

Early Education in Vermont Public Schools 2006 Survey Results

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Background

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Act 186 Legislative Study Committee with data concerning school involvement in preschool education and the utilization of public school funds to support these efforts. For purposes of the survey, publicly funded preschool was defined as “those early education services for three- and four-year-olds that are funded wholly or in part with General State Support/Average Daily Membership (ADM) monies.” Enrollment figures are not included in this study because they are being determined through student census counts currently underway.

Method

Department of Education staff, with assistance from staff at the Department for Children and Families, prepared a brief survey for school districts to complete electronically using SurveyMonkey technology, a web-based survey service. Letters were sent to each superintendent explaining the research effort and requesting their participation. In turn, superintendents had the option of completing the surveys for each school district within their office or enlisting the support of their respective school districts. Non-respondents were contacted the week following the deadline to increase the response rate. Several districts were contacted for additional clarification in order to have as accurate results as possible available for the Act 186 Legislative Study Committee. Despite some initial technological difficulties for programs accessing the survey on Survey Monkey, responses were received from 245 districts representing a return rate close to the 100 percent level. Once initial results were compiled, a preliminary report was sent to superintendents to verify their districts’ data. This report incorporates all changes reported to the Department of Education following the verification process.

Results

Based upon the responses of 245 school districts, the results of the 2006 Early Education in Vermont Public Schools are as follows:

1. Does your town provide publicly-funded preschool services (early education services for three- and four-year olds that are funded wholly or in part with General State Support/ADM monies)?

No - 95 (39%)

Yes - 150 (61%)

For the 150 districts reporting “yes” to question #1, the following responses were reported for questions 2-15:

2. In what year did your district begin counting 3- and/or 4-year-olds not eligible for EEE or EEI in the annual ADM census?

1987 or before-	6
1988-	9
1989-	6
1990-	2
1991-1995-	0
1996-	4
1997-	3
1998-	2
1999-	2
2000-	11
2001-	7
2002-	12
2003-	13
2004-	13
2005-	16
2006-	11
Unsure-	33

3. Was the town's decision to begin providing publicly-funded preschool services the result of community-wide discussions involving parents and community-based providers (CPB) from child care, Head Start, or Parent Child Centers?

Yes	53 (35%)
No	25 (17%)
Not sure	63 (42%)
No response	9 (6%)

4. Publicly-funded preschool services are offered to:

All resident children	83 (55%)
Some resident children*	58 (39%)
No response	9 (6%)

* *If offered only to some children*, is enrollment determined by (check all that apply):

First-come basis	24 (41%)
Lottery	12 (21%)
Specific criteria	22 (38%)

NOTE: The following breakdowns represent duplicated count due to some of the 58 programs using multiple criteria:

Age	12 (11%)
Developmental delay	40 (37%)
Abuse/ neglect	28 (26%)
Poverty	34 (31%)
English Language Learners	25 (23%)
Other at-risk factors	7 (6%)

5. How many hours of publicly-funded preschool services are offered per week to:

Three-year-olds:	
1-5 hours:	6 (4%)
6-9 hours:	22 (15%)
10 hours:	47 (31%)
11-15 hours:	14 (9%)
16 or more:	10 (7%)
Varies (5-12 hours):	9 (6%)
No response:	42 (28%)

Four-year-olds:		
1-5 hours:	6	(4%)
6-9 hours:	13	(9%)
10 hours:	75	(50%)
11-15 hours:	24	(16%)
16 or more:	10	(8%)
Varies (5-12 hours):	10	(8%)
No response:	8	(5%)

6. Which curriculum areas are emphasized in your publicly-funded preschool program(s)?

No response	11	(7%)
<u>Among the 139 programs responding</u>		
Language and literacy	139	(100%)
Mathematics/ numeracy	139	(100%)
Science	104	(75%)
Social studies	102	(73%)
Arts	113	(81%)
Social/ emotional	138	(99%)
Physical and motor development	136	(99%)

7. Does the town participate in an early education collaborative with other school districts or supervisory unions?

Yes	68	(45%)
No	71	(48%)
No response	11	(7%)

8. Can children attend qualified publicly-funded preschool outside of your town and still be included in your preschool ADM census?

Yes	72	(48%)
No	67	(45%)
No response	11	(7%)

9. Can children attend qualified publicly-funded preschool outside of your supervisory union and still be included in your preschool ADM census?

Yes	15	(10%)
No	123	(82%)
No response	12	(8%)

10. Does the town offer its own school-based publicly-funded preschool services?

Yes	88	(59%)
No	51	(34%)
No response	11	(7%)

11. Does the town collaborate with other community-based providers to offer publicly-funded preschool services?

Yes*	74	(49%)
No	61	(41%)
No response	13	(10%)

*** If yes, how many community-based providers in partnership with the district offer publicly-funded preschool services (list number of sites for each of the following categories):** NOTE: The following breakdowns represent duplicated count due to some of the 74 programs involved in multiple partnerships:

Licensed child care center(s)	48	(65%)
Head Start	41	(55%)
Parent Child Center	21	(28%)
Family child care providers	17	(23%)
Other	16	(22%)

12. Are written contracts established between the district or SU and community-based providers?

Yes 66 (89%)
 No/ No response 8 (11%)

13. What prerequisites must community-based providers meet? (check all that apply)

Licensed teacher working with children 68 (92%)
 Program licensed through the Child Development Division 71 (96%)
 Accredited by national early education organization 44 (59%)
 Participation in Vermont's STARS quality rating system (minimum 3 stars rating) 24 (32%)
 Curricula and assessments aligned with Vermont Early Learning Standards 74 (100%)
 Other (engage in professional development, other accreditation expectations, IPDP, participate in data collection/ accountability measures) 74 (100%)

14. If the town's publicly-funded preschool services are offered in partnership with a community provider this year, how much money is being distributed to the provider:

A. if this is the provider's FIRST YEAR in the partnership:

\$_____ per child per year OR \$0 – 2340
 \$_____ per program (flat fee regardless of enrollment) OR \$30,000
 ____ percent of estimated Preschool ADM funds generated per claimed child 0-100%

B. if this is the provider's SECOND YEAR in the partnership

\$_____ per child per year OR \$0 – 2340
 \$_____ per program (flat fee regardless of enrollment) OR \$13,131 – 14,000
 ____ percent of estimated Preschool ADM funds generated per claimed child 50 – 100%

C. if the provider has been in a partnership for THREE OR MORE YEARS,

\$_____ per child per year OR \$0 - 2664
 \$_____ per program (flat fee regardless of enrollment) OR \$6,248 – 7,100
 ____ percent of estimated Preschool ADM funds generated per claimed child 0 – 100% *

* Represents 0% when school-based programs provide staffing and other support but others report 60, 70, 80 (majority) or 100%

15. If the town's publicly-funded preschool is operated in partnership with a community-based provider, what services does the school district offer the community provider (please check all that apply):

Educational consultation and technical assistance 59 (80%)
 Professional development for early childhood staff 54 (73%)
 Equipment and/or materials 44 (59%)
 Access to school health services/information 42 (57%)
 Data collection 37 (50%)
 Additional teaching staff 27 (36%)
 Supervision 26 (35%)
 Access to school's guidance/counseling services 26 (35%)
 Space/facility 24 (32%)
 Transportation 10 (14%)
 Other 37 (50%)

For the 95 programs reporting "no" to question #1, the following responses were reported:

16. If your town does not offer publicly-funded preschool services at this time, is your town exploring plans to do so in the future?

Yes 24 (25%)
 No 32 (34%)
 Not Sure 35 (37%)
 No response 4 (4%)

A. If "yes," are you considering entering into partnership with existing community providers?

Yes	19 (79%)
No	3 (13%)
Not sure/ No response	2 (8%)

17. What steps have you taken to involve the public (check all that apply):

Public forums	18 (38%)
Study or planning committee	19 (40%)
School board agenda item for discussion	31 (66%)
Community survey	7 (15%)
Budget planning	9 (19%)
Other: forum with neighboring school districts, meeting with local preschool/childcare providers)	19 (40%)
No response	44 (48%)

18. Other comments

Additional comments were provided by approximately 100 school districts. These generally provided clarification to previously asked questions; however, few apparent themes were found that could be reported. The only recurring comments were that some respondents felt they could not accurately report on the historical context while other districts reported operating programs for quite some time, starting as a special education program and gradually expanding to include others as additional information on research and best practices, along with supplemental resources, became available.

Appendix 1

School Districts Reporting Publicly-Funded Preschool Services - 2006
(Survey as of 10/16/06)

<u>Town</u>	<u>Supervisory Union</u>
Wells River	Blue Mountain
Bridport	Addison Central
Cornwall	
Middlebury	
Ripton	
Salisbury	
Shoreham	
Weybridge	
Addison	Addison Northwest
Ferrisburgh	
Panton	
Vergennes	
Waltham	
Pawlet	Benn.-Rutland SU
Sunderland	
Danby	
Mt Tabor	
Rupert	
Manchester	
Burlington	Burlington
Sheffield	Caledonia North
Danville	Caledonia Central
Essex Junction	Chittenden Central
Westford	
Bolton	Chittenden East
Huntington	
Richmond	
Williston	Chittenden South
Hinesburg	
Shelburne	
Concord	Essex Caledonia
Granby	
Guildhall	
Kirby	
Lunenburg	
Gilman	
Maidstone	
Victory	
Waterford	
Canaan	Essex North
Essex Town	Essex Town School District

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St Albans City	Franklin Central
St Albans Town	
Fairfield	
Enosburg	Franklin Northeast
Montgomery	
Berkshire	
Richford	
Bakersfield	
Sheldon	Franklin Northwest Supervisory
Franklin	
Highgate	
Swanton	
Georgia	Franklin West
Fletcher	
Fairfax	
Alburgh	Grand Isle
Grand Isle	
Isle La Motte	
North Hero	
South Hero	
Cambridge	Lamoille North
Johnson	
Waterville	
Eden	
Hyde Park	
Montpelier	Montpelier
Brighton	Orleans Essex North
Charleston	
Holland	
Lowell	
Newport City	
Newport Town	
Bradford	Orange East S.U.
Corinth	
Newbury	
Thetford	
Topsham	
Washington	Orange North
Williamstown	
Randolph	Orange Southwest
Albany	Orleans Central
Barton	
Brownington	
Glover	
Westmore	
Orleans	
Irasburg	

Craftsbury	Orleans Southwest
Greensboro	
Hardwick	
S Royalton	Orange Windsor
Sharon	
Failree	Rivendell
Vershire	
West Fairlee	
Brandon	Rutland Northeast
Chittenden	
Mendon	
Leicester	
Whiting	
Sudbury	
Pittsford	
Clarendon	Rutland South
Shrewsbury	
Ludlow	Rutland Windsor
Mount Holly	
Plymouth	
South Burlington	South Burlington
Springfield	Springfield
St. Johnsbury	St. Johnsbury
Berlin	Washington Central
Waitsfield	
Calais	
East Montpelier	
Middlesex	
Worcester	
Northfield	Washington South
Fayston	Washington West
Moretown	
Warren	
Waterbury	
Dover	Windham Central
Marlboro	
Newfane	
Jamaica	
Rockingham	Windham Northeast
Westminster	
Athens	
Grafton	
Readsboro	Windham Southwest
Searsburg	
Whitingham	
Wilmington	
Brattleboro	Windham Southeast
Hartland	

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Cavendish	Windsor-Southwest
Chester	
Floodbrook School	
Athens	Windsor Northeast
Grafton	
Bethel	Windsor Northwest
Granville	
Hancock	
Pittsfield	
Rochester	
Stockbridge	
Putney	Windham Southeast
Winooski	Winooski