



**State of Vermont
Vermont Department of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501**

TO: Science Educators, Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Teachers, Curriculum Coordinators, ELL Teachers, and Guidance Counselors
FROM: Gail Taylor, Division Director, Research, Standards & Assessment Team
Michael Hock, Director of Educational Assessment
SUBJECT: Educators Needed to Participate in Item Review and Bias/Sensitivity Review for the NECAP Science Assessment
DATE: June 2, 2011

ADMINISTRATORS: PLEASE FORWARD THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO ALL APPLICABLE STAFF MEMBERS.

The Vermont Department of Education Research, Standards & Assessment Team is pleased to announce two different opportunities for science teachers and other educators to participate in the on-going development of the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) Science Assessment in August. Each opportunity is described below:

- 1. Item Review for the Spring 2012 NECAP Science Assessment**
Prior to field-testing, all NECAP science items are reviewed for alignment to the appropriate NECAP Science assessment targets, targeted depth of knowledge level, student accessibility, and instructional relevance. This work is done by three review panels—one for each of the grade levels that are assessed—made up of a total of 12 educators, four each from Vermont, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. Item Review will take place at the Stoweflake Mountain Resort in Stowe, Vermont, on August 2–3, 2011. To qualify, educators should (a) have experience teaching science at the elementary, middle, or high school level, (b) have experience using the NECAP Science assessment targets and Vermont science standards for classroom instruction and assessment, and (c) be willing to work collaboratively with educators from the three NECAP Science states.
- 2. Bias & Sensitivity Review for the Spring 2012 NECAP Science Assessment**
Prior to field-testing, all NECAP Science test items are reviewed by a select team of educators to ensure that they are free from language or content that may negatively impact the test performance of a specific subgroup of students. In general, the goal of Bias and Sensitivity Review is to help ensure that test items reflect students' classroom experiences, not their life experiences or cultural opportunities. This work is done by a team of 15 educators—5 each from Vermont, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island—who either represent a subgroup of interest (e.g., racial, ethnic or religious groups, rural or urban interests, individuals with disabilities, recent immigrants, English language learners) or have direct experience working with students from these subgroups. Bias and Sensitivity Review for the NECAP Science tests will take place at the Stoweflake Mountain Resort in Stowe, Vermont, on August 2, 2011. To qualify, educators should (a) have current and direct experience teaching or working with elementary, middle, or high school level students, (b) offer a unique perspective on one or more specific student subgroups, and (c) be willing to work collaboratively with educators from the three NECAP Science states who represent diverse perspectives.

- Guest rooms will be reserved for all participants if needed for the evenings of August 1 & 2.
- On August 2, breakfast and lunch will be provided for all participants.
- On August 3, breakfast will be provided for all participants, and lunch will be provided for all Item Review participants.

Participants will receive a \$25.00 meal reimbursement for each night they stay (8/1 & 8/2) and mileage reimbursement will be the federal rate at the time of the meeting. There is a \$100 stipend per committee member per day, but full participation is required to receive the stipend for each day.

All interested individuals should complete the attached application and mail or e-mail it to:

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Applications should be submitted by June 22, 2011. Department staff will review all applications and assign the most qualified individuals to each of the review teams. In some cases, preference may be given to individuals from under-represented groups, positions, or regions of the state.