



Teacher and Leader Equitable Access Plan

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Contents

Contents

Teacher and Leader Equitable Access Plan for Vermont	1
Section 1. Introduction.....	1
Scan of State-Level Policies, Initiatives, and Currently Available Data	1
Section 2. Stakeholder Engagement	2
Section 3. Equity Gap Exploration and Analysis.....	3
Definitions and Metrics.....	3
Section 4. Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps	13
Goal Setting	13
Root-Cause Analysis.....	13
Four Key Strategies.....	14
Section 5. Ongoing Monitoring and Support.....	23
Section 6. Conclusion	26
Appendix A. Vermont Stakeholder Engagement Process Timeline.....	27
Appendix B. Stakeholder Data Survey	29
Appendix C. Participation in Regional Meetings	31
Appendix D. Stakeholder Engagement Meeting PowerPoint.....	32
Appendix E. Vermont Agency of Education Press Releases Regarding Equity Plan	36

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Teacher and Leader Equitable Access Plan for Vermont

Section 1. Introduction

The Vermont Agency of Education (VT-AOE) is pleased to submit to the U.S. Department of Education the following plan that has been developed to address the long-term needs for Vermont related to ensuring on-going equitable access to great teachers and leaders for our students.

This plan responds to Education Secretary Arne Duncan's July 7, 2014, letter to SEAs, as augmented with additional guidance published on November 10, 2014. Vermont's plan complies with

(1) the requirement in Section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that each state's Title I, Part A plan include information on the specific steps that the SEA will take to ensure that students from low-income families and students of color are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers, and the measures that the agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the agency with respect to such steps; and

(2) the requirement in ESEA Section 1111(e)(2) that a state's plan be revised by the SEA if necessary.

Given the importance of strong leadership, our plan also includes the analysis that we undertook to ensure that students from low-income families and students of color are not disproportionately attending schools which experience high levels of turnover in the school principalship or Supervisory Union/district superintendency.

To create this plan, a team of leaders at VT-AOE, led by the Deputy Secretary of Education took the following steps:

1. Developed and began implementing a long-term strategy for engaging stakeholders in ensuring equitable access to excellent educators.
2. Reviewed data provided by USDE and our own local data systems to identify equity gaps.
3. Conducted root-cause analyses, based on data and with stakeholders, to identify the challenges that underlie our equity gaps to identify and target our strategies accordingly.
4. Set measurable targets and created a plan for measuring and reporting progress and continuously improving this plan.

In Vermont, like other rural states, the expected patterns of disadvantage do not always appear and the solutions which work in urban contexts are not easily transferable. As a result, our plan commits to address educator inequities for students attending high-poverty and/or high-minority schools where they exist in ways that match the rural nature of our state.

Scan of State-Level Policies, Initiatives, and Currently Available Data

To begin this process in an informed way, VT-AOE performed a scan of current policies and initiatives that Vermont has been implementing in recent years as well as a review of relevant and available data. This scan was conducted in collaboration with multiple teams within VT-AOE. Specifically, we reviewed:

- Existing state policy and practice for improving educator recruitment, retention, development, and support
- Policies and initiatives focused on Vermont’s institutions of higher education (IHE) and other providers that prepare teachers and principals
- Initiatives relating to providers of professional learning programs for teachers, principals and superintendents
- Current licensure standards and requirements for all educators
- Available data identified as relevant to the development and implementation of our state’s equitable access plan including:
 1. Educator Equity Data Profile . provided by USDE
 2. USDE Data sources including the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) and *EDFacts*
 3. Local data sources similar to data found in the Common Core of data
 4. Wherever possible, we relied on our best and most complete data. At this time, Vermont does not have a longitudinal data system and we therefore needed to reconcile data across multiple years. Given that patterns of disadvantage replicated over multiple years, we are confident that the data represent persistent patterns of inequity that will be addressed in this plan. Moving forward, Vermont will have access to a longitudinal data source which will allow for more robust analysis that will link students to their teachers in real time and aid in more accurate reporting. It is likely that as our data improves, we may identify additional issues related to educator access and our plan will need to change.

Section 2. Stakeholder Engagement

Vermont has a long history of attending to issues of equity in our schools. As a result, we built on existing structures to engage our stakeholders in identifying data sources, conducting root-cause analyses regarding inequities we identified and then generating the specific plans and metrics by which the state plans to address these inequities.

The VT-AOE invited participation in the development of this plan through personal invitations and public warnings for the Vermont State School Board, Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators, Vermont School Boards Association, Vermont Superintendents’ Association, Vermont Principals’ Association, Vermont National Education Association, Vermont Council of Teacher Education programs, staff at the AOE, and students, parents and staff in our communities with the highest poverty rates and those with the greatest percentage of non-white population. To ensure that all communities had the opportunity to impact the development of the Equity Plan and to be certain that regional differences were taken into account, we held seven regional meetings for stakeholders to participate in the process (see Appendix C and D for details regarding the stakeholder meetings).

To begin with, we made of list of potential stakeholder groups including professional organizations in Vermont, educators and community members. Individual interviews were held with the executive directors of the Vermont NEA, Vermont Principals’ Association and Vermont Superintendents’ Association. In addition, the VT AOE Leadership team, comprised of directors of all divisions, the Deputy team and an internal team of Agency staff was involved in several exercises to gain their input on the educator equity issues we were studying. Finally, the Board of Education and legislative committees were briefed on the data findings and offered their insight into the root causes of the inequities presented.

The statewide consultation supported the planning of seven public-stakeholder meetings in regions of our state where high-poverty and high-minority schools are concentrated. The purpose of these seven meetings was for stakeholders to:

- Review data and serve as advisors on interpreting the data and the root causes behind our state's equity gaps using the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders resource titled *Resource 7: Engaging Stakeholders in a Root-Cause Analysis* (<http://www.gtlcenter.org/learning-hub/equitable-access-toolkit/stakeholder-engagement-guide>). Due to different levels of familiarity with data among our stakeholder groups, we had a member of the state team with expertise in data analysis on hand at these meetings.
- Identify and prioritize root causes of inequities in access to excellent teachers and leaders.
- Review and provide feedback on the draft plan.

At these meetings, we heard from parents, teachers, non-instructional school staff members, principals, district leaders, school board members, and community organizations, parents, and journalists. To ensure that the conversations were accessible and generative, we reviewed the presentation thoroughly to eliminate educational jargon and included questions that would encourage discussion. Approximately 30 minutes of the 1.5 hour long meetings were dedicated to the presentation, and the remaining time was used to solicit feedback, questions, and recommendations from the stakeholders. See Appendix D for ppt presentation. The presentation was also video recorded in two segments and made available to any stakeholder who could not attend the regional meeting. (<http://education.vermont.gov/federal-education-programs/educator-equity>).

Each meeting had a note-taker who systematically captured stakeholder feedback and incorporated the feedback from all meetings into memos that were reviewed and discussed by the authors of this plan. In between meetings, participants were encouraged to engage more widely with colleagues and communicate back further insights that they gained. These communications were added to the compilation of stakeholder input. For stakeholders interested in staying updated on the progress of developing the plan but who may not have been able to invest significant time in the plan's development, we posted drafts on the VT-AOE website for their review.

To meet our obligation of reporting and sharing input with the field, the VT AOE has opted to blend the reporting of future equity findings through the Committee of Practitioners (COP) that currently oversees Title I policy and action. This decision has been made largely because the data suggests that at this time, Vermont experiences very little inequity relative to student access to quality educators and we prefer to embed this work within existing structures.

Section 3. Equity Gap Exploration and Analysis

Vermont has been concerned with achieving equitable results for our students for decades and overall we see that in many respects we have achieved a greater degree of equity than many of our fellow states¹. Where inequities persist, they are largely linked to issues of poverty and isolation from urban centers.

Definitions and Metrics

In Vermont, we currently do not have data systems which allow for tracking of individual students to the educators to which they are assigned. We will be launching a robust longitudinal data system in the next

¹ Based on an examination of the Educator Equity Profiles released by USDE in December 2014.

academic year and our results should show improved accuracy in the future. In addition, current licensing data does not adequately map to the schools where educators are currently employed. Rather, we have analyzed current (14-15) licensing data and historical (13-14) educator assignment data and historical student demographic data (13-14). While these years are not in perfect alignment, they represent consistent patterns in data and are the best available.

Our equity plan focuses on ensuring that students in our schools of highest need are not exposed to educators with characteristics that are commonly associated with negative outcomes with greater frequency than are our students in schools with the smallest needs. We also caution that while research suggests that these characteristics are associated with negative outcomes, they are by no means causal inferences.

Our previous educator equity plan focused primarily on HQT status. In contrast, the current plan focuses on additional metrics beyond highly-qualified status of teachers to include principals as well. Our evaluation utilized the *Great Teachers and Leaders* tool, “Example Metrics²” to review possible equity issues that may be considered in assessing equitable access to quality educators. After a careful review, we opted for those measures which we currently have reliable data to assess³.

Required Measures:

- **Percentage of First Year Educators.** We examined numerous metrics related to inexperienced teachers (1st year, 2nd year, <5 years) and found that there was no discernable difference between these metrics. For ease of communication, interpretation and the direct link to recruitment and hiring strategies, we opted to use the first-year data only. Similar data does not exist for principals or superintendents in our current data system, however we anticipate this will change with the new system.
- **Unqualified Teachers.** We will report on unqualified teachers as defined by those who have not achieved Highly Qualified Status (HQT) for the courses they are assigned.
- **Out-of-Field Teaching.** Out-of-field assignment for preparation and licensure will be defined as being currently assigned to teach a subject and/or grade that is outside the field specified by a full license or those who hold a provisional, apprentice or emergency license for a placement where they have been assigned students.

Additional Measures:

- **Principal and Superintendent Turnover.** Research demonstrates that changes in leadership result in disruptions to the continuity of educational programming and improvement efforts. In addition, a principal new to a school, even with experience elsewhere, encounters a new school culture and lacks experience in the new community. A five-year count of the number of leaders in the school (principal) and the Supervisory Union/district (superintendent) will serve as an indicator for equitable access to educational leaders.
- **Salaries.** We have examined salaries in three dimensions.

² Accessed here: <http://www.gtlcenter.org/learning-hub/equitable-access-toolkit/data-review-tool>.

³ Vermont does not employ a state wide evaluation system for teachers and/or leaders. In addition, we do not calculate value-added or growth measures for individual educators as 1) the vast majority of our schools and classrooms do not meet membership criteria which would make this an ethical or statistically sound practice and 2) we have not previously had a data system which linked students to the teacher within the school to whom they were assigned.

1. The **average salary** reported by the LEA which is calculated by dividing the expenditures allocated to teaching salaries divided by the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of the Supervisory Union or school. This metric is important as it captures the frequently advertised figure that may influence recruitment of educators away from schools with higher rates of poverty and minority populations. This measure was calculated for teachers, principals and superintendents.
2. The **adjusted average salary** applies a cost of living index to the average salary calculated above to determine the purchasing power of the salary earned. This metric is important because of the wide disparity in cost of living between our rural, town and city locales. This metric assumes, possibly incorrectly, that educators live in the county where the Supervisory Union/district office is located. This measure was calculated for teachers, principals and superintendents.
3. The **student:educator average salary** divides the average salary above by the average student:teacher ratio. This metric is important because working conditions vary greatly between our schools. For example, a small rural school may have an average salary of \$45,000 and the standard city school has an average salary of \$60,000- a \$15,000 inequity. However, the rural school may have 5 students in the class at \$9,000 per child/per teacher and the city school may have 20 students for a \$3,000 per child/per teacher. The salary per child captures both the earnings and work conditions. This measure was calculated for principals and superintendents by dividing the average salary by student membership.
4. The **student:educator adjusted average salary** divides the adjusted average salary above by the average student:teacher ratio. This metric is important because it provides an adjusted salary for disparities in costs of living, which also accounts for the student caseload. This metric assumes, possibly incorrectly, that teachers live in the county where the Supervisory Union/district office is located. This measure was calculated for principals and superintendents by dividing the adjusted average salary by student membership.

To identify Vermont's equity gaps, we further defined

- **“Low-income” students** are defined as those who participate in the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program.
- **“Minority” students** are defined as the students who have identified with any race or ethnicity that is not white/Caucasian (e.g., African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islander/Alaskan Native).
- We identified a summary descriptor of school locales that capture the type of location for each community based on definitions identified by the National Center for Education Statistics⁴
 - **City/Suburb-** Communities within an urbanized area that has less than 100,000 people. In Vermont, there is only one city which meets this designation; all schools identified with this location are located within Chittenden County where Burlington is located.
 - **Town-** A town is a smaller population center than a city.
 - **Rural-** A population area that is less densely populated than a town or city.

⁴ http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp

Exploration of the Data

Data Sources. For this analysis, we used a variety of data sources, which have been pulled into a single data system for analysis. Currently, Vermont does not have a longitudinal data system that links students to teachers, schools and districts so all data presented here is analyzed at the school or Supervisory Union/District level. Beginning in 2015-16, Vermont will have a student-level data system that will allow for more robust analysis and it is quite possible it will alter the conclusions we have drawn here. However, based on the data currently available in the state, Vermont has conducted a thorough evaluation of our data to identify existing equity gaps for our students.

To create our analytical comparison groups, we chose to use quartiles to identify the membership groups for our students (Table 1). Only 18 schools (6%) were identified as high-poverty and high-minority schools, 11 schools were identified as both low-poverty and low-minority schools (4%) and 72 schools (25%) were excluded from all analyses as they were middle-poverty and middle-minority schools.

Table 1: Cross tab of schools by poverty quartile and minority quartile.

	High-Poverty Quartile		Middle Poverty Schools		Low-Poverty Quartile		Grand Total	
	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total
High-Minority Quartile	18	6%	29	10%	24	8%	71	25%
Middle Minority	30	11%	72	25%	41	14%	143	50%
Low-Minority Schools	18	6%	42	15%	11	4%	71	25%
Grand Total	66	23%	143	50%	76	27%	285	100%

We begin our analysis by painting a picture of our state (Table 2). In our data there were 285 schools serving fewer than 78,000 students and 7,288 full time equivalent teachers. In addition to these schools, we also have career and technical centers which serve students part- to full-time, but their membership count remains in their home school and Supervisory Unions. All schools are members of school districts (LEAs) which may include multiple schools or single schools serving a community. Most individual districts have formed larger bodies called Supervisory Unions or supervisory districts which are headed by superintendents. These supervisory districts represent a full continuum from loosely confederated individual districts to cohesive entities that act as single governance unions.

Most schools are located in rural areas (73%) and serve 57% of the student membership. Burlington is the only community to meet federal definitions as a small city, with all other major population centers considered towns by the census.

In terms of poverty, our schools in the highest poverty quartile (66) serve 21% of our students and employ 22% of our teachers in 23% of our schools. The average poverty rate in these schools is 63% with a range of 48-100% of the student population qualifying for free and reduced lunch. In contrast, our schools in the lowest poverty quartile (76) serve 34% of all students and employ 31% of all teachers in 27% of our schools. The average poverty rate in these schools is 21% with a range of 0-31% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. All fourteen counties in Vermont have at least school placed in the highest

poverty quartile; high-poverty schools are disproportionately clustered in Orleans (13 schools= 20%) and Windham (11 schools=17%) counties.

In terms of minority populations, our schools in the highest minority population quartile (71) serve 32% of our students and employ 32% of our teachers in 25% of our schools. The average minority population in these schools is 16% with a range of 7-51% of the student population identified as “not white/Caucasian.” In contrast, our schools in the low-minority quartile (71) serve 15% of all students and employ 16% of all teachers in 25% of our schools. The average minority population rate in these schools is 1% with a range of 0-3% of the student population identified as “not white/Caucasian.” High-minority schools are distributed across all three locales; but by student membership nearly half of students attending high-minority schools in city/suburb are located in Chittenden County, where Burlington is located. Franklin and Windham Counties each have 8 schools with high-minority populations. Importantly, the vast majority of students attending low-minority schools are located in the rural areas (94% of schools; 88% of students) which are also associated with inequities related to poverty. Compared to other states in the nation, Vermont is a state with limited ethnic diversity, and schools which qualify as “high-minority” in Vermont might very well be considered low-minority schools if they were in other states.

We conducted several preliminary analyses. Initial input from the community gathered through survey indicated that the public was interested in a variety of data related to possible inequity in students’ access to high quality educators. We opted to examine those items for which we had reliable data. In addition to the three mandatory items for review, we also explored indicators related to salary, principal turnover and salary and superintendent salary. All data is aggregated from the school level to statewide averages.

Table 3 depicts the equity gaps in Vermont. We chose to focus on equity gaps by schools in our state in order to be certain that we could detect any discernible patterns that emerged at the smallest level of analysis.

Table 2. Selected descriptive statistics for Vermont schools including school counts, student membership, full time equivalent teacher counts, school location and county location.

	Vermont		Poverty Comparisons				Minority Comparisons			
			High-Poverty Quartile		Low-Poverty Quartile		High-Minority Quartile		Low-Minority Quartile	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
School Counts	285	100%	66	23%	76	27%	71	25%	71	25%
Student Membership	77,789	100%	15,994	21%	26,249	34%	24,812	32%	12,049	15%
Teacher Full Time Equivalents (FTE)	7,288	100%	1,613	22%	2,242	31%	2,327	32%	1,133	16%
Location (school)										
City/Suburb	34	12%	7	11% ⁵	19	25%	28	39%	1	1%
Rural	209	73%	45	68%	52	68%	28	39%	67	94%
Town	42	15%	14	21%	5	7%	15	21%	3	4%
Location (by student membership)										
City/Suburb	15,172	20%	2,774	17%	9,766	37%	11,759	47%	540	4%
Rural	44,102	57%	7,485	47%	13,593	52%	6,022	24%	10,634	88%
Town	18,515	24%	5,735	36%	2,890	11%	7,031	28%	875	7%
County (by school count)										
Addison	22	8%	2	3%	3	4%	5	7%	6	8%
Bennington	7	2%	2	3%	2	3%	1	1%	2	3%
Caledonia	13	5%	6	9%	1	1%	0	0%	6	8%
Chittenden	47	16%	7	11%	31	41%	30	42%	2	3%
Essex	6	2%	3	5%	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%
Franklin	20	7%	6	9%	6	8%	8	11%	4	6%
Grand Isle	5	2%	2	3%	2	3%	1	1%	3	4%
Lamoille	14	5%	2	3%	3	4%	4	6%	3	4%
Orange	19	7%	3	5%	2	3%	1	1%	11	15%
Orleans	20	7%	13	20%	0	0%	2	3%	3	4%
Rutland	30	11%	6	9%	4	5%	3	4%	11	15%
Washington	25	9%	1	2%	12	16%	4	6%	5	7%
Windham	28	10%	11	17%	3	4%	8	11%	3	4%
Windsor	29	10%	2	3%	7	9%	4	6%	8	11

Note: Percents may not total 100% due to rounding.

⁵ The percents in this section reference the total number of schools for the status. In this case, of the 66 high-poverty schools, 21% are located in city/suburb locations (7 of 66).

Table 3. Selected descriptive statistics for Vermont schools including key criteria for teacher, principals and superintendents.

		Vermont	Poverty Comparisons			Minority Comparisons		
			High-poverty Quartile	Low Poverty Quartile	Disadvantage?	High Minority Quartile	Low Minority Quartile	Disadvantage?
			Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Teacher Data	Percent of 1 st Year Teachers	4.7%	5.9%	3.0%	High-poverty	3.5%	6.3%	Low Minority
	Percent of Teachers Not HQT	4.5%	5.2%	4.7%	High-poverty	2.7%	4.9%	Low Minority
	Percent of Teachers with Provisional	1.7%	1.6%	2.0%	Low Poverty	0.2%	0.8%	Low Minority
	Adjusted Average Salary	\$47,821	\$47,446	\$48,638	High-poverty	\$49,886	\$46,578	Low Minority
	Student:Teacher Adjusted Average Salary	\$4,664	\$4,460	\$4,813	High-poverty	\$4,919	\$4,551	Low Minority
Principal Data	Number of Principals in last 5 years	1.93	2.00	1.95	High-poverty	1.80	2.00	Low Minority
	Adjusted Average Principal Salary	\$80,483	\$78,244	\$85,034	High-poverty	\$84,154	\$75,955	Low Minority
	Student:Principal Adjusted Average Salary	\$551	\$524	\$475	Low Poverty	\$429	\$808	High Minority
	FTE:P Adjusted Average Salary	\$5621	\$5033	\$5870	High-poverty	\$5,097	\$7,406	High Minority
Superintendent Data	Number of Superintendents in last 5 years	1.85	1.88	1.82	High-poverty	1.80	1.83	Low Minority
	Adjusted Average Salary	\$101,975	\$105,412	\$99,131	Low Poverty	\$106,029	\$98,272	Low Minority
	Student:Superintendent Adjusted Average Salary	\$88	\$100	\$65	Low Poverty	\$64	\$103	High Minority

Source: Vermont EDFacts data from 2011-12.

Equity Gap Analysis

In Vermont, we have had a long commitment to equity stemming from the *Brigham Decision* (1997) which established that the state must ensure substantial equality of educational opportunity throughout Vermont, and by extension, substantial equality in the ability to raise revenues for education. Subsequent legislation (Act 60 and Act 68) created a per pupil funding system that essentially equalizes tax effort across towns and across taxpayers of different means. This funding policy has resulted in all communities having more equitable access to fiscal resources for education. In turn, we believe this has contributed greatly to more equitable learning experiences for students that are reflected in the lack of equity gaps found in our data related to access to educators. While resource allocation and assignment of staff across the state have relatively low levels of inequity, however, this does not mean that Vermont has achieved equity in all aspects of student experiences and achievement which are beyond the scope of this equity plan.

Our high-minority schools, presumably because they are located in geographically desirable locations near Burlington, do not have the equity gaps related to educator characteristics generally associated with high-minority schools across the nation. In fact, almost all metrics we examined the advantage in terms of access to experienced, highly qualified and appropriately assigned educators belongs to the high-minority school. The only exception to this finding is the per student and per faculty pay rates in our high-minority schools for principals and superintendents; this disadvantage for high-minority schools reflects several conflating factors: 1) these schools tend to be larger in student population as they are more frequently located in our city and larger towns thus a higher overall salary is dispersed over more students thus reducing the per student allocation and 2) these schools, because of their size, frequently employ other staff (assistant principal(s), curriculum directors, HR directors, etc.) who support the workload of principals and superintendents so that actual costs for administrative support are more equivalent per student.

Conversely, our high-poverty schools do experience equity gaps in terms of exposure on most of the metrics we examined. Their teachers are less well paid and have less experience, on average, than their counterparts teaching in wealthier schools. In addition, because they are very small, a greater proportion of their per student funding is spent on salaries for teachers, principals and superintendents, which may in turn make it more challenging to leverage resources for high-quality professional development and support. The only area in which high-poverty schools are not disadvantaged is in the area of per student and per teacher salaries for principals and superintendents. Our high-poverty schools are typically smaller in terms of enrollment and provide few additional administrators to support the work that the principal and superintendent must execute.

To better understand the significance of the gaps, in addition to the differences for each metric for each subgroup, we also looked at the impact of the difference for those who experience it (see Table 4). For example, we found that the percentage of first-year teachers is twice as large in low-income schools compared to high-income schools. Of these criteria, most are relatively small in impact for describing differences between our high and low-poverty schools and almost all of the comparisons actually favor the high-minority school.

Table 4. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Metrics Across Schools in the State

		Poverty Comparisons				Minority Comparisons			
		High-poverty Quartile	Low Poverty Quartile	Disadvantage ^a		High Minority Quartile	Low Minority Quartile	Disadvantage	
		Mean	Mean	Difference	Impact of Difference	Mean	Mean	Difference	Impact of Difference
Teacher Data	Percent of 1st Year Teachers	5.9%	3.0%	2.9%	197% greater exposure to 1 st year teacher	Favors High-Minority School			
	Percent of Teachers Not HQT	5.2%	4.7%	0.5%	111% greater exposure to teacher who is not HQT	Favors High-Minority School			
	Percent of Teachers with Provisional	Favors High-Poverty School				Favors High-Minority School			
	Adjusted Average Salary	\$47,446	\$48,638	-\$1,192	2% lower teacher pay on average	Favors High-Minority School			
	Student:Teacher Adjusted Average Salary	\$4,460	\$4,813	-\$353	7% lower teacher pay per student	Favors High-Minority School			
Principal Data	Number of Principals in last 5 years	2.00	1.95	0.05	2% higher principal turnover	Favors High-Minority School			
	Adjusted Average Principal Salary	\$78,244	\$85,034	-\$6,790	8% lower principal pay on average	Favors High-Minority School			
	Student:Principal Adjusted Average Salary	Favors High-Poverty School				\$429	\$808	\$379	47% lower pay per student*
	FTE:P Adjusted Average Salary	\$5033	\$5870	-\$837	14% lower pay per student*	\$5,097	\$7,406	\$2,309	28% lower pay per teacher*
Superintendent Data	Number of Superintendents in last 5 years	Favors High-Poverty School				Favors High-Minority School			
	Adjusted Average Salary	Favors High-Poverty School				Favors High-Minority School			
	Student:Superintendent Adjusted Average Salary	Favors High-Poverty School				\$64	\$103	\$39	38% lower pay per student*

^a Impact of difference calculated by dividing the figure for high-poverty schools by the low-poverty school (high-minority/low-minority).

*Per student and per FTE salary adjustments are conflated with school and Supervisory Union size (high-poverty schools are smaller; high minority schools are larger) and the fact that larger systems are able to also hire additional administrative staff to support the work of principals and superintendents.

We then conducted similar analyses across locales instead of schools (see Table 5). Local input suggested that our outlying areas (towns and rural schools) might have differential impact compared to our schools located in the Burlington area. All metrics were evaluated compared by locale. All analysis produced similar results: whatever gaps existed were minimized if the school was located in a city/suburb and were either consistent or worse than the state gap if located in a town or rural area. No results when examined by locale pointed to a different conclusion. Given that the only metric which had substantial inequity for our students was exposure to first-year teachers and that this metric is exacerbated by locale, we chose this indicator as the focus of our planning.

Table 5. Percentage Difference and Ratio of Percentages for Percent of First Year Teachers

	High-poverty Quartile	Low-Poverty Quartile	Difference	Impact of Difference
Percent of First-Year Teachers				
Vermont	5.9%	3.0%	2.9%	197% greater exposure to 1 st year teacher
City/Suburb	2.8%	2.6%	0.2%	108% greater exposure to 1 st year teacher
Rural	7.0%	2.5%	4.5%	280% greater exposure to 1 st year teacher
Town	6.1%	3.2%	2.9%	191% greater exposure to 1 st year teacher

Lastly, we looked to determine if inequities may be the result of systematic biases on the part of our Supervisory Unions and supervisory districts. We find that this is not the case. Of the 58 Supervisory Unions, only 12 have schools that are members of both the high-poverty and low-poverty quartiles. A quick look at these schools shows that in this particular year, while more often than not the exposure rate to first-year teachers tends to be higher at the schools with high-poverty; this is not universally the case. In addition, the small sizes of our schools distort the impact of the difference. For example, Rutland Northeast had 17.5% more exposure to first-year teachers for students in its high-poverty schools compared to its low-poverty school; however, this is because they hired one new teacher of 6 total.

Table 6. Specific Supervisory Unions with both high-poverty and low-poverty schools

Supervisory Union	Average Teacher FTE		Average First-Year Teacher Rate			
	High-Poverty Schools	Low-Poverty Schools	High-Poverty Schools		Low-Poverty Schools	
			N	% FTE	N	% FTE
Addison Central	10.6	7.8	1	2.8%	0	0.0%
Bennington Rutland	10.7	18.2	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Franklin Central	78.6	58.6	2	2.5%	1	1.7%
Franklin Northwest	55.5	9.3	5	9.0%	0	0.0%
Grand Isle	13.9	9.9	1.5	10.5%	1	7.7%
Orange East	20.0	20.0	2	10.0%	1	5.0%
Rivendell Interstate School District	10.6	15.7	0	0.0%	2	12.7%
Rutland Northeast	5.7	20.9	1	17.5%	0	0.0%
Windham Central	5.5	4.3	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Windham Southeast	27.6	16.8	2	6.3%	1	6.0%
Windham Southwest	14.7	6.9	2	10.9%	2	29.0%
Total	253.4	188.4	16.5	6.5%	8	4.2%

Section 4. Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps

VT-AOE recognizes the importance of securing high-quality educators for our students, especially those who have been historically under-served. For this reason, Vermont has already acted to level the financial playing field through equity-based funding and our schools that serve higher percentages of non-white students have seen an equalization and, in fact, a privilege in the characteristics often associated with higher-performing educators. In most respects, the same is true for our students living in poverty but it is still in effect when it comes to exposure to first-year teachers.

However, information from the field suggests that this identified equity gap is not universally understood to be a problem, but rather is often seen as a resource. In Vermont, as in rural states across the nation, young people are engaging in a pattern of outmigration- as a result, rural communities are aging communities with diminishing tax bases which in turn support a narrower range of services⁶.

Vermont's Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators, therefore, is built on the following theory of action.

Theory of Action

If exposure to first-year teachers is systematically occurring in particular regions and Supervisory Unions, and

If a comprehensive approach to talent management for those regions and Supervisory Unions is implemented carefully and monitored and modified when warranted over time,

Then Vermont school districts will be better able to recruit, retain, and develop excellent educators such that all students have equitable access to excellent teaching and leading to help them achieve their highest potential in school and beyond.

This approach includes four strategies: research, promoting effective hiring practices, improving professional opportunities, and improving working conditions in high-poverty schools.

Goal Setting

VT-AOE will lead a goal-setting process to communicate the state's aspirations for equitable access and give stakeholders a clear way to track progress over time. VT-AOE will begin with our baseline data on all the metrics of educator effectiveness listed in Section 1 of this plan. As Vermont currently does not have equity gaps in access to high-quality educators for each metric for our high-minority schools, we will ensure this remains the case by replicating this study and all other studies related to this plan. Should inequities arise in future analyses; our plans will adapt to ameliorate them. For our high-poverty schools, we will set five-year and interim targets for reducing equity gaps in exposure to first-year teachers that aim to reduce the systematic privilege that low-poverty schools have in this area. After five years, the plan will be updated with lessons learned and the use of new data.

Root-Cause Analysis

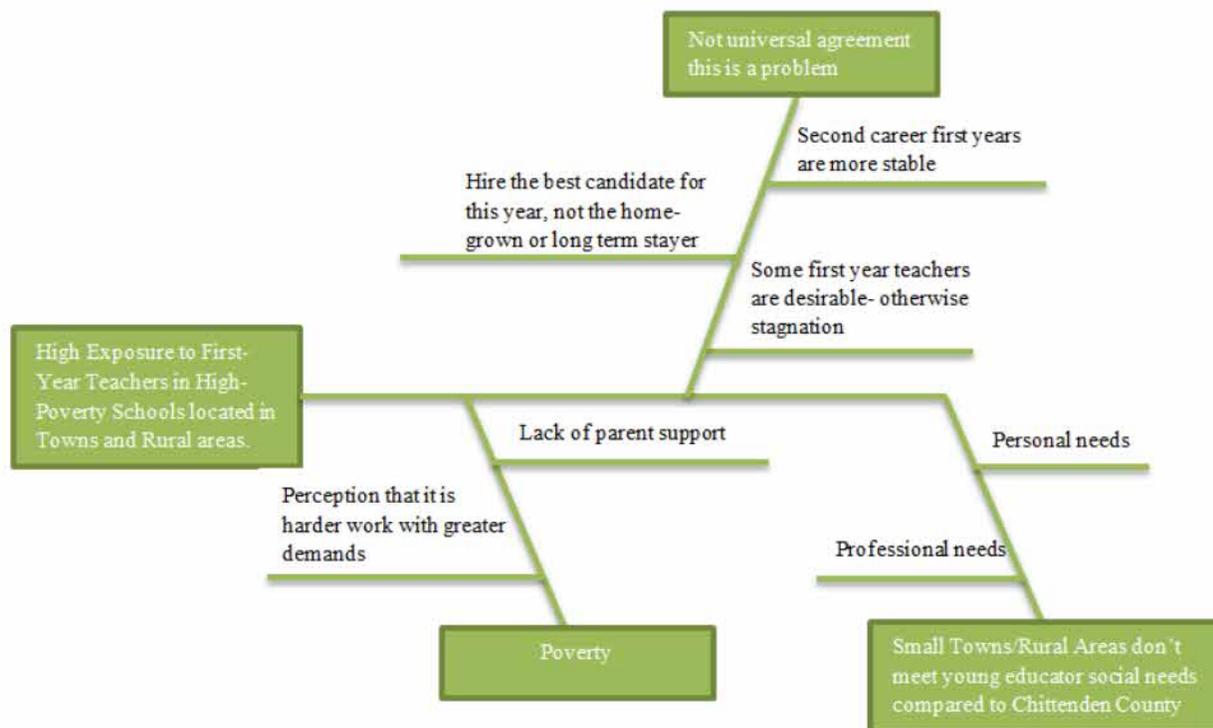
The root-cause analysis consisted of four steps:

⁶ http://www.uvm.edu/~crvt/reports/vrt_report_Dec2014.pdf

1. **Identifying Relevant and Available Data:** In this step, we determined what data are available and relevant to identifying equity gaps and relevant data sources and conducted an analysis of these data.
2. **Analyzing Data and Identifying Equity Gaps:** In this step, we identified the equity gaps resulting from our analysis in preparation for the root-cause analysis.
3. **Analyzing Root Causes:** In this step, we brainstormed a complete list of root causes behind our equity gaps and categorized them by themes.
4. **Mapping Strategies to Root Causes:** In this final step, we identified practical strategies to address our root causes.

We created “fishbone” diagrams to illustrate the root causes we believe hinder student access to excellent educators based on our local data and our stakeholder input.

Figure 1. Fishbone Diagram Indicating Causes of High Exposure to First-Year Teachers in High-Poverty Schools located in Towns and Rural areas.



Four Key Strategies

To achieve our state’s teacher and leader equity objectives VT-AOE intends to initially pursue four key strategies that correspond to the root causes behind the problem:

- Research
- Promoting Effective Hiring Practices
- Improving Professional Opportunities
- Improving Working Conditions in High-Poverty Schools

We have identified these four strategies as they best reflect what has emerged from listening to constituents across the state. Key among them is the need for more research before committing to a course of action which would tie limited resources to an issue which is not widely considered a problem and diverts those same resources from strategies which Vermonters feel are effective. We believe the best course of action is additional research as the sample of constituents was small and the most evidence was supplied through conventional wisdom or personal anecdote rather than a systematic investigation.

Table 6. Details of the Four Key Strategies

<p>Strategy 1: Research</p> <p>We believe that the data and root-cause analysis call for more research of first-year teacher exposure for students in high-poverty schools; particularly those in rural and town settings. There is a lack of consensus regarding the nature of this disadvantage and the steps we would take to address the problem.</p>
<p><i>Root-Cause Analysis Findings</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First-year teachers are viewed as positive resources. While the national research is clear that on average, first-year teachers do not produce the learning gains that teachers with more experience have, our constituents resoundingly reported that teachers early in their careers are desirable for bringing energy, the latest research and learning and vitality to their communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of evidence to support understanding of teacher turnover. We were not able to assess whether or not the same schools experience turnover and exposure to first-year teachers longitudinally or if the high rates of first-year teacher exposure at some schools were artifacts of a particular year and a small school. For example, School A may have 1 of 4 teachers in their first-year at 25% in this data set but then have no further new teachers for the next three years. Or School B may have between 15 and 25% of its teachers in their first-year every year. The constituents suggested that they thought this was not an ongoing problem and our data does not adequately address the question.
<p><i>Relevant Metrics</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The data analysis result which finds that exposure to first-year teachers is higher in high-poverty schools and that this is particularly true for high-poverty schools in town and rural settings but not in cities/suburbs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The results of unstructured interviews and conversations with hiring managers and Superintendents around issues of staff retention.
<p><i>Note: The available data represents a snapshot of time and does not capture experiences of schools over time, which led us to doubt the quality of inferences we are making from this data.</i></p>
<p><i>Stakeholder Feedback</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some regional stakeholders suggested that their experienced teachers are recruited to Chittenden County (Burlington area) where high salaries and greater amenities exist; this results in other counties needing to hire more first-year teachers. However, for most regions this was not a prevalent concern. Average salaries for teachers are higher in Chittenden County in comparison to their neighboring counties; however class size is also substantially larger.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most regional feedback suggested that the percentage of teachers in their first-year was relatively low

and if it were lower would also constitute a problem of recruiting those with current knowledge and energizing existing teaching faculty. Stakeholders suggested that this was not a problem that occurred every year, but rather a problem that may be cyclical in nature.

- Field constituents reported a preference for hiring higher quality teachers even if they were at greater risk for turnover rather than hire less highly-qualified teachers who was likely stay for the long term.
- Few responses were gleaned from first-year teachers regarding their experience and perspective on their plans to stay or not stay in their schools.

Research Sub-strategies

- **Sub strategy 1.1: Longitudinal First-Year Teacher Study.** The Vermont Agency of Education will utilize existing data resources to conduct a longitudinal study of first-year teacher exposure based on EdFacts data over the past decade to identify which, if any schools have persistent turnover in staff. This data will then be compared to current poverty and minority quartile data to determine if there is any relationship.
- **Sub strategy 1.3: Collaborative study with Vermont NEA.** In partnership with the Vermont NEA, the VT AOE will survey all first-year teachers in October and May to track teacher perceptions regarding their likelihood of seeking other employment outside of their Supervisory Union and the reasons they are/are not seeking that opportunity.

Performance Objectives

- 1.1a: By 2016, a statistical analysis of teacher migration patterns between Supervisory Unions will be completed.
- 1.2a: By 2016, a longitudinal analysis of teacher turnover in all schools will be completed to identify schools with persistent instability.
- 1.3a: By 2016, a first-year teacher perception survey will be completed in partnership with Vermont NEA.
- 1.0a: By 2017, the Vermont AOE will publish to schools the results of all three studies for identification of risk factors in hiring, attributes of better “matches,” and the factors which first-year teachers cite as “push” or “pull” factors in teachers seeking re-employment outside of their current Supervisory Union.
- 1.1b: Every year between 2016 and 2020, replicate the analysis done in the teacher migration patterns study to identify if any changes occur.
- 1.2b: Every year between 2016 and 2020, replicate the analysis done in the teacher turnover study to identify if any changes occur.
- 1.3b: In 2019, replicate the first-year teacher perception survey to determine if and how perceptions have changed for first-year teachers.

Strategy 2: Recruitment and Retention Practices

Our stakeholders suggested further research on current hiring practices in rural and town settings to analyze how schools find a candidate who is a “good match” for the more remote areas of Vermont. Best hiring practices will be highlighted for other high-turnover rural and town areas to utilize.

Root-Cause Analysis Findings

- **Towns/rural areas may not meet young educators’ social needs;** Young teachers who seek an active social life may not find amenities (restaurants, stores, or other social outing opportunities) that match their personal interests. While they may “try-out” a rural or town community, they leave if it doesn’t match their expectations thus increasing turnover.
- **It was suggested that there may be a cultural mismatch, which leads to higher teacher turnover;** Teachers who are new to the rural and town settings may find that they do not “fit into” the lifestyle of the community. Because there is less connection to the community, there may also be less commitment to staying involved in the community and/or school. Similarly, these communities may not feel connected to the newcomer teacher. This “cultural mismatch” may lead to higher turnover.
- **Lack of desirable and affordable housing in rural and town settings;** Young teachers’ who have an entry level salary may not be able to afford larger homes and may not find the less expensive homes desirable. This lack of a “middle range” options makes housing less accessible for new teachers such as apartment complexes that are available in cities/suburbs. As a result, many early career teachers have long commutes in addition to the work load of the first years, which make teaching in outlying areas undesirable and increase turnover.

Relevant Metrics

- First-year teacher exposure is higher for high-poverty schools located outside of Chittenden County and substantially higher for towns and rural areas compared to city/suburb setting.

Stakeholder Feedback

- Stakeholders suggested that hiring committees may not identify candidates who are a “best match” for staying in the communities in which they will serve;
- Stakeholders commented that teacher training programs may not provide adequate opportunities for teachers to experience more rural and/or town settings in order to determine whether the setting is a good match;
- Stakeholders suggested that individuals who are from these communities and who may be a good “cultural match” may not have adequate teacher training in the field;
- Stakeholders suggested that school systems may not provide adequate information for how first-year teachers new to the community can access resources, housing and community engagement.

Recruitment and Retention Practices Sub strategies

- **Sub strategy 2.1: Research current hiring and retention practices in high and low turnover schools.** Through focus groups with schools identified as having persistently high or low teacher turnover (Sub strategy 1.1 above) to identify which practices for hiring and retaining educators are currently in use in these Supervisory Unions/Districts.

- **Sub strategy 2.2: Promote hiring and retention strategies of low-turnover schools in “sending” counties.** Based on the results of the studies conducted in sub strategy 1.1 and 1.2, the AOE will identify the schools which have better than expected retention of first year teachers and isolate the practices they undertake for retaining educators for replication at other locations with less favorable outcomes.

- **Sub strategy 2.3: Create a pool of interested and acclimated candidates.** Further research is needed to understand the current placement of aspiring teachers who are training in Vermont higher education institutions. If it is found that limited or no opportunities are available for these aspiring teachers to experience a rural or town setting during their training, additional partnerships between these communities and the institutions could be forged. For example, higher education institutions might recruit aspiring teachers who indicate interest in teaching in more rural or town settings into their programs. These institutions can also help with specific placements during their training years, or they might develop additional incentives such as transportation or affordable housing to more remote areas where teachers can gain in-field experiences. It may also be advisable to research ways of “growing your own” teacher development models for specific counties.

Performance Objectives

- 2.1a: By 2017, identified the schools with persistently high and low teacher turnover for participation in focus groups related to hiring and retention practices.

- 2.1b: By 2017, report to the State Board of Education the findings related to migration patterns, identifying which districts benefit from in-migration and which pay the costs of out-migration for possible policy change considerations.

- 2.1c: By 2016, survey the existing practices of educator preparation programs to identify the criteria by which they place students in internships.

- 2.2a: By 2018, publish the results of best practices in hiring and retention related to low teacher turnover.

- 2.3a: By 2017, report to Vermont Council of Teacher Educators (VCTE) the results of educator preparation program survey and recommendations for change to meet state needs.

- 2.3b: By 2018, partner with at least 1 program (selected through competitive bid) to expand student internship placements into counties identified with persistent high turnover and study the results of that program for implementation elsewhere.

- 2.3c: By 2020, share the results of the program development with the Vermont Council of Teacher Educators (VCTE) to identify opportunities for moving to scale across the state.

Strategy 3: Increase Professional Benefits and Learning Opportunities

Our stakeholders shared that teachers may leave rural and town settings due to a lack of accessible professional-learning opportunities. This shortage could lead teachers to feel professionally isolated or stagnant in their professional growth. In addition, teachers in rural and town settings who receive lower pay than higher density areas may leave to teach in schools where there is higher pay potential.

Root-Cause Analysis Findings

- **Lack of network/peer learning opportunities among first year /early career teachers.** Because there are few first year/early career teachers in the more remote areas of Vermont, it is more difficult to create substantial networking and peer learning opportunities for professional development.
- **Lack of access to higher education connections for continued learning.** If new and early career teachers are not in physical proximity to higher education campuses, there is a lack of available resources for continued professional development, which may lead to master's degrees.
- **Lack of financial resources for less affluent school communities to provide professional development for new and early career teachers.** Despite the funding formulas in Vermont, which are designed to equalize tax dollars across the state per pupil, smaller districts may be less able to host high-quality professional development for their staff because funding needs to be allocated to overhead and salaries to remain competitive. Larger schools and districts, which have the same funding per pupil, may be able to leverage their larger scale to grow and support professional development in house.

Relevant Metrics

- Geographical analysis of distribution of colleges relative to counties with higher exposure to first-year teachers shows less access to colleges in those with lower rates of turnover.
- Analysis of participation rates in Professional Learning Network activities show greater participation in counties with lower exposure to first-year teachers.

Stakeholder Feedback

- Stakeholders suggested that teachers who work in rural or town settings may not have many peer mentoring or networking opportunities, which they believe would keep them professionally connected and engaged. They suggested that additional, even if remote, professional connections would lead to less isolation.
- Stakeholders noted a belief that schools in rural and town settings that have fewer financial resources than schools in higher density areas are not able to afford similar opportunities for professional development. It was suggested that schools with more resources for professional development should share these opportunities with less affluent schools outside of their communities.
- Stakeholders noted that schools closer to Chittenden County in particular, have better access to higher education institutions that are located near that area (including University of Vermont, Champlain College, Community College of Vermont, Burlington College, and St. Michaels College). This geographic access increases opportunities for partnerships in research, professional development, or other professional support.

Teacher and Principal Preparation Sub-strategies

- **Sub strategy 1: Develop regional mentoring and peer groups.** Mentoring programs for early career teachers have proven to be effective communities of practice for both new and experienced teachers, especially in areas of professional isolation. More data is needed to understand where such mentoring communities of practice are active, and where they could be further developed in our regional Supervisory Unions.
- **Sub strategy 2: Develop satellite higher education programs for continued professional development or Master’s degrees.** Stakeholders suggested that higher education institutions could develop a wider geographical reach for teachers who are unable to access their programs on the main campus. Satellite programs in more remote areas would enable these teachers to continue their professional development and/or pursue master’s degree programs. Online learning or increased partnerships with LEAs are potential opportunities for distance learning.
- **Sub strategy 3: Increase higher education research opportunities in more remote areas of Vermont.** Stakeholders recommended that further research opportunities in more remote areas of Vermont would bring additional resources to the community including increased partnerships with higher education faculty and students. Research projects can also bring additional funding, highlight best practices, or shed light on areas where further resources and support are needed.
- **Sub strategy 4: Increase Supervisory Unions collaboration on professional development offerings** Supervisory Unions that have fewer financial resources to pay for teachers’ professional development could partner with other Supervisory Unions to share the costs associated with this necessary benefit.

Performance Objectives

- 3.1a: By 2016, formalize partnership with Vermont NEA to support increased professional learning networks in rural and town settings.
- 3.2b: By 2017, survey the existing practices of Higher Educational institutions to identify interest and feasibility of an extensions of mentoring/networking support (higher education facilitators), satellite programs for continued learning/professional development, and research opportunities for faculty and students on high-poverty rural and town school settings.
- 3.1b: By 2017, identify the schools with persistently high and low-teacher turnover for participation in focus groups related to the perceived need for additional mentoring, and networking opportunities for teachers.
- 3.4a: By 2018, report the results of the survey regarding extended professional development opportunities to (networks, satellite programs, research opportunities) and propose development funding.
- 3.4b: By 2018, partner with at least 3 communities to implement additional mentoring and networking opportunities, especially for first-year teachers in high needs areas.
- 3.1c: By 2019, share the results of the program development of increased mentoring and networking with the Vermont NEA to identify opportunities for moving to scale across the state.

Strategy 4: Improving Working Conditions at High-poverty schools

Our stakeholders suggested that new and early career teachers may find it too challenging to work in high-poverty schools where students' and families' social, financial and academic needs are greater than in cities and suburbs where there are more resources for support. These teachers may "burn out" in high demand jobs and search for work in schools that are perceived as less challenging.

Root-Cause Analysis Findings

- High-poverty schools tend to have a higher percentage of students with academic and social needs who require additional support from teachers and staff.
- High-poverty schools are required to use Title I funds strategically, but these schools may not have access to a wide range of best practices for effective implementation.
- First-year and early-career teachers may not have adequate professional development related to poverty and the effects that it has on students' social and academic preparation.
- High-poverty communities may not have adequate systems of support for students and their families outside of the school.

Relevant Metrics

- The results of unstructured interviews and conversations with superintendents and teachers regarding lack of resources to support students and families in high-needs schools and communities.
- Analysis of participation rates in Professional Learning Network activities show greater participation in counties with lower exposure to first-year teachers.

Stakeholder Feedback

- Stakeholders were concerned that teachers who work in high-poverty schools perceived their jobs to be more challenging than jobs in schools with lower poverty rates. Stakeholders suggested that first year teachers and early career teachers leave the position sooner if jobs in less demanding schools became available to them.
- Stakeholders proposed that new teachers may not have had adequate preparation, training, or ongoing professional development to effectively support students who are traumatized by poverty.
- Stakeholders wondered whether some high-poverty rural and town schools may use Title I funds more effectively than others and suggested that best practices be studied and disseminated.

Fiscal Equity Sub-strategies

- Sub strategy 1: Utilize research from migration study to understand whether new and early career teachers transition to more affluent communities.
- Sub strategy 2: Utilize focus groups for high turnover schools to understand teachers' perceptions of high demand versus lower demanding schools and whether and how school context creates an incentive for transition.
- Sub strategy 3: Research low-turnover, high-poverty schools' practices with Title I funds and

disseminate best practices.

- Sub strategy 4: Create a pool of interested and acclimated candidates. Further research is needed to understand how teachers in training are prepared to support students who live in poverty. If it is found that little or no preparation is given to these teachers in training, then the higher education institution could increase their course offerings and internship opportunities in these areas.

Performance Objectives

- 4.1a: By 2017, identified the schools with persistently high and low teacher turnover for participation in focus groups related to high need students and schools.
- 4.1b: By 2017, report to the State Board of Education the findings related to migration patterns, identifying whether teachers transition from higher poverty schools to lower poverty schools to consider possible policy changes.
- 4.2a: By 2017, survey the existing practices of educator preparation programs to identify course plans for preparing teachers to work with high-poverty students and communities.
- 4.2b: By 2017, identify Title I best practices in high-poverty, low-turnover schools.
- 4.2c: By 2018, disseminate best Title I practices to all schools.
- 4.2d: By 2017, report to Vermont Teacher Education Collaborative the results of educator preparation program survey and recommendations for change to meet state needs.

Section 5. Ongoing Monitoring and Support

Vermont is committed to ensuring that all of our students, and particularly our students which have not been historically well served in schools, have access to the highest caliber educators. Towards that end, Vermont intends to continue using its Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A funds to provide technical assistance and oversight to the schools and districts that our data indicate are in the top decile for having the largest percentages of students from low-income families and/or students of color.

In particular, we commit to replicating this data analysis in each year to ensure that our schools continue to staff in such ways that there are no equity gaps in terms of access to high-quality educators based on these metrics in our high-minority schools and to identify if the existing gaps are reduced for students in our high-poverty schools. The results of these analyses will be shared with our Committee of Practitioners and posted to the SEA website on an annual basis.

Following the conclusion of our research strategy in 2017, we will have identified school systems with chronic teacher turnover issues and those that are negatively impacted as “exporting districts.” For these systems, we will have additional oversight and technical assistance around recruitment, hiring, and retention. We also will review applicable research and forward relevant studies to our task forces and school districts. Formal monitoring will be conducted on an annual basis and more often if a district fails to make progress toward its performance objectives in a timely manner.

As detailed in Section 4, for each strategy we have a plan in place to assess implementation success. We have already identified the following areas where we will begin collecting information, and we are prepared to build on these efforts with further data collection and reviews as they emerge:

- Development of a longitudinal teacher data system to identify “exporting” and “importing” districts and schools with chronic teacher turnover patterns.
- Creation of a teacher survey with Vermont NEA to build understanding of first year teacher experiences
- Development of a longitudinal data system that will link students to the teachers for whom they are assigned, which will lead to more precise reporting in the future.
- Fiscal auditing and management

We have established a detailed timeline (see Table 7) to guide the short-term and long-term implementation of our plan. Annual public reporting on progress toward addressing root causes to eliminate equity gaps will include posting a progress report on the VT-AOE website, sending the link to all LEAs and stakeholders, and scheduling a conversation with major news media. Every two years VT-AOE will formally update this plan based on new data, new analyses of root causes, and new strategies. More frequent updates to inform the plan, as well as strategic approaches to addressing implementation, will be emerge through our biannual Educator Equity Coalition described above.

Table 7. Vermont Implementation Timeline

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Time Frame	
			Start	Frequency
Execute Sub strategy 1.1: Longitudinal First-Year Teacher Study.	AOE and External Researchers	VT-AOE Deputy VT-AOE Director of Research	Summer 2015	Annually
Execute Sub strategy 1.2: Longitudinal Teacher Migration Study.	AOE and External Researchers	VT-AOE Deputy Brown University Researchers	Summer 2015	Annually
Execute Sub strategy 1.3: First-Year Teacher Survey	AOE and VT NEA	VT-AOE Deputy VT NEA	Summer 2015	Twice a Year, Repeat in 2019
Replicate Educator Equity Analysis	AOE	VT-AOE Deputy VT-AOE Director of Research	Winter 2016	Annually
Committee of Practitioners access plan implementation progress meeting (all strategies)	Stakeholders	VT-AOE Deputy	Spring 2016	Twice a year
Publish the results of each study for sub strategies 1.1-1.3	AOE	VT Deputy	Summer 2016	One time
Publicly report Equitable Access Plan Year 1 Progress Report and solicit input from stakeholders	Internal VT-AOE team, stakeholders, and the public	VT-AOE Deputy	Summer 2016	One time
Present to the Board of Education the results of the three studies.	AOE	VT-AOE Deputy	Fall 2016	One time
Survey existing educator preparation programs to identify how student interns are placed	AOE	AOE ROPA Coordinator	Fall 2016	One time
Focus group study of school systems with low-turnover and chronically high turnover to identify best practices	AOE	AOE Director of Educator Quality	Fall 2016	One time

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Time Frame	
			Start	Frequency
Update Vermont’s Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators	Internal VT-AOE team and stakeholders	VT-AOE Deputy	Spring 2017	Every two years
Publish results of identified best practices on AOE website.	AOE	AOE Director of Educator Quality	Summer 2017	One time, ongoing updates
Publicly report on Year 2 progress and solicit input from stakeholders	Internal VT-AOE team, stakeholders, and the public	VT-AOE Deputy	Summer 2017	One time
Report delivered to the Vermont Standards Board and The Vermont Teacher Education Collaborative on educator intern placement	AOE VSBPE NTEC	AOE ROPA Coordinator	Fall 2017	One time
Open competitive bid process for partnership for expanding intern placements in counties with persistent high turnover.	AOE	VT-AOE ROPA Consultant	Fall 2017	One time
Compile a progress report of strategy performance metrics and present to stakeholders	Internal VT-AOE team and stakeholders	VT-AOE Deputy	Winter 2018	One time
Identify and begin partnership study with 1 educator preparation program and begin implementation study.	AOE Institute of Higher Ed	AOE Deputy	Spring 2018	2-year partnership.
Publicly report Year 3 Progress and solicit input from stakeholders	Internal VT-AOE team, stakeholders, and the public	VT-AOE Deputy	Summer 2018	One time
Present results of the Intern Placement Implementation Study to Vermont Standards Board and The Vermont Teacher Education Collaborative on educator intern placement	AOE VSBPE NTEC	AOE ROPA Coordinator	Fall 2020	One time

Section 6. Conclusion

VT-AOE strongly supports the U.S. Department of Education’s goal of ensuring that every student has equitable access to excellent educators and welcomes this opportunity to present our plan for advancing this mission in Vermont. Our multi-faceted plan reflects outreach to the community and thoughtful deliberation about actions that most likely will enable our schools and districts to attain this important objective. Although our plan will evolve over time, we believe that our theory of action and the targeted strategies we have included in the plan embody a solid approach to improving educator effectiveness.

Appendix A. Vermont Stakeholder Engagement Process Timeline

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
Gather and review data.	Internal VT-AOE team	VT-AOE Deputy Secretary, Quality Assurance	Fall 2014
Identify and recruit stakeholders groups to inform the plan and build a longer term coalition to see it through.	Internal VT-AOE team	VT-AOE Deputy Secretary, Quality Assurance	Fall 2014
Personal interviews with key stakeholders	Identified Individuals	Task force leaders	Fall 2014
Prepare data materials to share with stakeholders.	Internal VT-AOE team	VT-AOE Deputy Secretary, Quality Assurance	Winter 2015
AOE input gathering workshop with Leadership Team	AOE Directors and Deputies	VT-AOE Director of Stakeholder Engagement	Winter 2015
Launch the survey regarding indicators of interest for stakeholders and analyze results (Appendix B)	Stakeholders	VT-AOE Director of Stakeholder Engagement	Winter 2015
Review stakeholder input, begin setting priorities, and identify metrics.	Internal VT-AOE team and stakeholders	VT-AOE Director of Stakeholder Engagement	Winter 2015
Data analysis of key metrics	AOE	VT-AOE Director of Stakeholder Engagement	Winter 2015
Build VT-AOE Equitable Access website, electronic mailing list, and communication tools to foster two-way feedback loops.	Internal VT-AOE team	VT-AOE Deputy Secretary, Quality Assurance	Spring 2015
Collect and collate input from stakeholders on the examination of data to inform equity gaps and root-cause analysis.	Stakeholders	Stakeholders/ VT-AOE Director of Stakeholder Engagement	Spring 2015
SEA drafts educator equitable access plan.	Internal VT-AOE team	VT-AOE Deputy Secretary, Quality Assurance	Spring 2015
Incorporate feedback from wider stakeholder conversations led by Vermont's Equitable Access committee members.	Stakeholders	Equitable Access Committee Members	Spring 2015
Post draft of SEA plan for feedback from stakeholders	Stakeholders	VT-AOE Deputy Secretary, Quality Assurance	Spring 2015

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
Incorporate feedback from stakeholder review.	Stakeholders	Equitable Access Committee Members	Spring 2015
Finalize plan.	VT-AOE and ED	VT-AOE Deputy Secretary, Quality Assurance	Summer 2015

Appendix B. Stakeholder Data Survey

Introduction: The United States Department of Education, the Vermont State Board of Education, and the Vermont Agency of Education are all committed to increasing educational opportunities for our students. In June, Vermont will submit a report to the federal government detailing our plans for addressing inequities that our students may face in their access to high caliber educators if they attend schools with higher rates of poverty or concentrations of non-white student populations. In this survey, we are seeking the public's input to understand what they perceive to be issues related to these inequities.

1. We must analyze inequities related to student experiences with less experienced educators. Based on your experience please rank the following data sources so that the first item is the one you most believe the Agency of Education should investigate for inequities:

<input type="checkbox"/> Percent of teachers working in their first year of teaching
<input type="checkbox"/> Percent of teachers working in their first or second year of teaching
<input type="checkbox"/> The number of years the current Principal has lead the school
<input type="checkbox"/> The number of years the current Superintendent has served the Supervisory Union or School District
<input type="checkbox"/> The number of Principals the school has had in the last 3 years
<input type="checkbox"/> The number of Superintendents the Supervisory Union or School District has had in the last 3 years

2. We must analyze inequities related to student experiences with less qualified educators. Based on your experience please rank the following data sources so that the first item is the one you most believe the Agency of Education should investigate for inequities:

<input type="checkbox"/> Percent of courses taught by teachers who are not rated "Highly Qualified"
<input type="checkbox"/> Percent of teachers who do not have a master's degree.
<input type="checkbox"/> Average Praxis Test Score for Teachers by subject (this test assesses the teacher's knowledge of the subject they teach)

3. We must analyze inequities related to student experiences with educators working outside their area of expertise. Based on your experience please rank the following data sources so that the first item is the one you most believe the Agency of Education should investigate for inequities:

<input type="checkbox"/> Percent of courses taught by teachers who are teaching on a Provisional license
<input type="checkbox"/> Percent of teachers who do not have a college major in the subject they are teaching
<input type="checkbox"/> Percent of course taught by teachers with licenses for other grade levels (ex. a middle school teacher in 6th grade with a secondary English license)

4. We may look at other issues related to inequities across our schools. How interested would you be in each of the following measures for comparing student experiences and access to quality educators

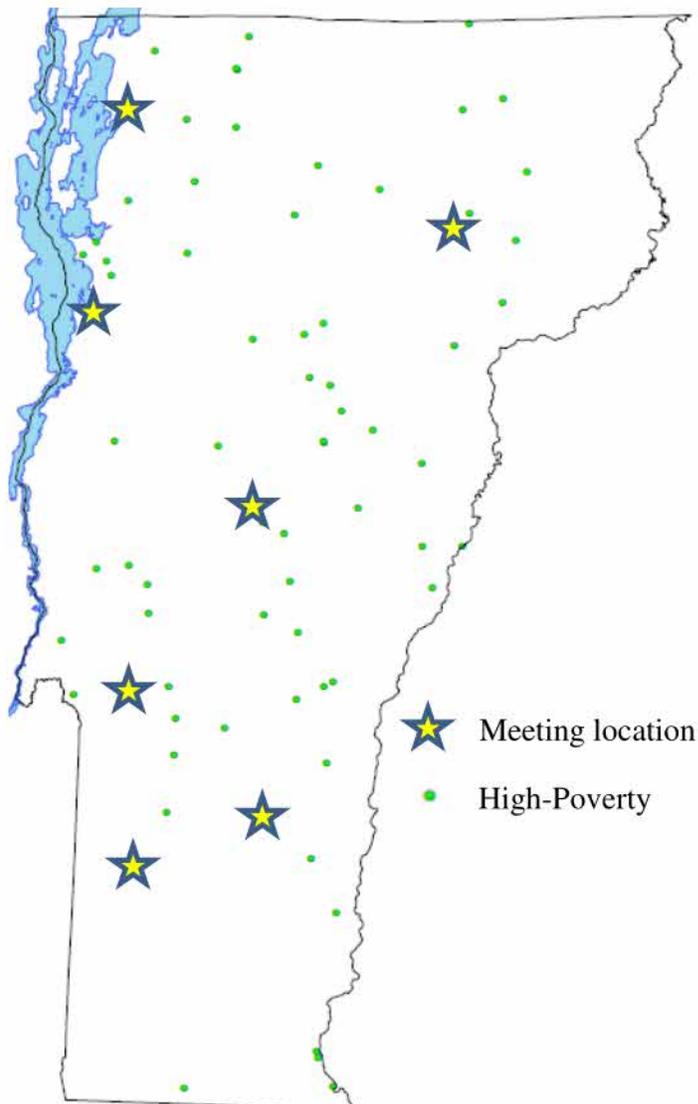
	Not interested at all	Somewhat interested	Interested	Very interested
The average teacher salary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The average first year teacher salary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The average principal salary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The percent of non-white educational staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The percent of female educational staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The percent of staff living within 20 miles of the school where they work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The average age of educational staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The average teacher to student ratio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. As we consider student access to high quality educational, are there any additional data sources which you think we should consider? How would these data sources affect student learning?

6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding the experiences of our students in high poverty or high minority schools that you think will help us to address any inequities that exist?

Appendix C. Participation in Regional Meetings

Stakeholder Group	Burlington March 19	Swanton March 25	Orleans March 26	Barre March 30	Bellows Falls April 7	Rutland April 8	Bennington April 9
Teachers	3	2	1	3	3	2	3
Principals	1	1	2	1	2	0	0
Community and business organizations	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
Parents	1	0	3	1	2	1	2
District Administrators and School Board Members	0	1	0	3	0	3	1



Appendix D. Stakeholder Engagement Meeting PowerPoint

Educator Equity

Dr. Amy Fowler
Ms. Debi Price
Ms. Jessica Stein
Dr. Annie Howell



AGENDA

1. Overview
2. Preliminary Data Findings
3. Opportunities for Input
4. Comments



2

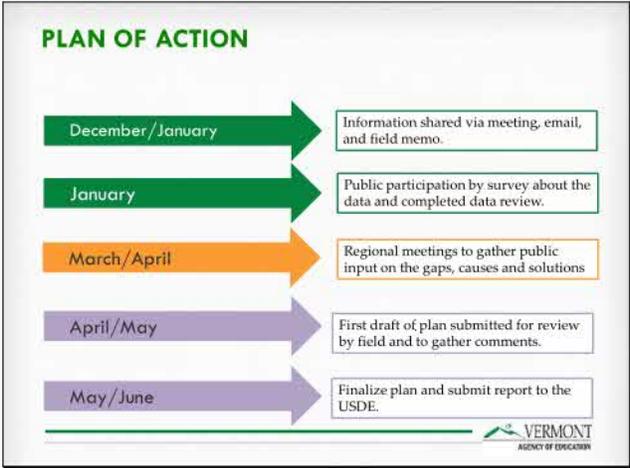
USDE REQUIREMENTS OF STATE PLANS

WHAT AND WHEN

- **Deadline:** June 1, 2015
- Plans must meet the following **six requirements:**
 1. Find equity gaps between poor and wealthy schools and high-minority and low-minority schools.
 2. Meet with the public to get their ideas
 3. Explain why there are equity gaps.
 4. Make a state plan to close the equity gaps that exist
 5. Determine how we will know if we are being successful with the plan
 6. Describe how we will report the results of our plan to the public



3



- ### HOW DID WE IDENTIFY EQUITY GAPS
- Have to compare schools in 2 ways:
 1. Poor Schools to Wealthy Schools
 2. High-Minority Schools to Low-Minority Schools
 - When we compare them we must look at 3 characteristics
 1. Inexperienced educators
 2. Unqualified educators
 3. Out-of-field teachers
- 5
- VERMONT AGENCY OF EDUCATION

UNDERSTANDING THE DATA

Key: DISADVANTAGES = RED

Based on national research we expected to see:

High Minority Schools with lots of **RED**

Poor Schools with lots of **RED**

6

VERMONT AGENCY OF EDUCATION

TEACHERS-MINORITY COMPARISONS

Finding: On teacher characteristics, Vermont's high-minority schools are not disadvantaged.		Average		
		High Minority Schools	Low Minority Schools	Difference
Teacher Data	1 st Year Teachers	3.5%	6.3%	2.8%
	Teachers Not HQT	2.7%	4.9%	2.2%
	Teachers with Provisional	0.2%	0.8%	0.6%
	Adjusted Average Salary	\$49,886	\$46,578	-\$3,308
	Student: Teacher			
	Adjusted Average Salary	\$4,919	\$4,551	-\$368



PRINCIPALS-MINORITY COMPARISONS

Finding: On most principal characteristics, Vermont's high-minority schools are not disadvantaged.		Average		
		High Minority Schools	Low Minority Schools	Difference
Principal Data	Number of Principals in last 5 years	1.80	2.00	-0.2
	Adjusted Average Principal Salary	\$84,154	\$75,955	-\$8,199
	Student: Principal Adjusted Average Salary	\$429	\$808	\$379



TEACHERS-POVERTY COMPARISONS

Finding: On most teacher characteristics, Vermont's poor schools are disadvantaged.		Average		
		Poor Schools	Wealthy Schools	Difference
Teacher Data	1 st Year Teachers	5.9%	3.0%	-2.9%
	Teachers Not HQT	5.2%	4.7%	-0.5%
	Teachers with Provisional License	1.6%	2.0%	0.4%
	Adjusted Average Salary	\$47,446	\$48,638	-\$1,192
	Student: Teacher			
	Adjusted Average Salary	\$4,460	\$4,813	-\$353



PRINCIPALS-POVERTY COMPARISONS

Finding:	Average			
	Poor Schools	Wealthy Schools	Difference	
On most principal characteristics, Vermont's poor schools are disadvantaged.				
Principal Data	Number of Principals in last 5 years	2.00	1.95	-0.05
	Adjusted Average Principal Salary	\$78,244	\$85,034	-\$6,790
	Student: Principal Adjusted Average Per. Student Salary	\$524	\$475	\$49



1ST YEAR TEACHERS

	Poor Schools	Wealthy Schools	Gap Analysis
State-wide	5.9%	3.0%	Gap is 2x as large P↔W
City/Suburb	2.8%	2.6%	Gap is nearly equal P↔W Gap is better than state
Town	7.0%	2.5%	Gap is 3x as large P↔W Gap is worse than state
Rural	6.1%	3.2%	Gap is 2x as large P↔W Gap is the same as the state



INPUT

- Why do our schools with higher poverty in rural and small towns experience
 - Higher exposure to 1st year teachers?
- What have the city/suburbs done that has eliminated this problem? What might the rural/towns do?



12

Appendix E. Vermont Agency of Education Press Releases Regarding Equity Plan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 19, 2014

Contact: Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary,
(802) 479-4308, amy.fowler@state.vt.us



219 North Main Street, Suite 402, Barre, VT 05641 | 802-479-1030 | www.education.vermont.gov

U.S. Department of Education to Release Educator Equity Data

BARRE – The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) will release data today on educator equity for all states, including Vermont.

This data release is part of a larger initiative by the USDE, which has determined that all states must examine the extent to which schools that serve students from historically underserved communities (poverty and high-minority populations) are enjoying the same access to quality educators as those school with greater privilege (wealthy and low-minority populations).

“The Vermont Agency of Education and State Board of Education share the federal government’s concern that equity for our students is a worthy goal,” said Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary for the Agency. “In Vermont, we will engage our stakeholders in identifying the indicators of inequity in our schools and generating proposals for how to address those issues. It is an excellent opportunity to dovetail the work our State Board of Education has already undertaken with a federal requirement.”

The data used in the profiles come from three existing Department data sources: the Civil Rights Data Collection, EDFacts, and the Common Core of Data. However, these data may include errors or incorrect data submissions.

The Agency of Education is looking at Vermont’s validated data sources which are considered more reliable, to identify and determine what inequities may or may not exist across the state in terms of access to Educator Quality.

According to USDE, the Educator Equity Profiles are intended to be a resource and example for how a state might present data analyzing differences in teacher characteristics between schools across the state for purposes of identifying equity gaps and developing a *State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators*. The State Plan is due on June 1, 2015.

Over the course of the next several months, the Agency will be hosting regional meetings across the state to collect public input on a plan to ensure equitable access. Dates and locations for those meetings will be announced publicly in early 2015.

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219 North Main Street, Suite 402, Barre, VT 05641 | 802-479-1030 | www.education.vermont.gov

Agency to Host Regional Meetings on Educator Equity ***Part of Federal Effort to Ensure Access to High-quality Educators for All***

BARRE – The Vermont Agency of Education is pleased to announce seven regional meetings for public input in response to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) call that all states must examine the extent to which schools that serve students from historically underserved communities (poverty and high-minority populations) are enjoying the same access to quality educators as those school with greater privilege (wealthy and low-minority populations).

“Our initial review of Vermont data suggests that there are pronounced inequities in access to high quality educators for our students attending schools with greater poverty, and these inequities are greatest in our rural and remote communities. For example, in our high poverty schools 6% of teachers are in their first year compared to 3% of teachers in our low poverty schools; in rural and remote areas this is even more pronounced. Among high poverty schools, those located far from urban centers have 6.4% of teachers in their first year compared to wealthier schools in these same areas where 2.8% of teachers are in their first year,” said Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary for the Agency. “Through these community meetings, we hope to hear from the people living and attending these schools to better understand what they believe is causing these inequities and what strategies they would suggest for addressing them.”

Each 90-minute meeting will include opportunities for community members to review the analyzed data, participate in small group discussions related to why these patterns of inequity exist and to generate suggestions for efforts Vermont should undertake to increase access to high quality educators in these communities.

The Vermont AOE is seeking the public’s input through two mechanisms:

- 1) Members of the public may weigh in on data which they would like to see the AOE investigate related to access of students to high quality educators by taking this survey: [Data Survey](#).
- 2) Members of the public are invited to join us for one of seven meetings as scheduled below. To register for an email notification, you may complete this survey: [Register for Meetings](#).
 - a. Burlington High School, 52 Institute Road, Burlington, VT 05408- March 19, 6:30-8:00 pm
 - b. Swanton Central School, 24 Fourth Street, Swanton, VT 05488- March 25, 6:30-8:00 pm
 - c. Lakes Region Union High School, 317 Lake Region Road, Orleans, VT 05860 - March 26, 6:30-8:00 pm
 - d. Rutland High School, 22 Stratton Road, Rutland, VT 05701 – April 2, 6:30-8:00 pm

- e. Bellow Falls UHSD #27, 406 High School Road, Westminster, VT 05158 – April 7, 6:30-8:00 pm
- f. Bennington Elementary School, 128 Park Street, Bennington, VT 05201 – April 8, 6:30-8:00 pm
- g. Spaulding High School, 155 Ayers Street, Barre, VT 05641 – March 31, 6:00-7:30 pm

Contact: Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary, (802) 479-4308 or amy.fowler@state.vt.us

Connect with the Vermont Agency of Education on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/VTEducation>), Facebook (www.facebook.com/VTEducation), and YouTube (www.youtube.com/VTEducation).

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219 North Main Street, Suite 402, Barre, VT 05641 | 802-479-1030 | www.education.vermont.gov

UPDATED DATES FOR RUTLAND, BARRE EVENTS: Agency Hosts Regional Meetings on Educator Equity *Part of Federal Effort to Ensure Access to High-quality Educators for All*

BARRE – The Vermont Agency of Education continues to hold regional meetings for public input in response to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) call that all states must examine the extent to which schools that serve students from historically underserved communities (poverty and high-minority populations) are enjoying the same access to quality educators as those school with greater privilege (wealthy and low-minority populations).

Each 90-minute meeting will include opportunities for community members to review the analyzed data, participate in small group discussions related to why these patterns of inequity exist and to generate suggestions for efforts Vermont should undertake to increase access to high quality educators in these communities.

The Vermont AOE is seeking the public's input through two mechanisms:

- 1) Members of the public may weigh in on data which they would like to see the AOE investigate related to access of students to high quality educators by taking this survey: [Data Survey](#).
- 2) Members of the public are invited to join us for one of seven meetings. There are still four meetings. Note the Rutland date has been changed. To register for an email notification, you may complete this survey: [Register for Meetings](#).
 - a. Spaulding High School, 155 Ayers Street, Barre, VT 05641 – March 31, 2015, 6:00-7:30 pm
 - b. Bellow Falls UHSD #27, 406 High School Road, Westminster, VT 05158 – April 7, 6:30-8:00 pm
 - c. **DATE and LOCATION CHANGE Rutland Middle School 67 Library Ave, Rutland, VT 05701 – April 8, 6:30-8:00 pm**
 - d. Bennington Elementary School, 128 Park Street, Bennington, VT 05201 – April 9, 6:30-8:00 pm

Contact: Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary, (802) 479-4308 or amy.fowler@state.vt.us

Connect with the Vermont Agency of Education on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/VTEducation>), Facebook (www.facebook.com/VTEducation), and YouTube (www.youtube.com/VTEducation).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 20, 2015

Contact: Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary,
(802) 479-4308 or amy.fowler@state.vt.us



219 North Main Street, Suite 402, Barre, VT 05641 | 802-479-1030 | www.education.vermont.gov

Agency Completes Draft of Educator Equity Plan *Part of Federal Effort to Ensure Access to High-Quality Educators for all*

BARRE – The Vermont Agency of Education has completed the first draft of their plan to respond to inequities in access to quality educators in high-poverty areas. This report was written in response to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) call that all states must examine the extent to which schools that serve students from historically underserved communities (poverty and high-minority populations) are enjoying the same access to quality educators as those schools with greater privilege (wealthy and low-minority populations).

The plan is posted on the Educator Equity page (<http://education.vermont.gov/federal-education-programs/educator-equity>) and is accompanied by a survey for stakeholders to provide feedback at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/EquityPlanFeedback>. Feedback must be submitted by **noon on May 29th** to be considered for this year's plan.

Connect with the Vermont Agency of Education on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/VTEducation>), Facebook (www.facebook.com/VTEducation), and YouTube (www.youtube.com/VTEducation).

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