

Testimony for Oct. 3, 2023 Public Hearing: Rule Series 2000 – Education Quality Standards

My name is Debra Stoleroff. I am a newly retired teacher. I founded and directed the [Renaissance Program](#) (Twinfield's personalized learning program) for the last 24 years. Prior to that I was an elementary teacher.

Equity in education has been the focus of my entire teaching career. In the early 90s I was asked to help write the Vital Results of the Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities. I then became a teacher leader for the Vermont Institute for Science, Math and Technology with a focus on equity. I've led the multiple iterations of equity focused professional committees at Twinfield and helped lead the design of our proficiency-based graduation system. I started the Renaissance Program to provide a path to graduation for one bright, creative, learning disabled student who was ready to drop out of school because she was bored and unengaged. *

Creating personalized learning experiences is an option for all Twinfield high school students. Since 1999 the program has met the needs 70% of Twinfield students. For many, having the opportunity to create an experience based on their interest, learning style and life experiences proved to be a lifeline to their success in school and their postsecondary life. Updated EQS standards will foster personalization in and out of classrooms. In turn, updating the EQS standards will improve education opportunities for students living in poverty; students who have experienced trauma; disabled students; students of all ethnic and racial groups as well as students who face challenges regarding their gender identity and sexual orientation. Having the most inclusive Education Quality Standards that better serve all students is of utmost importance. Every Vermont student, indeed every student in the US deserves education opportunities that allow them, indeed, compel them to exert the effort necessary to attain high levels of rigor and understanding. Not providing the most equitable education opportunities does a disservice to the future of Vermont and our society.

I ask the VT State Board of Education to support the implementation of the recommended EQS changes as proposed by the diverse and representative Act 1 Working Group.

I thank the Board Chair and Board Members for the opportunity to be heard.

Sincerely,

Debra Stoleroff

Plainfield, Vermont

* That bright, creative, learning disabled student who hated school and for whom we created an equitable path to graduation is now a Literacy Interventionist in the public school system of Holyoke, MA.