

# From the Board Room

A newsletter for members of the Vermont School Boards Association, 2 Prospect Street, Suite #4, Montpelier VT 05602  
Phone: 1-800-244-VSBA or 802-223-3580 Fax: 802-223-0098

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*Articles printed represent diverse points of view and may be controversial in nature. It is the belief of the Association that the democratic process functions best through discussions which challenge and stimulate thinking on the part of the reader. Therefore, materials published present the ideas/beliefs of those who write them and are not necessarily the views or policies of the VSBA unless so stated. This newsletter is distributed at no charge to all members of the Association. Contact the Association by calling 802-223-3580.*

## From Statehouse to Courthouse, Preschool Gaining Ground

As the nation enters the final leg of the 2006 election season, early childhood education is being discussed by candidates in state elections across the country. The emphasis on preschool comes from momentum that preschool advocates have been building for years, based on well-established research showing a "readiness gap" between low-income and high-income children before they even enter school. Research also demonstrates that early childhood education offers one of the most effective and efficient ways to narrow the achievement gap. From statehouse proposals to courthouse decrees, preschool is gaining ground.

Just providing preschool is not a silver bullet, however. As discussed in a report released this month by the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) at Columbia University, in order to improve the early literacy and math skills of low-income children, preschool must be of a high quality. The report summarizes the existing research regarding preschool effectiveness and presents recommendations for policymakers and school administrators.

### Closing the Readiness Gap

The report, "Effective Preschool Curricula and Teaching Strategies," is the

*Preschool ... (continued on page 4...)*

## 2006 VSA/VSBA Annual Conference

*"Politics, Policy and Perspective: Education 2007"*

The VSBA and VSA annual conference will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel & Conference Center in Montpelier on November 16 and 17.

**The school board member registration form may be found on page 9** of this newsletter and on the VSBA website at [www.vtsba.org](http://www.vtsba.org).

**The hotel reservation information may be found on page 9** also. For reservations please call the Capitol Plaza Hotel & Conference Center at 802-223-5252. The reservation deadline is November 1 and the space is limited so make your reservations early.

**The agenda may be found on page 8** and on the VSBA website.

### BUSINESS MEETING

The annual VSBA business meeting will begin at **4:00 on Thursday, November 16**. You may view the VSBA proposed resolutions and bylaws on the VSBA website or call 800-244-8722 to receive a hard copy in the mail. 📧

# NEW REPORT:

## States Face Steep Challenges in Helping Nearly 8,500 Schools In Need of Improvement Assistance Efforts Reflect New Demands Amid Limited Resources

Education Week's 2006 "Leading For Learning" report shows how the federal No Child Left Behind Act has created an immense leadership challenge for states and districts by requiring them to help a rapidly growing number of low-performing schools. At the same time, there has been no influx of aid to help states and districts address this problem.

A new analysis by the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center reveals that 8,446 schools and 1,624 districts nationwide were listed as "in need of improvement" in the 2005-06 school year. That means they have missed making "adequate yearly progress" for at least two years in a row and are entitled to assistance from their state.

On average, 16 percent of schools nationwide that receive federal Title I money were found to be in need of improvement. The schools enroll a total of 5.8 million students, of whom 66 percent live in poverty and 75 percent are members of ethnic and racial minority groups.

Christopher B. Swanson, the director of EPE's Research Center, says: "What's most striking is how highly concentrated these low-performing schools are within certain districts. Although about 2,400 districts have at least one Title I school in need of improvement, just 25 individual districts account for one-quarter of all such schools nationwide." In Alabama, Alaska, California, the District of Columbia, and Florida, more than 30 percent of schools are classified as in need of improvement. At the other extreme, fewer than 2 percent of all schools were so designated in Iowa, Nebraska, and Wyoming.

The report also includes findings from a review of federal documents listing school and district assistance efforts in each state. While not revealing all that states are doing, the review did find clear trends that suggest how states are trying to

reach more schools, often without added resources:

- States most often said they offered guidance on improvement planning (47 states), as well as ongoing support that wasn't based on-site (32 states), such as by a support team based at the state education department.
- States less often said they provided on-site assistance at individual schools (14 states) by assigning a highly skilled educator.
- A few more (17 states) said they provided such site-based support to schools in groups, or to districts.
- Twenty-three states described a "triage" process, which gives the most assistance to schools with the most needs.
- Nineteen states said they relied on outside providers, such as private consultants, to provide assistance.

The report includes profiles of how three states—Kentucky, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania—are trying to meet these changes. Snapshots of new efforts in other states also are included.

"This is a new kind of work for many state education departments," said Education Week Associate Editor Jeff Archer, the lead reporter on the project. "So they're changing their roles—from monitoring for compliance to providing technical assistance—at the same time that the number of schools demanding their help is on the rise."

### **New Demands Without New Money**

As the report notes, the scope of the challenge of assisting low-performing schools and districts is only just beginning to dawn on states, now that NCLB is in its fifth year.

Under the law, the highest priority for state technical assistance goes to schools and districts that have reached the status of "corrective action," meaning they missed their adequate yearly progress targets at least four years in a row.

According to the EPE Research Center's analysis: By the 2005-06 school year, 2,721 schools and 80 districts nationwide had reached at least the corrective-action stage for having missed AYP for at least four consecutive years. And about another 3,000 districts and 470 schools were potentially one year away from reaching that status. Most states, in fact, had more schools that could be in corrective action within one year for missing AYP again than they did already in that status.

Education leaders in the report say state and federal support has not kept pace with this growing demand. Under NCLB, 4 percent of Title I monies are set aside for school improvement activities, and at the current \$12 billion allocation, that amounts to \$500 million. Of that, 95 percent is required to go to schools and districts, leaving at most \$25 million total for 50 state agencies.

Still, the report notes that a few states have allocated more to support low-performing schools and that Congress is considering including new money for such activities in the next federal budget.

The 2006 "Leading for Learning" report (available online at [www.edweek.org/wallace](http://www.edweek.org/wallace)) is the third in a series of special reports on leadership in K-12 education, underwritten by the Wallace Foundation. The previous two reports examined leadership at the school and district levels. 🚗


*As first appeared in Education Week September 13, 2006. Reprinted with permission from Editorial Projects in Education.*

## HIV policy guidance is updated in 2006

A new recommended HIV sample policy, updated by the Vermont Department of Education, is now available for consideration by schools.

Changes to this recommended policy reflect updates to legal references and clearer language for each of the areas protected under this policy including confidentiality, non-discrimination, rights for students, faculty and staff and health protections and universal precautions. A new and improved best practice section is also included with recommendations in HIV/AIDS prevention curriculum and instruction, health protections and services, athletics and staff development.

This update presents an opportunity for schools to re-visit their current HIV policies which may have been adopted as far back as 1995, the year the original sample policy guidance was released. As schools consider HIV policy updates, note that while the policy itself is recommended, every item referenced in the policy is mandated either by state or federal law.

This updated policy guidance is available for download on both the DOE and VSBA websites. For more information, contact Kathryn Cassi O'Neill, HIV Prevention Program Coordinator, Vermont Department of Education, [kathrynoneill@education.stat.vt.us](mailto:kathrynoneill@education.stat.vt.us) or 828-5151. 

## Energy Costs Hit Food Service Facilities Harder Schools find a solution in efficiency

When energy costs rise and many schools feel a pinch, those with food service facilities can feel a squeeze. Energy demands in food service facilities are roughly 2.5 times more per square foot than in most commercial buildings.

"The good news is that nearly any school with a food service facility can reduce energy use," says Sheryl Graves of Efficiency Vermont. "The total savings potential from a more efficient institutional kitchen can vary from 10-30 percent, depending upon the technologies installed."

According to Graves the greatest energy savings typically stem from energy-efficiency improvements to methods for refrigeration, lighting, and ventilation. Significant savings can also be obtained when purchasing new, energy-efficient equipment, particularly for food preparation and dishwashing. Improvements range from those having little or no cost to those requiring a larger initial investment but which result in fast paybacks. In addition to lowering energy costs, efficiency improvements can enhance the comfort, appearance and ambience of lunch rooms and kitchens.

Below is a sample of effective energy-saving improvements being made in Vermont institutional kitchens. More information on energy-saving solutions is available at [efficiencyvermont.com](http://efficiencyvermont.com). Or call, toll-free, 888-921-5990. Effi-

ciency Vermont also can help you identify the most cost-effective approaches for your school and can determine if financial incentives are available for your electric energy-efficiency improvements.


**Food Preparation** – Select ENERGY STAR® qualified food-holding cabinets and steamers and use 50-60% less energy for these operations. That translates to an annual savings of \$650-800 for steamers that run two hours per day.

**Dishwashing** – Install a low-flow pre-rinse spray valve. You'll save \$300-400, annually, for each hour of daily spray time with an electric water heater.

**Refrigeration** – Set the temperature no lower than required by the health code.

This can reduce your yearly costs by \$110-170 for a 1,000 cubic-foot dairy cooler with temperature setting increased from 33F to 38F.

**Lighting** – Turn off lights in unoccupied areas or install occupancy sensors and reduce yearly costs by as much as \$110 in a typical dining area.

**Ventilation, Heating & Air Conditioning** – If you have a wall canopy exhaust system with fan controls, push your appliances as far back against the wall as possible. By moving appliances back 12 inches under a 10-foot hood system, you can save \$50-60 annually. 



## VSBA Negotiation Website Updated

The VSBA Negotiation website has been updated to include information through 2010. The password is available to school board members, superintendents and business managers. To receive your user ID and password please contact VSBA.

second in NCCP's "Pathways to Early School Success" series of issue briefs. This brief reviews and summarizes the research into both the challenges facing preschool education for low-income children and the potential solutions to those challenges.

Drawing upon a wide body of research, including that of Sharon Lynn Kagan at Teachers College, Columbia University, the report describes the gap in readiness for school between children from low-income and high-income backgrounds and explains that high-quality preschools are very effective in reducing this "readiness gap." However, many preschools, particularly those in the lower-income areas where they are most needed, deliver a poor quality of care and education. The report recommends ways to develop high-quality preschools, focusing on two factors: intentional curriculum and professional development.

Intentional curriculum, the report says, means "planned, organized, sequenced activities and lessons" that are age-appropriate but focus on academic readiness. Such a curriculum, must be based on research into what skills, when learned in preschool, can predict success in elementary education. In addition, intentional curriculum is a comprehensive endeavor, emphasizing not just the content of preschool education, but also teachers' engagement with children, the types of activities children experience, and the attention given to developing social skills.

On professional development, the report reviews studies that demonstrate the importance of specialized early childhood training for preschool teachers and argues that preschool teachers should

receive such training. In addition, preschool teachers need to have access to ongoing mentoring or coaching by experts in early childhood development and education.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations for policymakers, researchers, school administrators, and teachers. The recommendations to policymakers call for increased resources for training, as well as investment in experimental research that can determine what elements compose a successful curriculum. For school administrators and teachers, the report recommends increased professional development and alignment of preschool curricula with K-3 standards in order to produce sustained achievement as a child progresses through school.

#### **NIEER: Preschool Affects All Domains of Learning**

The report also draws upon research done by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University. NIEER's Preschool Policy Brief, published last April, states that early literacy is highly correlated with school achievement later in life. Furthermore, it explains that "all of the domains of a child's development - physical, social-emotional, cognitive, language and literacy - are interrelated and interdependent."

According to NIEER's policy brief, the interdependency of all areas of a child's learning makes high-quality preschool a necessity for children:

A growing body of evidence shows that early learning experiences are linked with later school achievement, emotional and social well-being, fewer grade retentions, and reduced incidences of juvenile delinquency and that these outcomes are all factors associated with later adult productivity.

The importance of high-quality preschool means policymakers and school administrators need to develop curricula and teaching practices that are "evidence-based" and "integrated with all domains of

learning." Researchers must study the effectiveness of early literacy curricula and teaching practices, and policymakers and administrators must provide increased resources for preschool teachers, including specialized training, expert coaches, and professional development.

#### **Courts and Policymakers**

The NCCP report is part of a growing national trend that recognizes high-quality preschool as a crucial element of efforts to narrow the achievement gap. Beginning with the *Abbott v. Burke* school funding case in New Jersey, and most recently in the *Abbeville v. State* case in South Carolina, courts recognize the importance of early childhood education in alleviating the detrimental effects of poverty. South Carolina circuit court judge Thomas W. Cooper, Jr. last December held:

[E]arly childhood intervention at the pre-kindergarten level and continuing through at least grade three is necessary to minimize, to the extent possible, the impact and the effect of poverty on the educational abilities and achievements of...children.

For low-income children to receive an adequate education, high-quality preschool is a necessity, and lawmakers across the country are starting to agree and are slowly improving access. Last year, 26 states increased preschool funding by a total of \$600 million, and this spring, Illinois joined Florida, Georgia and Oklahoma in providing preschool to all four-year-olds. 🚌



Prepared by Matthew Samberg  
October 13, 2006

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# School Board Professional Development

## Workshops on DVD

The VSBA now offers all of our workshops on DVD. The VIT sessions are chapterized by topic. Choose the chapters you need to learn. We appreciate the limited time school board members have. Learn what you need to know.

The following workshops are currently available (with the chapters)

### **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PART II** *November 22, 2005*

- 1-Review of Part I
- 2-Agency Fees
- 3-HRA & Insurance
- 4-Hot Topics
- 5-Bargaining Techniques
- 6-Collaborative vs. Traditional
- 7-Regional Negotiations
- 8-Confidentiality
- 9-Impasse Procedures
- 10-Teacher Retirement
- 11-Salary Schedules
- 12-Lower Income Teachers
- 13-"Cost" of a Teacher
- 14-Merit Pay

### **DEVELOPING THE BUDGET** *October 2006*

In process—available soon—order now!

### **ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES & RELATIONSHIPS** *Spring 2006*

- 1-VSBA Overview
- 2-New Board Members
- 3-Complaint Resolution
- 4-Term Glossary
- 5-School Board Law
- 6-Policy
- 7-Types of Board Meetings
- 8-Agendas
- 9-School Board Code
- 10-Personnel Relations
- 11-Community Relations
- 12-Conflict of Interest
- 13-Working at a School
- 14-Board Communications
- 15-Negotiations
- 16-Budgets & Act 68

### **SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR** *May 2006*

- 1-Executive Session
- 2-Minutes
- 3-Code of Conduct
- 4-Electronic Communication
- 5-Roles
- 6-The Law
- 7-Personnel Issues
- 8-Board Goals & Strategic Plan
- 9-Media
- 10-Managing Meetings
- 11-Meeting Effectiveness
- 12-Board Retreats
- 13-Encourage Competitive Elections
- 14-Communication
- 15-Micromanaging vs. Info Gathering
- 16-Veteran Advice

## Passing Your School Budget

As your school budget nears completion and you begin to see the impact that fuel costs, health care, special education and other economic factors will have on 2007-08 school operations, it's time to prepare your budget passage strategies for the annual school district meeting. To assist you, the VSBA staff has scheduled a "Passing Your School Budget" workshop on January 16th, 6:30 to 8:30 PM. This event will be aired on VT Interactive Television sites and will also be available on DVD following the workshop. Featured speaker National School Public Relations Association President, Bob Noyed – live from Minnesota to help refine the budget passage strategy.

### **Workshop Goals:**

- ◆ Communicate current statewide budget data;
- ◆ Identify key budget and tax components;
- ◆ Learn strategies for making school performance indicators and budget information understandable for voters;
- ◆ Demonstrate use of PowerPoint for effective budget presentations;
- ◆ Hear panel of experienced board members present effective budget passage strategies.

Preregistration for Passing Your Budget necessary  
at [www.vtvsba.org](http://www.vtvsba.org) or 800-244-8722

VIT sites may be found at [www.vitlink.org](http://www.vitlink.org)

Cost: \$35.00/Supervisory Union

# Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I recently questioned the VSBA newsletter's July 2006 choice of front page headline Destroying the Myths – Annual Poll Shows Public Schools not Losing Support and its supporting article as potentially misleading. For example, the article states “support for school choice shows no sign of increasing and could be said to be lagging”. In your responses, while you indicated your opinion that “The PDK-Gallup poll is the most comprehensive and objective annual poll on education”, you offered to run my reply in your September newsletter. Please accept this note and the following article that articulates my concerns as but one Vermont school board member who happens to favor School Choice. The article is from **DeHavilland Associates**, [www.dehavillandassociates.com](http://www.dehavillandassociates.com), an education consulting firm in Charlotte, NC that was published last week on the EDUCATION CONSUMERS CLEARINGHOUSE, [www.education-consumers.com](http://www.education-consumers.com), an international education forum.

Jay Eshelman  
River Valley Technical Center School Board

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## Strange things afoot at the PDK

For the last 38 years, Phi Delta Kappa and The Gallup Organization have conducted a national survey on the public's attitudes toward public schools. It's an influential survey, put out by two credible entities, and one would be inclined to take its results at face value. But it seems as if there are some shenanigans happening behind the scenes that would severely compromise the integrity of this work.

Given the inroads made in recent years by voucher initiatives (programs in Milwaukee, Cleveland, and DC for example), it would seem as if the idea of school choice is gaining political and public acceptance. Yet, according to PDK/Gallup:

Since 1991, the PDK/Gallup polls have approached this issue with a question that measures approval of the voucher concept — “allowing parents and students to choose a private school to

attend at public expense” — without using the politically charged word “vouchers.” Table 5 provides this year's results. In considering the results, it is useful to keep in mind that choice, independent of a specific program, is popular with the public.

Findings. The percentage favoring vouchers dropped from 38% a year ago to 36% this year, while opposition grew from 57% to 60%. Support for vouchers started at 24% in 1993, fluctuated up and down for years, and peaked at 46% in 2002. It is now at the mid-Nineties level.

Sounds bad for the voucher folks, right? It would – if this were the whole story.

PDK/Gallup is technically correct when they say that they've been asking about the voucher concept without using the word “vouchers” since 1991. What they don't say is that they've been asking about vouchers since 1970; the difference is that they actually used the word “vouchers” in previous years.

According to Andrew Coulson of The Cato Institute:

PDK actually started asking the American public about vouchers back in 1970, with a rather more informative question: *In some nations, the government allots a certain amount of money for each child for his or her education. The parents can then send the child to any public, parochial, or private school they choose. This is called the “voucher system.” Would you like to see such an idea adopted in this country?*

Response to this question was initially somewhat unfavorable, but those answering favorably began outnumbering those opposed in 1981, and that pattern was never reversed. The last time PDK ever asked this question, in 1991, 50 percent of respondents were in favor while only 39 percent were opposed. What Cato did not mention, but also can be found in the 1991 PDK report, is that “The voucher plan finds its strongest support among non-whites and blacks (57% in both groups), inner-city dwellers (57%), people with children under 18 (58%), and nonpublic school parents (66%).”

If you want to politicize this, you can argue that The Cato Institute has an agenda of its own – but they're simply presenting facts here, as evidenced by past editions of PDK/Gallup reports.

It gets even stickier. Sensing that the new question (“Do you favor or oppose allowing students and parents to choose a private school to attend at public expense?”) promoted a bias against vouchers, The Milton and Rose Friedman Foundation commissioned their own survey last year using Harris Interactive, another well-known polling firm. In this survey, they contacted 1,000 adults, asked 500 of them the PDK question verbatim, and asked the other 500 a slightly modified version.

The results, with changes in wording underlined:

**PDK Question:** “Do you favor or oppose allowing students and parents to choose a private school to attend at public expense?”

- 37% favor
- 55% oppose
- 5% neither favor or oppose
- 2% don't know/refused

**Adjusted Question:** “Do you favor or oppose allowing students and parents to choose any school, public or private, to attend using public funds?”

- 60% favor
- 33% oppose
- 5% neither favor nor oppose
- 2% don't know/refused

That's right – **a 23-point jump in support**, based on a slight rewording of the question. And while the Friedman Foundation is wholly pro-voucher, I've got to consider their question the fairer of the two.

It seems clear to me that PDK's work, at least on this issue, has been compromised by their agenda (they describe themselves as “a dedicated advocate for the public schools” on their site). As a result, it's hard to take any of their findings very seriously – just one more example of education research that can't be taken at face value. 🚌

# Teacher Quality Impacts Student Achievement

*The National School Boards Association's Center for Public Education has examined the link between teacher quality and raising student achievement. A growing body of research shows that student achievement is more heavily influenced by teacher quality than by students' race, class, prior academic record or the school a student attends. This effect is particularly strong among African-American students and students from low-income families.*

Here is a series of questions and answers generated by the Center for Public Education on this subject

**Q. How can attention to teacher quality close achievement gaps - the tendency for some groups of students to achieve less academically than others?**

**A.** Poor and minority students are the least likely group to be taught by teachers with experience, knowledge and credentials, the elements of teacher quality that research demonstrates are strongly associated with high student achievement.

Research also shows that these students produce the most gains when assigned to effective teachers. Indeed, these findings have led many

researchers and analysts to assert that the lack of good teachers is a major contributor to the achievement gap.

A California study suggests that schools hit a "tipping point" when approximately 20 percent of the school faculty is comprised of under-qualified teachers - teachers who do not meet minimum state requirements. After this point, schools begin to lose their ability to improve student achievement. The best strategy for closing achievement gaps is to make sure that schools serving poor and minority students have their fair share of qualified teachers.

**Q. What are the qualities of an "effective teacher"?**

**A.** Research findings point to four key dimensions of teacher quality:

1. Content knowledge.
2. Teaching experience.
3. Professional certification.
4. Overall academic ability.

It's important to note that there are individual teachers who are highly effective although they lack one or more of these qualities, just as there are ineffective teachers who have all

of them. But on average, the presence rather than absence of these qualities is more likely to produce effective teaching.

**Q. What can education leaders do to support efforts to have a highly qualified teacher in every classroom?**

**A. 1.** Recruitment: Step up recruiting efforts to aggressively seek teacher candidates who have strong academic credentials and who have completed a rigorous teacher preparation program. Recruiters could, for example, closely examine transcripts and other records that identify and describe the actual courses that teacher candidates have taken in order to assess the rigor and extent of teacher preparation. They could also ask teacher candidates specific questions about their course requirements and assessments during interviews.

**2.** Data collection: Explore value-added methods for monitoring teacher effectiveness, such as those used in Texas, North Caro-

*Teacher Quality... (Continued on page 10...)*

## An Injury/Safety Check List: Can You Answer Yes?

VSBIT Corner

- \* Does your school district do whatever is necessary to reduce accidents
- \* If necessary, do the appropriate employees wear protective equipment
- \* Does the school have a written Emergency Action and Fire Prevention Plan
- \* Do employees receive any safety training
- \* Does the school district take a proactive stance when it comes to safety
- \* Are all unsafe conditions promptly corrected
- \* Does the school district commit the necessary time and resources to safety improvements
- \* Does the school district have the ability to change and adapt quickly as conditions or circumstances warrant
- \* Is the school district sympathetic and understanding when an employee is injured
- \* When an accident occurs, does the school district consult with various members of its staff to develop a plan that will prevent similar occurrences from happening again
- \* Are employees involved in the design and implementation of the school district safety program
- \* Does the district have an OSHA required written Hazard Communication Program

Contact the VSBIT Office if you need any assistance with the above.

# VSA/VSBA Conference Program

## November 16-17

### Capitol Plaza, Montpelier

#### **Thursday, November 16**

- 7:30 Registration and continental breakfast
- 9:00 Conference opening
- 9:15 Observations on the Vermont Political Landscape  
*Prominent observers of the Vermont political scene - news reporter/commentator Bob Kinzel, lobbyist Steve Kimball and Professor Garrison Nelson of the University of Vermont will reflect on the November elections and share their perspectives on what is in store for the 2007/2008 Legislative Biennium.*
- 10:30 Remarks by Representative Gaye Symington, Speaker of the House  
*Speaker Symington will address the conference participants on the agenda for the upcoming legislative session.*
- 11:00 When Politics and Policy Intersect - The Example of Early Education  
*A panel of legislators will share their views on the politics and policy underlying recent deliberations related to early education. Panelists will speak about their plans for addressing this issue during the 2007-2008 Biennium.*
- 12:15 Luncheon & Governor's Address (invited)
- 2:00 Break-out Sessions  
*Participants will have an opportunity to attend breakout sessions on school governance, school safety, developments in renewable fuel options for schools and strategies for effective communications.*
- 3:45 VSBA Annual Meeting
- 3:45 VSA Fall Business Meeting
- 5:30 VSBIT Annual Meeting
- 6:30 VSBIT Reception
- 7:00 Dinner

#### **Friday, November 17**

- 7:00 Buffet Breakfast for overnight guests
- 7:30 Registration and continental breakfast
- 8:40 Conference Welcome and Remarks by Commissioner Richard H. Cate
- 9:00 Keynote Presentation - David Beliner, Arizona State University  
*David Beliner, Regents Professor in the College of Education at Arizona State University. Beliner is a noted education researcher whose works include The Manufactured Crisis. Beliner will speak on high stakes testing, the achievement gap and the persistent misrepresentation of the quality of public education by its critics*
- 10:00 Questions and Answers with David Berliner
- 10:45 Public Education - Fiscal Accountability, Sustainability and Quality  
*Paul Cillo of the Vermont Public Assets Institute, Vermont Tax Commissioner Tom Pelham and Superintendent Bill Mathis will speak on the topic. Public Education - Fiscal Accountability, Sustainability and Quality.*
- Vermont Education Commissioner Richard Cate will respond to the presentation with his view on this important subject.*
- 12:00 Luncheon and Address by U.S. Senator-Elect (invited)
- 1:30 Politics and Policy in our nation's capital - Michael Resnick, National School Boards Association  
*Michael Resnick, Associate Director of the National School Boards Association (and the most senior education lobbyist in Washington) will provide a briefing on the political and legislative scene in our nation's capital.*
- 3:00 Adjourn

# Registration /Reservation SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS ONLY

## Vermont School Boards Association 2006 Conference November 16-17

This may be completed on-line at [www.vtvsba.org](http://www.vtvsba.org)

### Step 1 Fax 802-223-0098

Registrant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone : \_\_\_\_\_

School Board/District: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee: \$45.00/person

*Attending Friday*

*Attending Thursday*



### Step 2

#### Staying Overnight

Call 802-223-5252

#### LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE

Please call the Capitol Plaza for reservations.  
**The reservation DEADLINE is November 1st.**

One Night Conference package: (per person)  
Includes Thursday night's lodging, one full breakfast,  
two lunches, one dinner, all taxes and services charges  
included.

\_\_\_\_\_ Single \$194.65

\_\_\_\_\_ Double (2 bed) \$153.77/pp

(Single room overnight no meals - \$89.38)

#### Commuting

Fax 802-223-0098

Qty		Subtotals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thursday Lunch	\$26.00 _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thursday Dinner	\$32.00 _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friday Breakfast	\$14.00 _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friday Lunch	\$26.00 _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Vegetarian Meal Selection</i>	
	<b>Totals</b>	_____

*Prices include tax and tip*

lina and other states. Use this data to inform decisions about where to assign teachers, how to staff schools and what supports and professional development are needed to maximize the benefits of having good teachers. Teachers can use value-added data themselves to reflect on their own practices and to assess students' individual needs.

3. Teacher preparation: Information about effectiveness can help identify teacher education programs that produce better qualified teacher candidates. It can further prompt discussions between state universities and systems regarding ways to ensure that teacher preparation programs explicitly address state and local instructional needs, including helping to increase the supply of teachers in areas of shortage.

4. Professional development and supports: Establish and maintain intensive, long-term induction programs that focus on helping new teachers and teachers new to the system meet challenging professional performance standards. Plan and implement comprehensive, standards-based professional development programs for all teachers that provide continuous access to professional learning activities specifically tailored to teacher needs and system priorities.

**Q. What is the potential of professional development as a strategy to improve teacher quality?**

A. There is growing consensus that effective professional development can improve teacher quality, but it is important to recognize that this consensus is not yet supported by rigorous research on what constitutes "effective." While studies show individual cases where professional development programs lead to improved instructional practices, the research on professional development has not identified development programs that have widespread success.

Nonetheless, practitioners and researchers do agree on four characteristics of professional development that are most likely to have the greatest impact on practice:


1. Extends over long periods of time.
2. Engages teachers as active learners.
3. Focuses on combining content and pedagogy.
4. Includes opportunities for practice, feedback and reflection rather than one-day workshops.

Currently, most teachers have no access to this kind of professional development on a regular basis, making it a ripe area for state and system teacher improvement plans.

**Q. What are some of the problems systems may encounter in their effort to recruit and retain the best teachers in the most challenging schools?**

A. Although systems must recognize that efforts to assign and retain teachers in more challenging schools may be difficult, they must be willing - over the long term - to commit necessary resources to address this challenge in a comprehensive manner. Recruitment and retention for needy schools require a three-prong strategy.

1. Recruitment of top teacher candidates.
2. Incentives and prestige to attract the best teachers where they're most needed.
3. Ongoing professional development to improve the effectiveness of current faculty.

Systems must recognize that it is not enough to simply sprinkle a few good teachers in low-performing schools or leave them to work in isolation. All teachers work better with extensive support and strong leadership in their schools. 

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# Happenings



## State Board of Education Meetings

For more information call Carol King at 802-828-5101 or [carolking@education.state.vt.us](mailto:carolking@education.state.vt.us).

◆ **November 14** - the meeting will take place at the Bellows Falls Union High School.

◆ **December 19** - the meeting will take place at the Missisquoi Valley Union High School

◆ **January 16** - the meeting will take place at the Capitol Plaza in Montpelier.

## VSBA Professional Development Opportunities

◆ **11/16 & 11/17/06** Annual Conference at the Capital Plaza in Montpelier. For more information please visit pages 8 and 9 in this newsletter and on [www.vtvsba.org](http://www.vtvsba.org).

◆ **1/16/07** - Budgeting PR workshop on VIT. More information available on page 5 and on the [www.vtvsba.org](http://www.vtvsba.org).

The following workshops are available on DVD from VSBA. Setback, relax, grab some popcorn and enjoy some school board professional development:

- ◆ Collective Bargaining
- ◆ School Board Member Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships
- ◆ The Role of the School Board Chairperson
- ◆ Developing the Budget