



Advisory Council on Literacy

November 29, 2023, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

AGENDA

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting
Call In: 1-802-552-8456
Conference ID: 104 670 676#

[No. 28. An act relating to improving prekindergarten through grade 12 literacy within the State.](#)

Members: Gwen Carmolli, Vermont Curriculum Leaders Association, Chair; Emily Leute, Agency of Education; Bill Clark, Standards Board for Professional Educators; Bev Davis, Associate Executive Director, Vermont Superintendents Association; Darren McIntyre, Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators; Beth O'Brien, Vermont Principals' Association, Vice Chair; Don Tinney, Vermont National Education Association; Catherine Campbell, Maple Run School District; Jennifer Farnsworth, Essex Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District; Susan Koch, Montpelier Roxbury School District; Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Community Member; Ana Russo, Vermont Agency of Education; Amy McMullen, Vermont School Boards Association; Susan Gray, Vermont Independent Schools Association; Michael Flanagan, Maple Run School District; Charley Gunkel, Montpelier High School

AGENDA [Meeting Link](#)
[Meeting Notes in italics](#)

<p>MEETING GOALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review the recommendations for the statewide report ● Hear updates on AOE resources 	<p>Attendees:</p> <p>Chair: Gwen Carmolli Note Taker: <i>Beth O'Brien & Michael Flanagan</i> Date & Time: November 29, 3:00-5:00 Format: Online meeting</p>
<p>NORMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen thoughtfully & assume positive intentions ● Ground statements in evidence ● Stick to the protocol ● Begin & end on time 	<p>DECISION MAKING PROCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather Information & Input ● Deliberate ● Prioritize ● Vote

TIME	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES & NOTES

3:00	30	<p>Council Work: <i>The meeting began at 3:08 when a quorum of members were present. Members introduced themselves & shared items from foundational skills & comprehension evidence-based practice. (see below for list of practices)</i></p>
3:30	5	<p>Approve Meeting Minutes - October DRAFT Minutes (Motion & Vote) <i>Michael Flanagan made the motion. Cynthia Gardner-Morse seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.</i></p>
3:35	10	<p>Public Comment (Hear) <i>Mack Gardener Morse spoke about test results. He is concerned about the decline in reading outcomes despite the ESSR money spent to counteract the effects of the pandemic. He encouraged us to look at Response to Intervention, and to act quickly when students show need for support.</i></p> <p><i>Chair Carmolli offered context, explanation and links to learn more about NAEP (“Nation’s Report Card”)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Given every other year in Grades 4 and 8 in Reading and Math</i> ● <i>It is a random sampling of students in those grades.</i> ● <i>The levels indicate proficiency of application of reading - students are asked to locate/recall, integrate/interpret, critique/evaluate.</i>
3:45	45	<p>Council Work (Gwen & Council) <i>Chair Carmolli provided an overview of the work from last spring-fall, and the recommendations that will be included in the upcoming report to the General Assembly, State Board of Education, and Secretary of Education.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Getting ready for our 2nd to the last report to the legislature.</i> ● <i>The last report is due next year.</i> ● <i>The Blueprint is supposed to be updated every 5 years.</i> ● <i>There were 33 recommendations, which we reviewed (using evidence-based resources), sought input and prioritized.</i> ● <i>As a result, we have made the following recommendations: (cut and paste from the slide)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Develop strategies to address turnover, recruiting, and retention.</i> ● <i>Specify a core of required curriculum and instructional expectations that are implemented in all schools statewide.</i> ● <i>Ensure any mandate for instruction, curriculum, or assessment is made with a strategy for funding (no unfunded mandates)</i> ● <i>Select valid and reliable assessments for the purpose of statewide assessment, including kindergarten readiness assessments, formative assessments, and required grade-level accountability testing.</i> ● <i>Support institutions of higher education to train an adequate number of early educators to ensure all children have access to highly prepared teachers.</i> ● <i>Identify and recognize evidence-based programs aligned with ESSA requirements.</i>

- Curate a database of literacy materials that reflect cultural and linguistic diversity. Literacy resources reflect the breadth and depth of diversity.

Further recommendations:

- Continuing financial support for literacy efforts - funding for resources/information, training and materials
- Maintaining the additional literacy position at the AOE (currently the Act 28 Project Manager)
- Continuing the Advisory Council on Literacy
- Expanding the focus of the Advisory Council on Literacy to other aspects of literacy - adolescent literacy, instruction for English Language Learners & writing

Members offered questions/comments:

- Susan Koch asked if we could include the importance of ensuring alignment of Early Education standards
- Cynthia Gardner-Morse is concerned that our recommendations are not very actionable. She suggested consulting with someone who has helped other states, on the national level, to help us improve.
- Cynthia Gardner-Morse offered to read over the rough draft of the report.
- Don Tinney and Cynthia Gardner-Morse suggested making a clear recommendation to the Standards Board regarding teacher preparation.
- Chair Carmolli stressed the importance of having resources available (modules on the AOE website), not just for teacher preparation.
- Susan Gray suggestion to make Evidence Based high impact practices more accessible, including new research on *The Science of Writing*
- Susan Koch pointed out that there is a lot of new learning and practice shifts happening across our state. It might take five years to see the results.
- Don Tinney asked about the audience and pointed out that the audience of this report is the policy makers - legislators, the Secretary, and the State Board. Don wondered about a system to collect related data - Cynthia wondered if the VT NEA could help with the data collection.
- Susan Gray shared information about a school in Southern VT that has received training in Orton-Gillihnam and is seeing gains in achievement.

3:45

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AOE Updates (AOE Representative, Emily Lesh)
 Emily Lesh provided a [Summary of Opportunities and Activities: Literacy Modules, Family Engagement Literacy Programming \(after school/summer\), VT Literacy Playbook for systems leaders, Early Warning System training \(eduClimber\), Effective Use of Assessment Data training, and VT Framework for Proficiency.](#)

		<p>The AOE released literacy modules 1 & 2 for K-3 and grades 4-9, more than 190 people have enrolled, more than 60 have completed the first module.</p> <p>There were suggestions about publicizing the modules - reach out to the VSA and VPA, post information on social media, include some testimonials from people who have taken the modules.</p>
4:50	10	<p>Wrap Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We take December off, so Chair Carmolli can get the report in. ● In January we will look at assessment. ● We will make recommendations about systems to track student progress. ● We will be wrapping up our work in the summer, but the report will be submitted in December 2024. ● Chair Carmolli will ask for the council to continue. <p>The meeting ended at 4:40.</p>

Evidence-based instructional practices from IES Practice Guides for K-3

Directions: Select 1 from each list that you use for instruction or learning

Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade

1. Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language, and vocabulary knowledge.
2. Develop awareness of the segments of sounds in speech and how they link to letters.
3. Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, and write and recognize words.
4. Ensure that each student reads connected text every day to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through Third Grade

1. Teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies.
2. Teach students to identify and use the text's organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content.
3. Guide students through focused, high-quality discussion on the meaning of text.
4. Select texts purposefully to support comprehension development.
5. Establish an engaging and motivating context in which to teach reading comprehension.