

VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL

SCHOLARSHIP | COMMUNITY | GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

PROFILE 2023-2024

ABOUT VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL

Founded in 1997, Vermont Commons School is celebrating 27 years as an independent, college-preparatory day school for students in grades 6-12 located in the greater Burlington, Vermont area. With a curriculum that balances academic rigor with innovation, Vermont Commons educates students who are academically motivated and intellectually curious. From its inception, Vermont Commons School has cultivated an ethic of environmental awareness and responsibility, as well as a focus on local and global community.

ACCREDITATION

Vermont Commons is accredited by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the Vermont State Board of Education.

VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL AT A GLANCE

- **Average class size:** 12 students
- **Geographic Distribution:** Vermont Commons School students generally live in the greater Chittenden County area, although some students hail from as far away as Middlebury, Waitsfield, towns along the Canadian border, and towns on Lake Champlain in New York.
- **Financial Aid:** Approximately 25% of the student body receives need-based financial aid.
- **2023-2024 Enrollment:** There are 103 students enrolled in grades six through twelve. There are 12 students in the class of 2024.
- **Teaching Faculty holding advanced degrees:** 12 of 14

Vermont Commons School's Mission:

SCHOLARSHIP.
COMMUNITY.
GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY.

ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY

Vermont Commons School presents a challenging college preparatory curriculum for students in grades 6-12. The academic program offers courses and presents material in ever-increasing depth and complexity throughout a student's career. Classes at Vermont Commons are writing-intensive, hands-on, and focus on critical thinking skills across the curriculum. Students move from acquiring skills and understanding systems to analyzing and communicating solutions. The curriculum includes honors and advanced coursework, affording students the opportunity to experience the expectations of college-level courses while still having a strong mentoring relationship with their faculty as they transition to higher education.



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NOTES ON COURSES AND PROGRAMS:

CONTRACT HONORS

Vermont Commons School offers Contract Honors, an exciting alternative to Advanced Placement courses. The Contract Honors program provides students with greater challenge, complexity, and coursework in grades 10-12. Students “contract” for additional studies and earn an Honors designation for that course on their transcript. Participating teachers offer students who meet each department's prerequisites the option to participate in Contract Honors; however, this option may not be offered in all courses. In order to take more than two Contract Honors courses, students must gain approval from the Department Chairs Committee. Honors grades are not weighted when computing a student's GPA. All honors work is graded and included in calculated course grades.

SCIENCE SEQUENCE

Vermont Commons School Biology, Chemistry, and Physics courses are divided into two semesters that occur over multiple years. This curriculum allows students to see how each of the science disciplines intersects with the others.

ELECTIVES

Students in high school are able to select 3-4 semester-long elective classes each year. These courses allow students to explore a topic outside of the traditional disciplines and dig deeply into new content with multi-age peers. Examples include: Rock Band, Environmental Science, and African Studies.

ENCOUNTER WEEK PROGRAM

Each student participates in three multi-age Encounter Weeks per year, one in late September, one in early February, and one in late May. Encounter Weeks, intensive experiential education experiences, allow students to learn new skills in a variety of settings, from the summit of Mount Mansfield to the streets of Rome to Mayan villages in Belize. During these weeks students explore the wilderness, the arts, and community-based projects. Encounter Weeks give students and faculty alike a new platform for connection, leadership, and understanding. Students engage in these challenging but rewarding journeys as fully as they do any other aspect of school.

SENIOR PROJECTS

At the end of the spring semester, each Vermont Commons School senior is provided the opportunity to design and implement their own senior project. These internship-style projects are five weeks long and replace regular classes. The students are able to pursue a career or skill interest and gain a sense of the professional setting outside of the classroom. This program allows seniors to creatively tie together their personal interests and academic experiences as they make the transition from high school to higher education. Students who choose to complete the senior project work with a community mentor for 30-35 hours/week, research an issue in their field of study, and present their experience to the school community.



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REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Each year, students are expected to successfully complete a full complement of courses. The available disciplines include Science, Mathematics, English, World Language, Social Studies, Visual Arts, Physical Education and Electives. Students must meet both the Vermont State requirements and the additional requirements as prescribed by the school.

Vermont Commons School requirements for high school graduation*, including:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of Science
- 4 years of Mathematics
- 4 years of Social Studies
- 4 years of World Language
- 4 years of Physical Education
- 8 semesters of Electives coursework, including Arts
- Participate in 11 Encounter Weeks
- Participate in Health & Wellness classes
- Successfully complete the requirements of the Senior Project Program, if student chooses to participate

**Vermont Commons School's flexible curriculum allows students to freely pursue their academic interests at a variety of colleges, universities and online programs. In doing so, they may elect out of any discipline at Vermont Commons, assuming school approval and only in cases of an equally rigorous and balanced academic program.*

GRADING

Vermont Commons School grades on a 100-point numeric scale, and courses are offered on either a semester or year-long basis.

GRADES & PERCENTAGES

A+	97-100%	C	73-76%
A	93-96%	C-	70-72%
A-	90-92%	D+	67-69%
B+	87-89%	D	63-66%
B	83-86%	D-	60-62%
B-	80-82%	F	59% and below
C+	77-79%		

Students receive a final grade at the end of a semester-long class. This grade is recorded as a final grade on the transcript. In year-long classes, the final grade is determined by the average of the two semester grades. Students receive a pass/fail grade for physical education and internships.



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STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES – (SOURCE: WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.COM)

	VCS Class of 2023	Nationwide Class of 2022
EVIDENCE-BASED READING AND WRITING	658	529
MATHEMATICS	608	521
TOTAL	1263	1050

VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY MATRICULATION RECORD (2019-2023)

American University	Oberlin College
Bard College	Purdue University
Bates College	Saint Mary's of Maryland
Bentley University	Saint Michael's College (and Honors College)
Carleton College	Savannah College of Art and Design
Case Western Reserve University	Skidmore College
Champlain College	Smith College
Clark University	Swarthmore College
Clarkson University	University of Colorado Boulder
Colorado College	University of Massachusetts Amherst
Columbia University	University of Massachusetts Boston
Dickinson College	University of Michigan
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Daytona	University of New England
Emerson College	University of New Hampshire
Florida Institute of Technology	University of Oregon
Fordham University	University of Southern California Cinematic Arts
Hobart & William Smith Colleges	University of Vermont (and Honors College)
Ithaca College	Vanderbilt University
Lynn University	Vassar College
Massachusetts College of Art and Design	Virginia Polytechnic Institute
Middlebury College	Washington University in St. Louis
Mount Holyoke College	Wesleyan University
Northeastern University	Yale University

VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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