

**Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting**

Call In: 1-802-552-8456

Conference ID: 187 709 727#

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Bill Clark, Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE); Bev Davis, Vermont Superintendents Association (VSA); Martine Gulick, Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA); Donald Tinney, Vermont-National Education Association (VT-NEA); Beth O’Brien, Vermont Principals’ Association; Susan Gray, Vermont Independent Schools Association (VISA); Gwen Carmolli, Vermont Curriculum Leaders Association (VTCLA); Katie Campbell, St. Albans Town Educational Center; Jennifer Farnsworth, Hiawatha Elementary School; Emily Lesh, Richmond; Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Calais; Jacqui Kelleher, Vermont Agency of Education (AOE)

**AOE:** Suzanne Sprague, Jess DeCarolis, Meg Porcello, Emily Leute, Glenn Bailey, Katie McCarthy

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities and Notes</b>
10:00	<b>Council Work:</b> The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome</li> <li>• Roll Call and share</li> <li>• Spring meetings</li> </ul>
10:20	<b>Approve Meeting Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved</li> </ul>
10:25	<b>Hear Public Comment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
10:35	<b>Updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invitations to present at different groups</li> <li>• Groups are appreciative of the work of the Council</li> <li>• Jess gave testimony to Senate Ed committee</li> </ul> <b>Hear Act 28 Updates – Follow-Up Questions and Answers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear overview of Act 28 Testimony by VT AOE Representative or Chair               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Jess and Emily (AOE): Testimony was linked updating 3 areas:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RFP update – two agencies (ADS and AOE) working together; draft RFP (not posted – will be posted on BGS website); ADS leads process                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neuroscience “101” about literacy and the brain</li> <li>• Self-paced so systems can use this over time in addition to in-person training</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council asks to be notified when RFP is posted</li> <li>▪ Evaluating educator prep programs and how they prepare educators to teach literacy – just received a report and will be able to share this info soon</li> <li>▪ Engaged in hiring process – had to request position, which took time; conducted final interview and are close to making an offer</li> <li>▪ Early Literacy NIC question – In this ELNIC, participating teachers and leaders work directly with researcher Dr. Nell Duke, from the University of Michigan, twice monthly to receive professional development on evidence-based instructional practices related to all of the above expected outputs. They also receive coaching on the implementation of these practices during their PDSA cycles. They share artifacts of student work, instructional practices, and data with Dr. Duke to receive feedback and additional support and resources to make improvements during subsequent cycles. During these sessions, issues are raised about consistency and coherence in instruction within and across schools (Similar to the suggested questions in the blueprint e.g., Are school leaders knowledgeable about early literacy and pedagogy? Are they able to ensure best practices toward how literacy occurs in their school?)</li> <li>• Hold brief question and answer on Act 28 progress</li> </ul>
11:05	<p>Hear and Discuss input on statewide Literacy Plan (blueprint)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share input by Council Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cynthia – surprised how little the community was aware of this document. Strengths are the guiding principles; not being rolled out effectively and not clear (specific); needs to be linked to scientific research (quantitative numbers); be sure that phonics, phonemic awareness, and spelling are not overlooked – add morphology; glad to see writing; lots of good questions the state is asking</li> <li>○ Julia’s comment (was emailed) – problem with the way it’s being implemented because a lot of kids in her school are not good readers; was not aware of the Blueprint and hasn’t seen a change; strength is K-3 in teaching reading; not widely understood, vague, limits direct instruction; improvements in morphology and spelling</li> <li>○ Bill – reminder about the importance at middle and high school as well</li> <li>○ Emily – how do we look at this whole scope? What is the AOE’s perspective of implementation of the Blueprint? Understanding and awareness of plan was low (schools, school boards, community members, etc.); suggestion to add specificity to plan and how we move this forward</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Beth – MTSS helps “back fill” skills at the higher levels; research-based and thoughtful, but came out at the same time as the pandemic (people didn’t have time or bandwidth to implement); make reading more fun and engaging; also a problem w/teacher turnover (increases equity gap); EPPs should have Blueprint
- Martine – VSBA colleagues and curriculum folks; most of their input has already been shared; Blueprint needs to be intentionally tied to other AOE work; at what point in this work does someone address screentime and virtual work, etc.?
- Susan G. - independent schools – collected data from a survey; teachers and administrators want more specificity on recommendations; maybe add vetted links to high quality research; take out the term “balanced literacy” (Gwen added that there are a lot of links to high quality research)
- Jen – strengths: mentioned it’s good to review standardized literacy assessments, print-rich environments (esp. In PK and K); their school uses this plan, but it’s not very well-understood and there’s no time to review it; there’s a lot of pressure to do this work, but not a lot of support for teachers; suggestions: provide teachers more support and EPPs need to teach teachers how to teach literacy
- Jess adds (AOE): Hi folks, as a clarification, the header "Balanced Literacy Instruction" in the Blueprint does not equate with the term of art and approach "Balanced Literacy." The discussion under that header clarifies that. We take your point that folks are misreading this but the word "balanced" meant the actual definition -- a balance of approaches. We can address that.
- Gwen – curriculum leaders; Blueprint is not well understood (early in implementation); strengths: systematic and explicit instruction is mentioned, connection to MTSS, some recommendations for state and local (but not really sure what local should be doing), link between teachers’ knowledge and early literacy; recommendations: funding for the work, literacy coaches, build expertise, more feedback, rewrite plan (make it clearer) - could there be a “thumbnail” of the plan?
- PLL (Mary Grace) - Gwen presented; strengths connection to MTSS, high quality instruction, interventions, etc.; comprehensive, balanced, evidence-based instruction, emphasizing needs for all students; recommendation to align with other state work and build a list of recommendations to better implement VTSS
- Discuss gathered inputs (on sheet)
  - Common strengths
    - Rooted in research (resources, links)
    - Explicit and systematic
    - Organized around MTSS (helps w/structure for implementation)
    - Incorporates 5 NRP pillars of reading instruction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Common themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation is early</li> <li>▪ Awareness and knowledge of plan is low</li> <li>▪ Need for teacher training, good PD</li> <li>▪ MTSS (keep in mind that it is in varied phases of implementation across the state)</li> <li>▪ Opportunity to connect initiatives</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ To what extent is the plan understood? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not well understood yet (might be too early in implementation, also impact of pandemic pivots)</li> <li>▪ Don: Introduce the Blueprint to educators and ask them what they need</li> <li>▪ Jess (AOE): The state Literacy plan should not be equated with other tools that can support implementation across different stakeholders of that plan and local literacy plans.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ How far in implementation is the plan? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Early in implementation; may vary across the state</li> <li>▪ Secretary French: timeline of implementation interrupted by pandemic response; allocation of funds for literacy improvement; will be connected to recovery planning and addressing learning loss</li> <li>▪ Jess (AOE): Timeline for Council re: the State Plan for Literacy (The Blueprint). The Blueprint was published on 1/27/2020 and schools closed on 3/15/2020. Any state level work to support the development of local literacy plans was pivoted to the state response to COVID.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p>Next Meeting and Wrap Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 13</li> </ul> <p>The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.</p>

**Resources shared in chat:**

- Dana Goldstein in the New York Times (3/8/22) writes about the reading loss during the pandemic: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/us/pandemic-schools-reading-crisis.html?searchResultPosition=3>
- CCSSO's Nation of Readers: <https://753a0706.flowpaper.com/CCSSOReadingResource/#page=18>
- Tim Shanahan's blog: <https://www.shanahanonliteracy.com/blog>
- Kelly Gallagher
- FL Center for Reading Research: <https://fcrr.org/>
- Vermont Early Learning Standards page: <https://vels.education.vermont.gov/>

**Tasks for the April Meeting:**

- Review and provide input #2 on blueprint – send to Gwen by April 6