

**Wednesday, January 16, 2014**

**House Committee on Education**

➤ **Guest: Kay Charron, retired Education Consultant @ Agency of Education**

**Summary Presentation: Opportunity to Learn: Defining Vermont Education for a New Generation of Learners. Overview of key policy proposals.**

**Context:** The Education Transformation Policy Commission worked in service to the Vermont State Board of Education. The Commission's final report was submitted in December, 2009.

"The fact is that given the challenges we face, education doesn't need to be reformed, it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education but to personalize it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and can naturally discover their true passions."

Ken Robinson, Ph.D. 2009

"While many education policymakers believe that the best way to face the future is by improving what they did in the past, school improvement does not lead to education transformation."

OTL Report, 2009. P 6

The Policy Commission's work was based on the premise that the goals of public education need to be radically changed to prepare children for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The current education structures and practices with which we are most comfortable cannot produce the higher level of results so essential to our children's and our society's future.

The OTL Report outlines systemic changes and proposes key policies and implementation steps toward building a transformed version of public education. It calls for Vermont to define new rigorous learning expectations, new educational environments and learning opportunities, and greater accountability for all students gaining proficiency for college, careers, and citizenship.

Key recommended policy actions in the Commission's report include:

- Establish strong **Education Quality Standards** that is results based and has controls and incentives to guide continuous quality improvement.
- Adopt **21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations** aligned with college, career, citizenship demands
- Apply proficiency based education methods with
  - student performance assessments used locally to help learners and teachers monitor individual skill progression over time (e.g. track progression of critical thinking skills K-12)
  - proficiency based grading and report cards
  - learners grouped by proficiency level – not by age or grade level
  - proficiency based graduation
- Raise **Educator Quality**: Revise educator preparation and licensing to support transformed education
  - Expand clinically based learning for future teachers
  - 4 tier career ladder based on teacher proficiency
  - New teacher induction and mentoring
  - Strengthen educational leadership function of principals and superintendents
  - Professional learning teacher groups and enhanced professional development
- Strengthen **PK-16 partnerships**
  - Establish a state level PK-12 Partnership to develop policy and practice recommendations to advance a “college for all” agenda and increase student post-secondary success and completion
  - Adopt college readiness standards
  - Fund and expand early college and dual enrollment options
- **Formation of Regional Education Districts** with the goal of expanding learning opportunities for all students
  - Revise statutes to enable the formation of 12-24 education districts
  - Appoint an Education Redistricting Commission
  - Plan for a multi-year process for implementation

As you consider the Policy Commission's report and explore what legislative leadership could advance education transformation, I encourage you to discuss why has there been such limited systemic change to Vermont public education in the decades we have been working. The Policy Commission hoped to identify high leverage policies that could be a catalyst for system change.