



**Advisory Council on Literacy**  
**September 13, 2023, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Gwen Carmolli, Vermont Curriculum Leaders Association, Chair; Bill Clark, Vermont Standards Board of Professional Educators; Sandra Cameron, Vermont School Boards Association; Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Community Member; Don Tinney, Vermont National Education Association; Ana Russo, Vermont Agency of Education; Beth O'Brien, Vermont Principals' Association; Susan Koch, Montpelier Roxbury School District; Michael Flanagan, Maple Run School District; Katie Campbell, Maple Run School District; Charley Gunkel, Montpelier High School; Emily Lesh, Vermont Agency of Education

**AOE:** Suzanne Sprague, Pat Fitzsimmons, Lori Dolezal

**Others:** Alison Novak

AGENDA	Meeting Link
<p><b>MEETING GOALS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Review spring recommendations</b></li> <li>● <b>Preview the work ahead</b></li> <li>● <b>Hear literacy updates</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Council Member Attendees:</b> Emily Lesh (for Emily Leute), Bill Clark, Sandra Cameron, Beth O'Brien, Donald Tinney, Catherine Campbell, Susan Koch, Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Michael Flanagan, Ana Russo, Charlie Gunkel</p> <p><b>Guests:</b> Pat Fitzsimmons (AOE),, Lori Dolezal (AOE), Alison Novak (Seven Days)</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Gwen Carmolli</p> <p><b>Note Taker:</b> AOE Representative</p> <p><b>Date &amp; Time:</b> September 13, 3:00-5:00</p> <p><b>Format:</b> Online meeting</p> <p>Notes included below agenda items.</p> <p>Meeting began 3:06 Meeting ended 4:24</p>
<p><b>NORMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Listen thoughtfully &amp; assume positive intentions</li> <li>● Ground statements in evidence</li> <li>● Stick to the protocol</li> <li>● Begin &amp; end on time</li> </ul>	<p><b>DECISION MAKING PROCESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gather Information &amp; Input</li> <li>● Deliberate</li> <li>● Prioritize</li> <li>● Vote</li> </ul>

TIME	MINUTE S	ACTIVITIES & NOTES
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3:00	25	<p><b>Council Work:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome &amp; Updates</li> <li>● Select notetaker; Gwen Carmolli &amp; Cynthia-Gardner-Morse</li> <li>● Roll Call &amp; share - Share name, role, and your <b>why</b> for serving on the council?</li> </ul> <p>Meeting began at 3:06</p> <p><b>Chair, Gwen Carmolli, welcomed the Council</b> and expressed appreciation for the collective efficacy around increasing literacy outcomes for all Vermont students. Hard work around literacy improvement is happening in schools around the state.</p> <p><b>Council members shared their interest - their why -</b> for serving on the Council</p> <p>Emily Lesh -(proxy for AOE member Emily Leute) to support long-term success for students</p> <p>Bill Clark - to increase reading achievement for high school and students learning English</p> <p>Sandra Cameron - to provide opportunities for literacy for early childhood learners</p> <p>Beth O'Brien - to increase success for learners from PreK through high school</p> <p>Donald Tinney - the importance of reading in academics and long term success in life</p> <p>Gwen Carmolli - to increase literacy achievement for all students</p> <p>Catherine Campbell - to provide supports for struggling learners in the early grades</p> <p>Susan Koch - to get students excited about the magic of reading</p> <p>Cynthia Gardner-Morse - to meet needs of those with dyslexia and improve outcomes for underprivileged groups</p> <p>Michael Flanagan - to get students excited about reading</p> <p>Charlie Gunkel - to meets needs of students with dyslexia</p>
3:25	5	<p><b>Approve Meeting Minutes - <a href="#">May Minutes</a></b> (Motion &amp; Vote)</p> <p>Motion to approve minutes from May 2023: Susan Koch</p> <p>Second: Donald Tinney</p> <p>Motion Approved</p>
3:30	10	<p><b>Public Comment (Hear)</b></p> <p>Brief comment/s - up to 2 minutes, respectful - Thank you!</p> <p>There were no public comments. Gwen reviewed the guidelines for public comment:.</p>
3:40	40	<p><b>Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our spring work - <a href="#">Blueprint Priority Recommendations</a></li> <li>● Work this year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Monitor statewide literacy assessment results</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop recommendations on literacy-related data collection</li> <li>○ Develop recommendations on the implementation of literacy instruction resources</li> </ul> <p>Gwen reviewed the Blueprint Priority Recommendations that were selected and approved by the council in the spring. The council recommended the following to prioritize funding, training and resources toward improvement efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop strategies to address turnover, recruiting, and retention</li> <li>● Specify a core of required curriculum and instructional expectations that are implemented in all schools statewide</li> <li>● Ensure any mandate for instruction, curriculum, or assessment is made with a strategy for funding (no unfunded mandates)</li> <li>● Select valid and reliable assessments for the purpose of statewide assessment, including kindergarten readiness assessments, formative assessments, and required grade-level accountability testing</li> <li>● Support institutions of higher education to train an adequate number of early educators to ensure all children have access to highly prepared teachers</li> <li>● Identify and recognize evidence-based programs aligned with ESSA requirements</li> <li>● Curate a database of literacy materials that reflect cultural and linguistic diversity. Literacy resources reflect the breadth and depth of diversity</li> </ul>
4:20	30	<p><b>AOE Updates</b> Brief clarifying questions - each member is welcome to ask 1 clarifying question</p> <p>Emily Lesh, Pat Fitzsimmons and Lori Dolezal provided updates and information about the initiatives and resources in progress or currently available from the AOE. Many of these resources support recommendations made by the council.</p> <p><b>Evidence-Based Practices Resources</b> are available in the <a href="#">AOE's English Language Arts page</a>.</p> <p><b>Vermont Literacy Playbook</b>, an implementation guide school leaders for the state's early literacy blueprint, available online later this fall</p> <p><b>Online Literacy Learning Course and LMS (Learning Management System)</b> a platform and set course with 6 modules on</p>

		<p>the neuroscience of literacy development and evidence-based strategies available online to all Vermont educators, due to be release 9/21/23</p> <p><b>Early Learning Network Improvement Community (NIC)</b>, a training opportunity for school systems to improve literacy instruction based on evidence-based strategies, led by Dr. Sharon Walpole and Dr. Katherine Beauchat, currently 6 districts/more than 25 school &amp; 80 educators are participating (an increase from 4 districts last year)</p> <p><b>Family Engagement Literacy Program</b>, AOE contract with Springboard Collaborative to provide after-school or summer small group literacy instruction for students in grades PK-3. There was a pilot of the program in Milton this summer.</p> <p><b>Vermont Framework for Proficiency - Professional Learning and Coaching</b>, a professional learning and coaching series led Pat Fitzsimmons at the AOE and Great Schools Partnership, aiming to help school systems develop their system’s portrait of a graduation, and refine school systems’ Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGRs). The AOE is also completing Graduation Proficiency Hierarchies as a resource for reviewing and refining graduation proficiencies.</p> <p><b>Effective Use of Local Assessment Data Professional Learning</b> AOE contact with Demonstrated Success, to provide learning opportunities (series and coaching, and a course with credits from Castleton College) about effective ways to use data to plan supports and increase achievement in literacy.</p> <p><b>Benchmark Assessments Grant</b>, an opportunity for systems to apply for funding to support planning and use of benchmark assessments.</p> <p><b>Early Warning Systems - Professional Learning</b> to learn ways to use a variety of local data (Academic, behavioral, social emotional, etc.) to inform need for systems of support.</p> <p><b>AOE &amp; Vermont Public Partnership</b>, a collection of activities and resources available through PBS Learning Media &amp; AOE partnership to support literacy instruction in grades K-12.</p> <p><b>Coordinated Curriculum Framework</b>, a resource for school systems to develop, refine and implement coordinated curriculum, expected to be released fall 2023.</p> <p>Council members asked clarifying questions and expressed thanks for all of this terrific work.</p> <p>Gwen thanked the AOE for the updates, and for recent additions to the ELA page on the AOE website, and for recent ELA resources included in the AOE’s <a href="#">Weekly Field Memo</a></p>
4:50	10	<p><b>Wrap Up</b></p> <p>Gwen thanked the presenters for the updates and council members for their commitment to improve literacy outcomes for all Vermont students.</p>

		Motion to end meeting: Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Second from Sandra Cameron Meeting ended at 4:24
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**Notes:**  
**Thank you for your participation and effort to increase literacy outcomes!**