



Advisory Council on Literacy  
September 14, 2022, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

**Present:** Gwen Carmolli, Vermont Curriculum Leaders Association, Chair; Emily Leute as a proxy for Secretary French, Agency of Education; Bill Clark, Standards Board for Professional Educators; Bev Davis, Associate Executive Director, Vermont Superintendents Association; Beth O'Brien, Vermont Principals' Association, Vice Chair; Don Tinney, Vermont National Education Association; Catherine Campbell, Maple Run School District; Barbie Collette as a proxy for Jennifer Farnsworth, Essex-Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District; Susan Koch, Montpelier Roxbury School District; Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Community Member; Martine Gulick, Vermont School Boards Association; Susan Gray, Vermont Independent Schools Association; Betty Roy, as a proxy for Jacqui Kelleher, Vermont Agency of Education

**AOE Staff Present:** Suzanne Sprague, Jess DeCarolis, Meg Porcello, Pat Fitzsimmons, Katie McCarthy, Ana Kolbach, Lori Dolezal and Emily Lesh

AGENDA		<a href="#">Meeting Link</a>
<p><b>MEETING GOALS:</b> Develop an understanding of statewide literacy initiatives Review the subcommittee's work to develop recommendations for the literacy blueprint</p>	<p><b>Attendees:</b> <b>Chair:</b> Gwen Carmolli <b>Note Taker:</b> AOE Representative <b>Time:</b> September 14, 2:00-4:00 <b>Format:</b> Online meeting</p>	
<p><b>TO PREPARE FOR THE MEETING, COUNCIL MEMBERS WERE ASKED TO:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review <a href="#">June Meeting Minutes</a></li> <li>● Review Summer Subcommittee Meeting Minutes: <a href="#">July 14</a>, <a href="#">July 15</a>, <a href="#">August 2</a>, <a href="#">August 3</a>, <a href="#">August 9</a></li> </ul>		
<p><b>NORMS:</b> <b>Chair</b> Gwen Carmolli reviewed the norms and decision-making process with the Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Listen thoughtfully &amp; assume positive intentions</li> <li>● Ground statements in evidence</li> <li>● Stick to the protocol</li> <li>● Begin and end on time</li> </ul>	<p><b>DECISION MAKING PROCESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gather Information &amp; Input</li> <li>● Deliberate</li> <li>● Prioritize</li> <li>● Vote</li> </ul>	

TIME	ACTIVITIES & NOTES
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2:00	<p><b>Council Work: The meeting convened at 2:04 p.m.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome</li> <li>● Roll Call &amp; share – Each Council member shared 1 area of progress or glimmer of hope in improving literacy outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emily Leute: AOE, ELA specialist. The AOE is doing great work to bring awareness to the field.</li> <li>● Bill Clark: He is working to bring multi-lingual students to grade-level and is seeing many good attitudes despite the challenges.</li> <li>● Bev Davis: Educators are eager to understand and expand their knowledge of literacy practices and do the best they can for kids. She is seeing a lot of positive energy this year.</li> <li>● Martine Gulick: The Burlington Super Intendent prioritized literacy in their 5-year strategic plan and implementation plan. They are moving to the ARC Core curriculum. There is a lot of buzz and energy around literacy as a key priority over the next 5 years.</li> <li>● Beth O’Brien: Happy to see many students reading books! Not just phones, but books!</li> <li>● Susan Gray: Happy to see the new benchmarking tool in North Bennington’s Village School already showing gains from the start of the school year. Students who weren’t sounding out words at the start of the year have already made progress. The benchmarking tool is capturing early, but significant, gains in initial stages of reading.</li> <li>● Don Tinney: Pleased to see enthusiasm returning. Also, pleased to see literacy in the fore of recovery efforts, along with social and emotional well-being.</li> <li>● Gwen Carmolli: Many positive indicators and buzz from VT curriculum leaders last week during the VTCLA meeting. Adolescent literacy and how we support the adolescent reader were a topic of conversation. Overall, great momentum around literacy is growing across the state.</li> <li>● Proxy for Jen Farnsworth, Barbie Collette: She is a literacy interventionist and on a release year now. She is has seen some of the most skilled teachers moving into elementary literacy.</li> <li>● Cynthia Gardner-Morse: Great to have Council together and is pleased about the Special Edu rule changes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2:15	<p><b>Approve June &amp; Subcommittee Meeting Minutes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Chair noted that the Council could entertain approving all 6 meeting minutes as a bundle (<a href="#">June Meeting Minutes</a> and 5 sets of summer subcommittee meeting minutes: <a href="#">July 14</a>, <a href="#">July 15</a>, <a href="#">August 2</a>, <a href="#">August 3</a>, <a href="#">August 9</a>)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cynthia Gardner-Morse made a motion and Don Tinney seconds the motion. All Council members in agreement and minutes approved.</li> </ul>
2:20	<p><b>Hear Public Comment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No public called in for comment</li> <li>• The Chair made two announcements about Council membership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted a question from a Council member about when the open community member position would be filled and noted that the AOE was working on this process.</li> <li>• Julia Spaulding, the student representative, has had to step down from the Council to focus on her schoolwork for her Senior year.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2:30	<p><b>Hear &amp; Discuss Subcommittee Work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share summer subcommittee work: Chair Carmolli &amp; Subcommittee members: Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Susan Gray, &amp; Susan Koch met 5 times this summer.</li> <li>• Context: Goal of the summer subcommittee work was two-fold: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Align <a href="#">prioritized selections</a> for recommended changes to the Blueprint on Literacy to existing legislation &amp; requirements - Act 173, EQS, Act 28, Statute 2902, Statute 2903, DMG Report</li> <li>2. Identify high priority recommendations for prioritized selections</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Tasks &amp; work to date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment and review of guiding policies and requirements: Subcommittee members reflected to the Council that there are many guiding policies and requirements; the importance of making the field aware of the various guiding documents; and that there were many connections to the guiding policies &amp; requirements in the prioritized selections, and also some gaps reflected in the <a href="#">work template</a>.</li> <li>• Review research and evidence-based that sits behind the Council's recommendations. The Subcommittee agreed to several evidence-based research articles as key resources: <i>CCNetwork State Policy Levers for Improving Literacy</i>, <i>Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel</i>, the <i>VT Universal Screener Recommendations</i>, Three IES Practice Guides (<i>Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in K Through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</i>, <i>Improving Reading Comprehension in K Through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</i>, and <i>Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4-9</i>), and International NCTQ <i>The 4 Pillars to Reading Success</i>. These resources also could be immediately usable by the field. Summary of discussions held by Subcommittee:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Subcommittee reviewed and had a healthy debate about including John Hattie’s work and although his work is widely used in VT his work did not fit all criteria for being evidence based. The subcommittee decided not to use Hattie as a resource.</li> <li>▪ Emily Leute noted that several of the resources above are posted on the <a href="#">Council’s page on the AOE website</a>, including annotated versions of the WWC Guides.</li> <li>▪ Chair Gwen Carmolli noted to the AOE that the Council would like to see a “splash” about these resources in the Weekly Field Memo and other communications to the field to increase awareness about available resources.</li> <li>▪ Susan Gray noted that these resources are excellent and comprehensive.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflections on the work to date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair Gwen Carmolli shared that finding and narrowing in on priorities to recommend is the hard par! There are many great resources and pieces of information. The Council wants input to be brief and readable, and narrow enough to provide a clear guide for the Agency. Careful notes were kept so that all breadcrumbs of discussions could be followed. Charts are difficult for the General Assembly due to accessibility requirements and therefore will be condensed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• No additional questions or concerns raised.</li> </ul>
3:10	<p><b>Hear &amp; Discuss AOE Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jess DeCarolis &amp; Emily Lesh provided <a href="#">updates from AOE</a> including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Literacy Policy and Practice Drivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deep dive on Act 173 levers</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ 2021-2022 Reflection – AOE deliverables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deep dive on Educator Preparation Program Syllabi review project</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Looking Ahead – AOE focus for 2022-2023</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Questions &amp; Discussion:</li> <li>• Don Tinney– Are the teaching students applying what they are learning in actual classrooms? Can we extend the time that pre-service teachers spend in student teaching? Don expressed concern about how short the internships are for new teachers since it takes a lot of time to internalize this work.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cynthia Gardner-Morse – how much time do teachers need for their practicum? Call participants did not have an answer, but Jess noted that a scan of EPPs would be needed.</li> <li>• Susan Gray – Who is overseeing programs and ensuring that they are using evidence-based practices? Jess suggested: Have someone from the ROPA team provide an overview.</li> <li>• Susan Koch asked if the R1CC work was in collaboration with other states? And also noted interest in learning more about the Playbook. Jess noted that <a href="#">R1CC</a> serves other states and did similar with MA, but the work wasn't completed directly with other states.</li> <li>• Gwen observed that there was more strength in literacy instructional models than in writing in the EPP review results and wondered if writing is included in the PD modules AOE is in the process of procuring. Jess noted that AOE is looking across all of the practices that can result in a literate student. Evidence-based practices were included in the RFP. AOE will share more specific information on the PD modules in the near future.</li> <li>• If PD module information is available in between meetings, Gwen requested that AOE sends it to Gwen for distribution to the Council between meetings.</li> <li>• Gwen question about the playbook – How will that be shared with other ed leaders? what is the communication plan? Jess noted that AOE is finalizing the project plan with R1CC regarding milestones and AOE will engage the VT education community in the development of documents. The goal is to create stackable documents that are not overwhelming. The playbook is about building tools at different stakeholder levels. Vermont hopes to get a wrap-around approach.</li> <li>• Susan Gray – Has there been a focus on non-evidence-based practices? Susan is referring to those practices shown not to be effective in the EPP review. She asked about those next steps. Jess responded that AOE doesn't have insight into specific programs at this time.</li> <li>• Next step identified: AOE bring Patrick Halliday, Education Quality Division Director to review the ROPA process.</li> </ul>
3:50	<p><b>Wrap Up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair Gwen reflected that it was hard for many educators to make the meeting at 2pm and asked about availability at 3pm. She noted that she wanted to respect the time of AOE employees and will connect with AOE and get back to the Council.</li> <li>• Martine Gulick motioned to close the meeting and Don Tinney seconded the motion. All agreed and zero opposed.</li> <li>• The meeting adjourned at 3:46 p.m.</li> </ul>

**Note:** Thank you, Susan Gray, Susan Koch & Cynthia Gardner-Morse for their subcommittee work!

*Tasks for the next meeting:*

*Review the subcommittee work to date*

- [Alignment Blueprint Subcommittee Work Template - Alignment](#)
- [Chart Alignment to Current Requirements](#)
- [Research Blueprint Subcommittee Work Template - Research for Recommendations](#)