

To: State Board of Education

From: Susan Schoenfeld

Date: 10/24/23

Re: Educational Quality Standards

I am a resident of South Burlington. While I have no children currently in the school system, I strongly believe in the importance of education in supporting our community's children so that they can thrive and become good citizens. Learning to recognize and address all forms of discrimination, including racism, antisemitism, attacks on our LGBTQ+ community, etc, is essential I have followed the important work of Vermont's Act 1 working group. Here are my current concerns:

1. I support the original anti-discrimination wording. There appears to be no legal agreement about the need to weaken this language. This should not be a area of compromise.
2. I am concerned about allowing independent schools to get a waiver rather than follow the statewide guidelines. Assuming that taxpayer money goes to these schools, why should there be compromise on this important point? Also, in looking at the space I saw for requesting a waiver didn't see any guidelines as to what would be mandatory in a waiver. Perhaps I missed this, but again- I don't think this should be allowed.

Thanks to the Working Group for the work done on creating the guidelines, and thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.