



# Vermont Education Quality Standards 1-22-25

Presentation for Vermont House Education Committee

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15 minutes	Intros & Historical Context
10 minutes	Questions
15 minutes	Implementation Considerations
10 minutes	Questions
10 minutes	Recommendations/Closing Thoughts

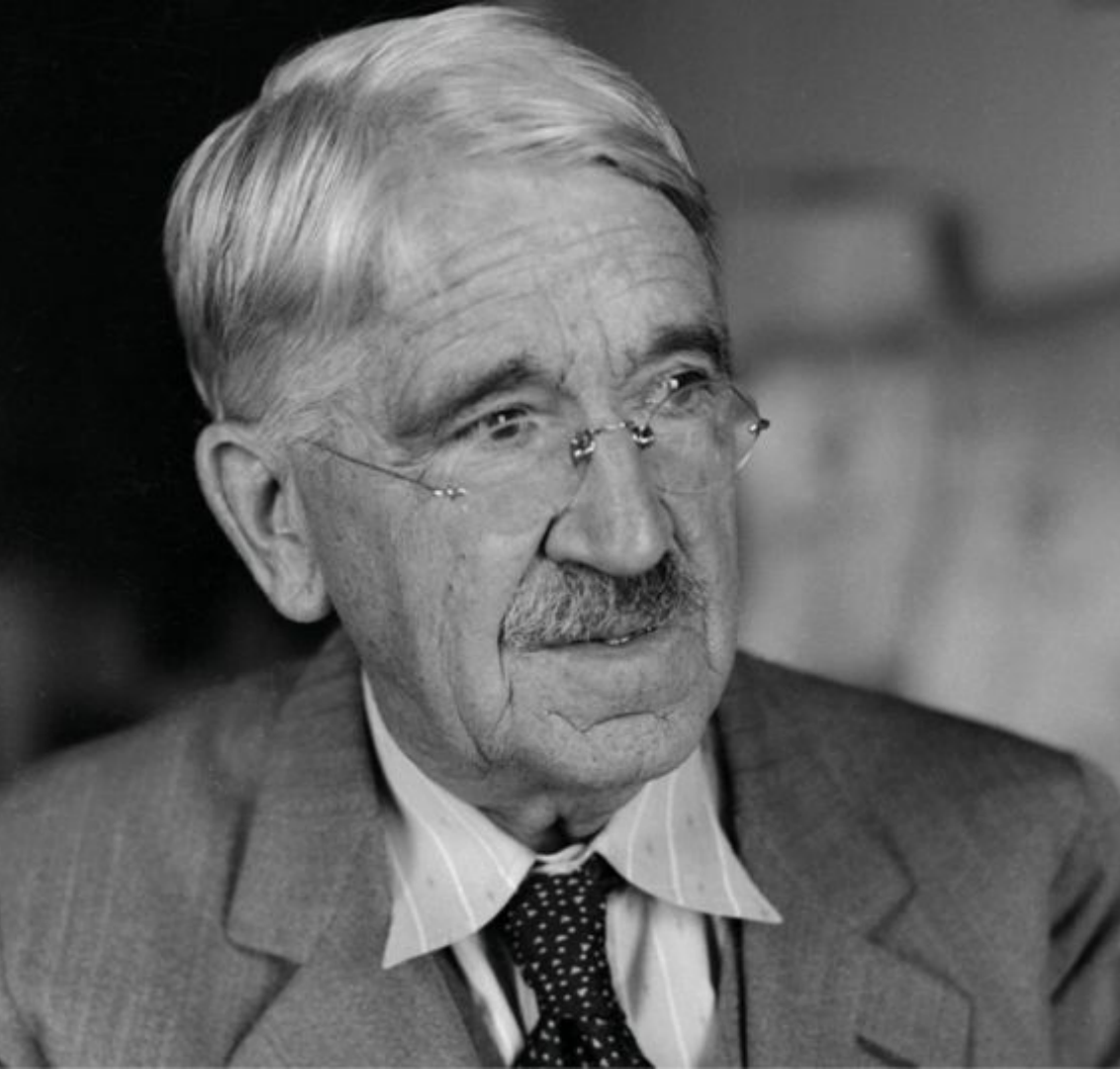
[additional resources](#)





What will  
students  
learn?





# 1916

“[A]ccidental inequalities of birth, wealth, and learning are always tending to restrict the opportunities of some as compared with those of others. Only free and continued education can counteract those forces which are always at work to restore, in however changed a form, feudal oligarchy. Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife”

-John Dewey, Democracy and Education (1916)

# 1969

The emphasis must be on learning, rather than on teaching.



*The Vermont Design for Education (1968)*



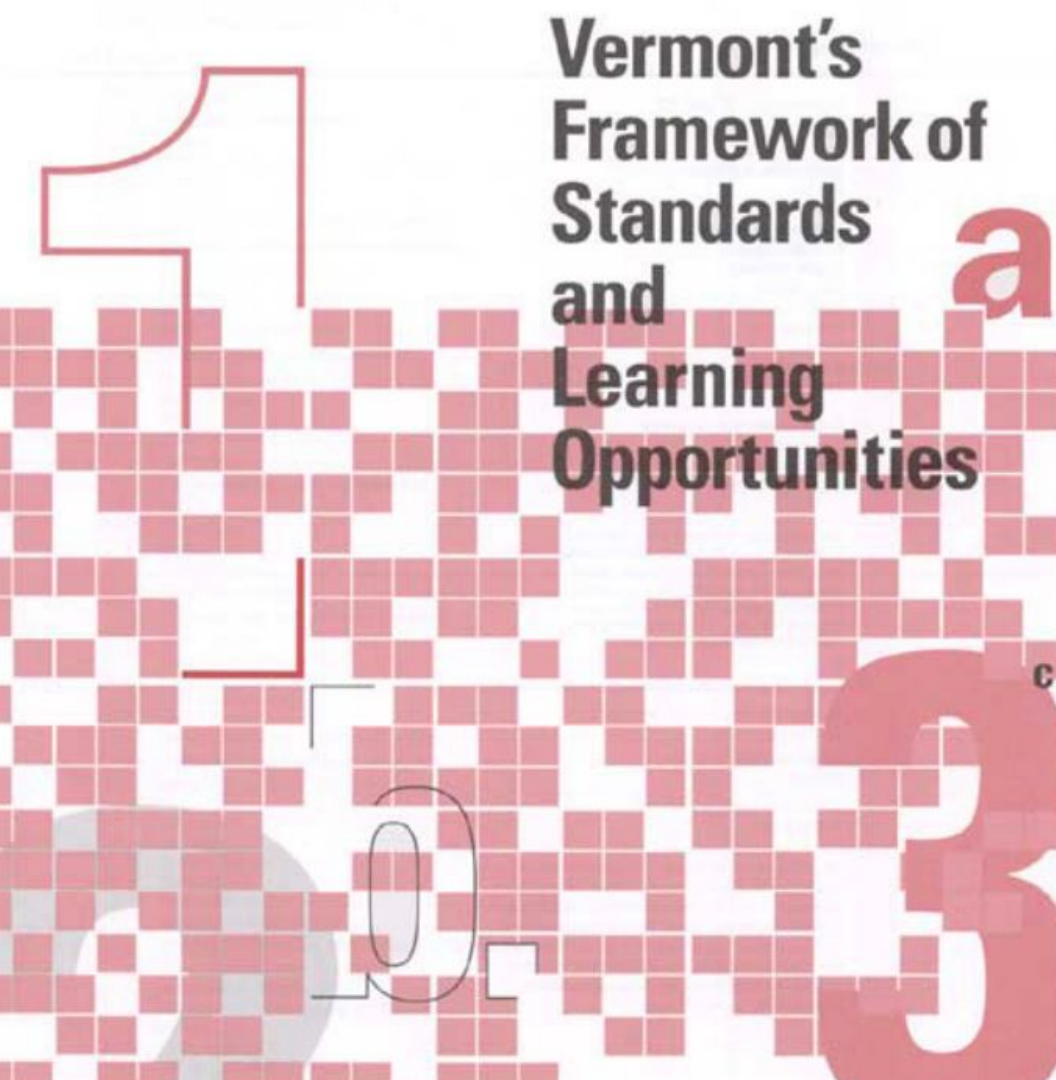


# 1976

The pupil will use the prefixes *centi-*, *milli-*, and *kilo-* correctly when using metric units.

Given an amount of money and directions to make change from \$10.00 (\$1.00, \$5 .00), the pupil will find the correct change using actual coins or play money.

Given proper fractions with denominators of 2, 4, 5, and 10, the pupil will give the equivalent decimal with 80 percent accuracy.



**Vermont's  
Framework of  
Standards  
and  
Learning  
Opportunities**

# 2000

## The Vital Results

- Communication
- Reasoning & Problem-Solving
- Personal Development
- Civic/Social Responsibility

*Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*  
(2nd ed.)

# 2010



M1: Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

M3 & E4: Construct viable arguments and critique reasoning of others

E7: Come to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading, listening, and collaborations

*Commonalities Among the Practices in Science, Mathematics, and English Language Arts*





# 2014



Graduation Standard



Performance Indicator



Learning Target

**Michael Martin** @Mike\_MPS · 16 Feb 2015

Can personalization and proficiency be mutually reinforcing? @VTEducation says yes.

@fischer\_vt @ktempletongsp #vted



# EQS

then & now

2014                      2025

Transformation of Vermont schools,  
most pointedly with respect to:

- Instructional strategies
- Curriculum-ethnic studies lens
- professional development of school staff
- school board policies and administrative leadership
- school-community collaboration
- restorative justice practices

# Remembering the Why for Revised EQS





# Remembering the Why: 1999

The Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights published a landmark report titled “Racial Harassment in Vermont Public Schools.” It found racial harassment appeared to be:

**“pervasive in and around the State’s public schools”**

...and its elimination was

**“not a priority among school administrators, school boards, elected officials, and State agencies charged with civil rights enforcement.”**

# Remembering the Why: 2017

The Act 54 report on “Racial Disparities in State Systems,” issued by the Attorney General and Human Rights Commission Task Force, concluded:

**“Education is one of the five state systems in which racial disparities persist and need to be addressed.”**

# Remembering the Why: 2023 YRBS

Key findings from the **2023 YRBS** include:

- A substantial 59% of LGBTQ+ students report experiencing persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, markedly higher than the overall student response of 35%
- 46% of LGBTQ+ students reported wanting to hurt themselves in the past 12 months compared to 13% hetero/cisgender peers.
- 56% of BIPOC students report being treated unfairly at school due to their race or ethnicity, in stark contrast to 14% of white, non-Hispanic students
- LGBTQ+ youth are **3.5x as likely (14% vs 4%) to have attempted suicide in the last 12 months** than their hetero/cisgender peers.



# What is Act 1?

An Act Related to the Ethnic and Social Equity Standards for Public Schools

# 2019

- A 2019 Vermont law
- Act 1 was advocated for by a coalition of BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and people with disabilities to further education justice in VT
- **CENTER**: inclusion, culturally responsive, anti-racism, anti-discrimination and equity

# Who was the Act 1 Working Group?



- State leaders in education, high school students, civil society advocates, and community members who care deeply about education, justice, inclusivity, and social and racial equity in Vermont.
- Half were selected by the Educational Justice Coalition to represent diverse communities and half were education groups in Vermont (representatives such as VPA, VSA, VSBA, VT-NEA, VCLA and VISA).

# ACT 1: The Actual Documents

- [Rule 2000 Series](#) (EQS for VT Public Schools)  
Implementation July, 2025
- [Rule 2200 Series](#) (Independent School Rules updated  
April, 2024)
- [IRIS, VT Ethnic Studies Standards Framework](#) (in  
State Board Subcommittee)



# **Educational Quality Standards:** ***Implementation Considerations***

# An Opportunity

The updates to the 2014 version of the EQS are a welcome and necessary revision to an important, yet outdated, education guidance document.

If realized into practice, the updated EQS could help transform Vermont public schools to better meet the needs of all students, especially those who have been historically marginalized, thus redefining the historically entrenched “grammar of schooling.”

Experiences with implementing the 2014 version of the EQS should be analyzed carefully to better understand the sorts of challenges and barriers encountered, so as to learn from the past to inform the future.



**Vermont State Board of Education**

Rule Series 2000 – Education Quality Standards

CVR 22-000-003

APPROVED FINAL RULE VOTE 4/17/2024

2120.1. Instructional Strategies

Educators shall be supported in:

14 Instructional Strategies

(a) examining their own identities and biases;

(b) fostering a learning environment that recognizes multiple ethnic, cultural and racial perspectives; presents and critiques historical counter-narratives; and encourages students to examine issues and expressions of social equity within and beyond the classroom or school;



## Vermont State Board of Education

### Rule Series 2000 – Education Quality Standards

CVR 22-600-603

APPROVED FINAL RULE VOTE 4/17/2024

#### 2120.1. Instructional Strategies

Educators shall promote personalization and high expectations so that each student may successfully engage with the curriculum delivered and meet graduation requirements. Practices employed by educators shall include examining and teaching a subject from multiple academic perspectives and encouraging students to engage with and synthesize diverse perspectives and narratives, including those from the students' lived experiences, into a coherent understanding or analysis. Classroom instruction shall include a range of evidence-based instructional strategies that most effectively improve student learning and engage all students, as identified by national and Vermont guidance, and locally collected and analyzed student data.

Educators shall be supported in:

- (a) examining their own identities and biases;
- (b) fostering a learning environment that recognizes multiple ethnic, cultural and racial perspectives; presents and critiques historical counter-narratives; and encourages students to examine issues and expressions of social equity within and beyond the classroom or school;
- (c) modeling and setting high expectations for all students - regardless of a student's prior academic experience, family background, socio-economic status or (dis)abilities and promoting respect for student differences;
- (d) recognizing the essential role that language acquisition and literacy play in the lives of students, especially culturally and linguistically diverse students, not only in

respect to listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing, but as home and community practices that shape a culturally responsive understanding of students' social, racial, linguistic, and ethnic identities, of their communities, and of their world;

(e) communicating in culturally and linguistically responsive ways;

(f) providing learning experiences that are designed for neurodiversity with multiple ways for students to access learning;

(g) using educational and assistive technology to reduce barriers to learning and heighten student engagement;

(h) cultivating student agency by providing multiple ways for students to engage with and demonstrate their new learning;

(i) emphasizing an inquiry-driven approach to all units of study and bringing real-world issues into the classroom;

(j) heightening the relevance and importance of learning objectives and providing mastery-oriented feedback;

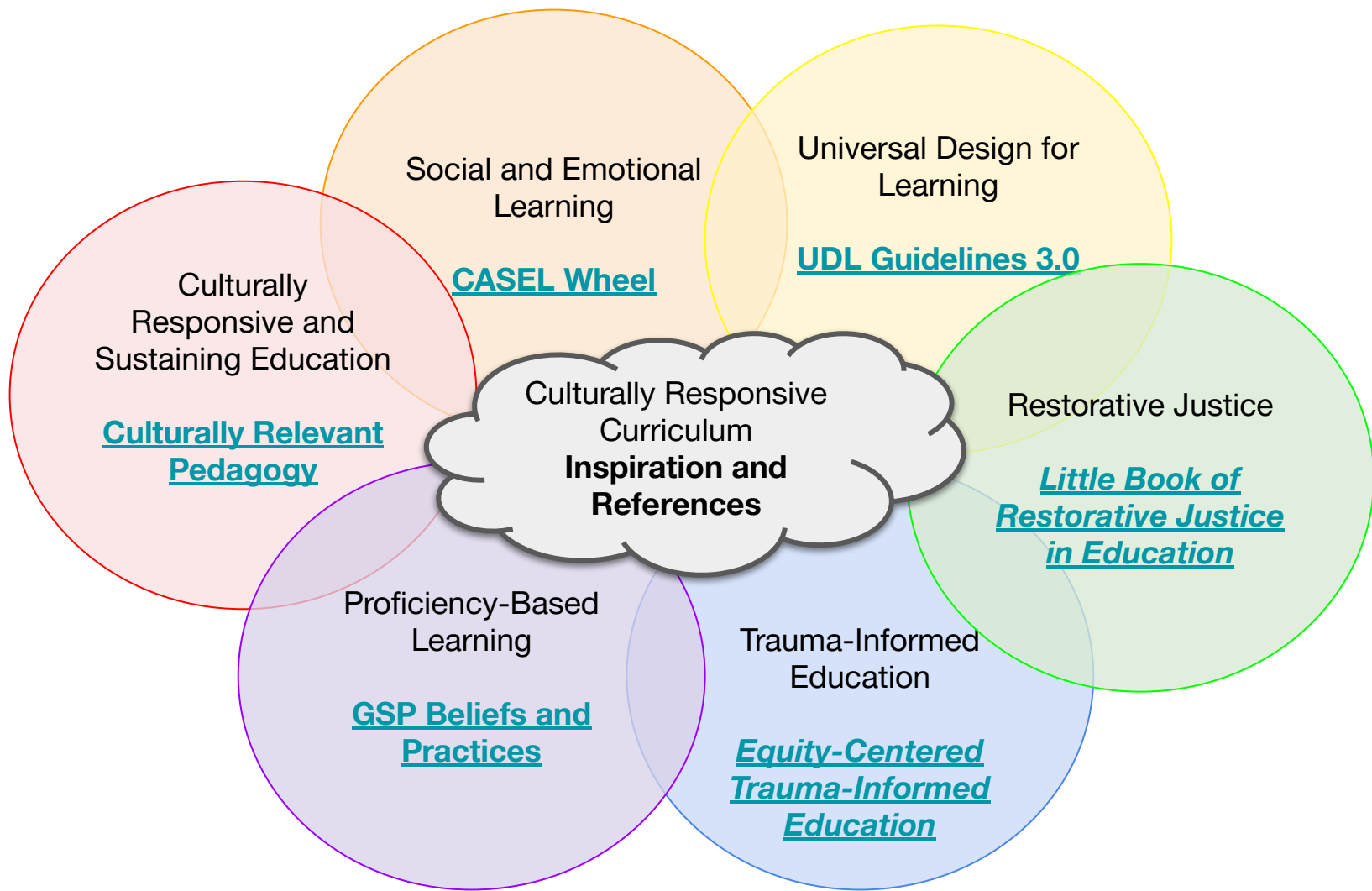
(k) employing the use of data to adapt pedagogy to unique student needs and incorporate student feedback into instructional design and curricula;

(l) teaching students how to develop metacognitive and social emotional skills that improve their academic outcomes;

(m) designing learning experiences that improve students' wellbeing, including opportunities for physical movement in the classroom; and

(n) fostering a positive classroom culture using restorative practices where appropriate.





# What Will VT Students Learn?

Each supervisory union or supervisory district shall develop documented curriculum that is aligned with the standards approved by the State Board. The curriculum shall be equitable, anti-racist, culturally responsive, anti-discriminatory, inclusive, and accessible to families and community members. Knowledge of diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives shall be incorporated into learning activities and curriculum design, including connecting students' life experiences and ways of learning, to help students to access rigorous curriculum and develop higher order thinking skills.

Each school district shall enable students to engage annually in rigorous, relevant, and comprehensive learning opportunities that allow them to demonstrate proficiency in the content areas (a) – (h) below.

p.11

ELA	PE & Health
Math	Art
Science	Transferable Skills
Global Citizenship (civics, history, geography, world language)	Ethnic and Social Equity Studies

# More Than Just the EQS

Districts are currently focused on meeting the compliance requirements of **Act 139 (2024)**.

Implementation of the “tiered system of supports” (MTSS) element of **Act 173 (2018)** is still a work in progress for many schools as well.

Middle and high schools are attempting to get back on track with the routine of engaging students in the development of personalized learning plans (PLPs), a component of **Act 77 (2013)**.

Some districts are also working to incorporate the **IRIS Ethnic Studies Standards Framework (2023)** alongside the updated EQS.

# Implementation Takes Time

Implementing substantive change in schools takes YEARS to accomplish.

Schools need adequate time to both understand and put into practice the multitude of changes required of the updated EQS.

Administrators and educators only have so much time and attention - any additional initiatives will distract from efforts to implement the EQS.

Teachers and school leaders are also contending with impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, including the increased social-emotional learning (SEL) needs of students.



# Policy to Practice

Putting the EQS into practice will involve extensive individual and collective “sensemaking.”

Sensemaking involves the interpretation of a change idea against pre-existing knowledge, experiences, and beliefs towards either assimilation or accommodation of the new practice into current routines.

Importantly, sensemaking requires capacity building and professional development/training for both administrators and educators.

Support with implementation will need to be ongoing and job-embedded.

# Crafting Coherence

Alignment with other policies and state/federal requirements will be important to support effective implementation of the EQS.

The Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) is one lever that could be utilized to help weave the implementation of the EQS into the work of schools and districts.

Incorporating specific elements of the EQS, especially *Section 2120.1. - Instructional Strategies*, into the CIP process could help ensure that these practices are part of the explicit improvement goals of schools.

The *Portrait of a Graduate* is another avenue to connect with the EQS.

# Recommendations Going Forward

**Licensing Requirements:** Clarifying how the revised EQS will impact educator licensing and credentialing. I know there has been some energy around this, but it remains an area that needs attention and collaboration with our prep programs.

**Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs):** Updating CIP templates, rubrics, and processes to reflect the new standards and ensure alignment with equity-focused goals. This one is explicitly stated in the updated EQS.

**Field Review Rubrics/Language:** Revising/Developing tools used for school quality reviews to incorporate the inclusive and culturally responsive principles embedded in the new EQS.

**Portrait of a Graduate:** Revising the unified framework that reflects the EQS vision for student outcomes, including transferable skills and equity-focused competencies.

**Professional Learning:** Ensuring that educators and leaders have access to high-quality professional development aligned with the revised standards, or at least facilitating pathways/resource\$ to PL. The needs and areas of possible support are lengthy with the teaching practices, UDL, restorative practices, examined social identities for teachers, and more.

**Agency Expertise for Leadership and Support:** Strengthening AOE's capacity to provide technical assistance, leadership guidance, and resources to districts during this transition. This may mean reassigning resource\$ within the AOE.

**Restorative Practices:** Help with guidance around embedding restorative practices into school policies and culture to promote equity, belonging, and conflict resolution. This includes revisiting Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying (HHB) policies to align with restorative approaches that focus on repairing harm, empowering all parties involved, and fostering a supportive school environment.