

SUCCESS IN VERMONT SCHOOLS

A snapshot of public education in Vermont from the VSA, VPA and VSBA

Vermont is the "Smartest State"

"For the second consecutive year, Vermont holds on to the top of Morgan Quitno Press's education rankings as the nation's Smartest State. Vermont has earned this distinction by demonstrating a strong commitment to students and teachers, an emphasis on excellence in the classroom and support for efficient public schools."³

More Early Readers

Vermont 2nd graders are reading at their highest level ever. The State Developmental Reading Assessment shows that:

- ▶ The number of 2nd graders below the standard has been cut in half since 1999.
- ▶ 85% of 2nd graders are meeting or exceeding the reading standard in 2006, up from 73% in 1999

NECAP Leadership

Vermont has developed and implemented a common educational assessment tool with New Hampshire and Rhode Island for grades 3-8. 2005 was the first year of testing, and the results confirm Vermont's commitment to education. 67% of Vermont students were found to be proficient or better in reading, and 63% were proficient or better in math. Vermont also ranked first in proficiency among the three states in every subject area.

Youth Risk Behavior Declines

A biannual survey administered to Vermont high school students determined that:

Cigarette smoking is down	
1999: 31%	2005: 16%
Alcohol consumption is down	
1999: 46%	2005: 37%
Marijuana use is down	
1997: 32%	2005: 22%

Sources: 2006 Kids Count Data Book, American Legislative Exchange Council's Report Card on American Education, Editorial Projects in Education's Quality Counts 2007, Education Vital Signs 2006, Morgan Quitno Press, New Hampshire Dept. of Education, Rhode Island Dept. of Education, US Dept. of Education, Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Dept. of Education, Vermont Dept. of Health

Commitment to VT Youth

2006 Kids Count, a national study of child well-being, ranks Vermont 2nd best overall among the states. Some of the highlights include:

Children enrolled in nursery or preschool, or kindergarten:		
Age 3-4	VT: 48%	US: 44%
Proficient or better in writing:		
Grade 4	VT: 32%	US: 27%
Grade 8	VT: 41%	US: 30%
Proficient or better in science:		
Grade 4	VT: 38%	US: 27%
Grade 8	VT: 41%	US: 27%
Teens who are HS dropouts:		
	VT: 4%	US: 8%
Children without a computer at home:		
	VT: 27%	US: 38%

Highly Qualified Teachers

92% of Vermont teachers in core academic subjects are "Highly Qualified," a federal designation indicating that an educator is suitably educated, trained and competent. In addition, Vermont is one of five states where 100% of teachers receive High Quality Professional Development annually.

AP Achievement

Advanced Placement allows high school students to prepare for college by taking college-level courses and earning college credit. AP exams are administered nationally and are graded on a scale from 1 (worst) to 5 (best). Vermont students taking AP exams scored a mean of 3.06, 6% better than the national mean. Vermont students' achievement is even more pronounced in some subjects:

AP Subject	VT Mean	US Mean
Calculus (BC)	4.35	3.71
Comp. Sci. (AB)	4.25	3.38
Econ. (Macro)	3.86	2.74
Econ. (Micro)	4.10	2.99
World History	3.47	2.62

A publication of the VT Superintendents Association, the VT Principals Association, and the VT School Boards Association

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High Performing Schools

Education Week's Quality Counts 2007 determined that Vermont schools performed 3rd best in the nation in achievement and achievement gains. The determination was made using 13 indicators, including NAEP scores, graduation rate, and recent improvement in achievement.

Opportunity for Success

Quality Counts 2007 also ranks the states on a "Chance-for-Success Index" that tracks the life-long benefits of residents' educational experience. It includes some traditional indicators such as residents' NAEP scores combined with adult educational attainment, annual income, and availability of reliable employment. It determined that Vermont residents have the 9th best chance for success.

2005 Vermont NAEP Results

The National Assessment of Educational Progress compares academic achievement across states, and consistently ranks Vermont in the upper echelon of success. In fact, Vermont's overall NAEP score ranks 3rd best among the 50 states and 2 jurisdictions assessed.

Vermont 4th graders:

outperformed 49 other states in reading and math

- ▶ outperformed 41 other states/jurisdictions in reading
- ▶ outperformed 39 other states/jurisdictions in math

Vermont 8th graders:

outperformed 49 other states in reading and math

- ▶ outperformed 34 other states/jurisdictions in reading
- ▶ outperformed 43 other states/jurisdictions in math

Music and the Arts

Three Vermont schools have won Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education "National School of Distinction" awards since 2001, and six more have earned state-level recognition. Thirteen Vermont music students have been awarded full scholarships to study at the National Symphony Orchestra Summer Institute since 2000.

SAT Success:

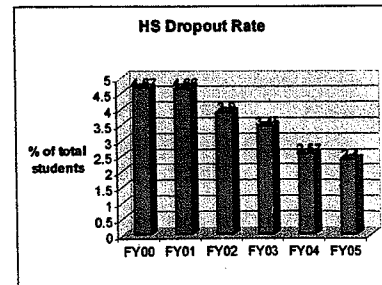
Scores Rise – More Students are Assessed

Vermont has made significant strides in preparing students for the SAT in recent years. Mean test scores have steadily increased while the number of students taking the exam has risen dramatically. Overall, Vermont ranks 7th nationwide in weighted SAT achievement.¹

Year	# of students	Verbal	Math
1998	5051	508	504
2000	5331	513	508
2002	5659	512	510
2004	5750	516	512
2005	5837	521	517

High School Completion

Vermont schools have made impressive strides in retaining and graduating their students. In the 1990s, Vermont decreased the number of students who don't complete high school by 66%. By the year 2000, Vermont had the highest high school completion rate in the nation at 88.2%!² Since then, the percentage of students who drop out has continued to fall:



¹ American Legislative Exchange Council

² *One-Third of a Nation*, Paul E. Barton, Educational Testing Service