

Good Evening,

My name is Katie Ballard, and I am the chair of the VT State Special Education Advisory Panel and I am here tonight with two fellow members of the panel, Dawn Campbell the Vice Chair, and Associate Director of Student Services in SouthWestern Vermont School District, and Rene Sanchez the Superintendent of Champlain Valley School District. We are here to express our concerns on a number of issues related to the education of people with disabilities. Tonight we want to share some of those areas specifically.

- Currently there is no reference or language to address the EST process within the EQS. We believe there should be.
- In the definitions section we want to suggest that academic records be clarified to add a sentence distinguishing academic records vs educational records, potentially referencing Ferpa definition. We also request that the culturally responsive curriculum and instruction include disability culture, for example deaf culture.
- In the MTSS section we acknowledge the intervention and delivery is part of the mtss umbrella in the general education section and we would like to see a reference to include special education or disability rights as well.
- We would like this group to examine the definition of caste/culture and consider language to include disability culture as IDEA/504 do not provide disability equity.
- In regards to personal learning plans-they are consistently not provided to students with disabilities.
- Flexible pathways section we would like to see more conversation in relation to students with disabilities and the importance for this option in terms of educational outcomes.
- Lastly, we would like to see clarity in the proficiency based learning and graduation requirements around the need to provide services.

Thank you for all your work and the work of the Act 1 working group on this, it has been amazing to see the changes and our panel hopes to continue to engage and when appropriate provide feedback as the EQS conversation continues.

Thank you

Katie Ballard