-T system superintendent to report annually, starting by July 1, 2011, to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary and the Education and Finance committees on V-T bus replacements, including the number of buses replaced in the previous school year and the number to be replaced in the upcoming school year.

**§ 8 — BUDGET AND EXPENSES REPORTING**

The bill requires the V-T system superintendent, twice a year, to submit the operating budget and expenses for each V-T school to the OPM secretary, the Office of Fiscal Analysis director, and the Education Committee. It also requires the superintendent to post the operating budget of each school for the current year on the V-T system website and the school's website.

**COMMENT*****Provision Conflicts with Existing Board Members Terms***

The bill requires that starting July 1, 2010 the SBE must include at least two members who (1) have experience in manufacturing or in a trade taught in the V-T system or (2) be alumni of or have served as educators at a V-T school. But this conflicts with the existing board membership and their terms. Members meeting the new criteria cannot be appointed until the current members' terms expire or a vacancy is otherwise created. At least four board member terms expire in the beginning of 2011.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference

Yea 27 Nay 5 (03/19/2010)

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 41 Nay 14 (04/05/2010)