

Appendix I

Glossary of Terms

Advanced Placement (AP)

Demanding academic curriculum through which high schools offer college-level courses to their students. By taking an AP course and scoring well on the national exam, high school students may acquire college credit for mastering college-level subjects.

Advisories

Regularly scheduled meetings between teachers and students that cover a continuum of possibilities from serving as a touchstone for students to create caring environments in school to personalizing a student's course of study.

Block scheduling

A means of reconfiguring the school day. The traditional school day is typically divided into six or seven classes, each lasting from 45 minutes to 55 minutes. With few exceptions, classroom instruction begins and ends within the allotted time period. Blocked courses may be scheduled for two or more continuous class periods or days to allow students greater time for laboratory or project-centered work, field trips or work-based learning and special assemblies or speakers.

Capstone project

A multi-stage project that allows a student to integrate learning from a variety of settings and sources while demonstrating mastery of Fields of Knowledge and Personal Skills identified in *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*. A capstone project provides students with the opportunity to develop a sound work ethic, high academic achievement, effective social skills, good citizenship and a sense of altruism that leads to informed decision-making and responsible action. Sometimes called a graduation challenge.

Center or network for high school renewal and innovation

Clearinghouse supporting field-based research, policy development, local and state renewal initiatives and best practices that increase the ability of each high school in Vermont to adopt the Twelve Principles for High School Renewal. This resource will support the dissemination and implementation of *High Schools on the Move: Renewing Vermont's Commitment to Quality Secondary Education* and will actively support the High Schools on the Move initiative.

Community-based learning coordinator

A person located in a school who coordinates community learning opportunities, job shadows and internships for students and sometimes teachers.

Community dialogue night

A forum for interested students, teachers, parents, administrators, district staff and business leaders to use *High Schools on the Move: Renewing Vermont's Commitment to Quality Secondary Education* to discuss the current state of a high school.





Community service learning

Learning that occurs while performing service. Service learning activities define a problem in the community and develop a solution to the problem; all related activities are tied to the curriculum in school.

Community service

Performing service to a community for its betterment.

Compact

A formal agreement among leaders to work together for local educational reform. Compact representatives may include community decision-makers, school superintendents, college presidents and heads of business organizations as well as superintendents, principals, teachers, parents and unions. Compacts provide a structure of mutual accountability because all participants agree to work together and individually to support group goals. Efforts on the part of compact members may include creating employment opportunities for students, helping to restructure educational systems and providing local labor market information. The Boston Compact was formed in 1982 by business leaders who felt they could help raise the quality of high school graduates; they approached local authorities and educators with a proposal for school reform. In exchange for districtwide improvements in student academic performance and a reduction in the total dropout rate, business leaders promised to increase jobs and college assistance to high school graduates.

Dual enrollment

A program of study allowing high school students to simultaneously earn credits toward a high school diploma and a post-secondary degree or certificate. Written agreements formalize the outcome of studies undertaken.

Educational support system (ESS)

A comprehensive set of supports and services that is integrated with the general education curriculum. ESS is found at both the state and local levels. The system is designed to provide students with needed accommodations and supplementary aids and services regardless of their eligibility for categorical programs. The goal is to increase to the greatest extent possible the capacity of general educators to meet diverse student needs in the classroom and to avoid over-reliance on special education services.

Education support team (EST)

Team that includes a variety of teaching and support personnel who assist teachers in planning and providing services and accommodations for students in need of classroom supports or enrichment activities in order to meet state and local standards. ESTs also gather data and identify patterns to inform the school's action plan to strengthen the overall capacity of an ESS. See also educational support system.

Effective practices

Research-based, proven practices.

Fishbowl

A facilitated discussion that allows students to respond to the question: “If you could create your version of the ideal high school, what would it look like?” Students talk openly and honestly about their feelings regarding high school. Students sit in a circle of chairs surrounded by an outer circle of observers, creating a fishbowl effect.

Graduation challenge

Varies between schools, but generally provides students with a culminating senior-year project. See also capstone projects.

High Schools on the Move

A network of high schools serving as multiple demonstration sites for systemic change in Vermont high schools. These high schools will provide a showcase to highlight effective practices linked to the Twelve Principles.

Internship

An opportunity for a student to work for an employer for a specified period to learn about a particular industry or occupation. Activities may include special projects, a sample of tasks from different jobs or tasks from a single occupation. Internships may or may not include financial compensation.

Teacher internships

Worksite experiences of at least two weeks in duration for teachers. During this time, teachers may work at a particular position to learn about the skills necessary for success in that field. Links are then made to instructional practice.

Met School

A small public high school open to all students in Rhode Island. It educates one student at a time, so each student’s curriculum is determined by his or her unique interests, background and learning styles. All students work on projects in real-world settings related to their interests and develop strong relationships with teachers and project mentors. The Met enrolls families, not just students. Every Met graduate has been accepted to college. Learn more from the *Met Portfolio*, the book *One Kid at a Time*, and the video *Learning Journeys*.

Personalized learning plan (PLP)

Recognizes the individuality of student learning styles, histories, interests and aspirations and allows the student, in concert with school staff and family members, to individualize the learning experience and demonstrate readiness for the adult world. Because of the central role each student fulfills in the construction of his or her own PLP, the student’s own ambitions, talents and interests become the unifying elements of the learning process. PLPs encompass anywhere from one year to all four years of high school and the experience and impact is far deeper than a series of single events, such as job shadowing or other work-based or community-based learning experiences.





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Pre-K-16 continuity

Coordination from kindergarten through post-secondary education to ensure Vermonters have access to education and training opportunities that will help them build sound economic and civic futures.

School Improvement Team

Team at the Vermont Department of Education available to assist schools identified for technical assistance with school improvement efforts.

School-to-Work (STW)

A program that provides a means of attaining high academic standards. To help students direct their own educations, STW encourages, among other things, exposure to a broad variety of career options – starting with speakers and field trips in elementary school and progressing to academically connected internships in a high school student’s field of interest. The underlying goal is to provide students with knowledge and skills that help them be well prepared for college, additional training or a well-paying job directly out of high school.

Teacher leader groups

Groups of teachers learning and working together to improve their skills and capacities to educate students.

Twelve Principles for High School Renewal

A set of principles drawn from more than 18 research-based models of whole school reform for high schools and around which schools may organize their leadership, instruction, professional development, missions and structures.

Vermont Interactive Learning Network (VT ILN)

An interactive learning network designed to broaden learning opportunities for students and teachers by connecting schools throughout the state. Sponsored by Verizon.

Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE)

Board that develops the standards that Vermont educators are expected to meet for licensure.