

A photograph of the Vermont State Capitol building in Montpelier, Vermont, during winter. The building is a large, light-colored stone structure with a prominent golden dome. The ground is covered in snow, and bare trees are visible in the foreground and background. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Education and the 2019 Legislative Session

January 3, 2019

Nicole Mace, Executive Director
Sue Ceglowski, Director of Legal and Policy Services

Introductions



Nicole Mace
Executive Director



Sue Ceglowski
Director of Legal
and Policy Services



Kerri Lamb
Director of
Operations

Technical difficulties: 802-223-3580 / 800-244-8722

Webinar Logistics

- PowerPoint presentation
- Question box to ask questions. Questions are always welcome!
- Evaluation form when you exit the webinar
- E-mail follow-up to each participant with summary information, video, and PowerPoint slides
- Archives at VTVSBA.org and on the VSBA Youtube channel



Agenda!

- Overview of the Legislative Process
- Overview of the 2019 Political Environment
- VSBA Resolutions
- School Boards as Advocates in 2019

A photograph of the Vermont State Capitol building in winter. The building is a large, light-colored stone structure with a prominent portico supported by tall columns. On top of the building is a large, ornate golden dome. The scene is set in a snowy landscape with bare trees in the foreground and a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The text "Overview of the Legislative Process" is overlaid in a large, black, serif font.

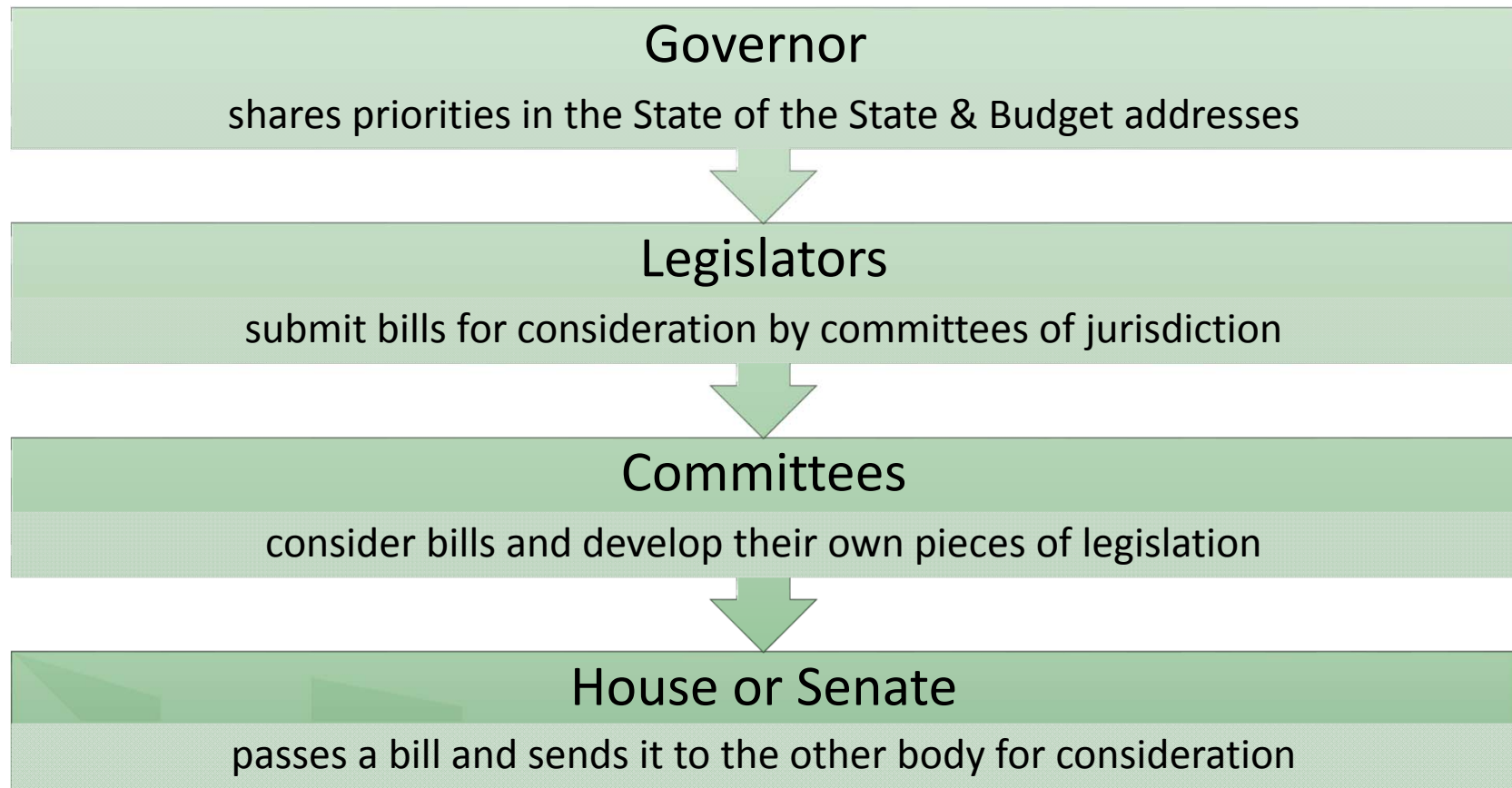
Overview of the Legislative Process

Overview of the VT General Assembly

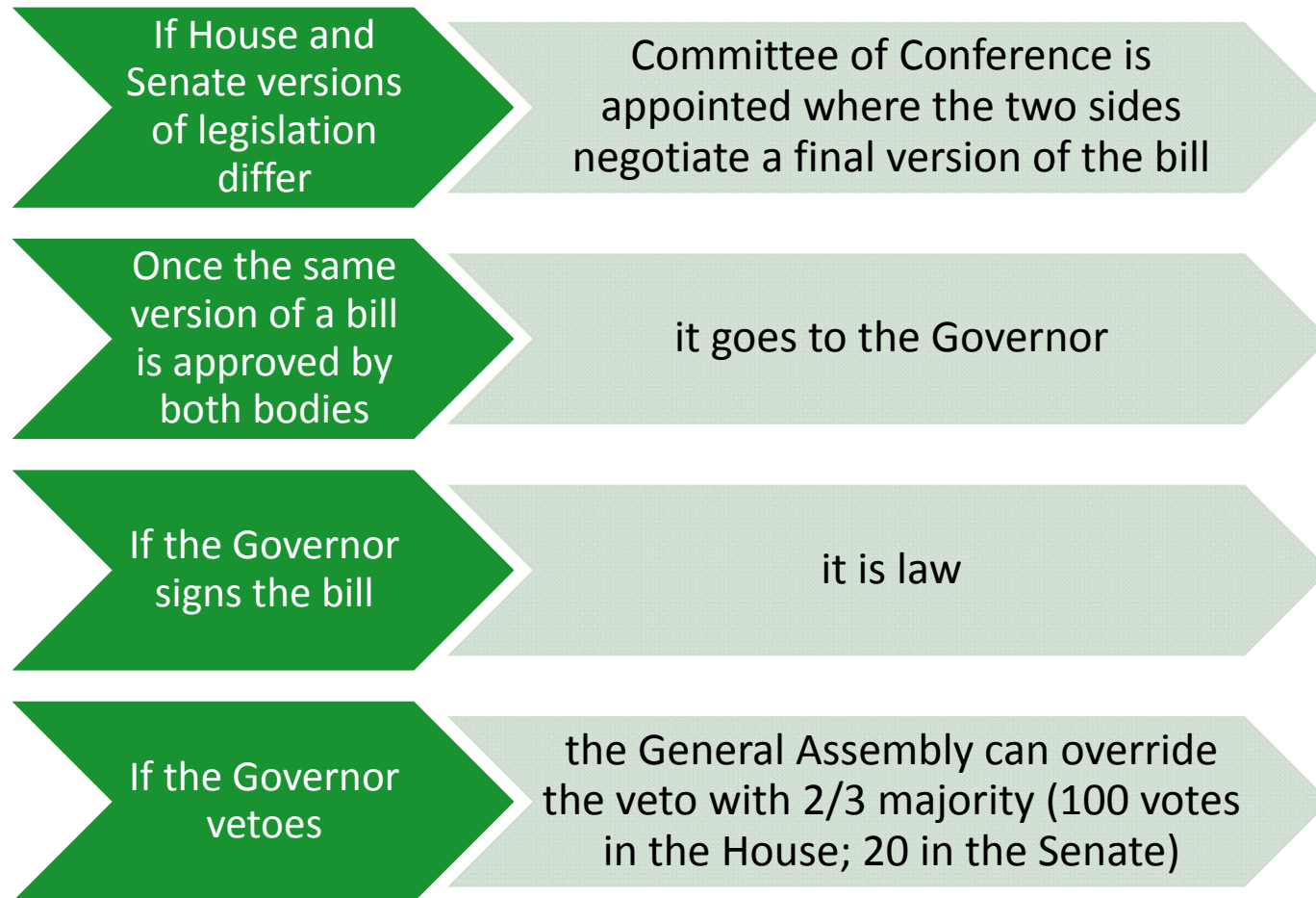


- House - 150 Representatives
- Senate - 30 Senators
- Two year terms
- Convenes in January for a biennial term - typically adjourns in May
- Staff limited to legislative counsel and joint fiscal office
- Committees of interest:
Education; Appropriations; Finance (Ways and Means);
Institutions; Government Operations; Health and Welfare

Overview of Legislative Process



Overview of Legislative Process

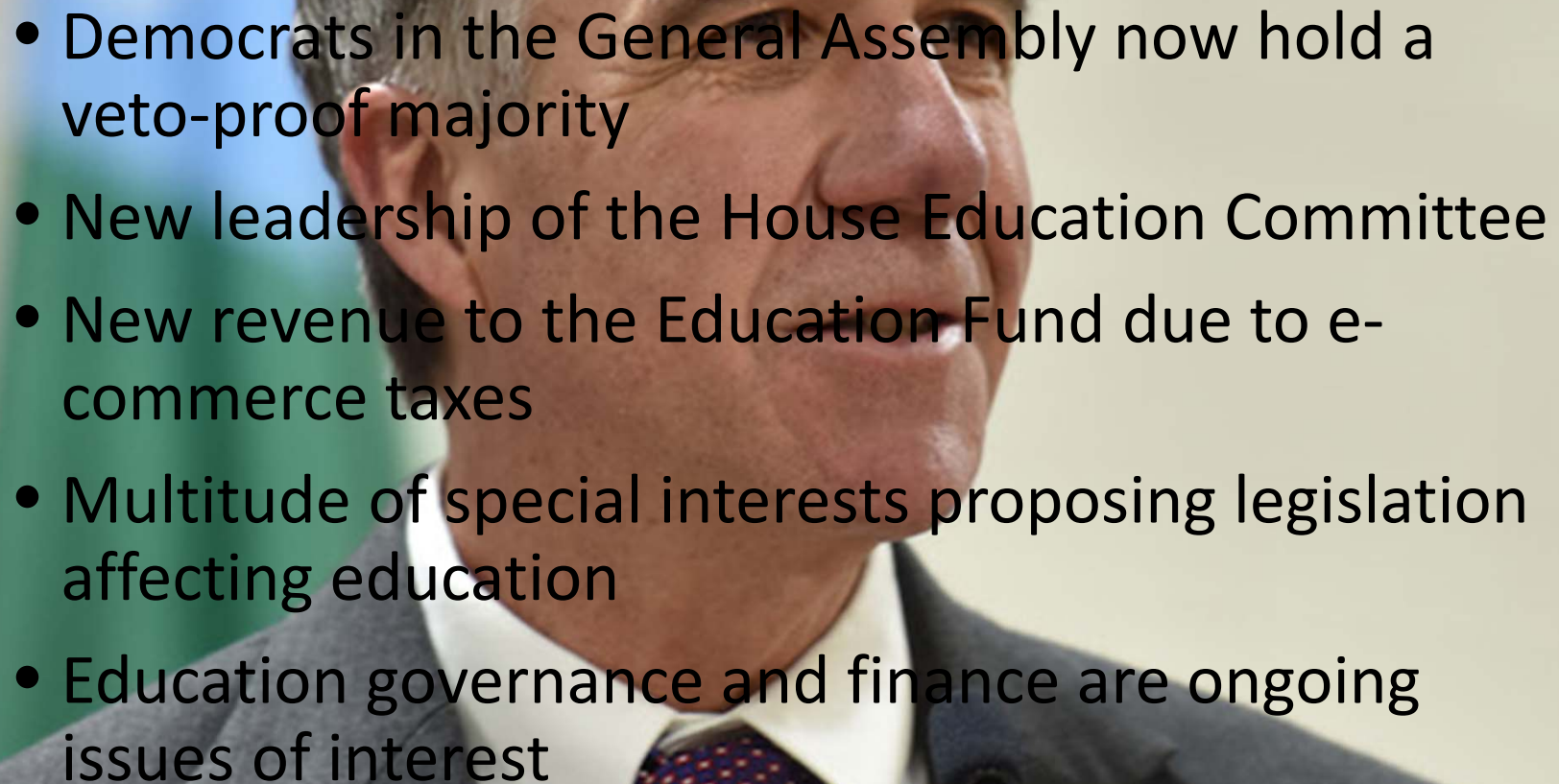




A photograph of the Vermont State Capitol building in Montpelier, Vermont, during winter. The building is a large, light-colored stone structure with a prominent portico supported by columns and a large, ornate dome topped with a statue. The ground is covered in snow, and bare tree branches frame the top and sides of the image. The sky is a clear, bright blue with a few wispy clouds.

Overview of 2019 Political Environment

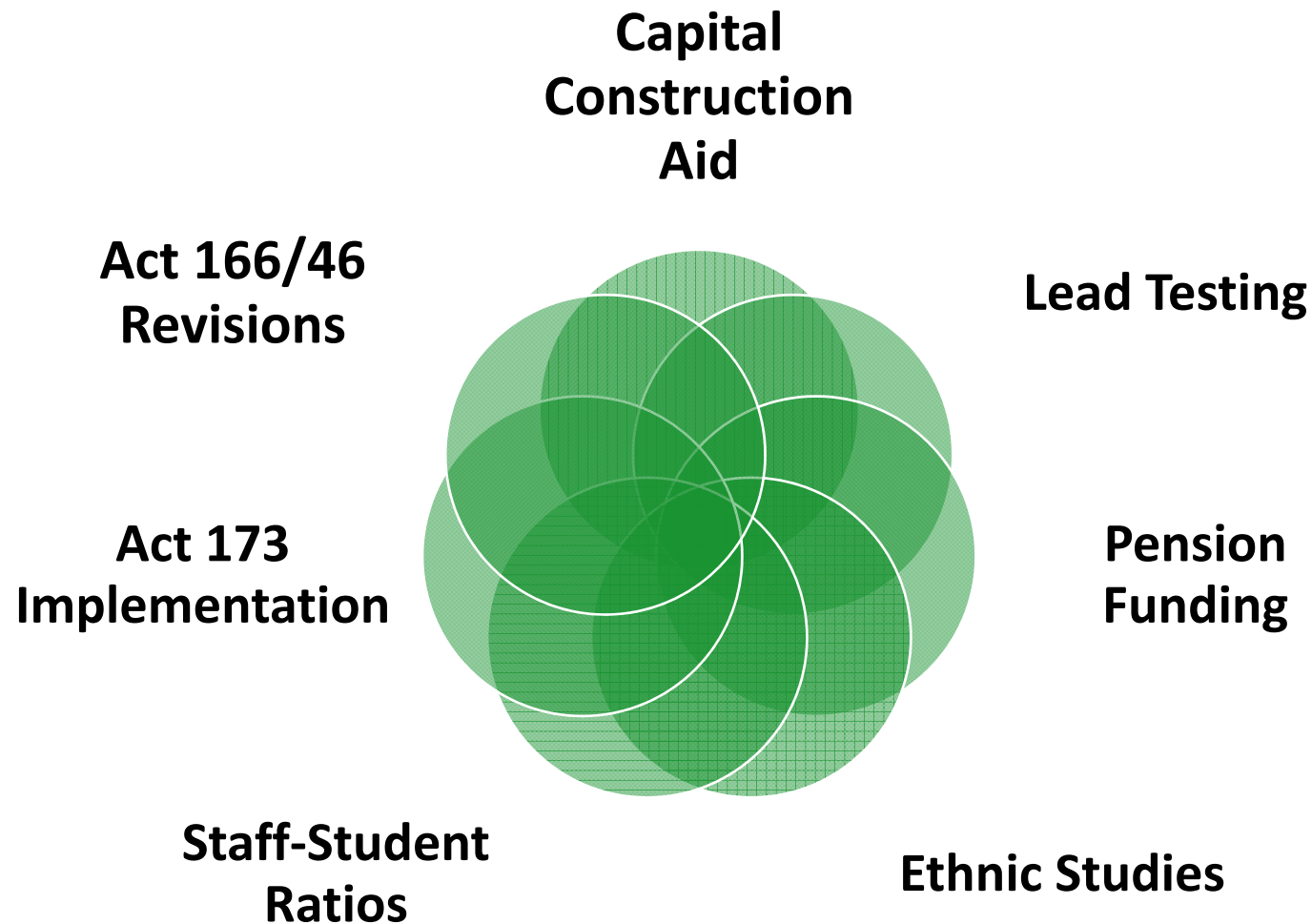
2019 Political Environment

- 
- Democrats in the General Assembly now hold a veto-proof majority
 - New leadership of the House Education Committee
 - New revenue to the Education Fund due to e-commerce taxes
 - Multitude of special interests proposing legislation affecting education
 - Education governance and finance are ongoing issues of interest

December 1 Tax Commissioner's Letter

- Predicts level average homestead tax rate and non-residential rates
- Assumes 3.24% growth in education spending
- Relies on \$21 million in undesignated reserve funds
- Proposes to direct \$6.6M in new e-commerce revenues to early care and education
- States that if education spending growth is at FY2019 levels (1.7%), \$21 million could be saved to lower property taxes or invest in early education

2019 Policy Issues Impacting Education





VERMONT SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION



VSBA Resolutions
Applicable in 2019



Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities

VSBA Resolutions Applicable in 2019

- **COST CONTAINMENT:** The VSBA advises the Vermont General Assembly to allow reasonable time for school districts to plan for cost containment legislation and refrain from passing legislation that affects budgets already adopted by school boards or approved by voters.
- **COST CONTAINMENT:** The VSBA supports the study and consideration of the costs associated with providing social services when making funding decisions and in setting any ratios.

Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities

VSBA Resolutions Applicable in 2019

- SUPERINTENDENT should Union the state or corporate fairne



only
dry
aiving
cture

Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities

VSBA Resolutions Applicable in 2019

- **ADDRESSING EQUITY, QUALITY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS** - The VSBA supports initiatives that are designed to create greater equity in high quality learning opportunities and to achieve cost effectiveness. Such initiatives shall focus on the needs of the students and taxpayers of the state of Vermont. Any initiative that impacts our governance structure or funding system must be designed in a way that reflects our community values. School boards are in the best position to inform this process and must be fully engaged in this effort.

Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities

VSBA Resolutions Applicable in 2019

- **EQUALIZATION** - It is the duty of the State of Vermont to ensure fiscal equity for all school districts to allow equal educational opportunities for all students. Significant state expenditure is required to equalize the financial resources of districts and maintain the educational opportunities of students.
- **REFORM THE EDUCATION TAX SYSTEM** - The General Assembly should examine alternative funding sources for our education system that are more equitable and sustainable, rather than continue a system that predominantly relies on the property tax for revenue.

VSBA Resolutions Applicable in 2019

- **USE OF THE EDUCATION FUND** - The VSBA opposes any diversion of funds raised through the statewide property tax to programs not within the jurisdiction of public school districts or supervisory unions.
- **UNFUNDED MANDATES** - All new educational requirements or programs mandated by the federal government or the State of Vermont should be fully funded by either the federal or state government.

.....
Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities





School Boards as Advocates in 2019

- Establish a relationship with your legislators. Be a credible source of information on education issues impacting your community.
- Messages to legislators should emphasize effect on students, not on you as a board.
- Present your point of view to legislators in language they will understand.
- Because of the many last-minute changes which a bill can undergo, when possible support positions and principles rather than specific legislation.

VSBA Resources to Support Advocacy

- Regular legislative reports from the Vermont Education Legislative Collaborative
- VSBA Updates and Action Alerts
- Commentary and Testimony on our website
- Connections with legislators and committees

VERMONT
SCHOOL
BOARDS
ASSOCIATION

.....

Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities



Contact Information

Sue Ceglowski

Director of Legal and
Policy Services

sceglowski@vtvsba.org



Nicole Mace

Executive Director

nmace@vtvsba.org

VERMONT
SCHOOL
BOARDS
ASSOCIATION

.....1-800-244-8722.....

Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities