

# PASS

Personalized Assessment of Student Standards

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# What is PASS?

PASS stands for Personal Assessment of Student Standards. Students are mentored through a two-part program to develop a self-designed project and the implementation component where they demonstrate proficiency.

Simply put, students work with a VTVLC teacher/mentor who supports and assesses their skills and knowledge gained by completing their own self-designed project.



# Why PASS?

Act 77 Flexible Pathways provides opportunities for students to pursue multiple opportunities in order to meet their local graduation requirements.

VTVLC is supported by:



Many schools have provided a Pathways Coordinator or Work-Based Learning contact within their schools in order to work as a liaison with students and members of the community to provide expanded learning opportunities. However, these opportunities are limited to those within the local region and often do not include working directly with a teacher/mentor to assess student learning.

Although most communities do have some opportunities available to students, there is a lack of systems available to quickly and efficiently align these efforts to the school's proficiency-based graduation requirements; primarily due to the variations around the state in how schools have pursued their local graduation requirements. Educators involved with such projects, unless part of their regular duty assignments during the day, are stretched thin and often lack the expertise to evaluate project-based learning where unique and highly engaging activities can boost success in preparing students to be college and career ready. Self-designed projects where student motivation is intrinsic and highly relevant to the individual, increases both the successful outcome as well as the depth at which student learning can be achieved.

# Key Elements

- Licensed teachers holding both content area endorsements as well as Online Teaching Specialist endorsement supports meaningful student learning and assessment of such student learning and ensuring that learning is aligned to proficiency-based graduation requirements required by the student.
- Specific targeted learning goals require students to build and demonstrate proficiency and are supported through a qualitative cycle with the teacher/mentor.
- Students are able to leverage highly engaging, personalized learning opportunities to meet graduation requirements, thereby improving the chance of successfully meeting college and career readiness.
- PASS projects cover 14-18 weeks of direct instruction, research, and assessment between the teacher/mentor and student.
- Supports schools of various populations where local staff may be stretched too thin to provide aligned programming for independent work of students through work-based learning, community-based learning, travel abroad, or sports training and competition.

# Program Design

The primary learning outcome for every student is self-direction, regardless of the specific aligned content standards of their project. As a transferable skill, self-direction will be assessed through the use of monthly status reports.

After identifying learning goals and progress against these goals, the student will reflect on various obstacles and learning strategies employed during that period. This reflection will allow the student to identify both obstacles that interfered with completion of their learning goals, as well as learning strategies that worked well in support of their accomplishments.

Content related proficiencies will be developed in collaboration between the student's proposal for their project, the teacher/mentor, and the student's school and identified proficiency-based graduation requirements. Once the student's project is confirmed, the student will identify the specific content area the focus will entail, allowing a specific teacher to be assigned with the appropriate content area endorsement(s). This will begin the assessment and alignment of content standards to be included in the project.

The final outcomes will become an integral component of the project and be used to align all artifacts the student will develop over the course of the project.

Ultimately, student engagement due to the individualized nature of the program is expected to be highly intrinsic. Project-based learning that is student-centered and supported with Vermont licensed teachers will maximize the success of students. In addition, both local support and additional student support provided by VT VLC will ensure students have the additional human capital to provide both technical and educational support necessary to be successful.

# The Details

- All student candidates start with a Project Proposal and Review using the VTVLC PASS process. Once a proposal is submitted, a full review and collaboration meeting is setup with the student's selected VTVLC teacher mentor. VTVLC then works with the student's school to ensure maximum alignment to the local proficiency based graduation requirements.
- The PASS program allows for flexible start and end dates. Students will be enrolled on the 1st or the 15th of the month.
- Each project will have an anticipated end date. The teacher will help build a week by week pace chart for deliverables.
- All of VTVLC Pass Teacher/Mentors are Vermont licensed teachers who are dedicated to support the student's project! They will act as a guide and make suggestions as they complete their project.



A new way to build proficiency through a self-designed, project-based learning course.

# Application Process

**Registration for PASS is a very individualized process, given the nature of the enrollment.**

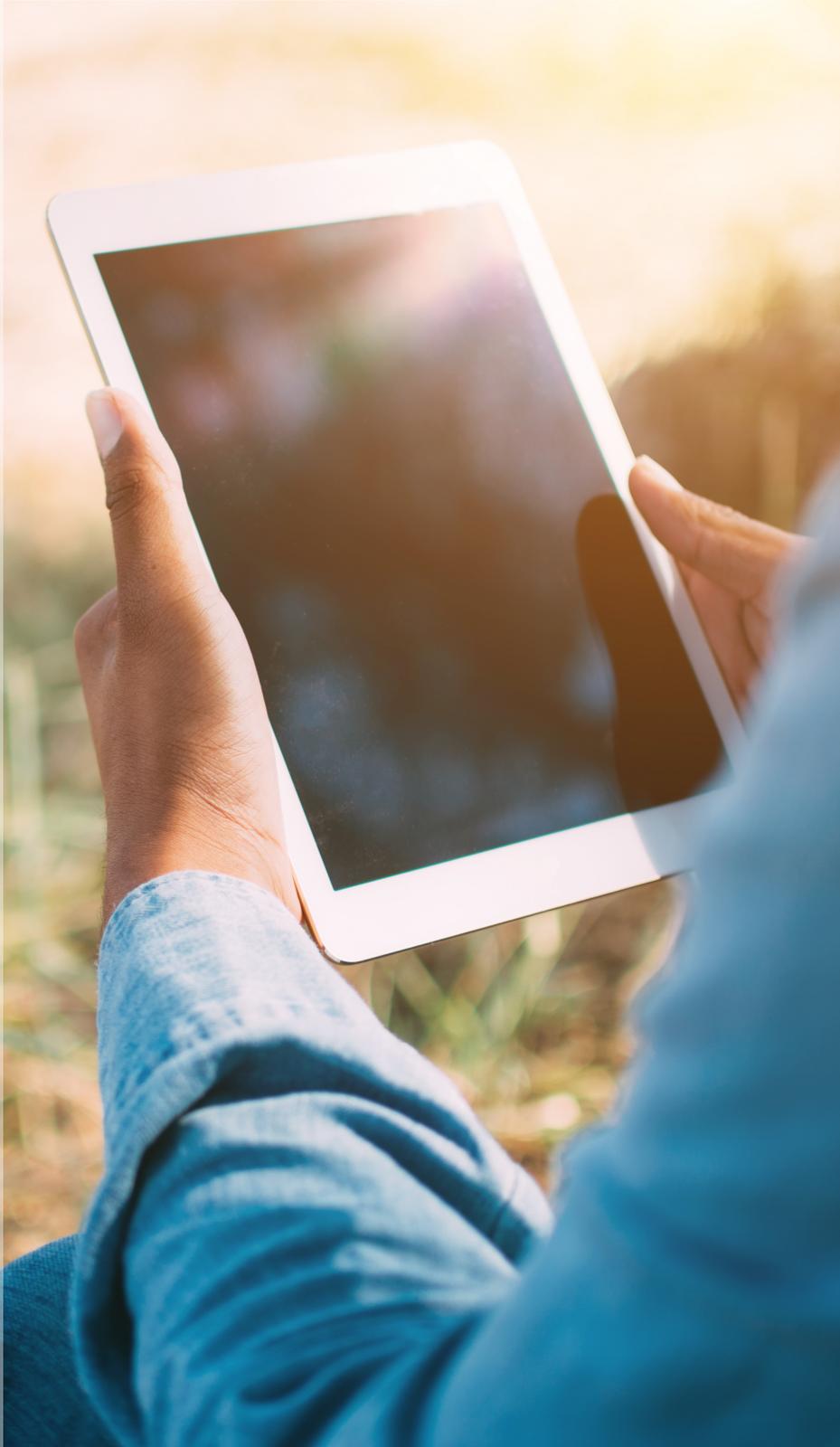
Once a student account has been created, and the student has registered for the PASS Application, a representative from VTVLC will be in touch with the student within 5 school days of receipt to review the application.

The student will be enrolled in the PASS Application course to outline their project.

Students will begin the process by first determining the following:

- What is the name of your project?
- What is the proposed content area for your PASS?
- What is the proposed project?
- What are the goals of the project?
- What is the proposed credit value of your PASS?
- What are your preferred start and end dates?

**Students will be guided through the process by VTVLC's Dean of Flexible Programs.**



# Who is the VTVLC Teacher Mentor?

The student's journey for the project will require them to be very self-directed and maintain strict time management, as they develop and work through the development of the project. The VTVLC Teacher Mentor will be selected according to the embedded academic content area of the project. In addition, students may also have additional mentors who will support the project as part of the PASS team.

Each VTVLC Teacher Mentor is an expert in their field. They are licensed Vermont educators who know their content areas, as well as having a breadth of other "real life" experiences that they can share with the student during the project. If an additional mentor will be used, the student should consider someone who will push them outside their comfort zone.

Working with a mentor will help the student develop a deeper understanding of the topic they chose, as well as a deeper understanding of themselves. If the student has questions, they can reach out to VTVLC and ask questions in order to ensure they feel comfortable before submitting the proposal.

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## Content Area Options

Students may choose to combine more than one content area within a project for a multi-disciplinary approach. Working with multiple VTVLC teachers, a student can combine two (.5) credit projects into a single PASS.

For instance, a student may have a project that combines both science and social studies for a 1 credit PASS. The student would work with both a science and social studies teacher to support their work.

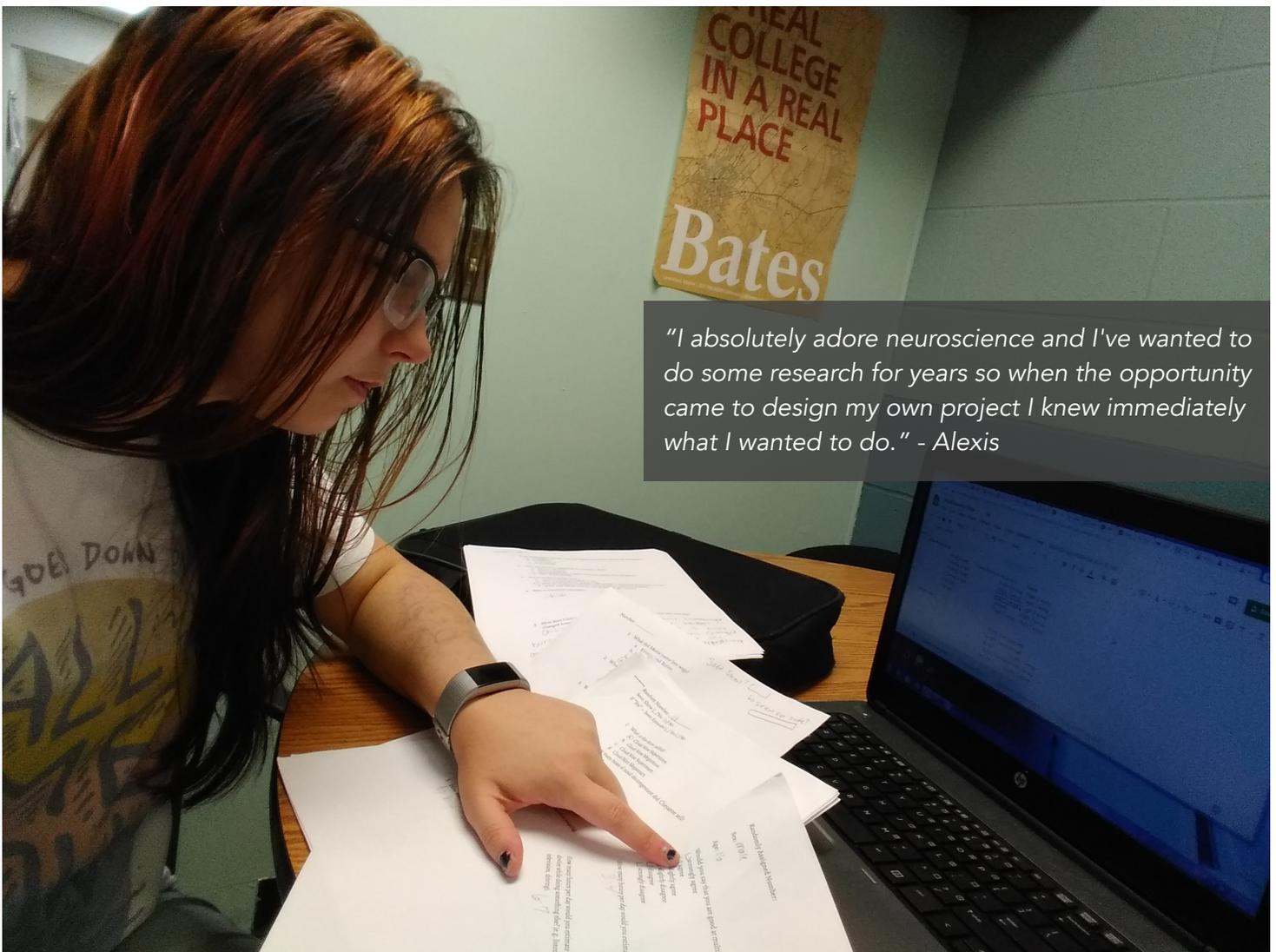
# Alexis

White River Valley Unified High School  
Teacher Mentor: Diane Moore,  
Science Teacher at Mount Anthony High School

*"One of the benefits of a custom PASS project is that it enables the mentor and the student to get to know each other as they work together to develop and meet the project goals. Frequent check-ins by phone is a good way to stay in touch and it helps maintain a positive student-mentor relationship. Guiding a student as they develop their own evidence of learning is rewarding." - Diane Moore, Teacher*

## Study on Brain Processing while Multitasking

**Executive Summary:** I propose to do some research regarding brain function under various conditions (a.k.a. while multitasking). For example test participants' reaction time, cognitive retention of concepts and ideas and/or auditory understanding (and more) while watching television vs focusing on the task at hand vs while scrolling through social media vs having a conversation with somebody etc. To do this I could first study the brain functions and chemistry that goes into such a thing. Then design a series of experiments with measurable criterion, next I could gather a group of willing participants and perform these experiments on them. I could then compile the data and come to conclusions based upon it. as one would do in an official research lab.



*"I absolutely adore neuroscience and I've wanted to do some research for years so when the opportunity came to design my own project I knew immediately what I wanted to do." - Alexis*

# The Project

**Content Area: Science**

**Credit: 1.0**

**Length of Proposal: 4 weeks**

**Length of Project: 20 weeks**

The project is a research project on multitasking. I first started by learning more about brain function and what is already known about multitasking before designing an experiment and testing it. After gathering the data I [will, but let's say I already did] wrote up a complete research report, with the details of the study, results and what these results mean.

**Conclusion:** "There is an implication in the self-reported that some teenagers do not know what multitasking is, or at the very least do not consider their phones to have an impact. For while the total averages were the same one group on average rated their phone multitasking two hours greater than they estimated their total multitasking time. This is a problem as it means that teenagers don't view things like texting and driving as "multitasking" and are not fully aware of the risks of doing so. "

## Learning Goals & Artifacts

**Goal 1 - Self-direction:** The demonstrated ability to identify, manage, and assess new opportunities related to learning goals and to integrate knowledge from a variety of sources to set goals and make informed decisions.

**Goal 2 - Clear and effective communication:** Evidence demonstrating organized and purposeful communication.

**Goal 3-- Understanding of the process of research:** Understanding of how research is designed/completed, etc in both an abstract and practical sense. Can design a research process as well as follow the steps someone else must have taken doing their research.-Look at other organizations' research articles; and write up a synthesis paper on.

**Goal 4-- Understanding Effects of Multitasking on the Brain & Health:** Can understand and explain how multitasking affects the brain directly as well as long-term in health. Can understand the benefits and detriments of multitasking.-Another synthesis paper to detail findings.

**Goal 5-- Completion of multitasking research:** Can complete an independent research project in depth and analyze the results found to support or disprove a hypothesis.-Lab report/formal presentation of data and processes. Similar to published results.

**Goal 6-- Ability to Design Repeatable Tests/Processes:** Can design and perform a series of experiments that work multiple times with minimal variables.-Actual experiment and data.-

**Goal 7-- Analysis:** Ability to perform effective analysis of results from an experiment and with outside data.-Lab report/formal presentation of data and processes. Similar to published results.-Presentation on multitasking effects based on findings.

Multitasking Data												
	A	B	C	D	E	F						
1	Participant Number:	9	50	78	19							
2	Score on TV (out of 5)	3	2	3	3							
3	Score on Reading (out of 5)	2	2.5	2.5	5	2	3.5	3.5				
4	Age	17	17	16	17	17	17	17	18			
5	Sex	female	female	female	female	female	female	male	male	male	male	
6	Self-Score	2	2	3	5	5	5	5	6	4	3	
7	hours 1	3	8	3	5	4	10	3	2	3	0	
8	hours 2	5	6	5	5	4	15	8	2	2	1	

*Rough timeline for each*  
 ~9:45-11:11  
 9:45-9:50 - get settled.  
 9:50-10:00 explain what's up, answer q's  
 10:00-10:15: pre-experiment survey  
 10:15: distribute texts and start show  
 10:45 give assessment

# Ann

South Burlington High School  
Teacher Mentor: Beth O'Connor,  
Foreign Language Teacher at Essex High School

## Continuing Education in Spanish

**Executive Summary:** Throughout my time of being a student, I have always been enamored by studying a foreign language, specifically Spanish. Being so interested and passionate in my pursuit of studying Spanish, I studied over the summer and was able to test into a higher-level Spanish class my Freshman year of high school. Because of this, I have unfortunately taken all the courses that my school offers. Despite this, I still want to continue learning the language and eventually minor in Spanish in college and I think that this program would be a great chance for me to do so. I would love to focus my studies around the unique culture of Spain. I haven't yet pinpointed a specific area that I want my project to center around (perhaps agriculture or pop-culture), but I think that if I was selected for this program, with the collaboration of another scholar, I would be able to formulate an interesting yet fun independent study. Wherever my project may take me, I want to walk away from this experience with an enlightened view of Spain and improvements in my writing, thinking, and grammar in Spanish.



*"Having taken all of the Spanish courses my school offers, I wanted to challenge myself with pursuing an independent study in Spanish-- this was the perfect opportunity to do so!" - Ann*

# Learning Goals & Artifacts

**Goal 1 - Self-direction:** The demonstrated ability to identify, manage, and assess new opportunities related to learning goals and to integrate knowledge from a variety of sources to set goals and make informed decisions.

**Goal 2 - Clear and effective communication:** Evidence demonstrating organized and purposeful communication.

**Goal 3 - Communicative:** 1.4a Students exchange information about subjects of special interest to them

**Goal 4- Interpretive:** 1.1b Students can understand basic information in ads, announcements, and other simple recordings and texts. 1.2b Students understand the main idea of what they listen to and read for personal enjoyment. 1.4b Students read written exchanges between other people.

**Goal 5 - Presentational:** 1.2c Students make a presentation or write short reports on something they have learned or researched. 1.3c Students make a presentation about common interests and issues and state their viewpoints.

**Goal 6 - Cultures:** 2.1a Students identify and analyze cultural practices from authentic materials such as videos and news articles. 2.1b Students identify and analyze cultural products found in a variety of media from the target culture. 2.2b Students create cultural triangles connecting products to associated practices along with suggested perspectives based on background information.

**Goal 7 - Comparisons:** 3.2a Students match groups of people with ways of expressing respect and communicating status differences in their own language and the language they are learning. 3.5b Students hypothesize about the relationship between cultural perspectives and expressive products (e.g., music, visual arts, forms of literature) by analyzing selected products from the target cultures and their own.

# The Project

**Content Area: World Languages**

**Credit: 0.5**

**Length of Proposal: 2 weeks**

**Length of Project: 16 weeks**

This project is in Spanish and is an investigation into the culture and fiestas in different parts of Spain. It looked into how the unique culture in different regions of Spain play into the types of fiestas they have. I began with learning more about the history of Spain with the creation of a timeline. I also wrote paragraphs about the language, how the government and religion interact with each other and how this plays into the everyday lives of Spaniards, and the lasting impressions from Spain's rich history. I then researched three different festivals in the North and South of Spain to explore the similarities and differences between them. Along the way, I also compiled a list of essential vocabulary in Spanish that I didn't previously know. I then ended with an oral presentation to my VTVC teacher's Spanish class of what I had been working on for the duration of my project.

**La historia de España**

241 AC: Con la primera guerra de Púnicas, Cartago empieza conquista y establecerse en España. Un capitol para Cartago en España fue establecer en Cartagena.

218-206 AC: Durante la segunda guerra de Púnicas, Roma venció Cartago y empezó un ocupación de 600 años en España.

*"I am so pleased that the PASS project gave Ann the opportunity to grow in her Spanish pursuits beyond what her high school offers." Ann's Mother*

# Hanna

Homestudy Student

Teacher Mentor: Cassandra Papandrea,  
English Teacher at Proctor Junior/High School

*Working with Hanna on her PASS class has been wonderful! We have been able to create assignments together to explore her interests while she learns important skills and meets proficiencies in English. She has been very engaged while learning and has often gone above and beyond what is expected of her because she is enjoying what she is doing in her PASS class. Cassandra Papandrea - Teacher Mentor*

## Writing Format & Literature Analysis

**Executive Summary:** The goal of this course is to obtain advanced knowledge of writing format and literature analysis. I will practice different genres of writing, including narrative, argumentative, and literary analysis essays while blending academic writing format with my own unique literary voice. I will use analysis and critical thinking skills throughout the course and read classic and contemporary literature. I also hope to learn to write precisely and efficiently.



*"I chose to do this PASS class so that I could form it to my needs, both with content and challenge. I love writing and wanted to improve my fiction as well as my poetry knowledge, and PASS provided the perfect opportunity." - Hanna*

# Learning Goals & Artifacts

**Goal 1 - Self-direction:** The demonstrated ability to identify, manage, and assess new opportunities related to learning goals and to integrate knowledge from a variety of sources to set goals and make informed decisions.

**Goal 2 - Clear and effective communication:** Evidence demonstrating organized and purposeful communication.

**Goal 3 - Reading -** Evidence demonstrating analytical reading skills.

**Goal 4 - Writing -** Evidence demonstrating analytical, argumentative, and narrative writing skills.

**Goal 5 - Language -** Evidence demonstrating language skills.

**Goal 6 - Communication -** Evidence demonstrating Communication skills.

**Goal 7- Informed and Integrative Thinking -** Evidence demonstrating Informed and Integrative Thinking skills.

## In this rewrite of Rumpelstiltskin, I chose to use a flash forward, parallel plots, and a flashback.

*"I want your firstborn child. But only if you are to become queen. Very little risk on your part, I do think."  
His smile glistened savagely. His eyes sparkled with mischief.  
Her eyes narrowed briefly in consideration.  
"Deal."*

*Once upon a time, there was a little village by the edge of a wood. Twisted trees with emerald green leaves stretched high into the sky, and the trilling sound of birds could just barely be heard over the sound of a babbling brook. It was here in this village there lived a boy named Rumpelstiltskin.*

*Rumpelstiltskin was, well, different.*

*He had spiky devil-red hair and a small rat-like nose. His ears curved up into elfin points, his eyes were small and unnaturally orange, and he was short. So very short. But that was not all. Rumpelstiltskin had magic. He could even spin straw into gold. Some of the greedier villagers found this skill very interesting, though even they were too scared to attempt to take any of the shining thread. Most said Rumpelstiltskin was the child of evil. While many boys would shy away from this rumor, Rumpelstiltskin reveled in it. He was a naughty child, weaving his thread into shimmering ropes that would obey his command to steal loaves of bread from ovens and hard-earned meat from tables.*

# The Project

**Content Area: Language Arts**

**Credit: 0.5**

**Length of Proposal: 2 Weeks**

**Length of Project: 11 Weeks**

The goal of this course was to explore various types of writing. Specifically, looking at various genres of writing including literary analysis, argumentative, and personal narrative. The focus will be on the elements of all of these types of writing as well as creating strong summative writing pieces.

Throughout the three units, the student also explored the writing process as well as concentrated on the process of revision. The final capstone project for this class is a writing portfolio, where where the student continued to revise pieces that had been completed throughout the course.

*"The PASS program allowed Hanna to follow her passion in depth and take the lead with her learning. The teaching and support were amazing - a GIFT. As a parent, I'm thrilled to see my daughter thriving and growing!" - Hanna's Mother*

# Henry

Montgomery High School, NJ  
Teacher Mentor: Terri Vest,  
English Teacher at Twinfield Union School

*"For me, this takes teaching to another level, and for my student, it takes learning to another level. It's exciting to have an opportunity to work in such an individualized and focused way with a student on something for which they have such passion." - Terri Vest, Teacher Mentor*

## Applied Language Arts for Book Writing Assistance

**Executive Summary:** Learning how to write a book is the point of my project. Prior to the Personalized Assessment of Student Standards course, I learned how to design, organize, develop, test, and finalize my own original video game with a story full of characters. Following the experience, I knew that an enormous amount of effort and thought had been put into it. To make the most of it, I decided to write a science fiction novel based on my video game.



*"A class designed specifically to help me write my own novel is not something I would expect to find in public school; certainly not in 9th grade. Doing this formally as a PASS class helped keep me accountable and on track as an additional course above the rigorous schedule of my public high school." - Henry*

Pictured above: Henry holding a copy of his published book that is available on Amazon!

# Learning Goals & Artifacts

**Goal 1 - Self-direction:** The demonstrated ability to identify, manage, and assess new opportunities related to learning goals and to integrate knowledge from a variety of sources to set goals and make informed decisions.

**Goal 2 - Clear and effective communication:** Evidence demonstrating organized and purposeful communication.

**Goal 3 -** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

**Goal 4 -** Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events; provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

**Goal 5 -** Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

**Goal 6 -** Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.

**Goal 7-** Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

# The Project

**Content Area: Language Arts**

**Credit: 1.0**

**Length of Proposal: 6 Weeks**

**Length of Project: 1 Year**

The goal of this project is to complete a writing project based on a video game Henry created, that would develop his writing skills.

*"Taking this PASS course added to the enrichment of our son's education with an applied-learning experience. Writing his own science fiction novel based on the creative ideas Henry made come to life with computer coding and digital arts skills is pretty remarkable for a 9th grade student. We are grateful for VTVLC's flexibility and fostering of turning this enrichment experience into a credited course for independent study, and hope that other students will be able to realize similar engaging and practical applied-learning experiences based on their own interests." James & Judy Bushong*



## The Siege of Gamma-X29 Kindle Edition

by Henry Bushong (Author)

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A young security officer has to grow up quickly when hostile aliens invade Spacestation Gamma-X29 and vaporize the senior officers. Compelled by both duty and a possible link to recent actions on Planet Xanthios, the young officer's courage and skill are pushed to the brink as he tries to survive a labyrinth of perils and save the station. *Siege of Gamma-X29* is a sci-fi adventure book based on an original 3-D video game created and coded by a teenager.

Length: 63 pages

Word Wise: Enabled

Enhanced T

## Prologue from Henry's book, *The Siege of Gamma X-29 - A Science Fiction Novel*

The situation seemed very unfortunate for me. My career as the security chief on this station had just begun, so I did not have much experience. I was posted here three weeks ago after a disastrous vacation on the planet Xanthios. During the vacation, miners on the planet uncovered an unknown underground cave that turned out to be a sensor-shielded complex. This discovery led to dark energies being released which clouded the atmosphere, and electromagnetically shielded the planet. Shortly after this, meteors burst coming from the underground caves began bombarding the the surface of the planet. I had to do something to save Xianthos, so I ventured into the mines...

# Susha

Montpelier High School

Teacher Mentor: Beth O'Connor,

Foreign Language Teacher at Essex High School

## Russian

**Executive Summary:** I am proposing to learn Russian language at home. I have been learning Russian since I was born from my mother who gives me weekly exercises following the curriculum created by M.T. Baranov and T.A. Laduzhenskaya, published in Russia by "Prosvezheniey" in 2012. My mother and I correct my work at the end of the week. Currently I work from a 7th grade textbook for native speakers of the Russian language. I speak Russian with my brothers and my mother at home. I might be going to Moldova for a year and I am going to learn more academic Russian. I would like to continue working with this curriculum, but am hoping to get support from another teacher and be officially awarded credit for this work. I completed a BYU Russian Language, year 2, part 2, so the next level for me would be Russian III or IV. I am also happy to research the requirements for AP Russian. I will consider designing a Russian Literature or Russian History course if there is no mentor for the Russian Language.



*"This course gave me an opportunity to learn how to be a little more responsible on my work and when I turn in the work".*

# Learning Goals & Artifacts

**Goal 1 - Self-direction:** The demonstrated ability to identify, manage, and assess new opportunities related to learning goals and to integrate knowledge from a variety of sources to set goals and make informed decisions.

**Goal 2 - Clear and effective communication:** Evidence demonstrating organized and purposeful communication.

**Goal 3 -** Use correct pronunciation to communicate verbally about current news.

**Goal 4 -** Use correct spelling and sentence structures to communicate in writing about Russian literature and history.

**Goal 5 -** Describe speaker's attitude in excerpts from authentic Russian literature.

**Goal 6 -** Demonstrate understanding of agreements in a sentence (adjective-noun, preposition-noun, subject-predicate) by communicating about a piece of news.

**Goal 7 -** Use compound and complex sentences to talk about an archaic word and its connection to a historical event.

**Goal 8 -** Create a presentation in the target language.

**Goal 9 -** Investigate, explain, and reflect on culture through the study of synonyms, antonyms, and archaisms.

## The Project

**Content Area: World Languages**

**Credit: 1.0**

**Length of Proposal: 16 weeks**

**Length of Project: 16 weeks**

The goal of this project is to be able to read the entire Harry Potter series in Russian, also to learn academic Russian, Russian literature and history through language.

*"This course gave my daughter an option to deepen her knowledge of the language that she has been studying since Kindergarten, and make her studies fit her needs and wishes. The instructor was very helpful and willing to meet my daughter where she was at and encourage her to go further".*

*Susha's Mother*

Мальчик пришел в себя только у источника, у того самого, где накануне днем они с дедушкой завтракали. Припавши вместе ртами к холодному водоему собака и человек долго и жадно глотали свежую, вкусную воду.

Они отталкивали друг друга, приподнимали на минуту кверху головы, чтобы перевести дух, причем с губ звонко капала вода, и опять с новой жаждой приникли к водоему, не будучи в силах от него оторваться. И когда они наконец отвалились от источника и пошли дальше, то вода плескалась и булькала в их переполненных животах.

Опасность миновала, все ужасы этой ночи прошли без следа, и им обоим весело и легко было идти по белой дороге, ярко освещенной луной, между кустарниками, от которых уже тянуло утренней сыростью и сладким запахом освеженного листа.

1.) Сегодня я играла в летающую тарелку, и была очень солнечная погода, а когда мы играли в летающую тарелку против Сент Джонсбери, была очень прохладная погода, и лил дождь.

2.) Самая лучшая вода на свете - это пресная вода.

# Willow

Champlain Valley Union High School  
Teacher Mentor: Terri Vest,  
Language Arts Teacher at Twinfield Union School

*"PASS was a fantastic way for Willow to integrate her interests and design a course that became the cornerstone of her semester. Terri Vest and VTVLC enthusiastically supported Willow's curiosity and creativity and celebrated her independence."  
- Willow's Mother*

## Literature of Place: India and Nepal

**Executive Summary:** I will read a variety of authors and literature ranging from the prose of Kamal Markandaya, the travel narratives of Peter Matthiessen and the political letters of Mahatma Gandhi to essays, short stories, novels, and poems. Investigations into current events, art, history, film, ethnography, geography, photography, religion, and ecology will complement our study of place.



*"I so appreciate the flexibility that the PASS class gave me. I believe that students my age are more capable than they are given the opportunity to show. I worked harder than I had in any other class during my Literature of Place PASS course. When students are learning about something they are truly passionate about and are given enough trust to take a more self driven course, I think those around them are often surprised by what they can do. I am grateful that VTVLC has grown this program so that students can experience the power of taking charge of their own learning." - Willow*

# Learning Goals & Artifacts

**Goal 1 - Self-direction:** The demonstrated ability to identify, manage, and assess new opportunities related to learning goals and to integrate knowledge from a variety of sources to set goals and make informed decisions.

**Goal 2 - Clear and effective communication:** Evidence demonstrating organized and purposeful communication.

**Goal 3 -** To experience a range of literary works connected with Nepal and India

**Goal 4 -** To produce a body of original writing, critical and creative in nature, that furthers intellectual and personal goals.

**Goal 5 -** To experience Nepal and India from multiple perspectives of scale, discipline, history, physical being, and social dimension (this includes trips to meaningful sites in Nepal and India connected to the course material)

**Goal 6 -** To explore expertise from other disciplines through independent research and direct experience

**Goal 7 -** To foster the skills and knowledge derived from a regular practice of attention, both to self and subject

**Goal 8 -** To provide a forum for the expression of ideas (this includes sharing learning in multiple ways.)

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## **My favorite piece of writing was the final reflective essay I wrote about my experience volunteering in India with an organization called Maher.**

"While the kids might have learned something from my family, I learned what it was like to be part of a family that was not defined by blood-ties, religion, or caste, but was based on hope, belonging, and understanding. The more I thought about it, I realized there is not just one definition of family. Sister Lucy really has offered a "new guiding story of place"--a world where people of different religious traditions, economics backgrounds, and family structures live together and care for one another."

"I never quite understood place beyond a geographic region or a set of shared understanding. Maher showed me what Lopez meant by the importance of having "a multi-dimensional understanding of place" because Maher was far more than its geography or buildings.

It was 20 years of relationships in the community, it was the children who got the chance to go to school, it was the teens who cared for younger kids as if they were siblings and who defied cultural norms by attending university, it was the staff who spent every waking hour helping others...Maher taught me that one can not truly understand place without first choosing to open one's heart and connect with the people who inhabit the place."

# The Project

**Content Area: Language Arts**

**Credit: 0.5**

**Length of Proposal: 20+ hours**

**Length of Project: 16 weeks**

Place is a meaningful location that influences our way of being and knowing in the world. This course invites us to explore place through the literature and landscapes of two countries--Nepal and India.

I will read a variety of authors and literature ranging from the prose of Kamal Markandaya, the travel narratives of Peter Matthiessen and the political letters of Mahatma Gandhi to essays, short stories, novels, and poems. Investigations into current events, art, history, film, ethnography, geography, photography, religion, and ecology will complement our study of place.

Central to this course is the belief that literature gains meaning when we are able to experience the site of its setting, and so we will travel to specific literary locations including the mountains of the Himalaya, the streets of Kathmandu, and the jungles of Kerala. I will spend time exploring tea plantations, Buddhist monasteries, Hindu temples, rural schools, artists' workshops, and ancient forts. Each of these experiences of place will serve to deepen our discovery of literature, our understanding of meaning, and our exploration into our own way of being and knowing in the world.

# Samples of Additional PASS Projects

## **Evelyn**

Homestudy Student

### **Title of Study: Directing Your Theatre**

**Executive Summary:** I would like to direct a play based on the book "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" by J.K. Rowling. I have done the first two Harry Potter books as plays, with 10-15 kids involved in each production. I would like to do the next one, but at the same time feel like I should learn more about directing. I would like to learn more about teaching kids and directing them properly.

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## **Emma**

Enosburg Falls High School

### **Title of Study: Feminism in Film**

**Executive Summary:** As someone who has always enjoyed cinema, one of my personal favorite themes in film is the empowerment of female characters. I am hoping to explore my love of this trope even more through this PASS course. I plan on writing essays on films I already love that I feel represent this accurately, as well as watching and analyzing movies that I haven't previously watched. I'm interested in creating a variety of powerpoint presentations, posters, and comic strips for projects. I'd also like to be able to investigate how female representation in cinema has impacted pop culture over the past twenty years.

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## **Harley**

Green Mountain Union High School

### **Title of Study: Algebra in Carpentry**

**Executive Summary:** My plan is to gain knowledge of Algebra I through my Carpentry class at the River Valley Technical Center. I believe this will greatly improve my learning experience and better help me on my path through Algebra. The ways I show algebra through my Carpentry class are:

- Measuring wood to 1/16ths, 1/8ths, 1/4ths, and 1/2 inches and also in centimeters and feet.
  - Making playhouses for sale
  - Angle cuts with circular saws
  - Blueprint reading and analyzing
  - Managing wasteboard and making sure to add saw thickness
  - Connect carpentry calculators with algebraic expressions
  - Formulas from the carpenters square
  - Placement of studs in walls
  - Leveling of platform, floor, and walls
-

**Kestrel**

U-32

**Title of Study: American Sign Language**

**Executive Summary:** I just moved to Vermont from Arizona and started school at U-32. At my former school I was taking my second year of American Sign Language and U-32 does not offer this course. I'm hoping to continue my learning through this program, with the help of a mentor. My last class left off with the subject of spatial visualization. My goal is to become fluent in American Sign Language by the time I graduate.

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**Gillian**

Arlington Memorial School

**Title of Study: English 12th Grade Honors**

**Executive Summary:** I will integrate my internship at Fisher Elementary School with my English and Spanish studies. I will create a modified teaching portfolio which will include reflections, lesson plans, a unit plan, and teaching several lessons. I will also include readings which will enhance my understanding of the subject matter.

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**Grace**

Montpelier High School

**Title of Study: Botany**

**Executive Summary:** Through the study of botany, I hope to combine my passion for science with a greater appreciation of the natural world. Plants and flowers provide endless opportunities to do hands-on learning in the natural landscape and climate of Vermont. By working closely with a knowledgeable mentor, I want to learn more about plant biology, evolution, and medicinal and health uses. I would love to also include field sketching and drawing so that I can simultaneously focus on both science and art. I have never studied botany by itself, but I think it will be a great fit for me because it aligns closely with many things I'm passionate about.

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**Joey**

Fall Mountain High School

**Title of Study: Audio/Video Production**

**Executive Summary:** I'm planning on using everything I've learned in my audio course thusfar, to record and engineer an audiobook for a novel that I'm in the process of writing. I plan to do the first 2 chapters of the book very thoroughly, complete with music, sound effects, narration, and different characters. I feel this would be a good way to combine audio and english, while also showing off my proficiency in both the studio and the classroom environment.

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**Sonya**

Montpelier High School

**Title of Study: French Language**

**Executive Summary:** I have been consistently taking French for two and half years, but was unhappy with the class provided by my school. I am now working with a private tutor once a week for an hour and receiving about an hour of homework per session. I would like to have the PASS course provide more practice of French and assign work that can coincide with what I am learning with my tutor. Since I am presently only meeting once a week, PASS could be another resource if I am confused about a concept and need more support. My main goal for my study is to become more comfortable with French conversation and writing. By implementing PASS I can practice regularly and increase the amount of French I focus on each week.

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**Sydney**

White River Valley High School

**Title of Study: The History of Zumba**

**Executive Summary:** In my History course I am looking to receive one credit by presenting a project on the history of zumba that contains historical US information. I can confidently present this by making a curriculum that fits the criteria and start to form a project that covers the curriculum which would be history.

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**Chaz**

Arlington Memorial School

**Title of Study: Independent English**

**Executive Summary:** I will meet my remaining English graduation proficiencies in an independent study course. I will access the CDL licensing manual and heavy equipment manual to demonstrate reading mastery while reflecting on my learning to master my writing proficiencies.

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**Feroza**

U-32

**Title of Study: German**

**Executive Summary:** I want to learn from a German speaking person or anyone that has studied the language.

I am also very into European history. I want to travel around all of Europe, and hope to use German somewhat fluently in certain places. Receiving credits for this would then be even more beneficial for me. I am excited to learn the language. I have already studied it a little and learned around a dozen phrases and words, still not very many and hope to expand my vocabulary much more and learn more with a professional.

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# Assessment

Student outcomes and achievement will be evaluated using three forms of criteria:

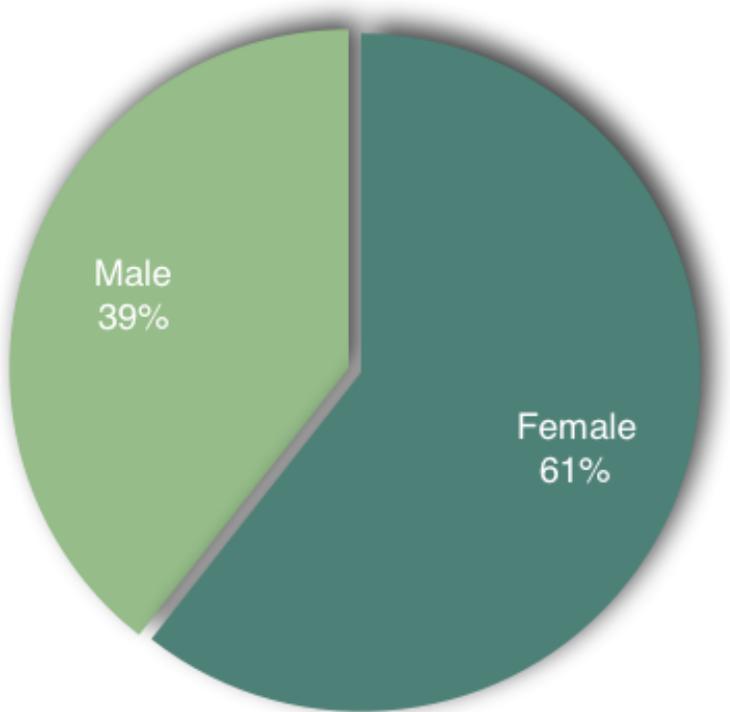
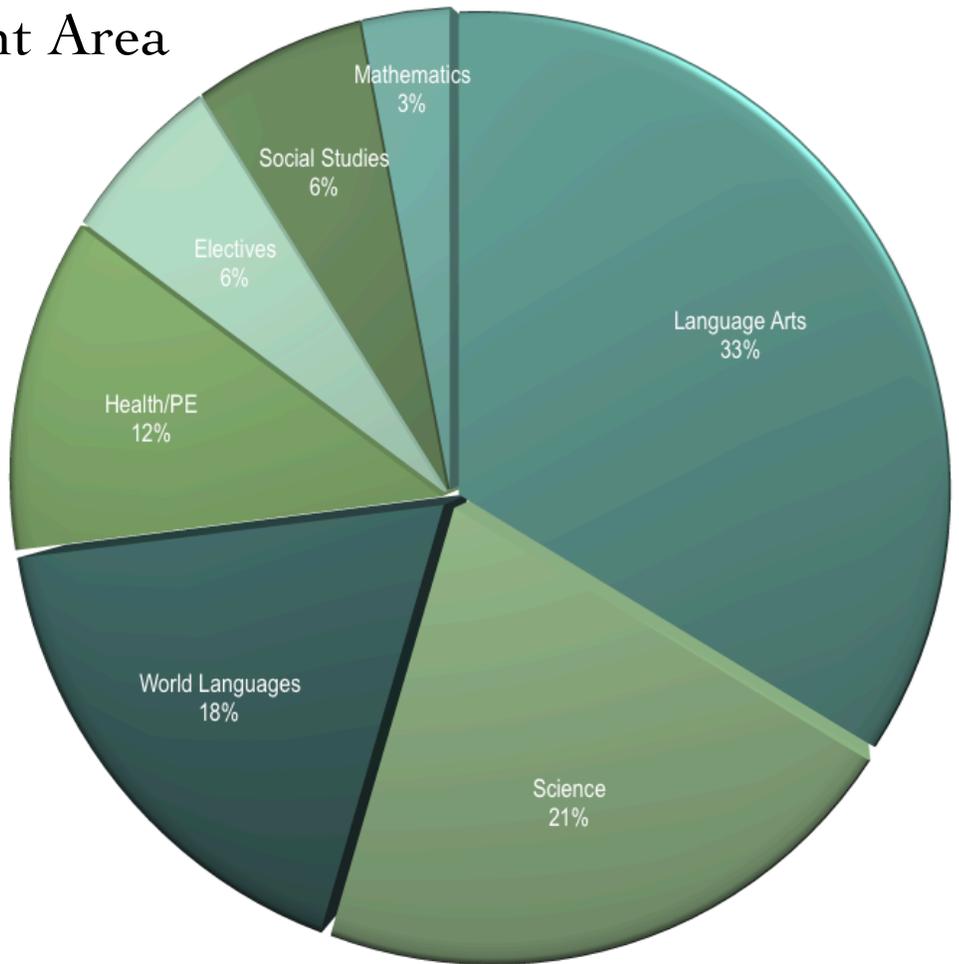
- Teacher assessment of student artifacts outlined in each PASS student proposal
- Objective assessment of student pacing (time-management) for completing of the project per student learning goals
- Monthly status reports which reflect the development of self-direction proficiency of the student



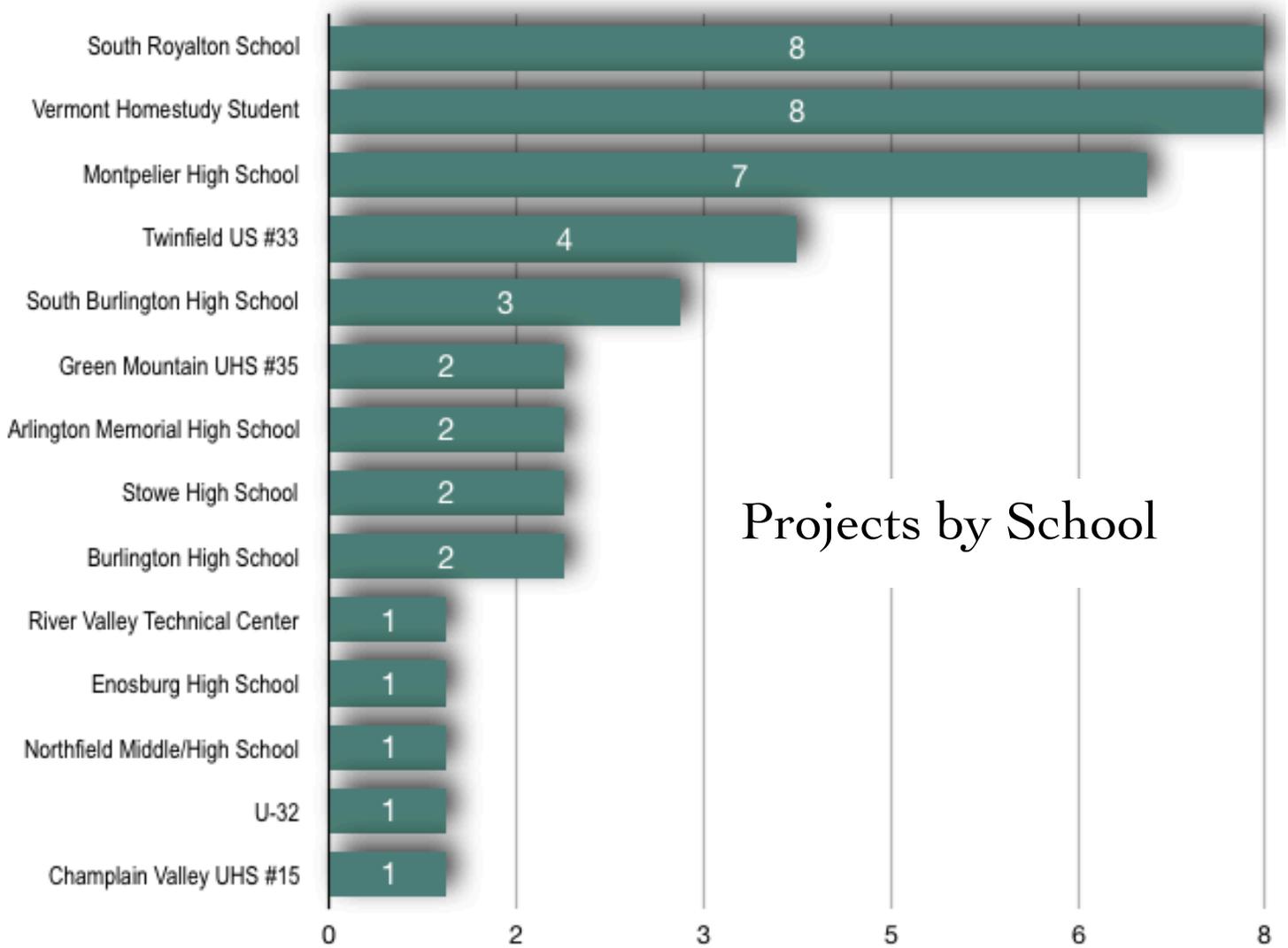
Evaluative criteria for assessment of student artifacts will be compared with evidence-based criteria developed during the proposal phase of each project for proficiency. Status report evaluation will leverage the VTVLC proficiency scoring guide for self-direction developed from the Vermont Agency of Education's outline for transferable skills.

Assessment of all student outcomes as outlined above will be documented and become part of the students' official VTVLC transcript. These transcripts will be provided to the students' school of record for incorporation into their local documentation of work toward graduation requirements.

## Projects by Content Area



## Projects by Gender



# Pricing

## **PASS Proposal**

Covers initial registration, orientation, proposal review and alignment, and school approval of student project.

\$150 Partner School Students

\$175 Non-Partner School Students

## **PASS Project (based on 0.5 credit)**

\$375 Partner School Students

\$450 Non-Partner School Students

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