

Education Quality Standards Rule Update Committee Process

April 20, 2022 - The State Board of Ed received the proposed changes to the EQS rules from the Act 1 Working Group.

May 13, 2022 - The EQS Rule Update Committee met for the first time to discuss charge and work plan;

- Charge:
 - Pursuant to [Title 16 of the Vermont Statutes, Chapter 3](#), the State Board of Education is responsible for the establishment, advancement, and evaluation of public education policy. The powers and duties of the Board include making [regulations](#) governing: attendance and records of attendance of all pupils, standards for student performance, adult basic education programs, approval of independent schools, disbursement of funds, and equal access for all Vermont students to a quality education. The governing regulations are outlined in the [State Board of Education Rules](#).
 - The State Board of Education Education Quality Standards (EQS) Committee is charged with updating Vermont's [Education Quality Standards](#) (Rule Series 2000), for compliance with Vermont [Act 1](#), and other recommendations from AOE or others for the purpose of policy coherence and alignment. The EQS is the body of state education rules that set standards for educational quality and equal educational opportunity in Vermont.
 - This committee will review these rules in the context of the relevant legal framework, recommendations from Act 1, and others, and the committee will identify changes in language to existing rules, as well as changes to statute that are necessary to implement the revised rules. The Committee's work will include careful review of existing statutory requirements, recommendations of the Act 1 working group and the AOE, and substantive stakeholder input.
 - The Committee will submit proposed Draft EQS Rules updates to the full State Board of Education for review and approval (December-January).
 - Upon approval by the full State Board, the EQS will enter the ICAR/LCAR formal adoption process, which will include additional formal public comment period and will be concluded within eight months, at which time the rules will be adopted.

June 23, 2022 - April 10, 2023 - EQS Committee met 28 times to hear testimony, discuss and deliberate possible revision to EQS Rules. *Minutes and those invited to*

testify can be found noted below. The EQS Committee also received a great deal of public comment at Committee meetings and the November 30, 2022, public listening session, at which 30 people spoke of their support and appreciation for the changes proposed from the Act 1 Working Group to EQS.

June 23, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Invited testimony and overview of Act 1 Working Group recommendations for update to the EQS
 - Amanda Garces and Mark Hage, Co-chairs of Act 1 Working Group

June 30, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Invited testimony regarding Act 1 Working Group proposed changes to EQS:
 - Deborah Stoleroff, Program Director Twinfield Union School
 - Perry Bellow-Handelman (Jewish community member and teacher of World History, Sociology and Ethnic Studies at Montpelier High School)
 - Yoram Samets (Jewish Communities of Vermont)
 - Leigh Ann O'Neill (Staff Attorney, Foundation Against Intolerance & Racism)

July 28, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Public comments from Jewish Communities of Vermont and members of Act 1 Working Group
- Committee consideration of definitions

August 11, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Committee consideration of feedback from the Jewish Communities of Vermont regarding inclusion of “persecution and genocide” in definition of “ethnic studies” and “ethnic groups”
- Public comment from Alyssa Chen, Education Justice Coalition

August 25, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Update from Amanda Garces, Act 1 Working Group regarding edits to “ethnic group” and “ethnic studies”
- Feedback from Mike Martin, of the Act 1 Working Group, regarding definition of “critical thinking”
- Committee discussion of feedback on edits to these definitions

September 1, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Committee consideration of “ethnic group”, “ethnic studies” and “social identity” group
 - Public comments from Jewish Communities of Vermont
- Invited testimony on definition of Critical Thinking
 - Michael Martin, VPA, representing Act 1 Working Group

September 15, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Invited testimony on on Instructional Practices/Strategies

- Jeff Fannon, VT NEA
- Andrew Jones, for Mike Martin, VT Curriculum Coordinators Association

October 6, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting

- Committee consideration of feedback from VT NEA and VT Curriculum Leaders Association on Instructional Practices/Strategies

October 20, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Invited testimony on proposed EQS
 - Heather Bushey, Deputy Director, AOE offered technical corrections

October 28, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Invited testimony on proposed EQS
 - Michael Clark, Superintendent, Grand Isle Supervisory Union
 - Chelsea Myers, Associate Executive Director, Vermont Superintendents Association

November 3, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Committee consideration of AOE recommendations

November 15, 2022 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Invited testimony on Statement of Purpose (application to independent schools)
 - Testimony from Mill Moore, Vermont Independent School Association (VISA)
 - Testimony from Mark Hage, Act 1 Working Group Co-chair

November 30, 2022 - Public Listening Session, [minutes](#)

- opportunity to hear feedback on the proposed EQS rules (heard from more than thirty people in support of the Act 1 Working Group recommendations to update).
- Committee Working draft from 11/30/22: <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/sbe-egs-rules-update-with-committee-annotations-and-aoe-recommendations-11-30-2022-protected.docx>

December 8 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Review of statement of purpose (application to Independent Schools);
- Testimony from NAESC and AISNE accrediting agencies
- Testimony from Sharon Howell, Head of St. Johnsbury Academy, and
- Testimony from Carrie Brennan, Head of Thetford Academy (independent school that complies with EQS)

December 15 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Testimony from Katie Ballard, Chair Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)
- Testimony from Rene Sanchez, Superintendent, Champlain Valley School District (CVSD)
- Testimony from Dana Lesperance, Community High School of Vermont
- Testimony from Amanda Garces and Chelsea Myers of the Act 1 Working Group regarding feedback on the AOE technical suggestions

December 21, 2022 - State Board of Education meeting, [minutes](#)

- EQS Committee Update: to include presentation of the most current working draft of the EQS Committee and discussion with Board

January 19, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Student feedback on the proposed EQS changes, highlighting the need for integrated curriculum and materials for students to feel seen in their educational experiences.
- Testimony from Tony Strata-Cortez, DEI Coordinator Thetford Academy (independent school that complies with EQS)
- Testimony from Sora Bolles, student at Thetford Academy, and member of Vermont Students Anti-racism Network (VSARN)
- Testimony from Katie Ballard, SEAP offering specific suggestions for edits to the proposed EQS

January 26, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Consideration of the statement of purpose and the extent to which EQS should apply to independent schools

February 3, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Committee review and edit of the full proposed EQS document
- Several areas for Act 1 Working Group review and feedback
- Discussed alignment with District Quality Standards/Quality Assurance Review (DQS/QAR)

February 7, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Continued Committee review of the full EQS to edit for clarity and consistency
 - Identified areas for review by the Act 1 Working Group
 - Identified areas for review by the AOE
- Discussed alignment with DQS/QAR; to invite AOE testimony
- Discussed specific questions for legal review and alignment with statute

February 16, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Testimony from Emily Simmons, General Counsel for the AOE
 - Feedback on technical corrections
 - Feedback on alignment with DQS/QAR
- Committee discussion on suggested edits

February 21, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Act 1 Working Group feedback on EQS Committee Edits
 - Concern regarding removing of application to independent schools
 - Offered clarity for other edits and definitions
- Restructuring of Section 2124 Reporting of Results for clarity and specificity regarding disaggregation of data.
- 2125 Continuous Improvement Plan and 2126 Compliance edited to align with DQS/QAR

- Consideration of outstanding questions regarding EQS sections and application to independent schools for legal consideration

March 10, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Executive Session to review confidential attorney client communications

March 17, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Committee consideration of feedback from Act 1 Working Group on earlier questions
- Committee considered feedback from Jennifer Samuelson, Chair SBE

March 28, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Committee considered remaining outstanding items
- Committee added a definition of “Neurodiversity” with input from the Act 1 Working Group

March 30, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting, [minutes](#)

- Committee discussion regarding the replacement of Patrick Brown on the State Board of Ed and his role on the EQS Committee, as a non-voting member
- Committee continued its consideration of the remaining outstanding “clean-up”

April 5, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting

- Committee considered remaining edits for the EQS

April 6, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting

- Committee considered remaining edits for the EQS

April 10, 2023 - EQS Committee meeting

- Committee deliberated the final draft for consideration and approval to move to the full Board for their consideration
 - EQS Committee was not able to resolve the question of whether and to what extent the EQS should apply to approved independent schools

April 13, 2023 - review of the EQS Committee proposed Draft Updates to the EQS by the State Board of Ed; expected vote to move on to ICAR/LCAR process for a May filing:

- Formal public comment period will be open
- Completion of the administrative rules process required within eight months

Concurrently, DQS and Quality Assurance Process is moving through the AOE rule making process. Efforts have been made to ensure there is appropriate reference and alignment with EQS and DQS.