

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 27, 2009



Contact: Jill Remick, 828-3154

STATE OF VERMONT
Department of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Vermont Study of Poverty and Effective Schools Released

MONTPELIER – The Vermont Department of Education released a first-of-its-kind study, *Roots of Success: Effective Practices in Vermont Schools*, at the State Board of Education monthly meeting today, held at U-32 High School in East Montpelier.

The department research team, with the help of an advisory panel representing K-12 schools and higher education, studied what it takes for schools—and therefore students, particularly low-income students,—to succeed. A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was employed to identify the characteristics common to effective schools.

Through a large-scale survey of more than 2,000 Vermont teachers in 87 schools across the state, as well as intensive site visits to three schools that are “beating the odds” (schools whose Reading and Mathematics scores on state assessments defy expectations and exceed those of other schools with similar demographics), the study uncovered a set of attitudes and beliefs, as well as specific school practices, that are associated with student, particularly low-income, success. These characteristics form the foundation for school effectiveness and are essential to ensuring that all children, regardless of background or socioeconomic status, reach their full potential.

“What makes this work unique is that we turned to members of our own community to affirm what other studies have been telling us for years—it is possible to reach all children, regardless of background,” said Commissioner Armando Vilaseca. “Our charge is to listen to the stories and lessons of Vermont educators and administrators and commit to the hard work of implementing these findings in all of our schools. Demographics are not destiny, unless we allow them to be.”

The final report is being mailed to all Vermont school principals and superintendents this week. In addition, it is available online, along with companion documents such as reflection tools and research methodology, at <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/mainpubs.html#success> and <http://rootsofsuccess.wordpress.com/>.

For more information, contact Susan Hayes at (802) 828-5892 or Jill Remick at (802) 828-3154.

#END#