

*Working to improve the system.
Preparing our children to build
the future.*

Transformative Education in Vermont

Implementation Framework by the State Board of Education

2010-2015 State Board Strategic Plan Goals

Educational Leadership

All levels of Vermont's public education system are guided by effective, transformative educational leaders.

Learning Expectations

Standards and expectations define the knowledge and skills essential for all PreK-12 learners to be successful in the 21st century and beyond.

Instructional Practices and Environments

Learning environments and instructional practices support multiple ways of learning, yield deep understanding and application of essential knowledge and skills, and ensure the success of every student.

PK-16 Partnerships

PK-16 education partnerships facilitate improved student success, by strengthening kindergarten readiness, increasing student engagement and relevance in K-12 education, and improving postsecondary aspiration, continuation and completion rates for all learners.

Policy and Governance

State and local policy and governance facilitate attainment of the educational practices and student outcomes articulated in the Vision statement.

Mission

Provide leadership, support and oversight to ensure that the Vermont public education system enables each student to be successful.

Vision

Every learner completes his or her public education with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, continuing education, careers, and citizenship. The public education system provides flexible learning environments rich with 21st century tools that promote self-development, academic achievement, and active engagement in learning. It operates within a framework of high expectations for every learner with support from educators, families and the community.

Every child must:

- Have an opportunity to learn in 21st Century learning environments.
- Graduate high school having achieved proficiency in reading, math, science, writing and 21st Century skill development.
- Be well prepared to enter college or training in a career of their choosing.

Our Greatest Strengths Present Unique Challenges

Historically we are known for innovation in education, small school communities, low student teacher ratios, and high inclusion rates for children with disabilities. Yet when we disaggregate our student achievement data we get to the heart of an issue of need. We know for example that like most other states, Vermont children who live in poverty and with disabilities or are English language learners in large part under-perform in core subject areas. To further our understanding of the issues facing Vermont educators, we conducted our own research study, [Roots of Success: Effective Practices in Vermont Schools](#) (Vermont Department of Education, 2009).

A major result of this study is the identification of key features of successful schools within Vermont and its rural context.

More specifically, the schools that are successful in ensuring all children are able to learn and thrive in their communities exhibit the following eight attributes of effective systems:

High Expectations – believe all students can succeed.

Continuous Improvement – take responsibility for students' achievement, working to continually improve practice to address students' diverse needs.

Leadership – provide strong leadership.

Use of Data – use data in an ongoing way to provide feedback to staff, as well as monitor progress for and support students.

Professional Teaching Culture – establish a professional teaching culture that supports high quality instruction.

Student Supports – ensure a comprehensive and highly functioning support system is in place to address students' academic, emotional, behavioral and social needs.

School Climate – create a supportive climate where expectations are clear and all students, adults and family members are valued.

Family Engagement – build constructive respectful relationships with families and involving them in their child's learning.

Transformation Policy Commission Informs Board Process

Recognizing that moving from theory to practice requires systemic change and an interconnected policy framework to support and drive the change, the State Board of Education formed the Education Transformation Policy Commission in March 2009 to advise the Board in forming the framework. This commission, comprised of educators, legislators, organizational leaders, school board members, students and parents, put forth the following high leverage policy recommendations:

Learning Expectations – Redefine learning standards so they are aligned with 21st century performance demands and are fewer, higher and deeper.

Student Assessments – Align assessments with 21st century skills and shift when and how assessments are conducted.

Teaching and Learning Practices – Establish a teaching and learning model that emphasizes deeper learning, in-

depth interdisciplinary applications, and required proficiency demonstrations, and require proficiency-based grading and graduation.

Personalized Learning – Establish a flexible education system that can support each learner to achieve at high levels.

Educator Quality – Design educator licensing, professional development, career ladders, evaluation and working conditions to support transformed educational practices.

Systems and Structures – Establish governance, funding, policies and learning structures to support 21st century education goals and practices.

Postsecondary Connections – Align PK-16 learning pathways and blend secondary and postsecondary learning experiences. Establish proficiency-based secondary graduation requirements and align secondary graduation requirements with postsecondary entry requirements.

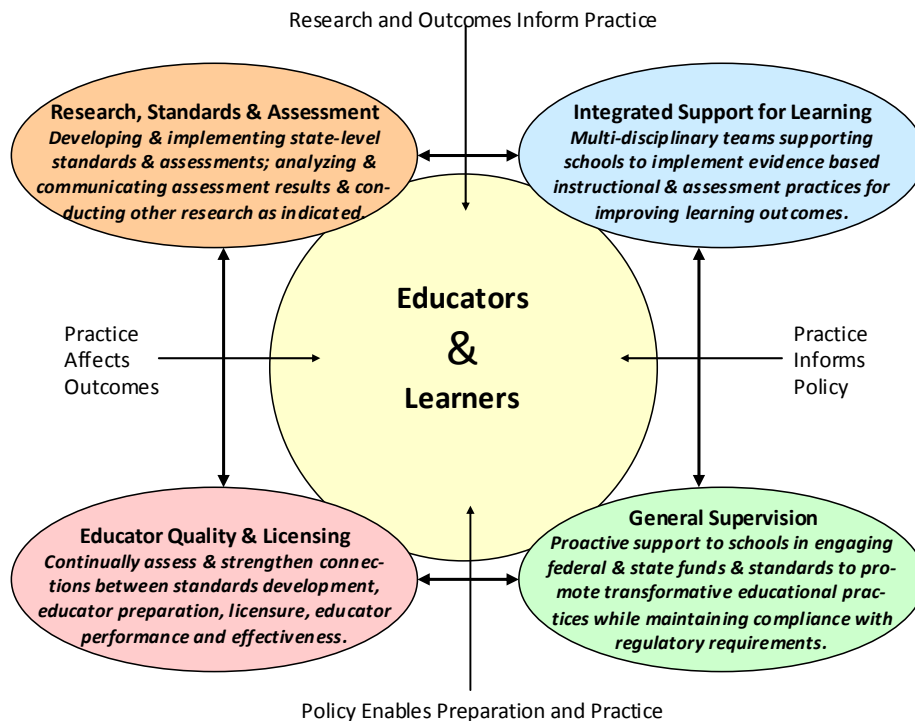
Guiding Principles

Toward this end, the Department has reprioritized its work and continues to restructure working relationships to facilitate a statewide system of support that improves instruction and learning outcomes for all Vermont learners and functionally recognizes the continuum of education from early childhood to young adulthood and beyond.

The Department works to embrace the following principles as we redefine our work:

- Communication, collaboration, cooperation, and coordination.
- High expectations for every one of our students – not just some.
- Purposeful engagement of our partners in the field – new and old.
- Developing new opportunities for leadership in education in Vermont.

The Department of Education: From Theory to Practice



Operational Management, School Finance, Legal, Communications and Information Technology Support, Inform and Guide the System