



Vermont Independent Schools *Development in Context of the History of Vermont's Education System*

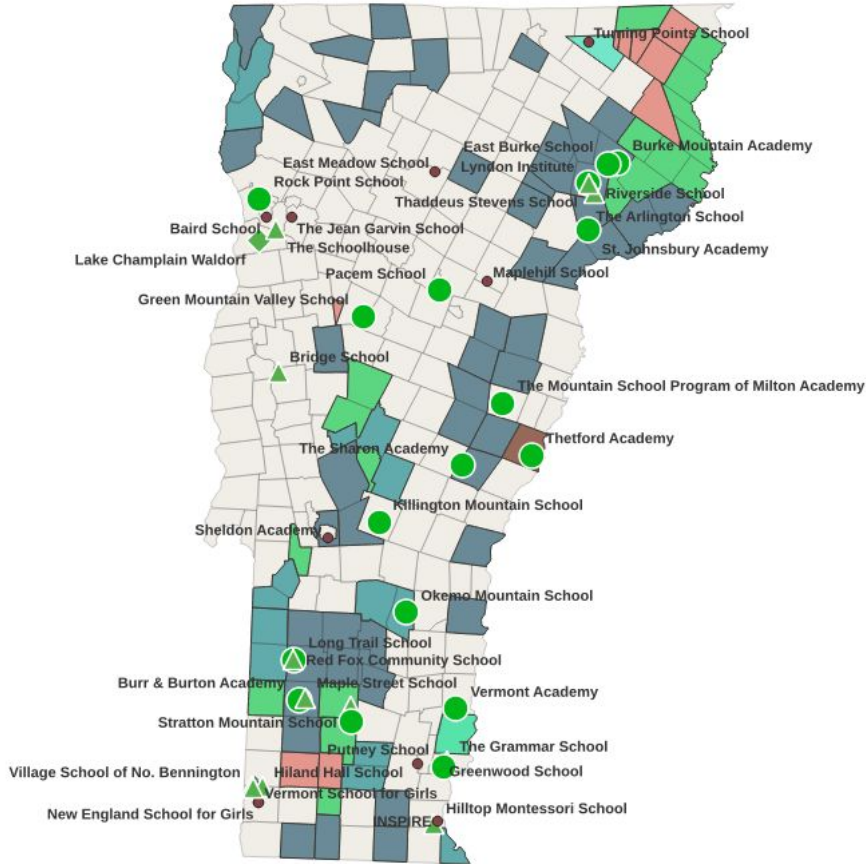
Oliver Olsen
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Tel: 802-585-5435
Email: oliver@oliverolsen.com

www.vtindependentschools.org



Overview of VISA & Our Member Schools



- Founded in 1965 by Lyndon Institute, St. Johnsbury Academy, and Vermont Academy
- Governed by 9 Member Executive Committee
- 42 Member Schools, Including:
 - Historic academies
 - General education schools
 - Specialized schools (e.g. ski academies)
 - Therapeutic and special education schools
 - Alternative schools
- All VISA Members are Approved Independent Schools that:
 - are non profit organizations
 - are governed by a student-centered philosophy
 - exist to ensure that there is a diversity of learning environments and educational opportunities to meet the unique needs of each student
 - uphold and fully support, without qualification, anti-discrimination laws and regulations
 - are committed to self-evaluation and continuous improvement



Early History of Education in Vermont

- Statutory Act of 1782 *Permitted* Towns to Create one or More School Districts within Each Town
- Act 23 of 1827 *Required* Towns to Establish School Districts
- Governance of public education became highly fragmented - 2,680 school districts by 1860!
- “Vicious Act of 1892” forced towns to consolidate to 1 district per town
- Early emphasis was on elementary education
 - outside of urban areas, lack of scale limited secondary educational opportunities
- Common Schools (elementary, e.g. one room schoolhouse)
 - Act 61 of 1864 - Cost of education at common schools made free to students
 - Act 13 of 1894 - Cost of textbooks responsibility of school district (no charge to students)
- County Grammar Schools (secondary education) at of turn of the 18th century
 - Originally intended to be 1 per county (Constitution of 1777)
 - Funded through lease lands (also known as Glebe land), although some counties had no lease lands
 - Value of lease income eroded over time due to inflation and competing claims
- Development of Academies in 1800’s
 - Some of the original County Grammar Schools evolved into academies (e.g. Peacham Academy)
 - Most were established by private benefactors, e.g. Burr & Burton Seminary in 1829 through a bequest of Joseph Burr, to “be applied in educating, in the village of Manchester, poor and pious youth”



Status of Academies in 1890

Statistics of academies and other private schools for the year ending June, 1890.

Name of institution.	Where located.	Number of male teachers.	Number of female teachers.	Number of different scholars during the year.	Greatest number of scholars in one term.	Number studying Greek.	Number studying Latin.	Number studying French or German.	Number of graduates this year.	Number going to college.	Number of weeks of school in the year.	Number of volumes in the library.	Name of principal.
Beeman Academy.....	New Haven.....	1	1	74	63	1	13	1	1	1	39	180	H. D. Hoffnagle.
Brigham Academy.....	Bakersfield.....	1	4	120	94	10	7	9	2	2	36	150	F. E. Parlin.
Burr and Burton Seminary.....	Manchester.....	2	5	97	83	10	26	10	14	7	39	400	A. C. Ferrin.
Black River Academy.....	Ludlow.....	1	3	149	113	8	46	7	9	2	36	150	George Sherman.
Bradford Academy.....	Bradford.....	1	2	130	110	6	39	9	38	2,000	38	D. B. Locke.	
Chelsea Academy.....	Chelsea.....	1	1	73	56	1	4	2	32	88	33	J. M. Comstock.	
Craftsbury Academy.....	Craftsbury.....	1	2	120	68	3	13	2	3	225	33	B. C. Day.	
Derby Academy.....	Derby.....	1	1	60	35	1	4	3	33	500	35	I. O. Palmer.	
Essex Classical Institute.....	Essex.....	1	3	86	70	19	7	35	300	300	37	Chauncey Hayden.	
Episcopal Institute.....	Burlington.....	4	40	36	6	18	9	3	2	400	400	H. H. Ross.	
Glenwood Classical Seminary.....	West Brattleboro.....	4	6	144	110	5	29	29	8	4	40	1,700	D. L. Maulsby.
Goddard Seminary.....	Barre.....	3	5	200	80	2	10	10	20	2	36	800	Elizabeth Colley, A.M.
Green Mountain Seminary.....	Waterbury Center.....	1	2	115	98	2	8	14	2	2	33	150	Don F. Andrus.
Hardwick Academy.....	Hardwick.....	6	4	220	152	9	40	30	35	3	39	800	Walter E. Ranger.
Lyndon Institute.....	Lyndon Center.....	1	3	63	41	9	3	2	34	36	36	David G. Smyth.	
Leland and Gray Seminary.....	Townshend.....	1	1	40	31	3	3	2	34	36	34	W. H. Gilchrist.	
McIndoes Falls Academy.....	McIndoes Falls.....	1	2	120	70	6	30	3	3	39	1,400	C. A. Bunker.	
Peacham Academy.....	Peacham.....	1	2	26	19	4	8	39	60	60	39	Celia Sherman.	
Royalton Academy.....	Royalton.....	4	4	339	300	40	130	48	55	20	40	500	C. E. Putney.
St. Johnsbury Academy.....	St. Johnsbury.....	1	2	85	70	1	18	2	1	35	35	35	C. E. Putney.
Thetford Academy.....	Thetford.....	8	5	226	176	29	71	27	20	9	39	2,200	J. N. Mallory.
Troy Conference Academy.....	Poultney.....	5	5	309	260	41	99	36	23	7	39	1,400	C. H. Dumton.
Vermont Academy.....	Saxtons River.....	2	2	32	28	15	3	23	350	350	350	E. A. Bishop.	
Vermont Methodist Seminary.....	Montpelier.....	2	4	52	44	2	11	2	3	1	36	500	Carrie A. Walker.
Green Mountain Perkins Academy.....	South Woodstock.....	2	4	52	44	2	11	2	3	1	36	500	George W. Perry.
Rutland English and Classical Institute.....	Rutland.....	2	4	52	44	2	11	2	3	1	36	500	George W. Perry.
Total.....		51	68	2,920	2,257	173	609	250	216	74	14,253	

Source: "History of Education in Vermont", George Gary Bush, PhD



20th Century Challenges Lead to Change

A perfect storm of conditions called attention to the fragility of Vermont's education system mid century:

- Antiquated facilities (still many one room school houses)
- Many rural communities lacked scale to operate their own public schools - paid tuition
- An unrealistic cap (\$325 in 1961) on high school tuition meant that families had to pay the difference and strained the finances of receiving schools

Rapid growth in Vermont's population:

- 389,881 in 1960
- 444,732 in 1970
- 511,456 in 1980

Dramatic rise high school completion rates:

- 46% in 1948
- 75% in 1965

16 parochial schools with over 2,000 students suddenly closed between 1967 and 1969 - put immediate pressure on public school system

Sources: US Census, 1960, 1970, 1980
"Vermont's Education History", James Lengel
Legislative Council Report, 1969



Mid 20th Century Change

- Act 66 of 1945 and Act 202 of 1953 create first mechanisms for school district mergers
- By 1962 only six union school districts had been established

Governor Hoff established an “Educational Task Force” to in response to concerns about the state of Vermont’s public education system. Report issued in October 1963 called for major changes:

- Creation of 12 regional school districts
- Substantial increase in state funding for education - from 21% to 40%
- 50% State capital aid to support the construction of new schools

Facts On Public Education

Wide disparity in quality of education from elementary grades through high school

Library facilities vary from good to non-existent.

Academic preparation from excellent to inadequate for college admission. Languages, laboratory sciences and mathematics are most critical areas.

Vocational courses vary from good to non-existent

Elementary classes range from 18 to 50 students.

Teachers' salaries range from less than 4,000 to more than \$7,000

Administration salaries range from \$6,000 to \$12,000

Per pupil secondary school expenditures range from \$256 to \$733

State expenditure per pupil in the public schools is \$70

Drop-out rates highest in smaller schools, lowest in larger schools

Largest high school, grades 7-12, Brattleboro 1280

Smallest high school, grades 7-12, Middletown Springs 38.

Mid 20th Century Change

- Hoff task force district consolidation proposal rejected in 1964 by the General Assembly
- Many changes were ultimately implemented between the mid 1960's and early 1970's, leading to the closure of many historic academies and smaller public schools in favor of newly constructed regional high schools in many - but not all - parts of Vermont



- “Minimum Standards” adopted in 1964 force closure and consolidation of schools
- State capital aid encourages construction of new public school buildings (but unavailable to academies)
- Miller formula - comprehensive education finance formula enacted 1969

1960's to 1980's

Tuition caps lifted in 1965 - ensuring that all students would be afforded the opportunity for a high school education at no cost to the family

1970s and 1980's sees the development of independent schools providing alternative education and special education needs

House Moves To Guarantee Free High School Education

MONTPELIER — Better pay for teachers and a step toward guaranteeing free high school education to Vermont young people won preliminary House approval Friday.

But the advancements were marked by debate and, in the

with the change, every session, of setting fixed amounts which the towns would pay and provide a plan to guarantee that every child in Vermont will have the opportunity to go to high school without extra cost to his parents."

which \$75 or \$100 just can't be squeezed out of their budgets. It means their kids don't get to school.

"It's shutting out a lot of boys and girls," he said. "I think the bill is long overdue."

After the roll call, Hebard rose and apologized "if I've hurt any feelings" over his remarks about educators.

The roll call advanced the measure, 197-14, to third — and final House — reading Monday night; 34 members were absent.

The House also gave preliminary approval to legislation raising minimum teachers' salaries by \$800 based on factors of teaching experience and teacher preparation.

The transition to the higher minimums becomes effective July 1, 1966, and may be accomplished through \$300-a-year steps until the minimum scale is reached.

Rep. Marjorie P. Doyle, R-Arlington, said a teacher with four years' preparation would be paid a minimum of \$4,800 a year in her first five years of teaching, \$5,300 a year from her fifth year in teaching to her 10th, and \$5,800 a year from the 10-year experience level.



Burlington Free Press
CAPITOL BUREAU

case of the bill (H.158) repealing the present \$475 high school tuition ceiling, a 197-14 roll call vote.

Rep. Christine LaDeau, R-Plainfield, said the Hunt-Gibb bill (H.158) marked "the last step" planned by the House Education Committee this session.

"The first," she said, "was to keep our young people in school through age 16; the second was the guarantee of free transportation for secondary school pupils; the third was to furnish free textbooks; and this will mean that towns with no high schools will pay the full net calculated cost of tuition charged."

The bill would make such towns pay "their full share of tuition," said Rep. Lyman C. Hunt, R-Essex.

"Its purpose is to do away

Opposition was voiced by Rep. Emory A. Hebard, R-Glover, who said he feared sweeping expenditures for education. He referred to "professional educators" as "greedy."

Hebard's remarks triggered violent reactions. Rep. Marjorie P. Doyle, R-Arlington, clearly fighting mad, termed the legislation "a matter of principle, not a matter of dollars and cents."

And Hunt seemed more hurt than angry when he rose and took exception "to being called a greedy educator."

"I'm speaking — through this bill — for the boys and girls I tried to serve well for 45 years. And there's nothing greedy about that," Hunt said. He is a retired superintendent of schools in Burlington.

Rep. C. O. Granai, R-Barre City, quickly defended the bill on grounds there "are a lot of rural families in Vermont in



K-12 School Enrollment Trends Since 1970

<i>All Students: Publicly Funded & Private Pay</i>	1970	1973	1982	2005	2023
Public	98,652	106,517	93,251	90,019	74,507
Historic Academies	3,203	3,425	2,867	3,644 (Inc. 1,111 BFA)	2,429 (Exc. BFA)
Other Independent	1,381	1,499	2,060	3,389 (Inc. SPED Schools)	3,248 (Inc. SPED Schools)
Religious	8,520	5,317	4,156	3,503	2,317
Total	111,756	116,758	102,334	100,555	82,501
Public School %	88%	91.2%	91.1%	89.5%	90.3%

Sources: Data from VT DOE & AOE Reports (1983, 2005, 2024)



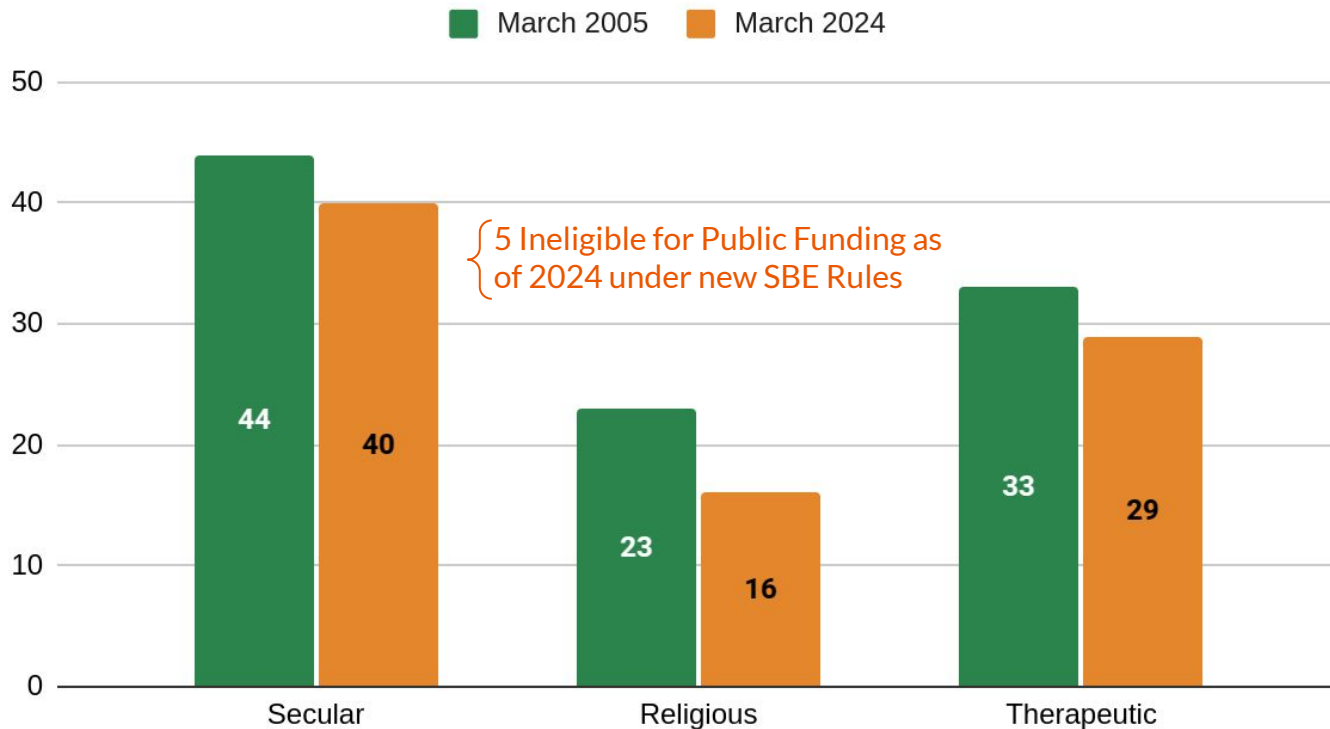
Approved Independent Schools Today

- Subject to statutes and State Board Rule Series 2200
 - Rule Series 2200 for Independent Schools - 45 Pages
 - Rule Series 2000 for Public Schools (EQS) - 23 Pages
- Three classes of Approved Independent Schools:
 - General education - approved and *eligible* for public tuition
 - General education - approved and *ineligible* for public tuition (currently 5)
 - Therapeutic - exclusively serves students on IEP or 504
- To be eligible for public tuition, an approved school must meet new State Board rules governing enrollment of students with special education needs and 504 accommodations
- All approved independent schools undergo periodic review and approval by the State Board of Education (with recommendation of the AOE) - at least once every 5 years
- Public tuition paid by non-operating districts is established by statutory mechanisms (see 16 V.S.A. §823 and §824):
 - Default is the “Average Announced Tuition” rate calculated by the AOE, based on announced tuition rates of union school districts
 - An independent school functioning as an approved area career technical center may charge the full cost of tuition (only two schools)
 - The electorate may vote to authorize payment of a higher amount (several school districts)
 - An independent school meeting EQS may charge the full cost of tuition (only two schools)



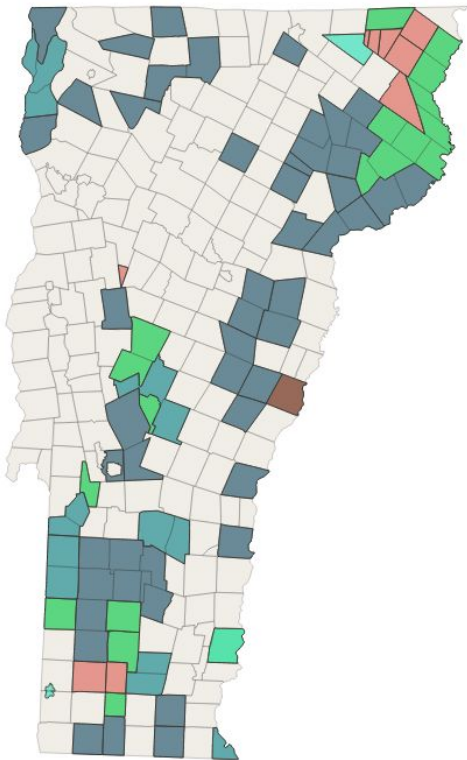
Recent Independent School Trending

Number of Approved Independent Schools in Vermont





Operating vs. Tuitioning District Density



63%

6,100 Square Miles Served by School Districts Operating Public Schools for All Grades K-12

11:1

ADM per Square Mile

37%

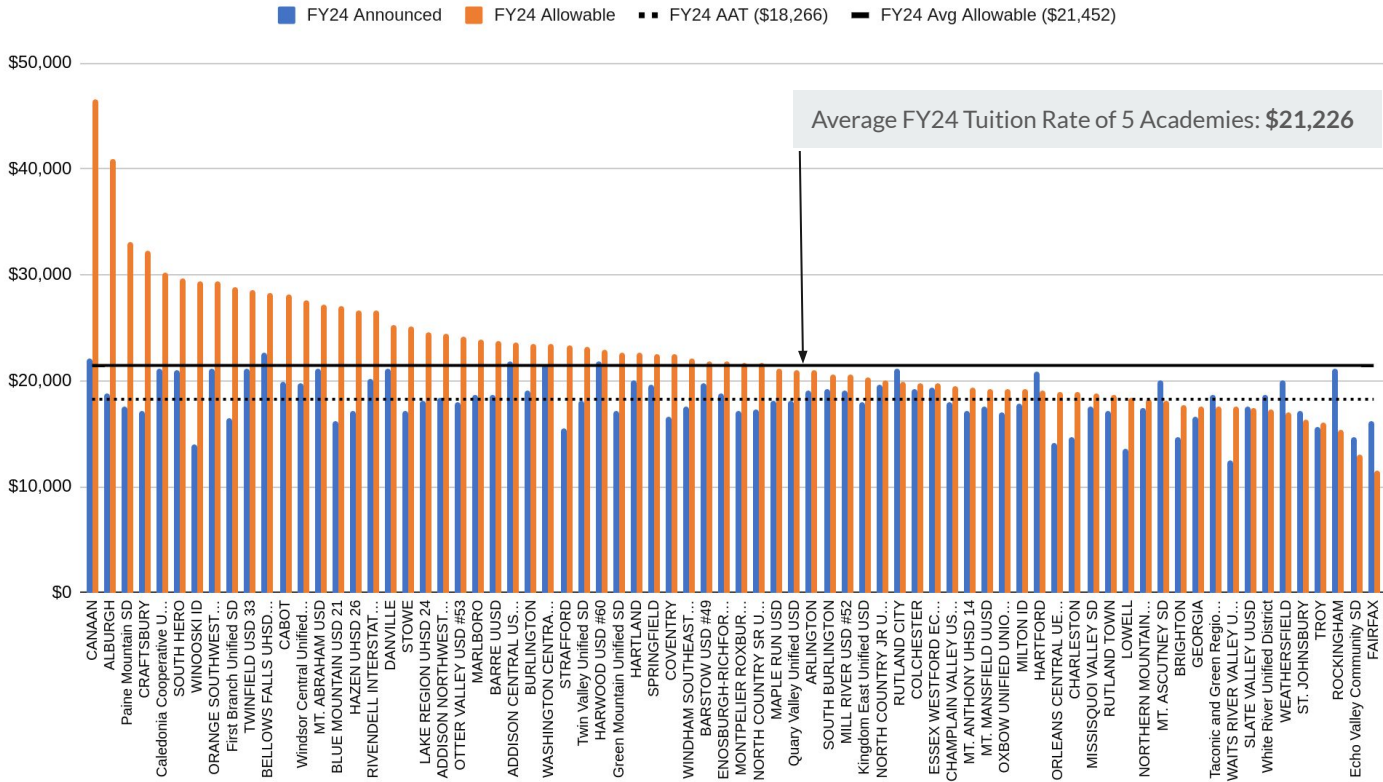
3,515 Square Miles Served by School Districts Tuitioning Some or All Grades

4:1

ADM per Square Mile



FY24 AAT vs. Allowable Tuition Rates



School Districts Operating Grades 9-12



Questions & Discussion

