**SUPPORTING EACH AND EVERY YOUNG CHILD AND FAMILY’S FULL AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION**

**Vermont Guiding Principles**

*A Brief History*

For two years, a diverse group of over 30 cross sector early childhood and early childhood special education/early intervention colleagues brought their agency, organization, family, foundation, faculty, administrator, specialist, and teacher perspectives together to support the development of a set of guiding principles. This document provides an overview of the rationale for the Vermont Guiding Principles, the vision for how the Vermont Guiding Principles mesh with other state and national requirements, values, and priorities, an overview of the steps in the statewide validation process, and a connection to resources for supporting the understanding and use of the Vermont Guiding Principles.

**Why does Vermont need a set of Guiding Principles?**

The explicit statements of the Vermont Guiding Principles should be used to:

* Create high expectations for each and every child to reach his or her full potential;
* Influence priorities for professional development, training and technical assistance;
* Shape responsive policies and guidance;
* Guide collection of data that will enable Vermont to see how well each child is faring;
* Shape the daily work of educators, therapists, and administrators with each child and family; and
* Build collaboration and strengthen connections across agencies and sectors.

**How do the Guiding Principles align with and reflect current state and national perspectives and priorities?**

The words and concepts of the Guiding Principles were developed to:

* Incorporate, build on, complement, and extend early childhood work that is foundational in Vermont (e.g., the Vermont Early Learning Standards or VELS, Vermont’s Early Childhood Action Plan);
* Be consistent with both state and federal mandates (e.g., section 619 of IDEA); and
* Move beyond the inclusion of children with disabilities to offer explicit, intentional, and actionable statements related to supporting the full potential of each and every child and their family.

**Steps in the Guiding Principles Development Process**

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| **Step in the Process** | **Additional Information** |
| Guiding Principles Work Group meetings to obtain input and develop the process for state validation of the final product | Additional details about each of these steps is available at [**https://fpg.unc.edu/presentations/full-and-equitable-participation-principles**](https://fpg.unc.edu/presentations/full-and-equitable-participation-principles) |
| Critical Conversation at Lake Morey to provide statewide input to a draft of the Guiding Principles |
| Work Group input on multiple drafts of the Guiding Principles, followed by revisions |
| Broad statewide review and input to draft; request for endorsement |
| Final draft to incorporate feedback from statewide validation; approved by Work Group |
| Final Guiding Principles disseminated to all agencies, programs, organizations, and individuals and posted on BBF website |

**Resources** to help individuals, programs, organizations, and agencies to learn about and use the Vermont Guiding Principles (e.g., checklists, PowerPoints, personas, etc.) are available at [**https://fpg.unc.edu/presentations/vt-guiding-principles**](https://fpg.unc.edu/presentations/vt-guiding-principles)

**Questions?** Please contact Camille Catlett (**camille.catlett@unc.edu** or 919/824-6842) or Kate Rogers (**kate.rogers@vermont.gov** or 802/479-1454)