

From: Dana Decker <ddecker@wrvsu.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 7:49 AM
To: Gleason, Kimberly G <Kimberly.G.Gleason@vermont.gov>; Kolbe, Tammy <Tammy.Kolbe@vermont.gov>
Subject: EQS

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Kim Gleason, Tammy Kolbe, and members of the State Board of Education EQS Committee,

I am writing to you as a 13 year special educator and equity coordinator for our Vermont Public Schools, living in Vermont. I am excited to learn that the recommended changes to the Education Quality Standards (EQS) will promote critical thinking around the history, contributions, and viewpoints of many different ethnic and social groups and among other changes provide welcoming spaces for all students. This work is important to me because of my passion for equity and inclusion in the classroom. Dedicating myself for the past 20 years in Vermont around inclusion and understanding how unsafe some of our students feel walking into our district building daily makes me want to advocate even harder for a fair education for all.

Vermont educators have been striving to make schools more safe and equitable for all Vermont students for many years. These changes support that fundamental goal. These updates reflect many of the ongoing efforts and provide specific areas of focus for improved equity. They provide attention to aspects of equity that may have been previously misunderstood or left out altogether. In addition, EQS provides unequivocal official state support for advancing equity in Vermont public schools that can be used to support educators when parent or community pushback occurs.

I appreciate the work done in the instructional practices section. Specifically, educators developing supportive learning communities and celebrating joy with our diverse student population. This facet is important. I know all too well how history has impacted our students in such a negative way, especially in our predominant white classrooms. The EQS promotes learning, growth and joy for all students.

I beg you to adopt these EQS recommendations submitted by the Ethnic and Social Equity Working Group so we can better serve all students in Vermont schools.

In Solidarity and with great hope for our future of education,

--

Dana Decker
she/her
Special Educator at RSUD
Equity Coordinator for WRVSU

