

# Recommended Changes to Rule Series 2000, Education Quality Standards

Presentation to Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR)

June 13, 2024

# State Board of Ed (SBE) Rules Series 2000 Education Quality Standards (EQS) Committee

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# Purpose of EQS & Amendments

- EQS establish the standards that public schools need to meet to ensure that all of Vermont's students have educational opportunities that are substantially equal in quality
- EQS were last updated in 2014
- Amendments were largely driven by passage of Act 1 (2019) and technical corrections to modernize the rule to align with current statute and AOE policies.

# Changes as a result of Act 1 (2019)

Act 1, “An act relating to ethnic and social equity studies standards for public schools” (Act 1 of 2019, Section 1(g) – Duties of the Working Group):

1. Increase cultural competency of students in grades PK-12;
2. Increase attention to the history, contribution, and perspectives of ethnic and social groups;
3. Promote critical thinking regarding the history, contributions, and perspectives of ethnic and social groups;
4. Commit supervisory unions to eradicating racial bias in their curricula;
5. Provide, across their curricula, content and methods that enable students to safely explore questions of identity, race equality, and racism; and
6. Ensure that the basic curriculum and extracurricular programs are welcoming to all students and account for parental concerns about religion or culture.

# 2000 EQS Rule Making Process

- *April 2022* **Received Act 1 Working Group recommendations for EQS (Act 1 of 2019)**
- *April 2022– May 2023* **28 meetings of the EQS Committee.** Testimony on:
  - Definitions, Curriculum & Instruction, Technical Changes, Application to Independent Schools, Alignment with District Quality Standards (DQS), legal review
- *May 17, 2023* **SBE voted unanimously to approve the Rule 2000 EQS for ICAR filing**
- *June/July 2023* ICAR presentation and formal filing
- *September/October 2023* **3 public hearings-180 attendees; September 13 & 28, 2023 and October 3, 2023**
  - 100 written comments
  - public comment period closed October 25, 2023
- *November 2023-April 2024* **14 meetings of the EQS Committee**
  - Included 2 joint EQS/2200 meetings (Special SBE Meetings)
- *April 17, 2024* **SBE voted unanimously to approve the Rule 2000 EQS for LCAR filing**
  - LCAR extension approved to June 13, 2024

# Framework for EQS Committee Work

- Testimony from public, stakeholders and practitioners considered recommended changes in the following context:
  - Are the proposed rules clear as written?
  - Do these rules strike an appropriate balance between offering adequate detail to be understood and adequate flexibility to ensure application in a local context?
  - Are these rules able to be operationalized in our schools?

# Public Comment - General Categories

- Statement of Purpose
- Definitions
- Applicability to Independent Schools
- Curriculum/Learning Content
- Tiered Systems of Support

# EQS Modifications since close of public comment:

1. Statement of Purpose modified to retain intention
2. Definitions:
  1. removed those that no longer appear in the document
  2. modified definition of discrimination
  3. removed those that are substantively defined in statute
  4. moved descriptive language into the body of the document where applicable
  5. included definitions for Agency and State Board
3. reorganized to move definitions up in the document, consolidated staffing requirements, moved tiered systems of support within instructional practices
4. clarified SU/SD and level of governance throughout the document
5. Effective date: July 1, 2025 and AOE support for implementation
6. legal/technical considerations, alignment of language with 2200 where appropriate and other clarifications



# Economic Impact

This will vary based on the extent to which existing policies, practices and resources are aligned with an equity framework. For some districts, redirection of resources may be necessary in the following areas:

1. Professional development
2. Curriculum alignment
3. Policy alignment
4. Feedback process
5. Learning environment and materials
6. Data reporting requirements

# Associated Benefit

The amended EQS reflect the intent and requirements of Act 1 (2019) and 16 V.S.A. 1 to...

*“...ensure all Vermont students are afforded educational opportunities that are substantially equal in quality and are equitable, antiracist, culturally responsive, anti-discriminatory and inclusive....” (Statement of Purpose, EQS)*

The pecuniary value cannot be precisely estimated. However, the cost to Vermont students and families if schools fail to implement the changes called for in these Rules are well documented in the Findings section of Act 1 (2019).