

SCHOOL CHOICE MATTERS

Vermont Policy Report

Introduction

PURPOSE

A combination of well-designed policies give all students access to the broadest range of educational opportunities, including key core policies and helpful policy enhancers. The purpose of this document is to provide insight to how well your state is doing at implementing the Ecosystem of School Choice Policies. This state report summarizes evidence across the seven policy buckets, with each policy component detailed in individual cells.

CORE POLICIES

Key policies expand student opportunities.



[Open Enrollment](#)



[Charter Schools](#)



[Private School Choice](#)



[Homeschooling](#)

POLICY ENHANCERS

Supporting policies enhance those opportunities.



[Part-time Enrollment/Course Access](#)



[Learn Everywhere](#)



[Transportation](#)

CORE POLICIES



Open Enrollment in Vermont

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Transfers Between Districts</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Sending and/or receiving districts have discretion over transfers</p>	<p>Vermont Public High School Choice law requires high schools to accept high school students who live outside their district boundaries, provided the school has capacity to accept students.</p> <p>Note that sending high school boards may limit the number of resident students who transfer to another high school. Boards may not limit the potential number of new transferring students to fewer than 5% of the resident students enrolled in the sending high school as of October 1 of the academic year in which the calculation is made or 10 students, whichever is fewer. The total number of transferring students in any year may not exceed 10% of all resident high school students or 40 students, whichever is fewer.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice)</p>
<p>Transfers Within Districts</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>School officials can block transfers</p>	<p>Vermont Statute provides for the transfer of high school students only to other schools, providing that if the school to which a student wishes to transfer does not have capacity, the school may implement a nondiscriminatory lottery system for transfers.</p> <p>Note that Statute also makes clear that even after a student is provided with notification of enrollment in a school, a student may enroll in a school other than the receiving high school only if the student, the receiving high school, and the high school in which the student wishes to enroll agree.</p> <p>Note that sending high school boards may limit the number of resident students who transfer to another high school. Boards may not limit the potential number of new transferring students to fewer than 5% of the resident students enrolled in the sending high school as of October 1 of the academic year in which the calculation is made or 10 students, whichever is fewer. The total number of transferring students in any year may not exceed 10% of all resident high school students or 40 students, whichever is fewer.</p>

		(16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice)
Year-round Transfer Window	LIMITED Restricted transfer window	School districts must accept applications for enrollment until March 1 of the school year preceding the school year for which the student is applying. The student is then notified of acceptance or rejection by April 1 of the school year preceding the school year for which the student is applying. Students must then give written notice of how they will be exercising their school choice option to the sending school and all receiving schools by April 15. (16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice; Vermont Agency of Education, Public School Choice Timeline)
Tuition-Free Public Schools	YES Prohibition on parent tuition	Under the Vermont Public High School Choice law, unless the sending and receiving schools agree to a different arrangement, tuition may not be charged or paid for a student transferring to a different high school. Further, students are prohibited from paying tuition, fees, or other costs not also paid by the student who lives in the receiving district. (16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice)
School Capacity Transparency	LIMITED Only some information reported	Vermont Statute requires boards of high school districts to define and announce capacity to accept students, on or before February 1 of each year. State guidelines to assist high school boards may include limits based on the capacity of the program, class, grade, school building, measurable adverse financial impact, or other factors. Guidelines must not be based on the need to provide special education services. (16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice)
Transfer Data Transparency	LIMITED Information only collected and/or some data not reported	Vermont Statutes for Public High School Choice requires the Secretary to report annually in January to the Senate and House Committees on Education on the implementation of public high school choice, which includes a “quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the program’s impact on the quality of educational services available to students and the expansion of educational opportunities. (16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice)

<p>Transparent Appeal Process</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>Vermont policy does not address an appeal of a district’s denial of transfer.</p> <p>Note that if a student transfer request is not approved in a particular year due to lack of capacity, through the nondiscriminatory lottery system, boards will give preference to the transfer request of a student whose request to transfer from the school was denied in a prior year.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice)</p>
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SOURCE CITATIONS

<p>Statutes</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice</p>	<p>State Department of Education</p> <p>Vermont Agency of Education, Public High School Choice</p> <p>Vermont Agency of Education, Legislative Reports: Public High School Choice</p> <p>Vermont Agency of Education, Public School Choice Timeline</p> <p>Vermont Agency of Education, Public High School Choice Frequently Asked Questions</p>
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Charter Schools in Vermont

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Multiple Charter Authorizers	NO No charter school law	Vermont has not adopted a charter school law.
Charter Appeal Process	NO No appeals process	
Charter Regulatory Flexibility	NO No charter school law	
Equitable Charter Funding	NO No charter school law	
Charter Facilities Funding	NO No charter school law	
Options for High-Performing Charters	NO No charter school law	

Charter Zoning Exemptions	NO No charter school law	
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Private School Choice in Vermont

POLICY	OVERALL RATING	PROGRAM OVERVIEW
<p>Universal Eligibility</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Eligibility less than 100%</p>	<p>Vermont Statutes provide for a Town Tuitioning Program. School districts in the state must maintain one or more approved elementary and high schools.</p> <p>For elementary schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The electorate may authorize school boards to provide for the elementary school education of students by paying tuition to one or more schools in one or more districts. • Or, without previous authorization by the electorate, a school board may pay tuition for students who reside near a school in an adjacent district upon request of the student’s parent or guardian, if in the board’s judgment the student’s education can be more conveniently furnished there due to geographic considerations. • Further, the electorate of a school district that does not maintain an elementary school may grant general authority to the school board to pay tuition for a student at an approved independent school or independent school meeting education quality standards upon notice given by the student’s parent or legal guardian. <p>(16 V.S.A. 821 School district to maintain public elementary schools or pay tuition)</p> <p>For high schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The electorate may authorize the school board to close an existing high school and to provide for education of students by paying tuition to a public high school, an approved independent high school, or an independent school that meets education quality standards, to be selected by the parents of the student, within or outside the state. • For school districts organized to provide K-12, but that maintain education for only the first 8 years, the district will be obligated to pay tuition for its resident students for at least 4 additional years. • A school district may both maintain a high school and furnish high school education by paying tuition to a public school as determined to best serve the interests of the students or to an approved independent school or independent school meeting education quality standards if the school board judges that a

		<p>student has unique educational needs that cannot be served within their own district or at a nearby public school.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 822 School district to maintain public high schools or pay tuition)</p>
<p>Comparable Student Funding</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Funding below 90%</p>	<p>Vermont Statute relating to tuition at elementary schools provides that the tuition that is paid for students must not exceed the least of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the average announced tuition of Vermont union elementary schools for the year of attendance; • the tuition charged by the approved independent school for the year of attendance; or • the average per-pupil tuition the district pays for its other resident elementary students in the year in which the student is enrolled in the approved independent school. <p>(16 V.S.A. 823 Elementary Tuition)</p> <p>Vermont Statute relating to tuition at high schools provide that districts must pay an amount not to exceed the average announced tuition of Vermont union high schools for the year of attendance for its students enrolled in an approved independent school not functioning as a Vermont area career technical center, or any higher amount approved by the electorate at an annual or special meeting.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 824 High school tuition)</p>
<p>Uncapped Student Access</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>There are no limits on student participation, through funding nor enrollment caps.</p>
<p>Extended Application Window</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Application period or periods</p>	<p>The electorate of a school district that does not maintain an elementary school may grant general authority to the school board to pay tuition for a student at an approved independent school or independent school meeting education quality standards upon notice given by the student’s parent or legal guardian, which must be given by April 15 for the following year.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 821 School district to maintain public elementary schools or pay tuition)</p> <p>Similarly, for students in high school, Vermont Statute provides as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parent or legal guardian who is dissatisfied with the instruction provided at a designated school or who cannot obtain for his or her child the kind of course or instruction desired there, or whose child can be

		<p>better accommodated in an approved independent or public high school nearer his or her home during the next academic year, may request on or before April 15 that the school board pay tuition to another approved independent or public high school selected by the parent or guardian.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 827 Designation of a public high school or an approved independent high school as the public high school of a school district)</p>
<p>Student Testing Options</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Rigid mandates, multiple tests, or no accountability</p>	<p>Vermont Statute requires approved independent schools to provide assurances that the school will assess each student’s progress, at least once each year. The school must maintain records of that assessment and provide the results of those assessments to each student’s parent or guardian.</p> <p>Statute further provides that approved independent schools that accept students for whom the district of residence pays tuition must use assessments required under subdivision 164(9) to measure attainment of standards for student performance.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 166 Approved and recognized independent schools)</p> <p>Vermont Statute 164(9) requires the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and continually update standards for student performance in appropriate content areas and at appropriate intervals in the continuum from kindergarten to grade 12 and methods of assessment to determine attainment of the standards for student performance. The standards shall be rigorous, challenging, and designed to prepare students to participate in and contribute to the democratic process and to compete in the global marketplace. The standards shall include a standard for reading level proficiency for students completing grade three. <p>(16 V.S.A. 164 State Board; general powers and duties)</p>
<p>School Autonomy</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Silent language or adverse regulations</p>	<p>Vermont Statute requires approved independent schools to provide certain assurances in the school’s enrollment notice submitted to the Secretary upon opening and every 5 years. The assurances must specify the school will meet State and federal laws and regulations concerning its physical facilities and health and safety matters as are applicable to recognized independent schools. The assurances also must make clear that the school’s educational program will include the minimum course of study as required in Vermont Statutes.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 166 Approved and recognized independent schools)</p>

<p>Accessible School Participation</p>	<p>YES No accreditation requirement</p>	<p>Vermont does not require independent schools to be accredited. Participating independent schools may be approved by the State Board, pursuant to Vermont Statutes. To be approved, schools must provide a minimum course of study, substantially complying with statutory requirements for approved independent schools and the Board’s rules for approved independent schools.</p> <p>Statute provides that an independent school that plans to accept public tuition shall be approved by the State Board only on the condition the school agrees, to enroll any student who requires special education services and who is placed in or referred to the approved independent school as an appropriate placement and least restrictive environment for the student by the student’s individualized education program team or by the local education agency.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 166 Approved and recognized independent schools)</p>
<p>ESAs and Parent-Directed Spending</p>		
<p>Freedom to Customize</p>	<p>NO No ESA or microgrant program</p>	<p>Vermont does not have an education scholarship account or microgrant program.</p>
<p>Freedom to Access</p>	<p>NO No ESA or microgrant program</p>	
<p>Carry-Over Funding</p>	<p>NO No ESA or microgrant program</p>	
<p>Tax Credits</p>		
<p>Full Tax Credit</p>	<p>N/A No Tax Credit Program</p>	<p>Vermont does not have an education tax credit program.</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS			
Statutes	Administrative Code	State Department of Education	Other Resources
<p>16 V.S.A. 166 Approved and recognized independent schools</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 821 School district to maintain public elementary schools or pay tuition</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 822 School district to maintain public high schools or pay tuition</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 823 Elementary Tuition</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 824 High school tuition</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 827 Designation of a public high school or an approved independent high school as the public high school of a school district</p>	<p>Vermont State Board of Education Rule 2200 Independent School Program Approval</p>	<p>Vermont Education Agency, Letter to Superintendents: Tuition Payment to Religiously-Affiliated Approved Independent Schools</p>	<p>EdChoice, The ABCs of School Choice: Vermont (2024 Edition)</p>



Homeschooling in Vermont

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Homeschool without Prior Approval	<p>YES</p> <p>No permission required</p>	<p>Vermont Statute does not require parents to receive permission from a local school board or other administrative body to begin homeschooling.</p>
No Extra Homeschool Notifications	<p>NO</p> <p>Annual notification</p>	<p>Vermont Statute requires parents intending to homeschool their children to send the Secretary notice of intent to enroll in a home study program. This must be done at least 10 business days before starting the program.</p> <p>The Secretary must then acknowledge this notice within 10 business days following receipt of the submission.</p> <p>This notice must be provided each year – “on or before the start of each following year.” This also must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the start of the home study program</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 166b Home study program)</p>
No Certification to Homeschool	<p>YES</p> <p>No certification requirement</p>	<p>Vermont policy does not require parents to possess teacher certifications.</p>
Flexible Assessment Options	<p>YES</p> <p>Flexible academic accountability</p>	<p>Vermont Statute requires parents to attest that the academic progress of their child(ren) will be assessed at the end of each school year – the parent must maintain the record of these assessments. According to the law, the assessment may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standardized assessment, administered by the local school district or testing service; • A review of the student’s progress by an individual who holds a current Vermont teacher’s certificate; • A report and portfolio that includes a summary of what the student learning during the school year and four samples of student work;

- Grades from an online academy or school; or
- Evidence of passing the GED.

[\(16 V.S.A. 166b Home study program\)](#)

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes

[16 V.S.A. 166b Home study program](#)

State Department of Education

[Vermont Agency of Education, Home Study](#)

[Vermont Agency of Education, Home Study Frequently Asked Questions](#)

POLICY ENHANCERS



Part-time Enrollment in Vermont

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Resident Course Access</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>By type of student, type of course, or district policy</p>	<p>Home Study Students Vermont Statute requires a school or district to adopt a policy that will “integrate home study students into its schools”, including through enrollment in courses, participation in cocurricular and extracurricular activities, and use of facilities.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 563 Powers of school boards; form of vote)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermont has promulgated rules relating to home study and part-time enrollment. <p>Vermont Rules relating to the integration of home study students provide that home study students are eligible to enroll as part-time students in the school by his or her district of residence, of if there is not a public school, in a public school for which his or her district is required to pay tuition.</p> <p>(Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4400 Integration of Home Study Students)</p> <p>According to the Vermont Agency of Education, home study students may enroll in their local school for up to 2 of the 5 main courses. Note the 5 main courses include math, science, reading and writing, history/civics/government, and literature. Home study students may also participate in electives, athletics, and extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>(Vermont Agency of Education, Public School and Home Study)</p> <p>Vermont Rules also specify that boards must adopt policies so that home study students who request part-time enrollment in courses or programs are accepted into those courses or program and furnished with required learning materials, in the same way that full-time students are.</p>

		<p>(Vermont Rule 4403 Part-time Enrollment of Home Study Students in Public School Academic Programs)</p> <p>Nonpublic Students Vermont policy does</p>
<p>Nonresident Course Access</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Districts only serve resident students or can impose other restrictions</p>	<p>Home Study Students Vermont Statute requires a school or district to adopt a policy that will “integrate home study students into its schools”, including through enrollment in courses, participation in cocurricular and extracurricular activities, and use of facilities.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 563 Powers of school boards; form of vote)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermont has promulgated rules relating to home study and part-time enrollment. <p>Vermont Rules relating to the integration of home study students provide that home study students are eligible to enroll as part-time students in the school by his or her district of residence, or if there is not a public school, in a public school for which his or her district is required to pay tuition.</p> <p>(Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4400 Integration of Home Study Students)</p>
<p>Virtual Course Access</p>	<p>YES</p> <p>The state has one or more fully accessible virtual providers</p>	<p>Vermont has created the Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative, run by the Vermont Agency of Education. This Cooperative works with schools to give students access to online courses. This program offers courses to part-time and full-time students in grades 9-12. Elementary students and middle schoolers may participate in a full-time online program, as well.</p> <p>Note that the Cooperative offers on-demand courses, which allows students even more flexibility in their online courses. Students can begin on the 1st or 15th of any month and finish at their own pace within 6 months.</p>
<p>Extracurricular Access</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Access denied to some resident students, or students must take at least one class in a public school</p>	<p>Home Study Students Vermont Rules provide that home study students are eligible to participate in or, when selection to participate in an activity is made on a competitive basis, to try out for, one or more co-curricular or extracurricular activities at a school operated by his or her district of residence, or if the district does not operate a school, at a public school for which his or her district is required to pay tuition.</p> <p>(Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4404 Participation of Home Study Students in Public School Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities)</p>

Nonpublic School Students

Vermont policy does not address nonpublic student participation in athletics and other extracurricular activities.

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes

[16 V.S.A. 563 Powers of school boards; form of vote](#)

Administrative Code

[Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4400
Integration of Home Study Students](#)

[Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4403 Part-time
Enrollment of Home Study Students in Public School
Academic Programs](#)

[Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4404
Participation of Home Study Students in Public School
Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities](#)

State Department of Education

[Vermont Agency of Education, Public School and
Home Study](#)

[Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative](#)



Learn Everywhere in Vermont

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Provider Qualification Standard	<p>NO</p> <p>No program</p>	<p>Vermont has not established a Learn Everywhere program.</p>
Course Credit Standard	<p>NO</p> <p>No program</p>	
Core Course Opportunities	<p>NO</p> <p>No program</p>	
Central State List	<p>NO</p> <p>No program</p>	



Transportation in Vermont

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Open Enrollment Transit	<div style="background-color: red; width: 10px; height: 100%;"></div> NO	<p>Vermont Statute relating to Public High School Choice does not provide funding for transportation for open enrollment students. Statute requires the superintendent of each supervisory union to establish and update a statewide clearinghouse providing information to students about transportation options among high school districts.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice)</p>
Fair Transportation Access	<div style="background-color: green; width: 10px; height: 100%;"></div> YES	<p>Vermont Statutes provides that each “legal pupil” defined in Statute, who is entitled or required to attend an elementary school or secondary school may be furnished with total or partial transportation to school, if it is determined school board to be “reasonable and necessary to enable the student to attend school.” School boards are required to adopt transportation policies, that must consider the transportation needs of students, including age and health of the student, distance to be travelled, and condition and type of highway.</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 1222 Students who may be furnished transportation)</p> <p>“Legal pupil” is defined in Statute to mean “an individual who has attained the age of five years on or before January 1 next following the beginning of the school year.”</p> <p>(16 V.S.A. 1073 “Legal pupil” defined; access to school)</p> <p>There are no limits on students attending independent schools regarding transportation services. Vermont does not have charter schools.</p>

<p>Vehicle Flexibility</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Only for student activities, or other restrictive conditions</p>	<p>The Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles permits Type I School Buses (seating capacity of more than 15 passengers) and Type II School Buses (seating capacity of 11-15 passengers) to transport students to and from school.</p> <p>A Multi-Function School Activity Bus can be used to transport students on trips, but not to transport to and/or from home and school.</p> <p>(Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, Types of School Buses)</p>
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SOURCE CITATIONS

<p>Statutes</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 822a Public high school choice</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 1073 “Legal pupil” defined; access to school</p> <p>16 V.S.A. 1222 Students who may be furnished transportation</p>	<p>Other Resources</p> <p>Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, Types of School Buses</p>
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