

FIVE STANDARDS FOR VERMONT EDUCATORS



Learning
Professional Knowledge
Collegueship
Advocacy
Accountability

A Vision For Schooling
ADOPTED BY VSBPE AUGUST 2003



STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Colleagues:

In 1990 Vermont's educators received the original version of the *Standards for Vermont Educators: A Vision for Schooling*. It was intended to serve as a professional development guide for practicing educators, as well as for Vermont's educator preparation programs and local and regional standards boards.

The document was revised in 1999 to reflect significant changes in state education policy, and it was renamed the *Five Standards for Vermont Educators: A Vision for Schooling*. A second revision of the document has just been completed in order to continue to address the new and ongoing needs of our educators in the field.

Vermont's Five Standards and 16 Educator Principles identify the common core of effective educator practice. The revised Quality Indicators that follow each principle were developed by dozens of teachers, administrators, and teacher educators from throughout the state. These revised indicators translate the standards and principles into concrete examples of practice.

Throughout these thirteen years and two revisions, the focus has remained clear: improved learning for all students in Vermont. This document will continue to guide us as we address the challenges and opportunities presented to educators in schools today.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susette LaFlesche Bollard".

Susette LaFlesche Bollard, Chair
Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David C. Larsen".

David C. Larsen
Commissioner of Education

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diane Mueller".

Diane Mueller, Chair
State Board of Education

VISION

This third edition of the **Standards for Vermont Educators: A Vision for Schooling**, now retitled **Five Standards for Vermont Educators: A Vision for Schooling**, builds upon the 1990 vision of the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) that all Vermont schools, without exception, will be excellent and that these schools will be staffed by educators who display a thorough knowledge and understanding of what is necessary to ensure that all students consistently attain high standards. This document is also built upon the premise that educators have never finished learning how to improve the science and the art of teaching. If we are to realize this vision, all educators must be lifelong learners.

Since this document was first published in 1990, the VSBPE, the Local and Regional Standards Boards, **Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities**, The Equal Educational Opportunity Act (Act 60), and An Act to Strengthen the Capacity of Vermont's Education System to Meet the Educational Needs of All Vermont Students (Act 117) have, separately and in concert, provided a lens through which we can clearly see a vision of improved student learning and greater accountability for that learning. This revised document reflects this focus.

This document contains educator Standards and Principles that compel us all to share responsibility for improved student learning through the rigorous preparation of new teachers and administrators and the continuing professional development of experienced educators. The Standards and Principles direct us to analyze, reflect upon, and assess the effects of our practice on student performance and to be accountable for that performance.

This document articulates the highest levels of performance by school professionals, while simultaneously acknowledging and celebrating the rich diversity of our educators' styles. It also recognizes the unique character of each local school and its community, and the distinctive quality of each of our higher education institutions. Our diversity proves repeatedly that a variety of ways to achieve excellent results is possible.

CONTENT AND USE OF THE FIVE STANDARDS FOR VERMONT EDUCATORS: A VISION FOR SCHOOLING

In order for educators and the public to have a broad picture of the requisite core knowledge and skills necessary for an effective teaching and learning process, and to provide clarity and continuity, the VSBPE has incorporated the **16 Principles for Vermont Educators** (Licensing Regulation 5235) and the requirements for **Basic Communication and Mathematics Literacy** (Licensing Regulation 5234) into this document. The 16 Principles for Vermont Educators and Basic Communication and Mathematics Literacy requirements are ones that all applicants for initial licensure must document.




In addition to the Five Standards, the 16 Principles, and the Basic Communication and Math Literacy requirements, each educator is also expected to demonstrate competence in the particular knowledge and performance standards required for his or her specific field of practice (known as an endorsement area).

Please refer to the **Regulations Governing the Licensing of Educators** for the knowledge and performance standards required for each endorsement area. (These regulations are available through the Department of Education and on the Department's website at www.state.vt.us/educ/.) These two documents, the *Five Standards for Vermont Educators* and the knowledge and performance standards for the educator's endorsement area, are intended to be addressed together as individuals prepare for initial licensure or relicensure.

The main focus of this document is the 16 Principles of effective educator practice embedded within each of the Five Standards and their corresponding **Quality Indicators**. The primary purpose for the Five Standards and 16 Principles is to guide educators as they meet the requirements of professional licensure and relicensure. The Standards and Principles provide the framework for professional preparation and continuing professional development. They are grounded in best practice, are responsive to state and local initiatives, and require accountability through self-assessment.

Preservice educators will use this document in the process of documenting their ability to meet the requirements for initial licensure. Experienced educators will use this document in the relicensure process to demonstrate professional growth in each of the Five Standards. Each Standard must be addressed in an educator's Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) and relicensure portfolio.

The **Quality Indicators** are examples that illustrate how an educator may meet each Principle and Standard. These Quality Indicators are intended to help preservice educators as they consider how they will demonstrate that they have met each of the 16 Principles required for educator licensure. They are also intended to help experienced educators direct their own professional development through a process of:

-  self-assessment and reflection upon the effect of their practice on student learning
-  development of IPDP's and relicensure portfolios
-  selection of professional development activities

The Quality Indicators may also guide local and regional standards boards as they assist colleagues and make recommendations for relicensure. Interpretation of these indicators as they apply to relicensure is a responsibility of the local or regional standards board.

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators strongly supports systemic efforts to improve student learning. Therefore, it also recommends that districts use this document as they revise and develop local performance evaluation processes and needs-based staff development programs.

1. LEARNING

(Expertise in the Endorsement Area)

Each Vermont educator is knowledgeable about the standards for his/her professional endorsement(s). Each educator continues to acquire new learning in the content of his/her endorsement(s) and reflects this new learning in professional practice.

2. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

(Methodology and Pedagogy)

Each Vermont educator continues to acquire knowledge in best practices in teaching and the learning process, so as to improve Learning Opportunities for all students.

3. COLLEAGUESHIP

Each Vermont educator works collaboratively with colleagues at local, state, and/or national levels to improve student learning through implementation of national professional standards, **Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities**, district goals, and school goals and/or action plans.

4. ADVOCACY

Each Vermont educator works to improve the educational health of Vermont learners, and promotes fairness and equity for all students and members of the educational community. The educator engages the family and the community in partnerships to promote student learning.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

Each Vermont educator carries out professional responsibilities ethically. Each educator demonstrates professional growth over time in each of the Five Standards for Vermont Educators and in the competencies for his/her endorsement(s). This growth is documented through a professional portfolio that includes evidence of rigorous professional development, reflective practice, and adaptation of practice to improve student learning. In addition, a portion of each educator's IPDP and professional portfolio is connected to his/her school's initiatives for improving student learning.

1. LEARNING

PRINCIPLE #1

The educator has knowledge and skills in the content of his or her endorsement(s) at a level that enables students to meet or exceed the standards represented in both the Fields of Knowledge and the Vital Results of *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*.

2. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

PRINCIPLE #2

The educator understands how individuals learn and grow and provides learning opportunities that support intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development.

PRINCIPLE #3

The educator understands how individuals and groups differ and creates equitable instructional opportunities that respond to the needs of all students.

PRINCIPLE #4

The educator understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to provide opportunities for all students to meet or exceed the expectations in *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*.

PRINCIPLE #5

The educator creates a classroom climate that encourages respect for self and others, positive social interaction, and personal health and safety.

PRINCIPLE #6

The educator implements, adapts, revises, and, when necessary, creates curriculum based on standards, knowledge of subject matter, and student needs and interests.

PRINCIPLE #7

The educator uses multiple assessment strategies to evaluate student growth and modify instruction to ensure the continuous intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development of every student.

PRINCIPLE #8

The educator integrates students with disabilities into appropriate learning situations.

PRINCIPLE #9

The educator integrates current technologies in instruction, assessment, and professional productivity.

PRINCIPLE #10

The educator understands conditions and actions which would tend to discriminate against students on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, age, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin, and takes proactive steps to address discrimination.

3. COLLEAGUESHIP

PRINCIPLE #11

The educator works as a team member and establishes collaborative relationships with school colleagues, parents, agencies and others in the broader community to support students' learning and well-being, and to implement the school's goals and articulated curriculum.

4. ADVOCACY

PRINCIPLE #12

The educator recognizes multiple influences on students inside and outside the school and accesses appropriate systems of support for students.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

PRINCIPLE #13

The educator understands laws related to student and educator rights and responsibilities, and applies current state and federal laws and regulations as they pertain to all children, including those who are at risk and those with disabilities, and treats students and colleagues fairly and equitably.

PRINCIPLE #14

The educator grows professionally, through a variety of approaches, to improve professional practice and student learning.

PRINCIPLE #15

The educator assesses student progress in relation to standards and modifies curricula and instruction, as necessary, to improve student learning.

PRINCIPLE #16

The educator maintains useful records of student work and performance and knowledgeably, responsibly, and effectively communicates student progress in relation to standards in a manner easily understood.

FIVE STANDARDS FOR VERMONT EDUCATORS

**Please note that the bulleted Quality Indicators which follow each Principle provide examples of evidence that the educator has met the Principle. These Quality Indicators are intended to provide guidance to educators seeking initial licensure or relicensure. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list for evaluation purposes.

1. LEARNING




(Expertise in the Endorsement Area)

Each Vermont educator is knowledgeable about the standards for his/her professional endorsement(s). Each educator continues to acquire new learning in the content of his/her endorsement(s) and reflects this new learning in professional practice.

PRINCIPLE #1

The educator has knowledge and skills in the content of his or her endorsement(s) at a level that enables students to meet or exceed the standards represented in both the Fields of Knowledge and the Vital Results of *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

-  Demonstrates professional competence in the standards required for his/her endorsement(s). [Please refer to the Regulations Governing the Licensing of Educators for the specific knowledge and performance standards required for each endorsement. These regulations are available through the Department of Education and on the Department's website at www.state.vt.us/educ/.]
-  Continually increases knowledge and skills in the knowledge and performance standards of his/her endorsement(s)
-  Adjusts curriculum and professional practice as a result of increased knowledge in order to improve student learning




2. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

(Methodology and Pedagogy)

Each Vermont educator continues to acquire knowledge in best practices in teaching and the learning process, so as to improve Learning Opportunities for all students.





PRINCIPLE #2 The educator understands how individuals learn and grow and provides learning opportunities that support intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

-  Understands the developmental nature and needs within each domain (e.g. cognitive, linguistic, psycho/social, physical) of the population he/she teaches, including understanding the tremendous variation in typical development across domains and among individuals
-  Applies this developmental knowledge to all curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom organization and management decisions
-  Understands learning theory and applies this research to all curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom organization and management decisions






PRINCIPLE #3 The educator understands how individuals and groups differ and creates equitable instructional opportunities that respond to the needs of all students.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

-  Creates or modifies environments, and instructional and assessment activities to meet the individual needs of all students
-  Flexibly groups and regroups students in order to meet their learning needs and instructional goals
-  Recognizes signs of significant exceptionalities, such as developmental delay or giftedness, in one or more domains
-  Accesses materials and resources, and collaborates with other personnel, to differentiate instruction in order to accommodate the needs of exceptional learners and others with special learning needs such as English Language Learners

PRINCIPLE #4 The educator understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to provide opportunities for all students to meet or exceed the expectations in *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

-  Uses assessments of students' prior knowledge to plan and differentiate instruction in order to maximize student learning
-  Appropriately selects and employs a range of instructional strategies consistent with current best practices, in order to meet instructional goals and the needs of diverse learners
-  Provides opportunities for students to use multiple modes to demonstrate and communicate their learning
-  Evaluates and selects materials for their appropriateness to specific curricular and instructional goals
-  Selects or creates learning tasks that make subject matter meaningful to students and enable them to think critically, solve problems, and demonstrate skills

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- 🍏 Engages students in purposeful discourse by using appropriate questioning strategies
 - 🍏 Maximizes the amount of time spent on instruction by effectively managing routines and transitions
 - 🍏 Actively teaches Vermont's Vital Results for communication, including:
 - 🍏 Incorporating developmentally appropriate strategies to promote oral language, vocabulary, and concept development germane to specific content area(s)
 - 🍏 Explicitly modeling and teaching specific strategies that support students' comprehension of written materials within the content areas
 - 🍏 Selecting or adapting a variety of materials at a range of reading levels to accommodate diverse learners
 - 🍏 Recognizing a student's need for individualized reading support in one or more skill areas (e.g., comprehension, decoding, fluency) and knowing when and where to seek support for that student
 - 🍏 Designing or selecting tasks that support writing development
 - 🍏 Evaluating student reading and writing against grade appropriate expectations and benchmarks, providing grade appropriate models of good writing to guide students, and assisting students to use Vermont's reading and writing standards to guide and evaluate their own work
 - 🍏 Helping students to pose, focus, and refine research questions; to gather, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of sources to answer those questions; and to organize their findings into thoughtful and clear presentations

PRINCIPLE #5 The educator creates a classroom climate that encourages respect for self and others, positive social interaction, and personal health and safety.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- 🍏 Models and facilitates respectful dialogue and rational argument in order to create an emotionally safe learning environment where students feel comfortable taking intellectual risks
- 🍏 Appropriately interprets student behavior in order to anticipate problems and prevent students from disrupting or disengaging from a lesson
- 🍏 Provides a comfortable, safe, and engaging physical environment for learning
- 🍏 Takes steps to ensure that culturally and linguistically diverse students are full participants in the classroom community
- 🍏 Uses knowledge of factors influencing individual and group motivation, including the importance of fairness and consistency of expectations and of student involvement in developing classroom rules and consequences, to make appropriate classroom management decisions
- 🍏 Creates a positive classroom community by providing opportunities for every student to work collaboratively with others on learning and service tasks, to assume various stewardship and leadership roles within the classroom, and to resolve conflicts using specific conflict resolution strategies
- 🍏 Cares for students in a sustained way that recognizes learning barriers, while communicating belief in students' abilities to overcome those barriers
- 🍏 Organizes classroom materials and procedures to facilitate student autonomy and responsibility for learning
- 🍏 Incorporates regular classroom celebrations of learning and accomplishment
- 🍏 Manages and diffuses conflict between or among teachers, students, parents and/or colleagues

PRINCIPLE #6

The educator implements, adapts, revises, and, when necessary, creates curriculum based on standards, knowledge of subject matter, and student needs and interests.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- 🍏 Connects the Fields of Knowledge and Vital Results within *Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*, and uses both, as well as other relevant professional standards (e.g. NCTM, NCSS), to plan curriculum and instructional activities that connect the standards with student needs and interests
- 🍏 Takes steps to ensure that his/her instructional program is consistent with the school's and district's PK-12 curriculum

PRINCIPLE #7

The educator uses multiple assessment strategies to evaluate student growth and modify instruction to ensure the continuous intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development of every student.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- 🍏 Uses assessments as teaching tools, not just as final "judgments"
- 🍏 Uses a cycle of pre-assessment, design, implementation, and post-assessment to facilitate individual student learning and to guide instructional decisions
- 🍏 Applies knowledge of basic measurement issues, including validity and reliability, to develop or adopt appropriate assessments
- 🍏 Considers the appropriateness of different assessment strategies and methods in regard to different assessment purposes and different age groups/learners
- 🍏 Consistently monitors student learning, offering feedback that corrects misunderstandings and enhances comprehension as well as providing specific guidance on ways to improve performance
- 🍏 Develops effective rubric scales to evaluate student performance
- 🍏 Provides opportunities for students to analyze, reflect upon, revise, and evaluate their own work
- 🍏 Incorporates assessment tasks and strategies that encourage and enable students to demonstrate their learning through multiple modes including the arts

PRINCIPLE #8

The educator integrates students with disabilities into appropriate learning situations.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- 🍏 Identifies the specific strengths and challenges of each student and supports each student's engagement in learning that addresses content knowledge
- 🍏 Develops instructional plans and uses instructional techniques that effectively and appropriately integrate all students into the regular education program
- 🍏 Collaborates with relevant educational teams in the development of effective educational practice and accommodations
- 🍏 Creates an inclusive learning climate for all students

PRINCIPLE #9

The educator integrates current technologies in instruction, assessment, and professional productivity.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- 🍏 Is familiar with the *National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers* (2000, International Society for Technology in Education) and uses them to guide and assess his/her efforts to integrate technology into the teaching and learning processes
- 🍏 Chooses and integrates a variety of developmentally appropriate technological tools to support standards-based curricular and instructional objectives (e.g., to access or analyze information, communicate ideas, or facilitate student collaboration)
- 🍏 Uses technology to support documentation, assessment, analysis, and evaluation of student development and learning
- 🍏 Is aware of and able to use various technologies to differentiate instruction, including the accommodation of special needs
- 🍏 Uses technology to enhance communication with families and colleagues, record keeping, and instructional planning
- 🍏 Models the ethical, legal, and safe use of educational technologies

PRINCIPLE #10

The educator understands conditions and actions which would tend to discriminate against students on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, age, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin, and takes proactive steps to address discrimination.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- 🍏 Reflects upon his/her own cultural background and how it may affect his/her teaching and interaction with students, colleagues, and parents
- 🍏 Sets social norms for the classroom or school that do not tolerate discriminatory behavior
- 🍏 Models ways to respect individual differences and to resolve conflicts that arise from individual differences
- 🍏 Recognizes and understands discriminatory behavior, and the responses to discriminatory behavior by targeted students
- 🍏 Incorporates into his/her teaching reading materials and activities that explore the consequences of various forms of discrimination for individuals and communities
- 🍏 Facilitates a learning climate where issues of discrimination are discussed openly in a way that is supportive of personal growth




3. COLLEAGUESHIP

Each Vermont educator works collaboratively with colleagues at local, state, and/or national levels to improve student learning through implementation of national professional standards, Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities, district goals, and school goals and/or action plans.

PRINCIPLE #11

The educator works as a team member and establishes collaborative relationships with school colleagues, parents, agencies and others in the broader community to support students' learning and well-being, and to implement the school's goals and articulated curriculum.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

-  Actively contributes to school-wide initiatives such as curriculum committees, action-planning teams, and other school improvement efforts
-  Demonstrates a willingness to give and receive critical feedback
-  Uses multiple approaches to establish proactive and on-going relationships with parents in order to enhance student learning




4. ADVOCACY

Each Vermont educator works to improve the educational health of Vermont learners, and promotes fairness and equity for all students and members of the educational community. The educator engages the family and the community in partnerships to promote student learning.

PRINCIPLE #12

The educator recognizes the multiple influences on students inside and outside the school and accesses appropriate systems of support for students.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

-  Demonstrates sensitivity to the individual economic, cultural, and familial influences affecting each student's life
-  Collaborates with other professionals inside and outside of the school to ensure his/her students receive necessary educational services and other supports for learning
-  Advocates for school and community policies and practices that promote the high achievement and healthy development of all students

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

Each Vermont educator carries out professional responsibilities ethically. Each educator demonstrates professional growth over time in each of the Five Standards for Vermont Educators and in the competencies for his/her endorsement(s). This growth is documented through a professional portfolio that includes evidence of rigorous professional development, reflective practice, and adaptation of practice to improve student learning. In addition, a portion of each educator's IPDP and professional portfolio is connected to his/her school's initiatives for improving student learning.

PRINCIPLE #13 The educator understands laws related to student and educator rights and responsibilities, and applies current state and federal laws and regulations as they pertain to all children, including those who are at risk and those with disabilities, and treats students and colleagues fairly and equitably.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- Complies with and keeps abreast of changes in students' and parents' rights, educator responsibilities and roles, and procedural mechanisms within current educational laws and regulations, including laws and regulations in the areas of harassment, discrimination, liability, confidentiality, and special education, and standards for practice within his/her endorsement area

PRINCIPLE #14 The educator grows professionally, through a variety of approaches, to improve professional practice and student learning.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- Continually analyzes and reflects upon all aspects of his/her practice using various techniques, including videotaping, peer observation, reflective journaling, or action research, in order to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of his/her practice
- Develops and implements an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) that addresses each of *The Five Standards for Vermont Educators*, the knowledge and performance standards required for his/her endorsement(s), and the school's action plan
- Actively participates in professional organizations and keeps abreast of research findings related to improvement of instruction in his/her endorsement area(s)
- Uses information from self and peer analysis, along with data on student achievement and other feedback, to set priorities for professional development and improve practice
- Adjusts his/her practice as a result of student assessment data, professional development, self-reflection, peer critique, and supervision and evaluation input

PRINCIPLE #15 The educator assesses student progress in relation to standards and modifies curricula and instruction, as necessary, to improve student learning.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- Uses a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student growth and understanding in relation to standards, and as a result of the data gathered, modifies instruction to improve student learning

PRINCIPLE #16 The educator maintains useful records of student work and performance and knowledgeably, responsibly, and effectively communicates student progress in relation to standards in a manner easily understood.

Quality is indicated when an educator:

- Uses assessment standards that are public and known to both students and parents, including providing models of student work that illustrate attainment of those standards
- Maintains accurate records of student work
- Regularly communicates, in a manner easily understood by students and parents, information about school and classroom goals, performance expectations, and student needs and progress

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The Vermont Department of Education is committed to ensuring that all its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public and all activities and programs are non-discriminatory in design, application, and performance.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR VERMONT EDUCATORS: A STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

The essential qualities of the competent and caring educator include moral integrity, humane attitudes, reflective practice, and a sound understanding of academic content and pedagogy. The public vests educators with trust and responsibility for educating the children of Vermont. We believe that fulfilling this charge requires educators to demonstrate the highest standards of ethical conduct.

We, as professional educators, respect the dignity and individuality of every human being. We are committed to, and model for our students, the lifelong pursuit of learning and academic excellence. We are dedicated to effective scholarly practice, further enhanced by collaboration with colleagues and those in the greater educational community. Furthermore, we are dedicated to compassionate service on behalf of our students and their families and advocate for them in the school and community settings.

We recognize and accept both the public trust and the magnitude of responsibility inherent in our profession. To this end, we put forth this statement of beliefs as the foundation for ethical practice for all Vermont educators to honor and follow.

*Adopted by the Vermont Standards Board
for Professional Educators, May 15, 2001.*

