

The Bridging Project

Participating schools receive the following services:

- Multi-year collaboration working with literacy experts from VRI at UVM
- Guided self assessment using formats and personnel provided by the VRI team to identify literacy-related strengths and needs present at the school
- Assistance from the VRI team in analysis and use of self-assessment data, reviewing related research and determining next steps
- Intensive support from VRI researchers/consultants. This will include but is not limited to:
 - Weekly visits from a VRI consultant
 - Frequent professional development sessions during/after school
 - In-classroom coaching by project staff
 - Assessment planning for instructional purposes
 - Consultation regarding action planning and literacy decision-making
 - Support in addressing the Vermont Grade Level Expectations
- Capacity building for sustained improvement over time
- Participation in the UVM-based research project, including reflection regarding process and outcomes, and receipt of updates regarding research findings
- Participation in sharing successful practices across schools

Participating schools agree to take on the required activities and school responsibilities:

- Ensure that all faculty are committed to support the work of the Bridging Project in the school by providing signatures of 100% of faculty
- Agree to provide once/month release for participating teachers for a two-hour period and a once a month steering committee meeting with representation from all grade levels.
- Participation of the staff and administration in a self assessment using formats provided by the VRI team to initially identify literacy-related factors present at the school
- Attendance of a school team at the VRI Summer Institute
- Capacity building for sustained improvement over time by supporting the development of literacy leaders in the building
- Participate in needs-based action planning in the area of literacy, using guidelines provided by the VRI project
- Identify and begin to develop (or enhance) research-based instructional practices in literacy, including a 90-minute literacy block
- Develop a vision and sense of professional commitment for the individual, team, and school community

A good deal of the Bridging Project's cost will be defrayed through funds granted to the University of Vermont from the VT DOE. Although the actual project cost per school will range from \$27,000-\$35,000, the range of the fee charged to a participating school will be between \$13,000-\$18,000 for year one. The specific fee to be paid by a school will be determined based on economic need and the size of the school. In addition, there will be some local costs, primarily in terms of assessments (i.e. the Gates MacGinitie Reading Tests, DRA 4-8 assessment kits) and support for professional development (i.e. substitutes, classroom/professional resources, etc.).

Application

Cover Sheet

School Name

Address

Principal

Superintendent

Names of teachers who will be involved

Number of students in grades 3-6

What percentage of these students qualify for the Free/Reduced Lunch plan?

Total number of students in the school

Brief Letter (two pages MAXIMUM) should explain:

- The level of need based on student performance data. Include data concerning the past years' student performance on state-level assessments, as well as any additional data that indicates a clear need to strengthen students' reading comprehension in grades 3-6.
- The school's past commitment to strengthen student performance in literacy. This would include actions taken recently by staff and/or administration to improve literacy achievement (e.g., reading courses held in the district, action steps taken to strengthen reading or writing.)
- Your school's readiness to participate in this work, as evidenced by a commitment to focus on literacy for a multi-year span. Include (or attach) a brief statement from school, district administrators, and staff indicating interest in this opportunity. (Note: If your school is "conditionally accepted" for this project, we will ask for 85% of professional staff in grades 3-6 to sign a letter of agreement at that time.) Upon receipt of those signatures, a formal agreement/contract will be awarded.

Letters of intent/applications need to be received by February 15, 2005. Please address letters to Mary Grace, Director, VRI at UVM, PO Box 1049, Montpelier VT 05601.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email Mary Grace.