

Act 139 & Read Vermont Update

State Board of Education Meeting

August 21, 2024

Act 139 | Literacy

Major Elements of the Act include:

1. Findings
2. Reading assessment and Intervention Kindergarten through grade-3
3. Literacy Professional Learning (focused on assessment and intervention)
4. Advisory Council on Literacy
5. Agency of Education Literacy Position
6. Expanding Early Childhood Literacy Resources (Department of Libraries)

Read Vermont

- **What:** Comprehensive state-wide initiative dedicated to improving literacy outcomes for Vermont students
- **Vision:** Ensure every child can read by third grade and graduates high school ready for college or career.
- **How:** Leveraging and braiding multiple funding sources to focus on Read Vermont priorities, including release of Capacity Building [RFP](#).

Read Vermont Priorities

- **Professional Learning:** Launch high-quality synchronous virtual, in-person, or hybrid high-quality professional learning opportunities for all PK-12 educators and leaders. The detailed schedule announced in early October.
- **Job-Embedded Coaching:** Intensive and personalized job-embedded coaching for elementary schools (K-3) in six to twelve Vermont SU/SD over one year. Interested schools must apply and be determined based on the highest need.
- **Literacy Learning Network:** Develop a network of leaders and educators engaged in a facilitated learning series to elevate learning and sharing among peers across the state.
- **Guidance Documents and Resources:** Issue a series of guidance documents and resources for SU/SD around Act 139 implementation and evidence-based practices.
- **Family and Caregiver Engagement:** Develop resources to support educators when engaging with families and caregivers.

Summer Accomplishments:

- Internal AOE launch of Read Vermont: alignment of programs and resources to support coordinated intra-agency effort
- Professional learning asynchronous modules “Building a Foundation for Lifelong Literacy Success” released in full
- External launch: [Memo](#) to Superintendents
- Identification of multiple funding sources to support Read Vermont
- Release [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP) focused on Capacity Building

Milestones & Next Steps

- September 2024:
 - Read Vermont Launch webinar
 - Professional learning asynchronous modules “Building a Foundation for Lifelong Literacy Success” Facilitation Guides released
 - Read Vermont Capacity Building [Request for Proposals](#) closes
- October 2024: Professional learning and coaching opportunities announced
- November 2024:
 - Reviewed screening instruments guidance document issued
 - Parental or guardian notification recommendations issued
- December 2024:
 - Professional learning guidance document issued
- July 2025: AOE submits recommendations to VT Standards Board on strengthening educator prep programs
- July 2026: VT Standards Board to consider AOE’s recommendations and update educator preparation programs as appropriate

State Aid for School Construction Working Group

State Board of Education Meeting

August 21, 2024

Act 149 of 2024

The Working Group

- "Study and create a recommended plan for a statewide school construction aid program, including recommendations on implementation."
- "The Working Group shall address the following topics, building from the recommendations contained in the report of the School Construction Aid Task Force..."

Working Group shall address...

- Governance
- Prioritization criteria
- Eligibility criteria
- State base share
- Incentives
- Environmental performance
- Assurance and certification process
- Environmental hazards and contaminants
- Pre-program construction aid
- Current law
- Efficiencies; prequalification's, cost containments
- Fiscal models
- School construction planning guide
- Population considerations
- Grant opportunities
- Utilization of renewable energy

Requirements and Deliverables

- Final findings and recommendations shall be submitted to the General Assembly on or before December 15, 2024, in the form of proposed legislation.
- Cease to exist on December 31, 2024.

Timeline of Work

SUCCESSSES AND MAJOR THEMES THUS FAR

Summer 2024

Elected Co-Chairs:

Representative
Erin Brady

Senator Martine
Larocque Gulick

July 30, 2024 - Virtual

- Overview of Working Group responsibilities
- Review of the 2021 School Facilities Assessment
- Recommendations submitted in the [February 1, 2024 report](#) by the School Construction Aid Taskforce

August 14, 2024 – In the State House

- [Presentation](#) on school district and SU governance structures
- Review of previous Vermont State Aid program (Title 16, Chapter 123)
- District Quality Standards
- Overview of Rhode Island School Construction Program
- **Decision:** Programmatic staff should be under the AOE, Legislative Counsel will prepare a draft of this language ahead of next meeting. Group is still considering an independent approval board.

Recurring Themes

- "Shall the Working Group focus on school construction as we stand now or as what we might be?" - Rep. Chris Taylor
- A program that helps drive state-wide priorities will be valuable and allow more visibility into what we're spending on, what we should require of school buildings, how we're maintaining buildings, etc.
- Centralization of construction and facilities oversight will match the centralized nature of project funding through the Education Fund.

Fall 2024

Next Meeting:

9:00am-2:00pm
Friday, September
27, 2024

In person at the
State House

Considerations for next meeting:

- Program resources and estimated funds.
- Funding mechanisms for aid, potential independent approval board, and program staff.
- Practices from other states related to resource allocation money for smaller, more routine repairs.
- Economic drivers for the program and implementation considerations

Upcoming Ask or Focus

- Funding mechanisms and revenue streams.
- Applicability of other state programs within Vermont's context.
- The previous VT state aid program (Title 16, Chapter 123) required projects to be approved by the SBE and the SBE was responsible for requesting necessary funds from the Legislature each year.
 - The Working Group is considering whether this process should stay the same or if another approval board should be recommended.
 - Will reach out to the SBE for input.