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AUTHOR	Hock, Michael
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ABSTRACT

This collection of materials provides a rationale for including all students with disabilities in statewide assessments and offers guidance for Vermont educators implementing the Vermont Assessment Program. Three reasons for inclusion are presented and supported with statistics, excerpts from the law, and research findings. The reasons for inclusion include: (1) to ensure comparability of scores; (2) to ensure compliance with legislation; and (3) to serve the best interests of students. The use of portfolio assessment in preparing Individualized Education Programs (IEP) is explained. Sample math and writing IEP sections are offered, as are two ways of reporting assessment accommodations in the IEP. Suggestions are given to help schools include all students in statewide assessments, including: consideration of the design characteristics of assessment instruments, accommodations, and alternative assessments used; explanation of the distinction between accommodated assessment and alternative assessment; guidelines for accommodation and an accommodation planning worksheet; standards for evaluating appropriateness of an accommodation; and examples. Also provided are suggestions for sources of additional help. (DB)

Vermont Assessment Program &
University of Vermont

STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS & STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL ASSESSMENT NEEDS

Michael Hock
Assessment Specialist
University Affiliated Program of Vermont

PLEASE COPY & DISTRIBUTE THESE MATERIALS WHOLE OR IN PART

All Means All
No Exceptions
No Excuses

For additional information and/or assistance please contact:

Michael Hock

University of Vermont College of Education
451a Waterman Building
Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: (802) 656-5720
Fax: (802) 656-1357
E-Mail: mhock@moose.uvm.edu

CONTENTS

WHY SHOULD WE INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS IN STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS?

1. ***It's necessary to ensure Comparability of scores.***

2. ***It's the law.***

3. ***It's in the best interest of students.***

WHY INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS?

BECAUSE IT'S NECESSARY TO ENSURE COMPARABILITY OF SCORES

The following table (Boston Globe, 1/30/95) summarizes widescale assessment participation rates for several large cities. What conclusions can be drawn from this data? Is it possible to compare student performance across cities? Can assessment data be used to make decisions about the quality of instruction?

School System	# Tested	# Enrolled	Ratio
Baltimore	51,620	57,517	90%
Boston	32,866	49,948	66%
Chicago	196,491	246,077	80%
Detroit	139,941	169,439	83%
Fairfax County, VA	36,456	40,175	91%
Indianapolis	13,355	15,732	85%
Los Angeles	423,674	552,239	77%
Memphis	71,553	76,841	93%
Miami	141,164	166,134	85%
New York	535,923	703,505	76%
Oklahoma City	8,599	12,534	69%
Philadelphia	112,043	129,470	87%
Pittsburgh	30,182	36,960	82%
Sacramento	23,931	28,470	84%
Washington	22,768	32,398	70%

WHY INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS?

BECAUSE IT'S THE LAW

Beginning with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973), a number of federal and state laws have been passed which require participation of students with disabilities, and other students with special assessment needs, in statewide assessments. Several are quoted below:

FROM THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990:

- *"...appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations (for persons with disabilities)"*

FROM THE GOALS 2000: EDUCATE AMERICA ACT OF 1993:

- *"...(states) certify that an assessment system includes all students, especially students with disabilities or limited English proficiency."*

FROM THE IMPROVING AMERICA'S SCHOOLS ACT (TITLE I) OF 1995:

- *"...a state shall develop or adopt challenging content and student performance standards that will be used by the state...for all students"*

- *"...assessments must be the same assessments used to measure the performance of all children"*

- *"...assessments must provide for participation of all students in the grades being assessed"*

- *"...assessments must provide for reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with learning needs"*

FROM THE PROPOSED INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (CURRENTLY UNDER REVISION)*:

- *"...require states to include students with disabilities in the general assessments aligned with a state's content standards"*

- *"...alternative assessments for students whose participation in the general assessment in not appropriate"*

- *"...the IEP would explain what reasonable accommodations, if any, are needed"*

* Administration Version. Each of the 3 versions of this act currently under consideration by Congress contains language similar to that quoted above

FROM THE VERMONT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS:

- *"...all public school students have a right to participate in the Vermont Assessment Program"*

- *"...because portfolio activities occur as part of regular classroom instruction, all students are expected to have a portfolio"*

- *"...any student with a disability is entitled to accommodations in the assessment situation comparable to the accommodations received daily for instruction"*

Why Include All Students?

BECAUSE IT'S IN THEIR BEST INTEREST

The following document, "Portfolios and Special Education: Building a Better IEP," provides guidelines and suggestions for embedding portfolios and other kinds of performance assessments in the process of developing and evaluating IEPs. Performance assessments are a good match for Vermont's new IEP process, and promise to provide parents and teachers with information which is generally more useful than that which can be derived from more traditional assessment methods. Performance assessments focus on the processes students use to solve problems and complete tasks, allowing evaluation and planning teams to pinpoint problem areas as well as strengths. Because they are very sensitive to changes in knowledge and skills, performance assessments make especially good progress measures. All students need to be included in Vermont's statewide assessments because it's in each student's best interest - the information is too valuable to miss.

VERMONT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Portfolios and Special Education: Building a Better IEP

RATIONALE:

Portfolio tasks and scoring rubrics can be valuable tools for preparing Individual Education Programs (IEP). They can contribute to the assessment that is used to determine areas of focus for the IEP (***What do we know about the student?***), and can become an integral part of IEP services (***What are we going to do to help the student receive an appropriate education?***). This is a case when "teaching to the test" is completely legitimate and makes good educational sense. The portfolio and associated scoring rubric can also be used to determine if IEP services are working (***How will we know if we are succeeding?***). Specific rubric language may even be integrated into IEP goals and objectives - when matched with "date(s) of completion," the levels of achievement listed on a typical rubric can provide the "evaluation procedures" and "objective criteria" required by state and federal regulations for IEP development. However, to make portfolios and rubrics useful in IEP development and implementation, it may be necessary to adapt portfolio tasks and/or provide accommodations which allow the IEP student to participate in performance assessments. Following are some questions and suggestions to help Evaluation and Planning Teams make effective use of portfolios and rubrics.

KEY QUESTIONS WHICH MAY BE ANSWERED THROUGH PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS:

- What components of the writing process or math problem solving are already in the student's repertoire? Where does the student's skill development level off or plateau? What is the next logical step in the process of helping the student learn important writing or math knowledge, skills or habits of mind (This is great information for pinpointing a starting point for an IEP writing or mathematics program - answering the question: ***What do we know about the student?*** and establishing a "point of instruction." Of course, it's good information for any of our students.)

- What can the student do? What can the student be taught to do? What part(s) will need to be addressed through accommodations? (This is great information for determining the elements of the writing or math program and services - answering the question: ***What are we going to do to help the student receive an appropriate education?***) (See IEP Samples which are attached for two approaches to listing assessment accommodations in IEPs).

- Should performance tasks be adapted in order to: 1) match the student's instructional levels; 2) provide an instructional sequence based on systematic increases in task difficulty; and/or 3) allow the student to participate in portfolio assessment? Will it be necessary to develop a new rubric which addresses levels of skill development which fall between the Criteria Levels on the Vermont Assessment Program rubric (See IEP Samples which are attached)?

SOME GUIDELINES FOR ADAPTING PERFORMANCE TASKS:

- Whenever possible, try to identify assessment accommodations which will allow the IEP student to complete the portfolio tasks being used in the classroom. Use adapted tasks only when accommodations aren't sufficient (see below). This decision sequence will allow for the highest level of participation, keeping the IEP writing or math program as close as possible to the classroom writing or math program. Some examples of accommodations are:

  - Alternative Presentation Formats (Braille, Video or Audio Cassettes, Large Type, Computer)
  - Alternative Response Formats (Computer, Braille Typewriters, Large Type/Format Response Booklets, Graphic (drawings/charts/graphs/tables) Rather Than Verbal Solutions)
  - Alternative Settings (Study Carrels, Preferential seating, Separate Location)
  - Assistive Personnel (Readers, Scribes, Individual Proctors)
  - Assistive Devices (Calculators, Spell Checkers, Unifix Cubes, Abacus, Opticon)
  - Additional Time (Extended Time, No Time Limit)
  - Additional Structure (Sequence Prompt Cards, Pre-solution Conferencing, Developing Problem Solving Maps with Support From Teacher, Special Educator, or Instructional Assistant, Task/Behavior Prompting)

- If it is necessary to adapt a performance task, try to maintain the conceptual elements of the classroom task while scaling down to the IEP student's writing, computation and/or instructional level. For example, if the standard classroom mathematics task requires measurement, estimation, development of a table, <u>and</u> division (which the IEP student has not yet mastered) try to develop an alternative task that also requires measurement, estimation, and development of a table, as well as similar "story content", <u>but</u> which can be solved using only addition or subtraction (which the IEP student has mastered). Try to avoid making the adapted task purely computational.

- Use a completely different performance task only when the IEP student's

individual program is completely different than the classroom program. Try to avoid developing programs for IEP students which are completely different than the classroom program.

- If it is necessary to develop unique tasks for a student whose individual curriculum differs from the classroom curriculum, also develop related scoring rubrics which outline the levels or milestones a student will need to reach in order to be reintegrated into the classroom program.

- Work with your special educator to develop classroom-based programs, accommodations, adapted performance tasks, and/or scoring rubrics. This partnership can facilitate IEP services that match classroom curricula as closely as possible and which also address the IEP student's individual needs.

- For additional help, contact your Vermont Assessment Program Network Leaders or Michael Hock at UVM (656-5720).

Please Note:

The sample IEP pages which follow represent first attempts at embedding performance assessment in the process of designing and evaluating IEPs. They have been included in this document to promote a discussion of what's possible, rather than to provide "exemplary" models. Those exemplary models aren't available yet. As more and more students are included in statewide assessments, and as new, better IEPs emerge, these prototypes will be replaced.

SAMPLE MATH IEP

(Including a special rubric designed to answer the question "How will we know if we are succeeding?)

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Student Name Carol

What do we know about Carol?	What are we going to do to help Carol receive an appropriate education?	How will we know if we are succeeding?
1. Carol uses appropriate mathematical representation and language when she solves problems, and her arithmetic skills seem appropriate for her grade level, but she uses only partially correct reasoning when solving math portfolio tasks (Vermont Mathematics Problem Solving Criteria PS3 - Level 2)	1. Carol's math program will begin with highly structured portfolio problems and systematically change to problems which require an increasing amount of planning and reasoning. Teacher or instructional assistant will pre-conference with Carol to develop "problem solving maps". Daily for 30 minutes with teacher, special educator or instructional assistant beginning on January 5, 1995.	1. ANNUAL GOAL: By the end of the school year Carol's work will "...suggest correct reasoning used in making decisions throughout the problem" (Vermont Mathematics Problem Solving Criteria PS3 - Level 3). SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES: Sequential steps toward reaching the annual goal are listed on the attached rubric. Each level represents a short term objective. EVALUATION PROCEDURES: Math Portfolio/Individual Rubric EXPECTED DATES FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT: By the end of each marking period Carol will advance one level on the rubric
Include present levels of performance, the student's unique characteristics and needs and/or personal educational goals.	Include special education and related services, personnel, frequency, duration, location, and amount of service, and if necessary, accommodations, transition services and activities	Include goals and objectives which include evaluation procedures, objective criteria, and the expected dates for accomplishment.

USING A SPECIALLY DESIGNED IEP RUBRIC

To answer the question "How will we know if we are succeeding" this Evaluation and Planning Team developed a special rubric which describes a sequence of intermediate steps connecting two broader levels on the Vermont Assessment Program's math rubric (See next page). A rubric, by the way, is a scoring device used in performance assessment which provides students, teachers and parents with a concise evaluation of the student's progress on given task. By choosing this method to evaluate the success of Carol's IEP, the Evaluation and Planning team maintains a close connection between Carol's special education program and the classroom curriculum. They have also chosen an assessment method which can communicate Carol's progress in terms all team members can understand. Here is Carol's special math rubric:

CAROL'S MATHEMATICS PROBLEM SOLVING CRITERIA				
Using correct reason-	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
to make decisions when solving multi-part portfolio problems	...solves structured, single step problems using problem solving map provided by teacher	...solves structured, 1 or 2 step problems using problem solving map developed with teacher	...solves structured, 1 or 2 step problems using a self generated problem solving map	...solves unstructured, multi-part problems using a self generated problem solving map

17

16

MATHEMATICS PROBLEM SOLVING CRITERIA

Vermont Portfolio Scoring Guide: Mathematics Rev. 6/96	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
PS1 Understanding the Problem	...misunderstood the problem or didn't understand enough to get started or make progress.	...understood enough to solve part of the problem or to reach a partial solution.	...understood the problem, including identifying and using any information minimally required to solve the problem.	...identified special factors beyond those minimally required to solve the problem and applied the factors consistently and correctly.
	Part of a Problem: For multi-part problems, if all the parts of the problem are not addressed, then the student only "understood enough to solve part of the problem." **Solution:** A solution includes: all of the work that was done to complete the problem, an explanation of the decisions made along the way, and an answer. **Special Factors:** Factors beyond minimal information required to solve the problem which add to the complexity of the problem and affect student's solution. **Special Consideration:** For Level 4, student must identify factors (explicitly or implicitly) at the start of solution.			
PS2 How Student Solved the Problem	...approach didn't work or no approach evident.	...approach would lead to solving only part of the problem or reaching a partial solution.	...approach worked or would work for the problem.	...approach worked and was efficient or sophisticated.
	Approach: The strategy or skill used to solve the problem. **Would:** An approach that would work for a problem even if computation errors or an incomplete response prevented a solution is credited as a Level 3 **Efficient:** Efficiency is determined by the directness of the approach. Use of an algorithm to solve a problem suggests this was just an application of knowledge, not a real problem. If finding the least common multiple, the use of prime factorization is efficient; listing all multiples is not. **Sophisticated:** A sophisticated approach shows evidence of applying concepts and skills in a novel way to solve the problem (not the standard, or usual approach). **Special Consideration:** A piece scored 1 or 2 on PS1 can not score more than 2 on PS2.			
PS3 Why - Decisions Along the Way	...no reasoning evident from the work or reasoning is incorrect	...only partially correct reasoning or correct reasoning used for only part of the problem.	...work suggests correct reasoning used in making decisions throughout the problem.	...work clearly exhibits correct reasoning used in making decisions throughout the problem.
	Suggests: Look for evidence in the student's understanding of the task, appropriateness of the strategy, and reasonableness of solution. Support for reasoning is not clearly explicated and/or is incomplete but decisions made by student are evident in work and decisions are correct. Evidence may include a change in approach, but no support given for the change; having more than one approach but no comparisons to show this was done as verification; work of other approaches given but without explanation of their part in reaching solution. **Clearly exhibits** support present for key decisions made in form of comments on approach, explanation of decisions, annotations, justification for path followed, or use of multiple approaches with comparisons and verification.			
PS4 So What - Outcomes of Activities	[illegible]	...solved the problem and made a mathematically relevant comment or observation about some aspect of his/her solution.	...solved the problem and made a mathematical connection between solution and other mathematics or the "real world."	...solved the problem and made a general rule about the solution or extended the solution to a more complicated situation.
	Connections can be: between mathematical ideas; between problems; to other classes or content areas; or to real-life applications or examples. There must be sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the application, example, or connection is relevant to the student's solution. **General Rule:** a rule that can be used no matter what the numbers in the problem are. Need not be an algebraic rule, it can also be a generalization of the problem to a more complicated situation. Student need not "prove" the rule works but must demonstrate understanding either through explanation of the derivation or application of the generalization to a specific case. **Prompted Response:** Specific prompts within the problem statement (e.g., What does this problem have to do with factors?, How is this similar to pricing items at a grocery store?) limit scoring to a Level 1. **Special Consideration:** Score Level 4 if a generalization was made at any point in the problem, whether a requirement of the problem or not, as long as an explanation showing understanding or derivation of the generalization is included.			

MATHEMATICS COMMUNICATION CRITERIA

Vermont Portfolio Scoring Guide: Mathematics Rev. 6/94	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
C1 Mathematical Language	*...used no mathematical language beyond problem statement, or incorrectly used mathematical terms or symbols, or used mathematical language to communicate his/her solution.*	*...used appropriate mathematical language to communicate his/her solution, may have some errors in accuracy and lack variety.*	*...used mathematical language accurately and appropriately throughout to communicate his/her solution, and exhibited variety.*	*...used mathematical language accurately and appropriately throughout, exhibited variety, and used sophisticated math language to communicate some aspect(s) of his/her solution.*
	Variety: Refers to use of variety of terms, notation, and symbols beyond those used in the task statement. For example, a response using the terms "add" and "subtract" with one operation is most likely a Level 2, if those terms and notation do not appear in the problem statement. **Sophisticated Mathematical Language:** includes language not commonly used at this student's grade level. For example, words like exponent or sequence, or notation like $x < 5$ or 2^3. **Special Considerations:** Don't consider math language that is included in the problem statement. Simply repeating words in the problem earns only Level 1. Use of a single term rarely merits a Level 2.			
C2 Mathematical Representation	*...used inappropriate mathematical representation or didn't use any mathematical representation to communicate the solution.*	*...attempted to use appropriate mathematical representation to communicate solution.*	*...used appropriate mathematical representation accurately to communicate the solution.*	*...used sophisticated mathematical representation(s) accurately to communicate the solution.*
	Mathematical Representations include graphs, charts, tables, models, diagrams, and equations that are linked to representations. Lists of numbers in columns without any labeling are not considered charts or tables and receive Level 1. **Appropriate Representation:** One that is related to the student's solution, regardless of the correctness of the student's approach and solution. **Accurate:** Accurate mathematical representations are those that are technically correct and executed properly. Accurate graphs, tables, charts and diagrams are appropriately labeled and have titles and/or keys, when necessary. Graphs must also include correctly scaled axes. **Sophisticated representations** are those that are perceptive and/or complex and stand alone. They must be appropriate and technically accurate. OR The use of representation may be sophisticated. Evidence of sophisticated use may include combinations of many graphs, charts, and tables to organize, display, and link data; or representations that were relied upon to obtain a solution. **Special Considerations:** A table or graph which is appropriate but not technically accurate receives a Level 2. Completion of a structured chart at grade 4 receives Level 2, at Grade 8 receives Level 1.			
C3 Presentation	*...presentation of solution is unclear.*	*...presentation of solution contains some clear parts.*	*...presentation of solution is clear, but reader must fill in some details to understand the solution.*	*...presentation of solution is clear throughout, well organized and detailed.*
	Unclear suggests the reader has little or no idea what was done to solve the problem. **Some clear parts** suggests the reader understood some of the work but is uncertain about what the student did to solve the problem, must fill in major gaps and make guess at what the student was thinking in parts of the solution. **Fill in some details** means that although most of the presentation is clear it may be missing some details which the reader is required to fill in, or it is detailed but lacks organization and the reader is required to fill in. **Clear throughout:** Student's presentation contains sufficient detail for reader to understand solution without having to make interpretations or inferences. **Well organized** pieces of work have all the parts connected to each other (e.g., any representation used is consistent with the student's solution.)			

20

21

SAMPLE WRITING IEP

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Student Name Geoff

What do we know about Geoff?	What are we going to do to help Geoff receive an appropriate education?	How will we know if we are succeeding?
1. When writing, Geoff frequently establishes a purpose and focus, uses details to develop ideas, and establish a personal tone. He sometimes demonstrates lapses in organization, unity and coherence. He rarely uses correct writing conventions, with many errors in grammar, usage and mechanics (Vermont Writing Assessment - Analytic Assessment Guide).	1. Before beginning a writing assignment, Geoff will conference with his teacher or special educator to develop a story web. Support on developing the story web will be faded as Geoff's skills increase. After completing a first draft, Geoff will conference with his teacher, special educator, or instructional assistant for guided proofreading - his errors will be used to structure individual lessons on grammar, punctuation and usage. Daily for 25 minutes beginning on September 3, 1996	1. As demonstrated by "best pieces" selected for his writing portfolio, Geoff will organize his writing so that it moves the piece forward with few lapses in unity or coherence. His command of grammar, usage and mechanics (GUM) will match grade level benchmarks (Vermont Writing Assessment - Analytic Assessment Guide attached). By Jan. 1, he will score at the "sometimes" level in oganization. By April 1, he will score at the "frequently" level in organization and the "sometimes" level in GUM. By June 1, he will score at the "frequently" level in both organization and GUM
Include present levels of performance, the student's unique characteristics and needs and/or personal educational goals.	Include special education and related services, personnel, frequency, duration, location, and amount of service, and if necessary, accommodations, transition services and activities	Include goals and objectives which include evaluation procedures, objective criteria, and the expected dates for accomplishment.

Vermont Writing Assessment

Analytic Assessment Guide

	Purpose	Organization	Details	Voice or Tone	Grammar/Usage/Mechanics
In assessing, consider...	...how adequately intent and focus are established and maintained (success in this criterion should not depend on the reader's knowledge of the writing assignment: the writing should stand on its own)	...coherence: ...whether ideas or information are in logical sequence or move the piece forward ...whether sentences and images are clearly related to each other (indenting paragraphs is a matter of Grammar/Usage/Mechanics)	...whether details develop ideas or information ...whether details elaborate or clarify the content of the writing with images, careful explanation, effective dialogue, parenthetical expressions, stage directions, etc.	...whether the writing displays a natural style, appropriate to the narrator ...or whether the tone of the writing is appropriate to its content	...the conventions of writing, including: *Grammar (e.g. sentence structure, syntax) *Usage (e.g. agreement and word choice) *Mechanics (e.g. spelling, capitalization, punctuation)
Ask how consistently, relative to length and complexity...	Intent is established and maintained within a given piece of writing	the writing demonstrates coherence	details contribute to development of ideas and information, evoke images or otherwise elaborate or clarify the content of the writing	an appropriate voice or tone is established and maintained	As appropriate to grade level, command of conventions is evident, through correct English or intentional, effective departure from conventions
Extensively	Establishes and maintains a clear purpose and focus.	Organized from beginning to end, logical progression of ideas, fluent and coherent.	Details are pertinent, vivid or explicit and provide ideas/information in depth.	Distinctive personal expression or distinctive tone enhances the writing.	Few or no errors present; or departures from convention appear intentional and are effective.
Frequently	Establishes a purpose and focus.	Organization moves writing forward with few lapses in unity or coherence.	Details develop ideas/information; or details are elaborated.	Establishes personal expression or effective tone.	Some errors or patterns of errors are present.
	Yes — *Is author's focus clear within the writing?* — No	Yes — *Does the organization move the writing forward?* — No	Yes — *Do details enhance and/or clarify the writing?* — No	Yes — *Can you hear the writer? Or, is the tone effective?* — No	Yes — *Does writing show grade-appropriate command of G/U/M?* — No
Sometimes	Attempts to establish a purpose; focus of writing is not fully clear.	Lapse(s) in organization affect unity or coherence.	Details lack elaboration, merely listed or unnecessarily repetitious.	Attempts personal expression or appropriate tone.	Numerous errors are apparent and may distract the reader.
Rarely	Purpose and focus not apparent.	Serious errors in organization make writing difficult to follow.	Details are minimal, inappropriate, or random.	Personal expression or appropriate tone not evident.	Errors interfere with understanding.

NON-SCORABLE

- *is illegible: i.e., includes so many indecipherable words that no sense can be made of the writing, or*
- *is incoherent: i.e., words are legible but syntax is so garbled that response makes no sense, or*
- *is a blank piece of paper*
- *For Portfolio: Does not have required minimum contents*

Purpose: Purpose refers to how adequately the author's intent is established and maintained within the writing. The purpose should stand on its own within a piece of writing, and not be dependent upon the reader's knowledge of the actual writing assignment. "Purpose" implies the purpose *within* the writing, rather than the purpose *of* the writing. Important factors that may contribute to the author's success in establishing and maintaining purpose include: consistent awareness of audience; consistent focus that is appropriate to the audience and the purpose.

Organization: Organization is the degree to which the writer's work illustrates unity and coherence. Writing that displays "unity" does not leave ideas or information hanging; "coherence" exists when sentences are logically and clearly related to one another, and appropriate transitions move the piece forward.

Details: Details contribute to the development of ideas, provide information, evoke images, and elaborate or clarify the content of the writing. When details are "elaborated," they are not simply listed: they advance the purpose of the writing!

Voice or Tone: Voice is the personality of a piece of writing. Tone is the attitude toward the subject, and should vary according to audience, purpose, genre and form. For example, a personal narrative may have a compelling voice and a research paper may have an engaging tone; both can reflect the personal involvement and choice of the author. One way to check for voice is to read a piece aloud: does it have a conversational tone, or a sense of unique involvement? In looking for appropriate tone, ask whether the writing projects a sense of authority or a stance that is consistent to the writing's purpose.

Grammar/Usage/Mechanics: the conventions of writing. In some cases, the writer may intentionally depart from conventional English; where such departure is effective, the writer may be judged to "show command of G/U/M." Where lapses from conventional English are not intentional, the reader should look for patterns. A single word, misspelled once or throughout a piece of writing, counts as a single error; when several words are misspelled, a "pattern of errors" is noted. Similarly, a single type of punctuation error throughout a piece should count as a single error; a variety of punctuation errors constitutes a "pattern." Writing at the "sometimes" level has errors that "distract" the reader — note that these are errors of Grammar/Usage/Mechanics, not of organization or purpose. In a "rarely" piece, the G/U/M errors not only distract, they interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS
SAMPLE IEP PAGES

Sample #1) ***Listing assessment accommodations in a basic skill area***

Sample #2) ***Listing assessment accommodations in a separate section***

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Student Name Gertrude

What do we know about Gertrude?	What are we going to do to help Gertrude receive an appropriate education?	How will we know if we are succeeding?
1. Gertrude can comprehend grade level material that is read to her, but hasn't developed good enough word attack skills to read grade level material independently. On an informal reading inventory using passages from classroom texts, Gertrude word attack accuracy rate was less than 50%.	1. Reading Services & Accommodations: Individualized reading program using Recipe for Reading materials for 30 mins per day with Mr. Jones beginning Sept. 1. Reader/scribe whenever testing requires extensive reading or writing and reading or writing is not the topic of the test. Accommodations will be eliminated when reading skills approve.	1. ANNUAL GOAL: Gertrude will read grade level material with at least 90% accuracy while maintaining good comprehension, to be measured using informal reading inventories conducted by Mr. Jones. She will participate in classroom, schoolwide and statewide assessments which reflect her content knowledge rather than reading skills. OBJECTIVES: 10/1/96 - 60% accuracy/"B"or higher average on tests1/5/97 - 75% accuracy/"B" or higher average on tests 4/1/97 - 90% accuracy/"B" or higher average on tests 6/1/97 - 90% accuracy/maintain "B" or higher test average w/o accommodations
Include present levels of performance, the student's unique characteristics and needs and/or personal educational goals.	Include special education and related services, personnel, frequency, duration, location, and amount of service, and if necessary, accommodations, transition services and activities	Include goals and objectives which include evaluation procedures, objective criteria, and the expected dates for accomplishment.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Student Name Felix

What do we know about Felix?	What are we going to do to help Felix receive an appropriate education?	How will we know if we are succeeding?
1. Felix is able to master the content of his science and social studies classes but has not been able to demonstrate mastery on timed tests because he is a slow worker and somewhat distractible	1. Testing Accommodations: Felix will be permitted to take large group tests in a separate location where distractions are minimized. Felix will take tests with extended time limits. Felix will be taught test taking strategies by the learning specialist starting at the beginning of the spring semester, using small group tutorials which will meet 3 times per week for 1/2 hour	1. Felix will participate in large scale assessments and will receive scores which are generally equivalent to his class grades, to be evaluated by his Evaluation & Planning Team. By April 15th he will have completed the test taking strategy tutorial and will begin using strategies on classroom tests. During school wide achievement testing in early May he will make use of strategies, separate location, and extended time limits as needed. By final exam week, all strategies and accommodations will be used and final exam grades will be 85% or higher in science and social studies.
Include present levels of performance, the student's unique characteristics and needs and/or personal educational goals.	Include special education and related services, personnel, frequency, duration, location, and amount of service, and if necessary, accommodations, transition services and activities	Include goals and objectives which include evaluation procedures, objective criteria, and the expected dates for accomplishment.

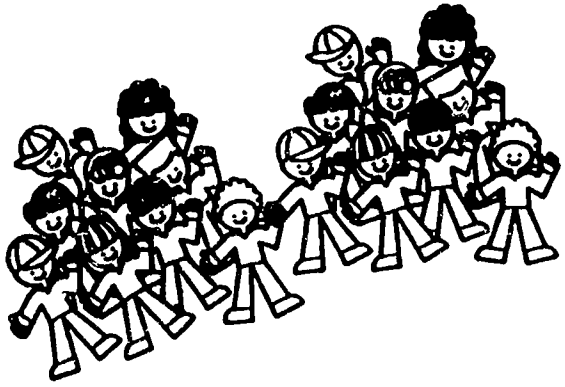
HOW CAN WE INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS IN STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS?

1. ***By designing assessments to be maximally inclusive***

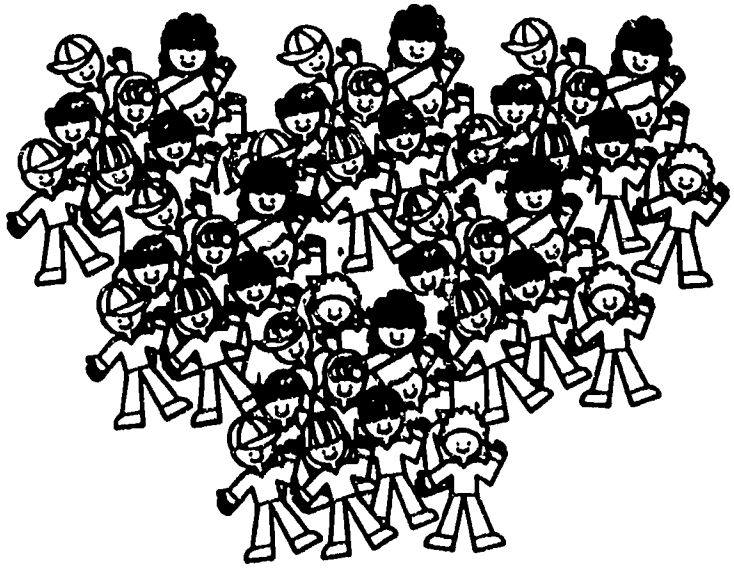
2. ***By providing reasonable assessment accommodations***

3. ***By providing alternative assessments***

All Means All



5% - 10%
Standard Assessment with Accommodations



85% - 90%
Standard Assessment

<2%
Alternative Assessment

VERMONT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Including All Students In Statewide Assessments: Design Issues, Accommodations and Alternative Assessments

To be sufficiently comprehensive, an assessment system should be designed to include the maximal number of students, including students with special assessment needs. Students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and students who are being served through non-traditional programs (e.g., students who have been hospitalized or who are receiving home bound instruction, incarcerated students, students attending alternative schools) are several of the special population groups which should be considered, although others may be identified as the particular demands of new assessment instruments become apparent. Maximal inclusion of students representing special populations is an important goal for any assessment system because it promotes development of assessment instruments which benefit a broad and diverse population of students, and also equalizes assessment conditions across participating schools or school districts, improving the interpretability of results. Inclusion rates, the percentage of total students at a given grade level who have been assessed, is one important variable which should be considered when measuring Opportunities to Learn.

Students representing special populations should be included in comprehensive assessment systems at several levels, including:

- When assessment instruments are designed and developed
- During item analysis and field-testing
- During wide scale implementation of the assessment system
- When reporting assessment results
- When evaluating the assessment system

Maximal inclusion can be achieved through a variety of approaches, including: 1) the specific design characteristics of the assessment instrument, 2) provision of accommodations during assessment administration, and 3) development of assessment alternatives for students whose progress and performance cannot be measured validly and reliably even when accommodations are provided.

DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

Assessment instruments should be designed with a clear understanding of

the diverse styles and needs which will be presented by the array of students who will be participating in the assessment. Assessment instruments should include specific design features which promote maximal inclusion. Whenever possible, assessment instruments should be developed with a broad content focus and include items which address a developmental hierarchy of skills, from emerging through advanced. Item analysis and field testing should include specific activities involving students representing special populations, with results being used to refine instruments, determine appropriate (and inappropriate) accommodations, and identify students for whom the assessment may not be appropriate.

ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS:

Three basic principles should guide planning and implementation of assessment accommodations:

- Assessment accommodations should be planned by a multi-disciplinary team which includes the student's parents. All proposed accommodations should be documented in the student's Individual Education Plan, Section 504 Plan, or Instructional Support Team Plan.

- Assessment accommodations should directly match the accommodations routinely used in the classroom setting.

- Assessment accommodations should not be provided in a way which will invalidate the assessment results.

When planning assessment accommodations, the individual student's team should first consider the purpose or intent of the assessment. In other words, the team should ask the question, "What is the assessment supposed to tell us about the student?" The answer to this question serves as a guideline for determining if a particular accommodation is appropriate, that is that it does not invalidate the assessment results. An appropriate assessment accommodation allows the student to participate in the assessment <u>and</u> accurately demonstrate what s/he knows or can do. An inappropriate assessment accommodation facilitates participation but fails to provide an accurate demonstration of the student's level of competence.

ASSESSMENT ALTERNATIVES:

When students cannot be included in an assessment, even with accommodation, a specific and consistent local response should be indicated. This response will generally take the form of an alternative assessment which mirrors the standard(s) (e.g., the common core vital result) measured by the large scale assessment, but which is more in keeping with the student's individual needs and skills. For example, if the large scale assessment measures writing skills but writing

is not part of the student's individual curriculum, the alternative assessment would measure the form of expression or communication the student is learning. Basing alternative assessments on an equivalent standard will aid in determining how these scores will be interpreted in the larger context of the assessment.

REPORTING ASSESSMENT RESULTS:

Provisions should also be made for including students representing special populations when assessment results are reported. Inclusion rates should be measured consistently across schools or school districts, and reported in a format which provides a context for other results. Consider, for example, how difficult it would be to evaluate and compare results across schools or districts if some districts included all but a very few of its students and others routinely excluded certain student subgroups (e.g., IEP students, students with limited English proficiency). Results of alternative assessments should be report in relation to the equivalent standard(s) measured by the large scale assessment, again so accurate comparisons can be made.

If disaggregated data is to be reported, it should be done in a way which does not violate an individual student's right to privacy, a particular concern in some of our smallest schools where it might be relatively easy to personally identify the one or two students whose data are represented in a particular subgrouping. Overall, assessment results for students representing special populations should be reported in a way which rewards and encourages maximal inclusion.

EVALUATING THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM:

Finally, evaluation procedures used to determine the efficacy of the overall assessment system should include measures which reflect the extent to which guidelines concerning students representing special populations have been followed. This information will help establish the integrity of the assessment system and will also indicate procedures and guidelines which may need to be added, clarified or replaced. It will also establish a level of comparability for the data produced by each participant in the system.

ACCOMMODATED ASSESSMENTS & ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS: AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION

- ***ACCOMMODATED ASSESSMENT:*** ***the standards (knowledge, skills, habits of mind) being measured are the same as those being measured on unaccommodated assessments***

- ***ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT:*** ***the standards being measured are derived from the student's individualized curricula***

VERMONT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT WORKGROUP

Accommodation Guidelines

PURPOSE:

Assessment accommodations are the means by which students who might otherwise be excluded from the Vermont Assessment Program are able to participate and accurately demonstrate what they know and can do. Through the use of assessment accommodations it should be possible to achieve the goal of having all or nearly all students participate in the Vermont Assessment Program, excluding no more than 1-2% of students in any one school. The two major purposes of these guidelines are (1) to aid school districts in the process of identifying which students should receive assessment accommodations, and (2) to identify accommodations which are reasonable and appropriate.

GUIDELINES:

- Assessment accommodations are intended only for those students who would be denied meaningful participation in the assessment without them. The intent is to provide equity, not advantage. Generally students who are provided accommodations will have disabilities or limited English proficiency, although other students needing accommodations might be identified through an Instructional Support Team

- Assessment accommodations must allow the student to demonstrate what s/he knows and can do.

- Assessment accommodations must not invalidate the assessment results.

  Suggested procedure for determining if an assessment accommodation is reasonable and appropriate (see the **ACCOMMODATIONS PLANNING WORKSHEET** which is attached:

  1. Ask, "What is the assessment supposed to tell us about the student?" (e.g., the VAP Uniform Prompt in writing is designed to tell us how well a student can communicate in writing when given a specific subject or topic - an "on demand" type of writing). Note whether the focus of the assessment is on the process a student uses to solve a problem or complete a task, a finished product, or both.

2. If it is not clear what an assessment is designed to measure, contact someone who knows (i.e., VAP Network Leaders, the person who designed the assessment, the person at the State Department of Education responsible for administering the assessment, etc.).

3. Determine what knowledge and skills (other than the knowledge and skills that are being assessed) a student needs in order to participate in the assessment and perform the assessment tasks (i.e., in order to participate in the Uniform writing prompt a student must be able to communicate in English, communicate with writing, use a pencil, follow directions with more than one step, etc.).

4. Determine the knowledge or skills that the student is lacking and identify possible accommodations (e.g., a student who can't communicate in English might have an interpreter, a student who can't write might dictate to someone, a student who can't use a pencil might use a word processor, a student who can't follow directions with several steps might be given a prompt card, etc.).

5. Evaluate each possible accommodation by asking:

   - Does it allow the student to participate?

   - Does it allow the student to accurately demonstrate what s/he knows and can do?

6. Select only those accommodations that meet both criteria.

7. If none of the accommodations meet both criteria, consider an alternative assessment

- Assessment accommodations should support the student's learning <u>and</u> the assessment experience.

- Assessment accommodations should promote individual interpretation <u>and</u> should allow the student's results to be included in schoolwide interpretation.

- Assessment accommodations should be in "everyday" use. They should be consistent with the accommodations used across the school day and year (e.g., included in IEP or 504 Plan). Students should know how to use the accommodations before participating in any widescale assessments.

- Assessment accommodations should be developed as part of the regular IEP or 504 planning meeting. There shouldn't be a "special portfolio" planning

meeting.

- Assessment accommodations should be developed with the student (as appropriate), by the school personnel who know the student best (i.e., the IEP Team or 504 Team), and include the student's parents/family members.

- Assessment accommodations should reflect knowledge of effective teaching/testing principles (e.g., testing continuously for 2 hours is not an effective assessment practice).

- Assessment accommodations should be evaluated frequently, adjusted as needed, and communicated to subsequent teachers and support personnel at significant transition points.

- Assessment accommodations should be embedded in instruction. Students should be taught to use the accommodations and be given an opportunity to try them out before applying them to an important assessment.

- Assessment accommodations should be prepared with the student's classroom teacher, or, at the very least, should be communicated to the student's classroom teacher.

Including all students in the Vermont Assessment Program

ACCOMMODATIONS PLANNING WORKSHEET

PURPOSE: What is the assessment supposed to tell us about the student? What knowledge and/or skills is it designed to measure?	REQUIREMENTS: What must a student know or be able to do in order to complete the assessment tasks? What are the requirements for participation? Will process, product, or both be considered in scoring?	STUDENT REPERTOIRE: Which of the assessment requirements are in the student's skill/knowledge repertoire? For which requirements are accommodations necessary?	ACCOMMODATIONS: What accommodations will allow the student to participate in the assessment and accurately demonstrate what s/he knows and can do?

AN ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATION IS APPROPRIATE IF...

- *It allows a student with special assessment needs to participate in an assessment when the student lacks the necessary prerequisites skills but can reasonably be expected to have mastered the content which is being assessed*

- *It allows a student with special assessment needs to participate in assessments while prerequisite skills are being developed*

- *It allows a student with special assessment needs to fairly and accurately demonstrate what s/he knows and can do*

- *It is in everyday use in the classroom*

AN ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATION IS NOT APPROPRIATE IF...

- *It will invalidate assessment results*

- *It is planned and used exclusively for statewide "highstakes" assessments*

- *It results in differential scoring*

- *It requires changes in the standards being assessed*

AN ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATION SHOULD *NEVER* MAKE IT LOOK LIKE A STUDENT KNOWS SOMETHING S/HE REALLY DOESN'T OR CAN DO SOMETHING S/HE REALLY CAN'T

SOME EXAMPLES

Two general types of Assessment Accommodations:

- **Test/Task Specific**

  ...the assessment is standardized with a specific set of allowable accommodations. No other accommodations can be used

- **Student Specific**

  ...assessment accommodations are planned for each student with special assessment needs to address the mismatch between assessment requirements and the student's unique repertoire of skills

Seven specific types of Assessment Accommodations:

- **Alternative Presentation Formats:**

  - ***Braille***
  - ***Video or Audio Tape***
  - ***Large Type***
  - ***Computer***

- **Alternative Response Formats:**

  - ***Computer***
  - ***Braille Typewriter***

- *Video or Audio Tape*
- *Large Type Response Booklets*
- *Graphic Rather Than Verbal Solutions*

- **Alternative Settings**

  - *Study Carrels*
  - *Preferential Seating*
  - *Separate Location*

- **Assistive Personnel**

  - *Readers*
  - *Scribes*
  - *Individual Proctors*

- **Assistive Devices**

  - *Calculators*
  - *Spell Checkers*
  - *Unifix Cubes*
  - *Abacus*
  - *Opticon*

- **Additional Time**

  - *Extended Time*
  - *No Time Limit*

- **Additional Structure**

  - ***Sequence Prompt Cards***
  - ***Solution Maps***
  - ***Pre-Conferencing***
  - ***Task/Behavior Prompting***

WHO CAN HELP?

Including students with special assessment needs in statewide assessments isn't easy, especially if we are going to be sure that assessment results are meaningful and accurately reflect what those students know and can do. Fortunately, help is available:

- ***Special educators can work with classroom teachers to plan appropriate accommodations and assessment alternatives, including the information in IEPs when appropriate***

- ***Your school's Instructional Support Team may be able to help plan for the special assessment needs of students who are not being served through a special education program***

- ***The I-Team at the University Affiliated Program of Vermont can help solve assessment challenges, particularly those presented by students with severe disabilities who may need alternative assessments. Contact Marie Rock at (802) 656-1141***

- ***The Rural Education Center Language and Cultural Affairs Program can help plan accommodations and alternative assessments for students with limited English proficiency. Call Jim McCobb at (802) 658-6342***

- *The Assessment Project at the University of Vermont may be able to provide information, materials and guidance. Call Michael Hock at (802) 656-5720.*

- *The Parent Information Center offers parents of children with disabilities guidance and support related to a wide variety of educational issues, including assessment. Call (802) 658-5315.*

- *The Vermont Assessment Program Portfolio Network Leaders are available to answer questions. Network leaders also host a series of Portfolio Network Meetings throughout the school year. They would be delighted if special educator/classroom teacher teams attended. Contact information and meeting dates are listed on the following pages:*

1995-96 WRITING PORTFOLIO NETWORK LEADERS

FIFTH GRADE

NETWORK	LEADER	HOME #	SCHOOL #
1	Betty Boudreau	442-8966	823-7333
2	Linda Bourne	254-9152	254-2271
3	Jean Korstange	869-2789	885-4774
4	Sunny Wright	824-6402	362-1597
5	Joan Wise	422-3577	422-3366
6	Janice Garrow	459-6367	537-2491
7	Mary Sullivan	453-3650	453-2348
8	Ellen Seeger	767-3790	767-3161
9	Nan McBroom	229-2707	485-7768
10	Mary Austin	223-1263	234-9248
11	Darlene Johnson	748-9410	563-2289
12	Nicki Houston	586-2536	472-6551
13	Michelle Green	626-8549	626-3209
14	Susan Collins	524-6919	868-4920
15, 16, 17	Beth Lane + Jan Foytek	878-6670	------

EIGHTH GRADE

NETWORK	LEADER	HOME #	SCHOOL #
3	Gordon Korstange	869-2789	824-6811
4	Penny Bishop	244-8962	------
5	Joyce Roof	457-3359	457-1317
8	Joanna Hawkins	765-4040	765-4351
9	Irina Markova	229-0028	229-0321
11	Darlene Johnson	748-9410	563-2289
12	Joan Simmons	586-2854	586-2541
13	Norma Wiesen	472-6517	472-6511
14	Nancy Mildrum	527-7005	524-6358
15, 16, 17	Tish McGonegal	899-4541	863-5282

1995-96 WRITING PORTFOLIO NETWORK MEETINGS

FIFTH GRADE

NETWORK	DATE	DATE	LOCATION
1	Nov. 1	March 28	SW Vt. Supv. Union Offices, Beech Street, Bennington
2	Nov. 1	March 20	Brattleboro UHS Voc. Ed. - Cusick Conf. Center
3	October 26	March 28	Chester Congregational Church
4	Nov. 17	March 28	Rutland Holiday Inn
5	Nov. 7	March 26	Woodstock Union High School Library
6	October 27	March 29	Lilac Inn, Brandon
7	Nov. 2	March 27	Middlebury Inn
8	Nov. 1	March 19	South Royalton School Library
9	Nov. 3	March 22	Pavilion Building Conference Room, Montpelier
10	October 30	March 18	Pavilion Building Conference Room, Montpelier
11	Nov. 6	March 25	Lincoln Inn, St. Johnsbury
12	Nov. 2	March 21	Hillary's Restaurant, Morrisville
13	October 27	March 22	Lyndon Town School
14	October 30	March 25	Mary S. Babcock School, Grand Avenue, Swanton
15, 16, 17	October 25	March 20	Dept. of Health, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington

EIGHTH GRADE

NETWORK	DATE	DATE	LOCATION
3	October 26	March 28	Chester Congregational Chapel
4	Nov. 17	March 28	Rutland Holiday Inn
5	Nov. 7	March 26	Woodstock Union High School Library
8	Nov. 1	March 19	South Royalton School Library
9	Nov. 3	March 22	Pavilion Building Conference Room, Montpelier
11	Nov. 6	March 25	Lincoln Inn, St. Johnsbury
12	Nov. 2	March 21	Hillary's Restaurant, Morrisville
13	October 27	March 22	Lyndon Town School
14	October 30	March 25	Mary S. Babcock School, Grand Avenue, Swanton
15, 16, 17	Nov. 8	March 27	Dept. of Health, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington

Eighth Grade Teachers, if your network does not have scheduled meetings, please attend another most convenient. Please call network leader to confirm.

All meetings are scheduled from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. If you have any questions, please call Geof Hewitt at 828-3111 or your network leader.

1995-96 MATHEMATICS PORTFOLIO NETWORK LEADERS

FOURTH GRADE				EIGHTH GRADE			
NETWORK	LEADER	HOME #	SCHOOL #	NETWORK	LEADER	HOME #	SCHOOL #
1	Gary Lamoureaux	447-1942	823-7333	1, 4, 6, 7	Cindy Eaton	265-3103	265-3883
2, 3	Deborah Cory	368-2840	464-5177	2	Linda Ives	257-7012	254-2733
4	Sandra Hedman	362-1459	375-6100	5	Nancy Pejouhy	457-3953	457-1317
5	Shirley Burroughs	457-3698	457-2522	9, 10	Eric Weiss	223-3677	229-0321
6	Lisa Taggart	287-9604	265-3883	11	Jennifer Wood	695-8182	748-9393
7	Suzanne McKegney	863-4124	453-2949	12	Jean Sequeira	644-2280	888-4261
8	Karen Cingiser	496-2011	276-3153	13	Carole Fortier	988-2953	988-2565
9	Amy Morse	583-5150	496-2487	14	Marcy Cummings	285-2089	849-6711
10	Kate Sullivan	244-1228	496-2487	15, 16, 17	Charlotte Kenney	878-2170	655-1772
11	Marcia Jaquith	223-7914	426-3213				
12	Kim Fellows	888-7042	888-2237				
13	Deborah Armitage	873-3141	895-2915				
14	Mary Herrick	372-5679	On Leave				
15, 16, 17	Jean Dumbleton	879-9484	878-1381				

1995-96 MATHEMATICS PORTFOLIO NETWORK MEETINGS

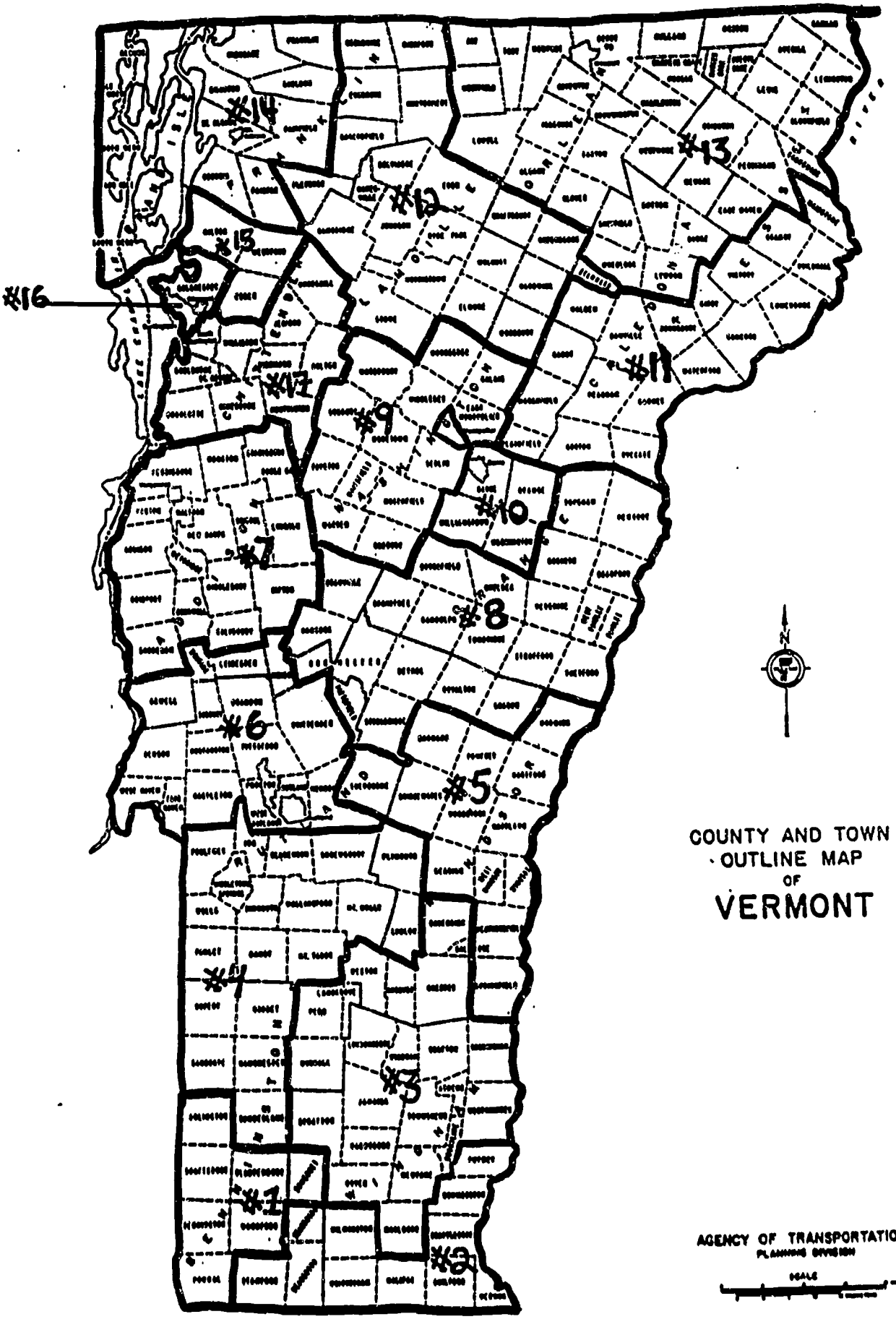
FOURTH GRADE

NETWORK	DATE	DATE	LOCATION
1	October 11	March 13	SW Vt. Supv. Union Offices, Bennington
2, 3	October 5	March 7	Deerfield Valley Elem. School, Wilmington
4	October 4	March 6	First Congregational Church, Manchester
5	October 10	March 12	Baptist Church, Woodstock
6	October 10	March 14	Castleton State College Chapel
7	October 5	March 14	Middlebury Town Offices
8	October 2	March 7	Gifford Hospital Conference Room, Randolph
9	October 3	March 7	Green Mountain Power Offices, Green Mountain Drive, Montpelier
10	October 12	March 12	Green Mountain Power Offices, Green Mountain Drive, Montpelier
11	October 5	March 14	Waterford Elementary School
12	October 4	March 13	Charlmont Restaurant, Morrisville
13	October 13	March 15	Newport City Elem. School
14	October 11	March 13	Masonic Hall, St. Albans
15, 16, 17	October 6	March 15	Conf. Room 2B, Dept. of Health Burlington

EIGHTH GRADE

NETWORK	DATE	DATE	LOCATION
1, 4, 6, 7	October 6	March 8	Castleton State College Chapel
2	October 5	March 7	Wilmington Middle/High School
5	October 10	March 12	Baptist Church, Woodstock
9, 10	October 6	March 8	4th Floor Conf. Room, Pavilion Bldg., Montpelier
11	October 5	March 14	Waterford Elementary School
12	October 4	March 13	Charlmont Restaurant, Morrisville
13	October 13	March 15	Newport City Elementary School
14	October 11	March 13	Masonic Hall, St. Albans
15, 16, 17	October 5	March 7	Dept. of Health Bldg. Conf. Room 2B, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington
		PLEASE NOTE:	*Grade 8 Network 3 & 8 teachers should attend*
			network meeting most
			convenient.

All meetings are scheduled from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. If you have any questions, please call Carol Amico at 828-3111 or your network leader.



COUNTY AND TOWN
OUTLINE MAP
OF
VERMONT

AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING DIVISION

SCALE