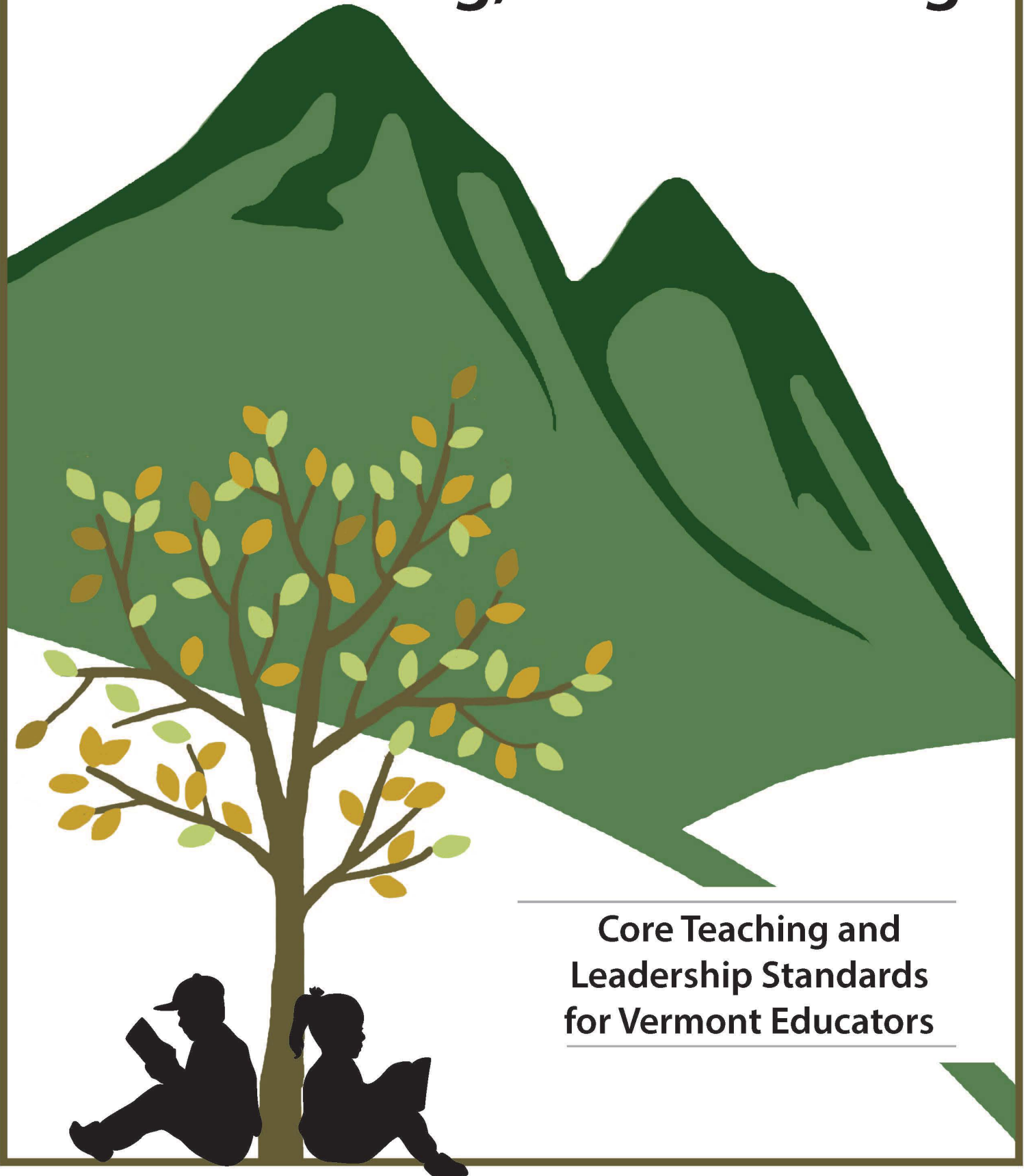


# A Vision for Teaching, Leading, and Learning



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**Core Teaching and  
Leadership Standards  
for Vermont Educators**

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June 5, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Since being revised in June 2013, *A Vision for Teaching, Leading, and Learning – Core Teaching and Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators* (also referred to as “The Mountain Book”) has remained untouched. The 2013 revision proudly included the adoption of professional educator standards based on the *Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards (2011)* and the *2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards*. Both set of standards formed a blueprint for the performances and essential knowledge that every educator should strive toward to ensure that all preK-12 students are college and career ready.

In November 2016, the VSBPE adopted the updated Leadership Standards based on the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015 (formally known as ISLLC)*. These updated ten standards:

- Have a stronger focus on students and student learning to better prepare students for a productive role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and
- Are interrelated to better promote academic and personal success for students and
- Are for all levels of educational leaders.

Additionally, included in this resource document are the links to two companion documents published by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and Jobs for the Future (JFF) to be used with the INTASC Teaching Standards and the PSEL Leadership Standards. *Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching (2015)* and *Leadership Competencies for Learning-Centered, Personalized Education (2017)*. These documents focus on personalized learner-centered systems and teacher and leader competencies that support personalized learner-centered systems.

Lastly, in the spring of 2018, the VSBPE updated the *Code of Professional Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct for Vermont Educators* that was first adopted in 2009. The VSBPE adopted the NASDTEC (National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification) *Model Code of Ethics for Educators (2015)* which is included in this resource document.

Adopting national standards and a national code of ethics is not only informing Vermont educators of national trends in education, but in keeping with the VSBPE’s vision of teaching, leading, and learning in Vermont.

Sincerely,

Vermont Standards Board of Professional Educators

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**2017 - 2018**

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This book cover is designed and printed as part of a cooperative project with the Digital Media Art class at the Barre Technical Center, Vermont. Book cover layout and design by Ratko Jokic, Jillian Pierce, Ethan Tatro, Dylan Philibert, Digital Media Arts 2012, instructor Ric Nudell.

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## Introduction

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to serve as a resource for educators, leaders, districts, professional organizations, teacher education programs, and others. As each set of standards included here emphasizes the skills and knowledge needed for 21st century teaching and learning, they form the basis for teacher preparation, licensure, and professional learning. A Vision for Teaching Leading and Learning includes:

- Core Teaching Standards for Vermont Educators
- Core Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators
- Code of Professional Ethics

### Alignment

The Core Teaching and Leadership Standards for Vermont educators stem directly from the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) model core standards, from the national Policy Board for Educational Administration: Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015 (formally known as ISLLC Standards). Adopting national standards, ensures that Vermont's standards are compatible with the Common Core State Standards for students in mathematics and English language arts, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) accomplished teaching core principles, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation standards. There is also a direct correlation between the standards and national teacher evaluation work, including Danielson's Framework<sup>1</sup> and the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model<sup>2</sup>.

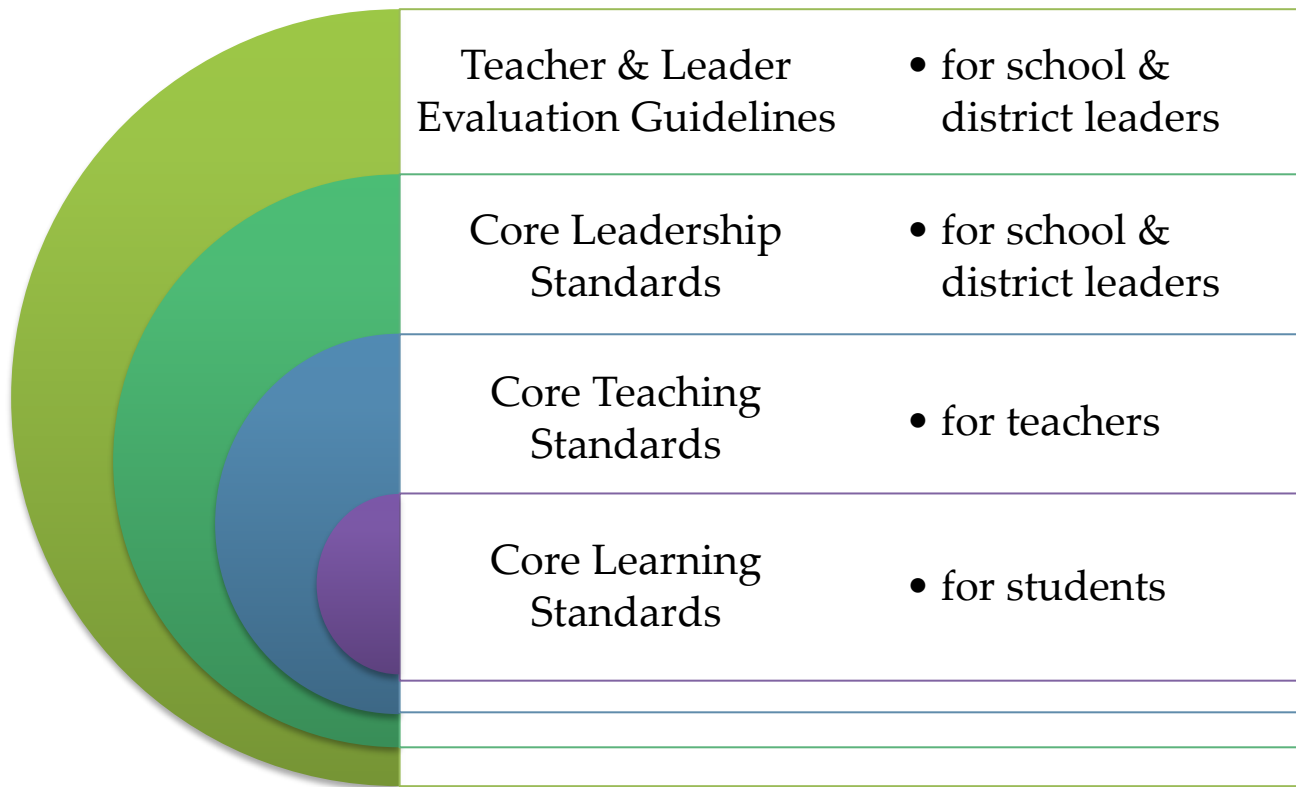
The relationship between and among the standards in Vermont is seen in the following graphic. Pictured here, student standards are the central focus of our work. The Core Teaching Standards immediately follow as they define how a teacher can best support students in meeting the Common Core Standards. The Core Leadership Standards function to support high-quality instruction and by extension student learning. Next, teacher and leader evaluation guidelines (see [Vermont Guidelines for Teacher and Leader Effectiveness](#)) support effective evaluation systems where educators are provided with the necessary feedback to guide them in improving their professional practice. Ideally, the standards function in conjunction with evaluation systems to promote effective professional growth and learning practices that lead to improved student learning. Ultimately, the standards remain distinct but function together to create a coherent system organized around the needs of students.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: The Danielson Group, Correlation of Danielson Framework for Teaching to InTASC Standards, accessed 11/28/12. Website: <http://www.danielsongroup.org/ckeditor/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Danielson%20Framework%20correlation%20with%20InTASC.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Source: Learning Sciences International, *The Marzano Causal Teacher Evaluation Model Alignment to INTASC Model Core Teaching Standards*, (2011). Website: [http://www.marzanoevaluation.com/files/Marzano\\_Causal\\_Model\\_Alignment\\_to\\_InTASC\\_Teaching\\_Standards.pdf](http://www.marzanoevaluation.com/files/Marzano_Causal_Model_Alignment_to_InTASC_Teaching_Standards.pdf)

# EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR VERMONT



## How to Use this Book

This book has been divided into sections devoted to the teaching and leadership standards. Each section includes an introduction as well as the detailed standards themselves.

# Supporting Effective Teaching in Vermont

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Core Teaching Standards for Vermont Educators

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## INTRODUCTION

The dedication and professionalism of Vermont educators make our schools strong. This is especially important given the research that finds that teachers are the most important school-based factor affecting student achievement (Hanushek, Eric A., John F. Kain, and Steven G. Rivkin. 1998). The increasing attention to teaching effectiveness, however, necessitates that we create a coherent system of support so that educators can continue to achieve at a high level.

These standards form the foundation of a system of support for educators by outlining what educators across all content and grade levels should know and be able to do to be effective in today's schools.

In 2011, the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) adopted the *Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards*. These standards form the foundation of such a system by outlining what educators across all content and grade levels should know and be able to do to be effective in today's schools. The Vermont Core Teaching Standards (e.g. InTASC) embody the VSBPE's vision for having a caring, competent, highly effective educator in every Vermont classroom. Education professionals from across the country, including practicing teachers, teacher educators and state education agency staff, drafted these research-based standards. The ten standards call for:

- Personalized Learning for Diverse Learners
- A Stronger Focus on Application of Knowledge and Skills
- Improved Assessment Literacy
- A Collaborative Professional Culture
- New Leadership Roles for Teachers and Administrators

The revised standards are compatible with the Common Core State Standards for math and English language arts, with the [National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](#) (NBPTS), and Learning Forward professional development standards.

In August of 2015, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and Jobs for the Future (JFF) collaborated and published [Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching](#). The competencies were designed to assist educators with personalized, learner-centered environments to prepare students for success in postsecondary education and careers. They may be used in conjunction with the Core Teaching Standards and a crosswalk between the InTASC Standards and the Educator Competencies may also be found in this document.

*The Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching* build on and push beyond the best existing teaching competencies and standards to capture what educators need in order to create and thrive in personalized learner-centered systems.

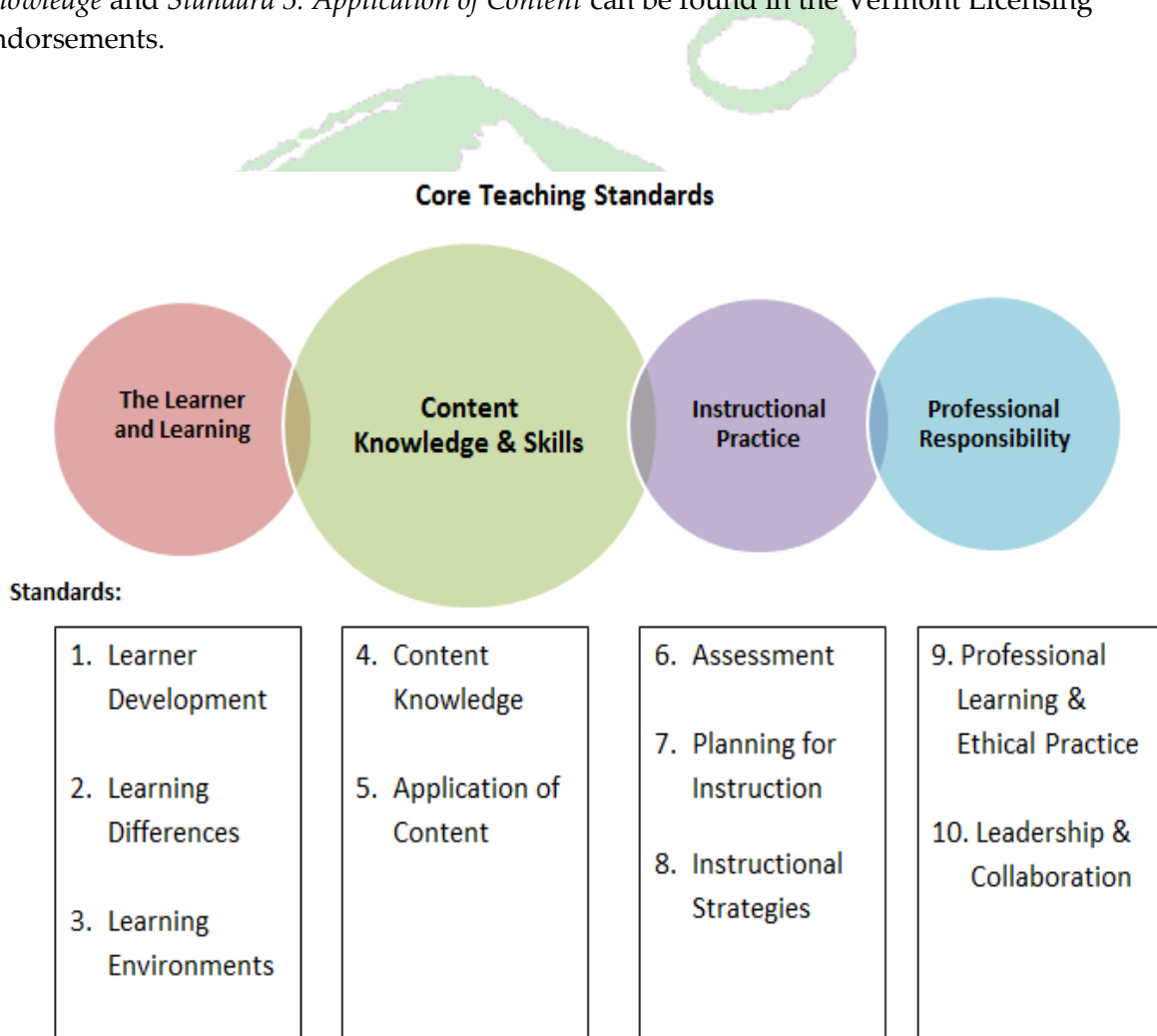
Jobs for the Future & the Council of Chief State School Officers. 2015. *Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future



## STRUCTURE OF THE STANDARDS

Vermont's Core Teaching Standards are interrelated and overlap significantly. While each standard depicts a discrete aspect of teaching or leading, the actual practice of education incorporates many standards simultaneously. The ten standards can be grouped into four general categories: The Learner and Learning, Content, Instructional Practice, and Professional Responsibility. The categories are further explained by performance and knowledge indicators and critical dispositions. *Performance* indicators are included first because they are the aspect of teaching that can be observed and assessed. *Essential Knowledge* indicators describe the knowledge necessary for effective practice. Finally, *Critical Dispositions* describe the habits of professional action and moral commitments that underlie the work of educators.

The Content category is depicted as larger than the surrounding standards in the following diagram to emphasize its centrality to the work of educators. Educators preparing to become teachers or those planning their professional development process will need to prioritize content knowledge and application. Additional indicators that illustrate *Standard 4: Content Knowledge* and *Standard 5: Application of Content* can be found in the Vermont Licensing Endorsements.



## USING THE STANDARDS

The Vermont Core Teaching Standards provide a picture of what professional practice looks like at different developmental stages of a teacher's career. Educator preparation programs, mentors, and schools can use the standards to support educators as they develop. Educators, too, can use the standards to help guide their professional practice and growth over time. What distinguishes a novice from the accomplished teacher is the degree of sophistication in her/his application of knowledge and skills. Finally, the knowledge and performance indicators are not intended to be checklists, but instead provide ways to picture what each standard means.



## Standard #1: Learner Development

The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

### Performances

1(a) The teacher regularly assesses individual and group performance in order to design and modify instruction to meet learners' needs in each area of development (cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical) and scaffolds the next level of development.

1(b) The teacher creates developmentally appropriate instruction that takes into account individual learners' strengths, interests, and needs and that enables each learner to advance and accelerate his/her learning.

1(c) The teacher collaborates with families, communities, colleagues, and other professionals to promote learner growth and development.

### Essential Knowledge

1(d) The teacher understands how learning occurs-- how learners construct knowledge, acquire skills, and develop disciplined thinking processes--and knows how to use instructional strategies that promote student learning.

1(e) The teacher understands that each learner's cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical development influences learning and knows how to make instructional decisions that build on learners' strengths and needs.

1(f) The teacher identifies readiness for learning, and understands how development in any one area may affect performance in others.

1(g) The teacher understands the role of language and culture in learning and knows how to modify instruction to make language comprehensible and instruction relevant, accessible, and challenging.

### Critical Dispositions

1(h) The teacher respects learners' differing strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to further each learner's development.

1(i) The teacher is committed to using learners' strengths as a basis for growth, and their misconceptions as opportunities for learning.

1(j) The teacher takes responsibility for promoting learners' growth and development.

1(k) The teacher values the input and contributions of families, colleagues, and other professionals in understanding and supporting each learner's development.

## Standard #2: Learning Differences

The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

### Performances

- 2(a) The teacher designs, adapts, and delivers instruction to address each student's diverse learning strengths and needs and creates opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in different ways.
- 2(b) The teacher makes appropriate and timely provisions (e.g., pacing for individual rates of growth, task demands, communication, assessment, and response modes) for individual students with particular learning differences or needs.
- 2(c) The teacher designs instruction to build on learners' prior knowledge and experiences, allowing learners to accelerate as they demonstrate their understandings.
- 2(d) The teacher brings multiple perspectives to the discussion of content, including attention to learners' personal, family, and community experiences and cultural norms.
- 2(e) The teacher incorporates tools of language development into planning and instruction, including strategies for making content accessible to English language learners and for evaluating and supporting their development of English proficiency.
- 2(f) The teacher accesses resources, supports, and specialized assistance and services to meet particular learning differences or needs.

### Essential Knowledge

- 2(g) The teacher understands and identifies differences in approaches to learning and performance and knows how to design instruction that uses each learner's strengths to promote growth.
- 2(h) The teacher understands students with exceptional needs, including those associated with disabilities and giftedness, and knows how to use strategies and resources to address these needs.
- 2(i) The teacher knows about second language acquisition processes and knows how to incorporate instructional strategies and resources to support language acquisition.
- 2(j) The teacher understands that learners bring assets for learning based on their individual experiences, abilities, talents, prior learning, and peer and social group interactions, as well as language, culture, family, and community values.
- 2(k) The teacher knows how to access information about the values of diverse cultures and communities and how to incorporate learners' experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction.

### Critical Dispositions

- 2(l) The teacher believes that all learners can achieve at high levels and persists in helping each learner reach his/her full potential.
- 2(m) The teacher respects learners as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests.
- 2(n) The teacher makes learners feel valued and helps them learn to value each other.
- 2(o) The teacher values diverse languages and dialects and seeks to integrate them into his/her instructional practice to engage students in learning.

### Standard #3: Learning Environments

The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

#### Performances

- 3(a) The teacher collaborates with learners, families, and colleagues to build a safe, positive learning climate of openness, mutual respect, support, and inquiry.
- 3(b) The teacher develops learning experiences that engage learners in collaborative and self-directed learning and that extend learner interaction with ideas and people locally and globally.
- 3(c) The teacher collaborates with learners and colleagues to develop shared values and expectations for respectful interactions, rigorous academic discussions, and individual and group responsibility for quality work.
- 3(d) The teacher manages the learning environment to actively and equitably engage learners by organizing, allocating, and coordinating the resources of time, space, and learners' attention.
- 3(e) The teacher uses a variety of methods to engage learners in evaluating the learning environment and collaborates with learners to make appropriate adjustments.
- 3(f) The teacher communicates verbally and nonverbally in ways that demonstrate respect for and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives learners bring to the learning environment.
- 3(g) The teacher promotes responsible learner use of interactive technologies to extend the possibilities for learning locally and globally.
- 3(h) The teacher intentionally builds learner capacity to collaborate in face-to-face and virtual environments through applying effective interpersonal communication skills.

#### Essential Knowledge

- 3(i) The teacher understands the relationship between motivation and engagement and knows how to design learning experiences using strategies that build learner self-direction and ownership of learning.
- 3(j) The teacher knows how to help learners work productively and cooperatively with each other to achieve learning goals.
- 3(k) The teacher knows how to collaborate with learners to establish and monitor elements of a safe and productive learning environment including norms, expectations, routines, and organizational structures.
- 3(l) The teacher understands how learner diversity can affect communication and knows how to communicate effectively in differing environments.
- 3(m) The teacher knows how to use technologies and how to guide learners to apply them in appropriate, safe, and effective ways.

#### Critical Dispositions

- 3(n) The teacher is committed to working with learners, colleagues, families, and communities to establish positive and supportive learning environments.
- 3(o) The teacher values the role of learners in promoting each other's learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning.
- 3(p) The teacher is committed to supporting learners as they participate in decision making, engage in exploration and invention, work collaboratively and independently, and engage in purposeful learning.
- 3(q) The teacher seeks to foster respectful communication among all members of the learning community.
- 3(r) The teacher is a thoughtful and responsive listener and observer.

## Standard #4: Content Knowledge

The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

### Performances

4(a) The teacher effectively uses multiple representations and explanations that capture key ideas in the discipline, guide learners through learning progressions, and promote each learner's achievement of content standards.

4(b) The teacher engages students in learning experiences in the discipline(s) that encourage learners to understand, question, and analyze ideas from diverse perspectives so that they master the content.

4(c) The teacher engages learners in applying methods of inquiry and standards of evidence used in the discipline.

4(d) The teacher stimulates learner reflection on prior content knowledge, links new concepts to familiar concepts, and makes connections to learners' experiences.

4(e) The teacher recognizes learner misconceptions in a discipline that interfere with learning, and creates experiences to build accurate conceptual understanding.

4(f) The teacher evaluates and modifies instructional resources and curriculum materials for their comprehensiveness, accuracy for representing particular concepts in the discipline, and appropriateness for his/ her learners.

4(g) The teacher uses supplementary resources and technologies effectively to ensure accessibility and relevance for all learners.

4(h) The teacher creates opportunities for students to learn, practice, and master academic language in their content.

4(i) The teacher accesses school and/or district-based resources to evaluate learners content knowledge in their primary language.

### Essential Knowledge

4(j) The teacher understands major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry, and ways of knowing that are central to the discipline(s) s/he teaches.

4(k) The teacher understands common misconceptions in learning the discipline and how to guide learners to accurate conceptual understanding.

4(l) The teacher knows and uses the academic language of the discipline and knows how to make it accessible to learners.

4(m) The teacher knows how to integrate culturally relevant content to build on learners' background knowledge.

4(n) The teacher has a deep knowledge of student content standards and learning progressions in the discipline(s) s/he teaches.

### Critical Dispositions

4(o) The teacher realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated, and ever evolving. S/he keeps abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field.

4(p) The teacher appreciates multiple perspectives within the discipline and facilitates learners' critical analysis of these perspectives.

4(q) The teacher recognizes the potential of bias in his/her representation of the discipline and seeks to appropriately address problems of bias.

4(r) The teacher is committed to work toward each learner's mastery of disciplinary content and skills.

## Standard #5: Application of Content

The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

### Performances

5(a) The teacher develops and implements projects that guide learners in analyzing the complexities of an issue or question using perspectives from varied disciplines and cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., a water quality study that draws upon biology and chemistry to look at factual information and social studies to examine policy implications).

5(b) The teacher engages learners in applying content knowledge to real world problems through the lens of interdisciplinary themes (e.g., financial literacy, environmental literacy).

5(c) The teacher facilitates learners' use of current tools and resources to maximize content learning in varied contexts.

5(d) The teacher engages learners in questioning and challenging assumptions and approaches in order to foster innovation and problem solving in local and global contexts.

5(e) The teacher develops learners' communication skills in disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts by creating meaningful opportunities to employ a variety of forms of communication that address varied audiences and purposes.

5(f) The teacher engages learners in generating and evaluating new ideas and novel approaches, seeking inventive solutions to problems, and developing original work.

5(g) The teacher facilitates learners' ability to develop diverse social and cultural perspectives that expand their understanding of local and global issues and create novel approaches to solving problems.

5(h) The teacher develops and implements supports for learner literacy development across content areas.

### Essential Knowledge

5(i) The teacher understands the ways of knowing in his/her discipline, how it relates to other disciplinary approaches to inquiry, and the strengths and limitations of each approach in addressing problems, issues, and concerns.

5(j) The teacher understands how current interdisciplinary themes (e.g., civic literacy, health literacy, global awareness) connect to the core subjects and knows how to weave those themes into meaningful learning experiences.

5(k) The teacher understands the demands of accessing and managing information as well as how to evaluate issues of ethics and quality related to information and its use.

5(l) The teacher understands how to use digital and interactive technologies for efficiently and effectively achieving specific learning goals.

5(m) The teacher understands critical thinking processes and knows how to help learners develop high level questioning skills to promote their independent learning.

5(n) The teacher understands communication modes and skills as vehicles for learning (e.g., information gathering and processing) across disciplines as well as vehicles for expressing learning.

5(o) The teacher understands creative thinking processes and how to engage learners in producing original work.

5(p) The teacher knows where and how to access resources to build global awareness and understanding, and how to integrate them into the curriculum.

### Critical Dispositions

5(q) The teacher is constantly exploring how to use disciplinary knowledge as a lens to address local and global issues.

5(r) The teacher values knowledge outside his/her own content area and how such knowledge enhances student learning.

5(s) The teacher values flexible learning environments that encourage learner exploration, discovery, and expression across content areas.

## Standard #6: Assessment

The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

### Performances

6(a) The teacher balances the use of formative, interim, and summative assessment as appropriate to support, verify, and document learning.

6(b) The teacher designs assessments that match learning objectives with assessment methods and minimizes sources of bias that can distort assessment results.

6(c) The teacher works independently and collaboratively to examine test and other performance data to understand each learner's progress and to guide planning.

6(d) The teacher engages learners in understanding and identifying quality work and provides them with effective descriptive feedback to guide their progress toward that work.

6(e) The teacher engages learners in multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and skill as part of the assessment process.

6(f) The teacher models and structures processes that guide learners in examining their own thinking and learning as well as the performance of others.

6(g) The teacher effectively uses multiple and appropriate types of assessment data to identify each student's learning needs and to develop differentiated learning experiences.

6(h) The teacher prepares all learners for the demands of particular assessment formats and makes appropriate accommodations in assessments or testing conditions, especially for learners with disabilities and language learning needs.

6(i) The teacher continually seeks appropriate ways to employ technology to support assessment practice both to engage learners more fully and to assess and address learner needs.

### Essential Knowledge

6(j) The teacher understands the differences between formative, interim, and summative applications of assessment and knows how and when to use each.

6(k) The teacher understands the range of types and multiple purposes of assessment and how to design, adapt, or select appropriate assessments to address specific learning goals and individual differences, and to minimize sources of bias.

6(l) The teacher knows how to analyze assessment data to understand patterns and gaps in learning, to guide planning and instruction, and to provide meaningful feedback to all learners.

6(m) The teacher knows when and how to engage learners in analyzing their own assessment results and in helping to set goals for their own learning.

6(n) The teacher understands the positive impact of effective descriptive feedback for learners and knows a variety of strategies for communicating this feedback.

6(o) The teacher knows when and how to evaluate and report learner progress against standards.

6(p) The teacher understands how to prepare learners for assessments and how to make accommodations in assessments and testing conditions, especially for learners with disabilities and language learning needs.

### Critical Dispositions

6(q) The teacher is committed to engaging learners actively in assessment processes and to developing each learner's capacity to review and communicate about their own progress and learning.

6(r) The teacher takes responsibility for aligning instruction and assessment with learning goals.

6(s) The teacher is committed to providing timely and effective descriptive feedback to learners on their progress.

6(t) The teacher is committed to using multiple types of assessment processes to support, verify, and document learning.

### Critical Dispositions

6(u) The teacher is committed to making accommodations in assessments and testing conditions, especially for learners with disabilities and language learning needs.



6(v) The teacher is committed to the ethical use of various assessments and assessment data to identify learner strengths and needs to promote learner growth. 6(s) The teacher is committed to providing timely and effective descriptive feedback to learners on their progress.

## Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

### Performances

7(a) The teacher individually and collaboratively selects and creates learning experiences that are appropriate for curriculum goals and content standards, and are relevant to learners.

7(b) The teacher plans how to achieve each student's learning goals, choosing appropriate strategies and accommodations, resources, and materials to differentiate instruction for individuals and groups of learners.

7(c) The teacher develops appropriate sequencing of learning experiences and provides multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge and skill.

7(d) The teacher plans for instruction based on formative, interim, and summative assessment data, prior learner knowledge, and learner interest.

7(e) The teacher plans collaboratively with professionals who have specialized expertise (e.g., special educators, related service providers, language learning specialists, librarians, media specialists) to design and jointly deliver as appropriate learning experiences to meet unique learning needs.

7(f) The teacher evaluates plans in relation to short- and long-range goals and systematically adjusts plans to meet each student's learning needs and enhance learning.

### Essential Knowledge

7(g) The teacher understands content and content standards and how these are organized in the curriculum.

7(h) The teacher understands how integrating cross disciplinary skills in instruction engages learners purposefully in applying content knowledge.

7(i) The teacher understands learning theory, human development, cultural diversity, and individual differences and how these impact ongoing planning.

7(j) The teacher understands the strengths and needs of individual learners and how to plan instruction that is responsive to these strengths and needs.

7(k) The teacher knows a range of evidence-based instructional strategies, resources, and technological tools and how to use them effectively to plan instruction that meets diverse learning needs.

7(l) The teacher knows when and how to adjust plans based on assessment information and learner responses.

7(m) The teacher knows when and how to access resources and collaborate with others to support student learning (e.g., special educators, related service providers, language learner specialists, librarians, media specialists, community organizations).

### Critical Dispositions

7(n) The teacher respects learners' diverse strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to plan effective instruction.

7(o) The teacher values planning as a collegial activity that takes into consideration the input of learners, colleagues, families, and the larger community.

7(p) The teacher takes professional responsibility to use short- and long-term planning as a means of assuring student learning.

7(q) The teacher believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on learner needs and changing circumstances.

## Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

### Performances

8(a) The teacher uses appropriate strategies and resources to adapt instruction to the needs of individuals and groups of learners.

8(b) The teacher continuously monitors student learning, engages learners in assessing their progress, and adjusts instruction in response to student learning needs.

8(c) The teacher collaborates with learners to design and implement relevant learning experiences, identify their strengths, and access family and community resources to develop their areas of interest.

8(d) The teacher varies his/her role in the instructional process (e.g., instructor, facilitator, coach, audience) in relation to the content and purposes of instruction and the needs of learners.

8(e) The teacher provides multiple models and representations of concepts and skills with opportunities for learners to demonstrate their knowledge through a variety of products and performances.

8(f) The teacher engages all learners in developing higher order questioning skills and metacognitive processes.

8(g) The teacher engages learners in using a range of learning skills and technology tools to access, interpret, evaluate, and apply information.

8(h) The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies to support and expand learners' communication through speaking, listening, reading, writing, and other modes.

8(i) The teacher asks questions to stimulate discussion that serves different purposes (e.g., probing for learner understanding, helping learners articulate their ideas and thinking processes, stimulating curiosity, and helping learners to question).

### Essential Knowledge

8(j) The teacher understands the cognitive processes associated with various kinds of learning (e.g., critical and creative thinking, problem framing and problem solving, invention, memorization and recall) and how these processes can be stimulated.

8(k) The teacher knows how to apply a range of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to achieve learning goals.

8(l) The teacher knows when and how to use appropriate strategies to differentiate instruction and engage all learners in complex thinking and meaningful tasks.

8(m) The teacher understands how multiple forms of communication (oral, written, nonverbal, digital, visual) convey ideas, foster self expression, and build relationships.

8(n) The teacher knows how to use a wide variety of resources, including human and technological, to engage students in learning.

8(o) The teacher understands how content and skill development can be supported by media and technology and knows how to evaluate these resources for quality, accuracy, and effectiveness.

### Critical Dispositions

8(p) The teacher is committed to deepening awareness and understanding the strengths and needs of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction.

8(q) The teacher values the variety of ways people communicate and encourages learners to develop and use multiple forms of communication.

8(r) The teacher is committed to exploring how the use of new and emerging technologies can support and promote student learning.

8(s) The teacher values flexibility and reciprocity in the teaching process as necessary for adapting instruction to learner responses, ideas, and needs.

## Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

### Performances

9(a) The teacher engages in ongoing learning opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in order to provide all learners with engaging curriculum and learning experiences based on local and state standards.

9(b) The teacher engages in meaningful and appropriate professional learning experiences aligned with his/her own needs and the needs of the learners, school, and system.

9(c) Independently and in collaboration with colleagues, the teacher uses a variety of data (e.g., systematic observation, information about learners, research) to evaluate the outcomes of teaching and learning and to adapt planning and practice.

9(d) The teacher actively seeks professional, community, and technological resources, within and outside the school, as supports for analysis, reflection, and problem-solving.

9(e) The teacher reflects on his/her personal biases and accesses resources to deepen his/her own understanding of cultural, ethnic, gender, and learning differences to build stronger relationships and create more relevant learning experiences.

9(f) The teacher advocates, models, and teaches safe, legal, and ethical use of information and technology including appropriate documentation of sources and respect for others in the use of social media.

### Essential Knowledge

9(g) The teacher understands and knows how to use a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies to analyze and reflect on his/her practice and to plan for adaptations/adjustments.

9(h) The teacher knows how to use learner data to analyze practice and differentiate instruction accordingly.

9(i) The teacher understands how personal identity, worldview, and prior experience affect perceptions and expectations, and recognizes how they may bias behaviors and interactions with others.

9(j) The teacher understands laws related to learners' rights and teacher responsibilities (e.g., for educational equity, appropriate education for learners with disabilities, confidentiality, privacy, appropriate treatment of learners, reporting in situations related to possible child abuse).

9(k) The teacher knows how to build and implement a plan for professional growth directly aligned with his/her needs as a growing professional using feedback from teacher evaluations and observations, data on learner performance, and school- and system-wide priorities.

### Critical Dispositions

9(l) The teacher takes responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice.

9(m) The teacher is committed to deepening understanding of his/her own frames of reference (e.g., culture, gender, language, abilities, ways of knowing), the potential biases in these frames, and their impact on expectations for and relationships with learners and their families.

9(n) The teacher sees him/herself as a learner, continuously seeking opportunities to draw upon current education policy and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve practice.

9(o) The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy.

## Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration

The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

### Performances

- 10(a) The teacher takes an active role on the instructional team, giving and receiving feedback on practice, examining learner work, analyzing data from multiple sources, and sharing responsibility for decision making and accountability for each student's learning.
- 10(b) The teacher works with other school professionals to plan and jointly facilitate learning on how to meet diverse needs of learners.
- 10(c) The teacher engages collaboratively in the schoolwide effort to build a shared vision and supportive culture, identify common goals, and monitor and evaluate progress toward those goals.
- 10(d) The teacher works collaboratively with learners and their families to establish mutual expectations and ongoing communication to support learner development and achievement.
- 10(e) Working with school colleagues, the teacher builds ongoing connections with community resources to enhance student learning and well-being.
- 10(f) The teacher engages in professional learning, contributes to the knowledge and skill of others, and works collaboratively to advance professional practice.
- 10(g) The teacher uses technological tools and a variety of communication strategies to build local and global learning communities that engage learners, families, and colleagues.
- 10(h) The teacher uses and generates meaningful research on education issues and policies.
- 10(i) The teacher seeks appropriate opportunities to model effective practice for colleagues, to lead professional learning activities, and to serve in other leadership roles.
- 10(j) The teacher advocates to meet the needs of learners, to strengthen the learning environment, and to enact system change.
- 10(k) The teacher takes on leadership roles at the school, district, state, and/or national level and advocates for learners, the school, the community, and the profession.

### Essential Knowledge

- 10(l) The teacher understands schools as organizations within a historical, cultural, political, and social context and knows how to work with others across the system to support learners.
- 10(m) The teacher understands that alignment of family, school, and community spheres of influence enhances student learning and that discontinuity in these spheres of influence interferes with learning.
- 10(n) The teacher knows how to work with other adults and has developed skills in collaborative interaction appropriate for both face-to-face and virtual contexts.
- 10(o) The teacher knows how to contribute to a common culture that supports high expectations for student learning.

### Critical Dispositions

- 10(p) The teacher actively shares responsibility for shaping and supporting the mission of his/her school as one of advocacy for learners and accountability for their success.
- 10(q) The teacher respects families' beliefs, norms, and expectations and seeks to work collaboratively with learners and families in setting and meeting challenging goals.
- 10(r) The teacher takes initiative to grow and develop with colleagues through interactions that enhance practice and support student learning.
- 10(s) The teacher takes responsibility for contributing to and advancing the profession.
- 10(t) The teacher embraces the challenge of continuous improvement and change.

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# Supporting Effective Leadership in Vermont

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Core Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators

## INTRODUCTION: Core Leadership Standards

In the fall of 2011, the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) voted to adopt the 2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Educational Leadership Policy Standards. The VSBPE had last adopted requirements for administrators in 1998, so the need for new standards was essential given the changes over time in the roles and responsibilities of educational leaders.

Each standard was reinforced by functions that described the actions for which school leaders are responsible. The functions were further defined by knowledge and performance indicators which mirrored the format of the Vermont Core Teaching Standards (also adopted by the VSBPE in 2011).

In November of 2016, the VSBPE adopted the 2015 Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL). Formerly known as the ISLLC Standards, the PSEL are based on current research and the experiences of educational leaders.

The 2015 Leadership Standards were created for and by the profession and were developed based on research and input from today's practicing educational leaders to identify omissions in the 2008 Leadership Standards, and the demands of educational leaders today while considering future demands. The Standards are for all levels of educational leadership regardless of where they are in their administrative career.

The current standards (2015) have a stronger emphasis on students and student learning to better prepare today's students for a productive role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

While the 2008 Leadership Standards were composed of six standards, the updated 2015 version contains ten standards that are interrelated to better promote academic and personal success for students.

Each standard, as with the previous version, is supported by functions that describe the actions for which educational leaders are responsible. The 2015 Leadership Standards are grouped into three clusters with the exception of one standard:

2015 Standards embody a research- and practice-based understanding of the relationship between education leadership and student learning.

National Policy Board for educational Administration (2015) *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015*. Reston, VA: Author

Educators have a better understanding of how and in what ways effective leadership contributes to student achievement. An expanding base of knowledge from research and practice shows that educational leaders exert influence on student achievement by creating challenging but also caring and supportive conditions conducive to each student's learning.

National Policy Board for educational Administration (2015) *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015*. Reston, VA: Author



### Cluster One:

- Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values
- Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms
- Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness

### Cluster Two:

- Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Standard 5: Community of Care and Support for Students

### Cluster Three:

- Standard 6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel
- Standard 7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff
- Standard 8: Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community
- Standard 9: Operations and Management

### Standard 10:

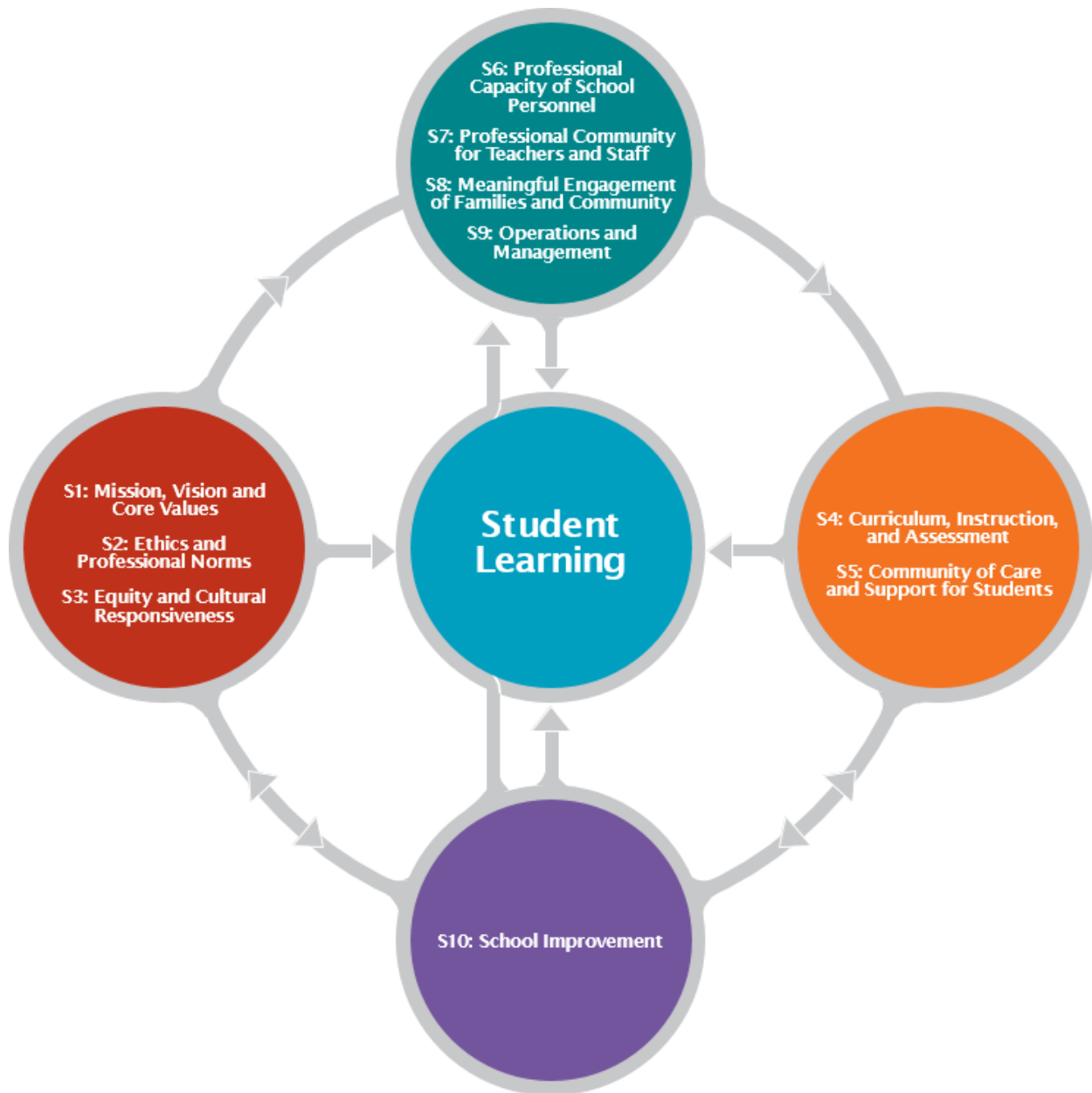
- Standard 10: School Improvement stands alone as it impacts all the other clusters, and together with the three clusters, collectively impact student learning.

The 2015 Leadership Standards create and set direction for current educational leaders, serving as a basis for policy, preparation, licensure, professional learning, and evaluation.

Finally, the VSBPE acknowledges the importance of continued professional growth in relation to the standards. What distinguishes levels of proficiency among those in leadership roles is the degree of sophistication in their application of the knowledge and skills required to lead. Educational leaders in different positions and at different points in their careers can be expected to meet these performance standards at increasingly higher levels of effectiveness as they develop professionally.

In September 2017, the Chief Council of State School Officers (CCSSO) and Jobs for the Future (JFF) published a companion document to *Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learning-Centered Teaching* for educational leaders entitled: [\*Leadership Competencies for Learning-Centered, Personalized Education\*](#). The competencies begin to define the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed by educational leaders to design and cultivate a learner-centered, personalized learning environment for all learners.

# Vermont Leadership Standards



National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2015). *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015*. Reston, VA: Author

# Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015

## STANDARD 1. MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.

## STANDARD 2. ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL NORMS

Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

## STANDARD 3. EQUITY AND CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

## STANDARD 4. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

## STANDARD 5. COMMUNITY OF CARE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.

## STANDARD 6. PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

## STANDARD 7. PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF

Effective educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

## STANDARD 8. MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

## STANDARD 9. OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

## STANDARD 10. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

## STANDARD 1: MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

**Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student.
- b) In collaboration with members of the school and the community and using relevant data, develop and promote a vision for the school on the successful learning and development of each child and on instructional and organizational practices that promote such success.
- c) Articulate, advocate, and cultivate core values that define the school's culture and stress the imperative of child-centered education; high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; openness, caring, and trust; and continuous improvement.
- d) Strategically develop, implement, and evaluate actions to achieve the vision for the school.
- e) Review the school's mission and vision and adjust them to changing expectations and opportunities for the school, and changing needs and situations of students.
- f) Develop shared understanding of and commitment to mission, vision, and core values within the school and the community.
- g) Model and pursue the school's mission, vision, and core values in all aspects of leadership.

## STANDARD 2: ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL NORMS

**Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Act ethically and professionally in personal conduct, relationships with others, decision-making, stewardship of the school's resources, and all aspects of school leadership.
- b) Act according to and promote the professional norms of integrity, fairness, transparency, trust, collaboration, perseverance, learning, and continuous improvement.
- c) Place children at the center of education and accept responsibility for each student's academic success and well-being.
- d) Safeguard and promote the values of democracy, individual freedom and responsibility, equity, social justice, community, and diversity.
- e) Lead with interpersonal and communication skill, social-emotional insight, and understanding of all students' and staff members' backgrounds and cultures.
- f) Provide moral direction for the school and promote ethical and professional behavior among faculty and staff.

## STANDARD 3: EQUITY AND CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

**Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Ensure that each student is treated fairly, respectfully, and with an understanding of each student's culture and context.
- b) Recognize, respect, and employ each student's strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning.
- c) Ensure that each student has equitable access to effective teachers, learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for success.
- d) Develop student policies and address student misconduct in a positive, fair, and unbiased manner.
- e) Confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status.
- f) Promote the preparation of students to live productively in and contribute to the diverse cultural contexts of a global society.
- g) Act with cultural competence and responsiveness in their interactions, decision making, and practice.
- h) Address matters of equity and cultural responsiveness in all aspects of leadership.

## STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

**Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student's academic success and well-being.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that promote the mission, vision, and core values of the school, embody high expectations for student learning, align with academic standards, and are culturally responsive.
- b) Align and focus systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment within and across grade levels to promote student academic success, love of learning, the identities and habits of learners, and healthy sense of self.
- c) Promote instructional practice that is consistent with knowledge of child learning and development, effective pedagogy, and the needs of each student.
- d) Ensure instructional practice that is intellectually challenging, authentic to student experiences, recognizes student strengths, and is differentiated and personalized.
- e) Promote the effective use of technology in the service of teaching and learning.
- f) Employ valid assessments that are consistent with knowledge of child learning and development and technical standards of measurement.
- g) Use assessment data appropriately and within technical limitations to monitor student progress and improve instruction.

## STANDARD 5: COMMUNITY OF CARE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

**Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Build and maintain a safe, caring, and healthy school environment that meets that the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student.
- b) Create and sustain a school environment in which each student is known, accepted and valued, trusted and respected, cared for, and encouraged to be an active and responsible member of the school community.
- c) Provide coherent systems of academic and social supports, services, extracurricular activities, and accommodations to meet the range of learning needs of each student.
- d) Promote adult-student, student-peer, and school-community relationships that value and support academic learning and positive social and emotional development.
- e) Cultivate and reinforce student engagement in school and positive student conduct.
- f) Infuse the school's learning environment with the cultures and languages of the school's community.



## STANDARD 6: PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL

**Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Recruit, hire, support, develop, and retain effective and caring teachers and other professional staff and form them into an educationally effective faculty.
- b) Plan for and manage staff turnover and succession, providing opportunities for effective induction and mentoring of new personnel.
- c) Develop teachers' and staff members' professional knowledge, skills, and practice through differentiated opportunities for learning and growth, guided by understanding of professional and adult learning and development.
- d) Foster continuous improvement of individual and collective instructional capacity to achieve outcomes envisioned for each student.
- e) Deliver actionable feedback about instruction and other professional practice through valid, research-anchored systems of supervision and evaluation to support the development of teachers' and staff members' knowledge, skills, and practice.
- f) Empower and motivate teachers and staff to the highest levels of professional practice and to continuous learning and improvement.
- g) Develop the capacity, opportunities, and support for teacher leadership and leadership from other members of the school community.
- h) Promote the personal and professional health, well-being, and work-life balance of faculty and staff.
- i) Tend to their own learning and effectiveness through reflection, study, and improvement, maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

## STANDARD 7: PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF

**Effective educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student's academic success and well-being.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Develop workplace conditions for teachers and other professional staff that promote effective professional development, practice, and student learning.
- b) Empower and entrust teachers and staff with collective responsibility for meeting the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student, pursuant to the mission, vision, and core values of the school.
- c) Establish and sustain a professional culture of engagement and commitment to shared vision, goals, and objectives pertaining to the education of the whole child; high expectations for professional work; ethical and equitable practice; trust and open communication; collaboration, collective efficacy, and continuous individual and organizational learning and improvement.
- d) Promote mutual accountability among teachers and other professional staff for each student's success and the effectiveness of the school as a whole.
- e) Develop and support open, productive, caring, and trusting working relationships among leaders, faculty, and staff to promote professional capacity and the improvement of practice.
- f) Design and implement job-embedded and other opportunities for professional learning collaboratively with faculty and staff.
- g) Provide opportunities for collaborative examination of practice, collegial feedback, and collective learning.
- h) Encourage faculty-initiated improvement of programs and practices.

## STANDARD 8: MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

**Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and well-being.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Are approachable, accessible, and welcoming to families and members of the community.
- b) Create and sustain positive, collaborative, and productive relationships with families and the community for the benefit of students.
- c) Engage in regular and open two-way communication with families and the community about the school, students, needs, problems, and accomplishments.
- d) Maintain a presence in the community to understand its strengths and needs, develop productive relationships, and engage its resources for the school.
- e) Create means for the school community to partner with families to support student learning in and out of school.
- f) Understand, value, and employ the community's cultural, social, intellectual, and political resources to promote student learning and school improvement.
- g) Develop and provide the school as a resource for families and the community.
- h) Advocate for the school and district, and for the importance of education and student needs and priorities to families and the community.
- i) Advocate publicly for the needs and priorities of students, families, and the community.
- j) Build and sustain productive partnerships with public and private sectors to promote school improvement and student learning.

## STANDARD 9: OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

**Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Institute, manage, and monitor operations and administrative systems that promote the mission and vision of the school.
- b) Strategically manage staff resources, assigning and scheduling teachers and staff to roles and responsibilities that optimize their professional capacity to address each student's learning needs.
- c) Seek, acquire, and manage fiscal, physical, and other resources to support curriculum, instruction, and assessment; student learning community; professional capacity and community; and family and community engagement.
- d) Are responsible, ethical, and accountable stewards of the school's monetary and non-monetary resources, engaging in effective budgeting and accounting practices.
- e) Protect teachers' and other staff members' work and learning from disruption.
- f) Employ technology to improve the quality and efficiency of operations and management.
- g) Develop and maintain data and communication systems to deliver actionable information for classroom and school improvement.
- h) Know, comply with, and help the school community understand local, state, and federal laws, rights, policies, and regulations so as to promote student success.
- i) Develop and manage relationships with feeder and connecting schools for enrollment management and curricular and instructional articulation.
- j) Develop and manage productive relationships with the central office and school board.
- k) Develop and administer systems for fair and equitable management of conflict among students, faculty and staff, leaders, families, and community.
- l) Manage governance processes and internal and external politics toward achieving the school's mission and vision.

## STANDARD 10: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

**Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student's academic success and well-being.**

Effective leaders:

- a) Seek to make school more effective for each student, teachers and staff, families, and the community.
- b) Use methods of continuous improvement to achieve the vision, fulfill the mission, and promote the core values of the school.
- c) Prepare the school and the community for improvement, promoting readiness, an imperative for improvement, instilling mutual commitment and accountability, and developing the knowledge, skills, and motivation to succeed in improvement.
- d) Engage others in an ongoing process of evidence-based inquiry, learning, strategic goal setting, planning, implementation, and evaluation for continuous school and classroom improvement.
- e) Employ situationally-appropriate strategies for improvement, including transformational and incremental, adaptive approaches and attention to different phases of implementation.
- f) Assess and develop the capacity of staff to assess the value and applicability of emerging educational trends and the findings of research for the school and its improvement.
- g) Develop technically appropriate systems of data collection, management, analysis, and use, connecting as needed to the district office and external partners for support in planning, implementation, monitoring, feedback, and evaluation.
- h) Adopt a systems perspective and promote coherence among improvement efforts and all aspects of school organization, programs, and services.
- i) Manage uncertainty, risk, competing initiatives, and politics of change with courage and perseverance, providing support and encouragement, and openly communicating the need for, process for, and outcomes of improvement efforts.
- j) Develop and promote leadership among teachers and staff for inquiry, experimentation and innovation, and initiating and implementing improvement

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# **CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR VERMONT EDUCATORS**

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**Adopted by the VSBPE on April 15, 2009  
Revised and adopted by the VSBPE on June 5, 2018.**

## INTRODUCTION

Act 214 of the 2006 Vermont legislative session mandated that the VSBPE develop a code of professional ethics and act as advisors regarding its interpretation. The first Code of Ethics for Vermont educators was adopted in April, 2009. The Model Code of Ethics for Vermont Educators and Rules of Professional Conduct for Vermont Educators that follow are meant to ensure that our educators demonstrate the highest professional conduct and care for our learners.

In May 2018, the VSBPE adopted the NASDTEC Model Code of Ethics for Educators. The VSBPE reviewed its current code of ethics with that of NASDTEC's to assure its standards were aligned with current practices from across the country.

The public vests educators with trust and responsibility for educating the children of Vermont.

### Licensing Hearing Panels

Act 214 also required the establishment of a Licensing Hearing Panel (LHP). The LHP is a 14-member teacher majority board that determines compliance with these standards to help assure high caliber professionals and high quality public educational programs for Vermont students.

### References

NASDTEC, Model Code of Ethics for Educators, June 25, 2015.  
Retrieved from [www.nasdttec.net](http://www.nasdttec.net)



## **5510 Code of Professional Ethics**

The essential qualities of the competent and caring educator include moral integrity, humane attitudes, reflective practice, and a sound understanding of academic content and pedagogy. The public vests educators with trust and responsibility for educating the children of Vermont. We believe that fulfilling this charge requires educators to demonstrate the highest standards of professional conduct.

We, as professional educators, respect the dignity and individuality of every human being. We are committed to, and model for our students, the lifelong pursuit of learning and academic excellence.

We are dedicated to effective scholarly practice, further enhanced by collaboration with colleagues and with those in the greater educational community. Furthermore, we are dedicated to compassionate service on behalf of our learners and their families, and we advocate for them in the school and community settings.

We recognize and accept both the public trust and the magnitude of responsibility inherent in our profession. To this end, we put forth these rules of conduct as the foundation for professional practice for all Vermont educators to honor and follow.

## **5520 Rules of Professional Conduct**

What follows is a statement of fundamental principles which all Vermont educators should follow, each of which is accompanied by an enumeration of examples of unprofessional conduct which could subject an educator to licensing action.



## **Principle I: Responsibility to the Profession**

The professional educator is aware that trust in the profession depends upon a level of professional conduct and responsibility that may be higher than required by law. This entails holding one and other educators to the same ethical standards.

*The professional educator demonstrates responsibility to oneself as an ethical professional by:*

1. Acknowledging that lack of awareness, knowledge, or understanding of the Code is not, in itself, a defense to a charge of unethical conduct;
2. Knowing and upholding the procedures, policies, laws and regulations relevant to professional practice regardless of personal views;
3. Holding oneself responsible for ethical conduct;
4. Monitoring and maintaining sound mental, physical, and emotional health necessary to perform duties and services of any professional assignment; and taking appropriate measures when personal or health-related issues may interfere with work-related duties;
5. Refraining from professional or personal activity that may lead to reducing one's effectiveness within the school community;
6. Avoiding the use of one's position for personal gain and avoiding the appearance of impropriety;
7. Taking responsibility and credit only for work actually performed or produced, and acknowledging the work and contributions made by others.

*B. The professional educator fulfills the obligation to address and attempt to resolve ethical issues by:*

1. Confronting and taking reasonable steps to resolve conflicts between the Code and the implicit or explicit demands of a person or organization;
2. Maintaining fidelity to the Code by taking proactive steps when having reason to believe that another educator may be approaching or involved in an ethically compromising situation;
3. Neither discriminating nor retaliating against a person on the basis of having made an ethical complaint;
4. Neither filing nor encouraging frivolous ethical complaints solely to harm or retaliate.
5. Cooperating fully during ethics investigations and proceedings

*C. The professional educator promotes and advances the profession within and beyond the school community by:*

1. Influencing and supporting decisions and actions that positively impact teaching and learning, educational leadership and student services;

2. Engaging in respectful discourse regarding issues that impact the profession;
3. Enhancing one's professional effectiveness by staying current with ethical principles and decisions from relevant sources including professional organizations;
4. Actively participating in educational and professional organizations and associations;  
and
5. Advocating for adequate resources and facilities to ensure equitable opportunities for all students.

**Principle II: Responsibility for Professional Competence**

The professional educator is committed to the highest levels of professional and ethical practice, including demonstration of the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for professional competence.

A. *The professional educator demonstrates commitment to high standards of practice through:*

1. Incorporating into one's practice state and national standards, including those specific to one's discipline;
2. Using the *Model Code of Educator Ethics* and other ethics codes unique to one's discipline to guide and frame educational decision-making;
3. Advocating for equitable educational opportunities for all students;
4. Accepting the responsibilities, performing duties and providing services corresponding to the area of certification, licensure, and training of one's position;
5. Reflecting upon and assessing one's professional skills, content knowledge, and competency on an ongoing basis; and
6. Committing to ongoing professional learning.

B. *The professional educator demonstrates responsible use of data, materials, research and assessment by:*

1. Appropriately recognizing others' work by citing data or materials from published, unpublished, or electronic sources when disseminating information;
2. Using developmentally appropriate assessments for the purposes for which they are intended and for which they have been validated to guide educational decisions;
3. Conducting research in an ethical and responsible manner with appropriate permission and supervision;
4. Seeking and using evidence, instructional data, research, and professional knowledge to inform practice;
5. Creating, maintaining, disseminating, storing, retaining and disposing of records and data relating to one's research and practice, in accordance with district policy, state and federal laws; and
6. Using data, data sources, or findings accurately and reliably.

C. *The professional educator acts in the best interest of all students by:*

1. Increasing students' access to the curriculum, activities, and resources in order to provide a quality and equitable educational experience.

2. Working to engage the school community to close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps; and
3. Protecting students from any practice that harms or has the potential to harm students.

### **Principle III: Responsibility to Students**

The professional educator has a primary obligation to treat students with dignity and respect. The professional educator promotes the health, safety and well being of students by establishing and maintaining appropriate verbal, physical, emotional and social boundaries.

A. *The professional educator respects the rights and dignity of students by:*

1. Respecting students by taking into account their age, gender, culture, setting and socioeconomic context;
2. Interacting with students with transparency and in appropriate settings;
3. Communicating with students in a clear, respectful, and culturally sensitive manner;
4. Taking into account how appearance and dress can affect one's interactions and relationships with students;
5. Considering the implication of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to students;
6. Engaging in physical contact with students only when there is a clearly defined purpose that benefits the student and continually keeps the safety and well-being of the student in mind;
7. Avoiding multiple relationships with students which might impair objectivity and increase the risk of harm to student learning or well-being or decrease educator effectiveness;
8. Acknowledging that there are no circumstances that allow for educators to engage in romantic or sexual relationships with students; and
9. Considering the ramifications of entering into an adult relationship of any kind with a former student, including but not limited to, any potential harm to the former student, public perception, and the possible impact on the educator's career. The professional educator ensures that the adult relationship was not started while the former student was in school.

B. *The professional educator demonstrates an ethic of care through:*

1. Seeking to understand students' educational, academic, personal and social needs as well as students' values, beliefs, and cultural background;
2. Respecting the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual student including, but not limited to, actual and perceived gender, gender expression, gender identity, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and culture; and
3. Establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes the emotional, intellectual, physical, and sexual safety of all students.

C. *The professional educator maintains student trust and confidentiality when interacting with students in a developmentally appropriate manner and within appropriate limits by:*

1. Respecting the privacy of students and the need to hold in confidence certain forms of student communication, documents, or information obtained in the course of professional practice;
2. Upholding parents'/guardians' legal rights, as well as any legal requirements to reveal information related to legitimate concerns for the well-being of a student; and
3. Protecting the confidentiality of student records and releasing personal data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.

**Principle IV: Responsibility to the School Community**

The professional educator promotes positive relationships and effective interactions, with members of the school community, while maintaining professional boundaries.

A. *The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with parents/guardians by:*

1. Communicating with parents/guardians in a timely and respectful manner that represents the students' best interests;
2. Demonstrating a commitment to equality, equity, and inclusion as well as respecting and accommodating diversity among members of the school community;
3. Considering the implication of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to parents/guardians; and
4. Maintaining appropriate confidentiality with respect to student information disclosed by or to parents/guardians unless required by law.

B. *The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with colleagues by:*

1. Respecting colleagues as fellow professionals and maintaining civility when differences arise;
2. Resolving conflicts, whenever possible, privately and respectfully and in accordance with district policy;
3. Keeping student safety, education, and health paramount by maintaining and sharing educational records appropriately and objectively in accordance with local policies and state and federal laws;
4. Collaborating with colleagues in a manner that supports academic achievement and related goals that promote the best interests of students;
5. Enhancing the professional growth and development of new educators by supporting effective field experiences, mentoring or induction activities across the career continuum;
6. Ensuring that educators who are assigned to participate as mentors for new educators, cooperating teachers, or other teacher leadership positions are prepared and supervised to assume these roles;
7. Ensuring that educators are assigned to positions in accordance with their educational credentials, preparation, and experience in order to maximize students' opportunities and achievement; and

8. Working to ensure a workplace environment that is free from harassment.

*C. The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with the community and other stakeholders by:*

1. Advocating for policies and laws that the educator supports as promoting the education and well-being of students and families;
2. Collaborating with community agencies, organizations, and individuals in order to advance students' best interests without regard to personal reward or remuneration; and
3. Maintaining the highest professional standards of accuracy, honesty, and appropriate disclosure of information when representing the school or district within the community and in public communications.

*D. The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with employers by:*

1. Using property, facilities, materials, and resources in accordance with local policies and state and federal laws;
2. Respecting intellectual property ownership rights (e.g. original lesson plans, district level curricula, syllabi, gradebooks, etc.) when sharing materials;
3. Exhibiting personal and professional conduct that is in the best interest of the organization, learning community, school community, and profession; and
4. Considering the implications of offering or accepting gifts and/or preferential treatment by vendors or an individual in a position of professional influence or power.

*E. The professional educator understands the problematic nature of multiple relationships by:*

1. Considering the risks that multiple relationships might impair objectivity and increase the likelihood of harm to students' learning and well-being or diminish educator effectiveness;
2. Considering the risks and benefits of a professional relationship with someone with whom the educator has had a past personal relationship and vice versa;
3. Considering the implications and possible ramifications of engaging in a personal or professional relationship with parents and guardians, student teachers, colleagues, and supervisors; and
4. Ensuring that professional responsibilities to paraprofessionals, student teachers or interns do not interfere with responsibilities to students, their learning, and well-being.

**Principle V: Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology**

The professional educator considers the impact of consuming, creating, distributing and communicating information through all technologies. The ethical educator is vigilant to ensure

appropriate boundaries of time, place and role are maintained when using electronic communication.

A. *The professional educator uses technology in a responsible manner by:*

1. Using social media responsibly, transparently, and primarily for purposes of teaching and learning per school and district policy. The professional educator considers the ramifications of using social media and direct communication via technology on one's interactions with students, colleagues, and the general public;
2. Staying abreast of current trends and uses of school technology;
3. Promoting the benefits of and clarifying the limitations of various appropriate technological applications with colleagues, appropriate school personnel, parents, and community members;
4. Knowing how to access, document and use proprietary materials and understanding how to recognize and prevent plagiarism by students and educators;
5. Understanding and abiding by the district's policy on the use of technology and communication;
6. Recognizing that some electronic communications are records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and state public access laws and should consider the implications of sharing sensitive information electronically either via professional or personal devices/accounts; and
7. Exercising prudence in maintaining separate and professional virtual profiles, keeping personal and professional lives distinct.

B. *The professional educator ensures students' safety and well-being when using technology by:*

1. Being vigilant in identifying, addressing and reporting (when appropriate and in accordance with local district, state, and federal policy) inappropriate and illegal materials/images in electronic or other forms;
2. Respecting the privacy of students' presence on social media unless given consent to view such information or if there is a possibility of evidence of a risk of harm to the student or others; and
3. Monitoring to the extent practical and appropriately reporting information concerning possible cyber bullying incidents and their potential impact on the student learning environment.

C. *The professional educator maintains confidentiality in the use of technology by:*

1. Taking appropriate and reasonable measures to maintain confidentiality of student information and educational records stored or transmitted through the use of electronic or computer technology;
2. Understanding the intent of Federal Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) and how it applies to sharing electronic student records; and

3. Ensuring that the rights of third parties, including the right of privacy, are not violated via the use of technologies.

*D. The professional educator promotes the appropriate use of technology in educational settings by:*

1. Advocating for equal access to technology for all students, especially those historically underserved;
2. Promoting the benefits of and clarifying the limitations of various appropriate technological applications with colleagues, appropriate school personnel, parents, and community members; and
3. Promoting technological applications (a) that are appropriate for students' individual needs, (b) that students understand how to use and (c) that assist and enhance the teaching and learning process.

Application Notes:

1. The foregoing Model Code of Ethics is adopted in accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1694(5).

2. Nothing in these Rules can, or is intended to, vary the definition of "unprofessional conduct" which is contained in 16 V.S.A. § 1698. Rather, these Rules enumerate a non-exclusive list of conduct which, if proven in a particular case, might constitute unprofessional conduct.



## Glossary

### Boundaries:

The verbal, physical, emotional and social distances that an educator must maintain in order to ensure structure, security, and predictability in an educational environment. Most often, the boundaries that are transgressed relate to role, time and place. By respecting contracted roles, appropriate working hours, and the location of the learning environment, secure boundaries are in place for all members of the schooling community.

### District/school district:

This is often referred to as a “local education agency.” A “district” in this document is defined as a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools. This can include charter schools, magnet schools, virtual magnet schools, regional educational school districts, or other entities falling under the definition above.

### Culture:

The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group, including the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by people in a place or time<sup>3</sup>.

### Educator:

Educators are the target audience for the MCEE, and are defined as licensed educators. These include paraprofessionals, teachers, teacher leaders, student support personnel and administrators. However, others who interact with students who are not under the auspices of an education-related licensing organization such as coaches, school secretaries, custodians or other school staff are encouraged to adopt or adapt this *Model Code of Educator Ethics*. See a separate definition for “professional educator.”

### Ethic of care:

Responding with compassion to the needs of students.

### Ethical Decision-Making Model:

A framework utilized by educators to guide decision-making which includes professional dispositions; applicable laws, statutes, and policies; the *Model Code of Educator Ethics*; and other guidelines that have been adopted and endorsed by educational organizations.

### Fiduciary relationship:

A fiduciary relationship is one in which a person justifiably places confidence in another whose aid, advice, or protection is assumed. Inherent in such fiduciary relationships is an imbalance of power. Educators have a unique responsibility, as the relationship between student and

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture>

teacher differs from other professional/client relationships (e.g., attorneys, physicians, clergy). Educators are entrusted with the safety and welfare of students during and after school hours and serve “in loco parentis.”

Implicit or Explicit Demands of an Organization:

Implicit demands are often subjective or implied and reflect the culture of the schooling environment. Explicit demands are clearly articulated through mandates, policies, or statutes.

Harm:

The impairment of learning or any potential action which may lead to physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or intellectual damage to a student or a member of the school community.

Learning Community:

A group of educators who work with one another to achieve the shared goals of their school and engage in collaborative professional learning to strengthen practice and increase student results.<sup>2</sup>

Multiple Relationships:

Multiple relationships occur when the educator is in a professional role with one or more members of the school community and also has a personal relationship with that person or a member of that person’s family. Multiple relationships have the potential to impair objectivity, competence, or effectiveness in performing his or her functions as an educator.

New Educators:

New educators include individuals in an educator preparation program or newly employed in the education profession, including paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators, and student support personnel.

Professional educator:

A licensed educator who demonstrates the highest standards of ethical and professionally competent practice and is committed to advancing the interests, achievement and well-being of students. The professional educator is also committed to supporting the school community and the education profession.

Proprietary materials:

Materials that protected from unauthorized use by copyright or other forms of intellectual property rights.

Safe environments/Safety and well-being:

A school setting which promotes the well-being of all members of the school community and is characterized by the absence of physical, psychological, sexual or emotional harm

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<sup>2</sup> <http://learningforward.org/standards/learning-communities#.VTVerkv7Q3Y>

<sup>3</sup> <http://edglossary.org/school-community/>

School Community:

This term usually refers to those stakeholders invested in the welfare of a school and its community. A school community includes school administrators, teachers, school staff members, students, their parents and families, school board members and other community members.<sup>5</sup>

Sensitive Information:

This includes but is not limited to student information and educational records, including medical or counseling records.

Student:

A learner attending a P-12 school.

Technology:

Tools, systems, applications and processes that can include, but are not limited to, electronic communications networks such as the internet and electronic devices such as computers, laptops, phones and other hardware/software that deliver text, audio, images, animation, and streaming video.

Transparency:

Openness and accountability with respect to one's behaviors, actions and communications as an educator.