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The Vermont Millennium Arts Partnership

Evaluation Report 2000-2001

Prepared by:

Fred Schmidt, Ph.D., Co-Director

Michele Cranwell, Research Process Analyst

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**CENTER FOR
RURAL STUDIES**

Executive Summary

The Vermont Millennium Arts Partnership (VT-MAP) is an Internet-based arts education program, providing an online forum to facilitate student learning through an exchange among students, teachers, artists, musicians, and other professionals. Three main organizations are involved in this project, including the two former initiatives of the WEB Project, the Vermont Musical Instrument Digital Interface Project (MIDI), established in 1995, and Art Responding Through Technology (ARTT), established in 1997 based on the model of the MIDI Project. A recent addition to the online forum (established in 2000) is the Vermont Young Playwrights Online (VYP Online), a part of the Vermont Stage Company. The Digital Audio Initiative is also a part of the Vermont MIDI Project established in 2000. The Partnership is a program of the Vermont Arts Council, operating in conjunction with MIDI, ARTT, VYP Online, the Vermont Alliance for Arts Education, and the Vermont Department of Education. Funding is provided through a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Technology Opportunities Program, with other funding coming from the Jesse B. Cox Charitable Trust, Josephine Bay and C. Michael Paul Foundation, the State of Vermont, IBM, and Verizon.

This past year, from July 2000 to July 2001, VT-MAP rewarded grants to twenty-four schools (39 classroom teachers) in twelve counties throughout Vermont to participate in either the Vermont MIDI Project or ARTT. An additional ten schools participated in a VYP Online, receiving assistance in software purchases and training only. Two additional schools received equipment for the Digital Audio Initiative through VT-MAP funding. In total, over the past two years, fifty-four teachers in thirty-four schools have received grants and assistance through VT-MAP. Classroom involvement in VT-MAP exposes students to the art, musical, and written creations of their peers, the language of critique in the Arts, the critique of their work by professional artists, and the creative possibilities available through the use of technology.

Students, teachers, administrators, and online mentors subscribe to a protocol for sharing work online through a password-protected web site, based on the experience of online sharing beginning with the Vermont MIDI Project in 1995. The three projects have focused their work on several of the Vermont and National Standards of Education, specifically the *Vital Results* of the Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities. The online network also approaches several standards as a whole that focus on Reflection and Critique and the Skill Development of the young composers.

Evaluation Design

The Center for Rural Studies (CRS) at the University of Vermont is the evaluator for VT-MAP for the three-year grant period from July 1, 1998 to July 30, 2001. This evaluation is primarily based upon qualitative data collected through online and paper surveys, with supplemental quantitative data from surveys and website activity. The model of evaluation documents the "process" and "outcome" of the project. Project "process" refers to the experience that takes place in the classroom, and "outcome" refers to the outcomes of teacher and student participation in the online forum and related classroom activities, specifically impact on student performance and achievement based on Vermont and National Standards.

Progress Towards Grant Goals

Goal I: To increase Vermont public awareness of, and support for Arts education.

VT-MAP met the following grant goals related to community support for the arts and introducing new audiences to the arts. Community support for the arts is evident as 80% of Vermonters on a state wide opinion poll (720 respondents, 95%, +/- 5% confidence level) reported that it is either important or very important for state government to provide funding to support arts programs such as arts education in schools, community arts organization, and arts programs provided through social services agencies. Respondents reported willingness to spend a mean of \$128 to provide additional support for the arts, with 32% willing to spend between \$51-100 and 31% willing to spend between \$1-25. More than half of respondents (59%) selected arts education programs in schools as their top priority to receive funding from this pool of money. Twenty-six percent of respondents reported that they were aware of Internet based arts education programs in Vermont, with 9% aware of the Vermont MIDI Project, 14% ARTT, and 13% VYP Online.

Sixty-four percent of the thirty-four schools (22) reported that they presented the project and student artwork, music compositions, and dramaturge during the 2000-2001 school year. These presentations/showcases helped to introduce the project, present student artwork, demonstrate the process of posting and the online exchange, and ultimately the benefit of the project for the art education of children. The target audiences of these presentations included parents, school principals, the school board, and the public. All of the teachers who presented the project or arranged for a student art show or musical performance reported that they received a positive response from their showcase audiences.

VT-MAP did not meet the following grant goals because of school level funding availability, however the project made significant progress towards improvement in arts programs at the school level. Over the past two years, eight (24%) teachers in the 34 participating schools had an increase in FTE, while one school (3%) added one full time arts teacher. Eight (24%) of participating schools reported an increase in their arts budget for the 2001-2002 school year. Most schools stated the arts were an integrated part of their total program but were not specifically included in their schools action plan. Three (9%) have plans to improve their arts program through their school action plan. Over the past two years, fifteen schools (44%) received additional hardware and one (3%) received funds for workstation improvement from their school budget.

Goal II: Improve opportunities for students to learn the Arts.

VT-MAP has met the following grant goals related to improved opportunities for learning in the arts. Over the course of three years, the pool on artists skilled in on-line mentoring has increased to 37 artists with twenty-three online mentors actively work on-line. Ten of these mentors work in ARTT, eight in the Vermont MIDI Project, and five in VYP Online. Approximately 10,000 students have been exposed to the online mentoring forum through the thirty-four grant recipient schools and the other 85 participating schools. VT-MAP has maintained online arts learning opportunities in 12 of the 14 counties in Vermont with the online network at large present in all 14 counties. All students who have participated in the project have shown improvement in performance, achievement, and related areas based on the Vermont and National Standards. VT-

MAP has held three annual conferences and five showcases of student work, two of which were presented at the annual conferences.

VT-MAP did not meet the following goal of assisting 7 local area Arts Organizations with connectivity and computer technology through training and providing hardware on an as-needed basis. By the end of the second year, two of the three LASO accepting assistance had withdrawn and one additional LASO applied for and received assistance through the grant.

Goal III: Increase use of computers and Internet technology in arts education.

All of the following goals relating to increasing computers and Internet technology in arts education were met by VT-MAP. From the past two years, there are 54 teachers from the 34 grant schools that are using computers and the Internet technologies within their art, theater and music curriculum. Over the past two years, 60 schools have joined the online network without the assistance of VT-MAP. All of the VT-MAP grant schools posted at least one piece of work online. Anecdotal information from project coordinators shows an increase in the frequency of use of the communications forum when new teachers begin integrating technology in the classroom. However, after an initial peak in usage by new teachers as they practice their uploading skills, more experienced teachers use the online forum less often as they direct their online inquiries in a more specific manner based on “need” for feedback about artwork.

Student In-Class and Online Activities

Students participate in the Vermont MIDI Project, ARTT, and VYP Online through in-class activities that take place off-line and in the online forum. Working in the classroom, students become familiar with computers, software such as Sibelius and Adobe PhotoShop, and equipment such as keyboards, digital cameras, and scanners. This is also the place where students learn arts vocabulary and theory in order to participate in both online and in-classroom dialogue of asking questions, providing feedback, and responding to the feedback.

Student activities in the online website include:

- Viewing and exploring the website – students gain ideas for their own works
- Critiquing work posted on the website – students develop appropriate arts vocabulary to interact with online mentors
- Posting their work for review
- Reviewing and processing constructive criticism they have received
- Improvement of student artwork based on mentors comments – sometimes students choose not to incorporate the advice of mentors, however teachers comment that the experience is still beneficial as it introduces students to different ideas for creating.

Examples of Student Projects

- ♪ One MIDI classroom was working on a unit where they studied different composer's work and presented their research to the class with examples of their compositions. The students then develop their own compositions based on what they have learned. The teacher commented that the use of MIDI technology had enhanced this curriculum, which had been in place for several years.
- ♪ At one MIDI school that has been involved with the project for two years, seventh and eighth grade students composed at least one three part twelve measure piece. The teacher remarked that because these students have been using MIDI technology and the online forum for two years, their quality of work has increased tremendously with students writing more intricate compositions.
- ♪ A teacher involved in the Digital Audio Initiative through the MIDI Project wrote that students created commercials with the mini disk recorder. Each student created a sound track for background under speaking or singing or both and generated an advertisement for some local business. They were great fun, highly creative, and demonstrated a good grasp of the tools. Several were good enough for the local radio station and (the teachers) may pursue that or not.
- One ARTT teacher wrote that her art students have worked on marker drawings, paper mache, clay chairs, and pencil drawings. Students who worked on the pencil drawings posted their work online. They then incorporated the artists' suggestions into their work by adding color and texture.
- A high school class involved in ARTT developed digital portfolios with Adobe Photoshop. Students then wrote reflections on their artwork. Students stored this portfolio on a CD as well as pasting printed images into their sketchbooks. Students in a photography class use a digital camera and Adobe Photoshop as well as a 35mm camera to create work. Students in a painting class work with Adobe Photoshop and a blank canvas and incorporate many painting and filter techniques into their work.

Website Activity

Posting student artwork or compositions is only one component to participation in the project. The coordinators of ARTT, MIDI, and VYP Online stress that the number of postings by each classroom is not an appropriate measure of success or quality in the project. Oftentimes, the initial use of the website and posting work is high while the teachers and students learn the critique process and practice their digitizing and uploading skills. Many of these postings are not 'need' driven but are practice for students and teachers. As teachers become confident that they are able to use the online forum when a student has a real question to ask the online mentors about a work in progress, classroom activity drops off. The following presents the website activity data of the three online organizations. The project coordinators note that several schools experienced technical difficulties that prevented them from either posting work or replying to mentor comments. Further, several new schools that were learning how to use the online process

posted numerous times with few students replying. This occurrence tended to lower the percentage of student replies to mentor comments.

The Vermont MIDI Project

A total of 148 musical compositions were posted between September 2000 and August 2001 for VT-MAP schools involved in the Vermont MIDI Project, with a total reply rate of 41% (61). Four of the six schools involved in the Digital Audio Initiative posted twelve pieces online.

ARTT

A total of 150 pieces of artwork were posted between September 2000 and August 2001 by VT-MAP grant recipients in ARTT, with a total reply rate of 58% (87).

VYP Online

The VYP Online project posted a total of 69 pieces on the website between September 2000 and August 2001 with 27% (19) of the total posts completing the request-respond-reply cycle.

Project Impact on Student Achievement and Performance

Teacher reported data indicates that participation in VT-MAP positively impacts student achievement and performance, based on Vermont and National Standards of Education, through revitalizing arts curriculum and learning opportunities in schools. Teachers have used the online forum as a teaching tool to facilitate student learning of creative development, the critique process, use of hardware and software relating to the arts, and arts vocabulary. As a result of their online participation, students are encouraged to challenge their creative abilities and improve their work. Teachers comment that the online forum has had a positive impact on their curriculum as it supports and enhances their current curriculum and student learning.

The Vermont MIDI Project

In the Vermont MIDI Project, teachers reported that students have **developed skills in**

"I have seen students with severe handicaps, emotionally and physically, excel at composing a singable simple melody to which other students respond very enthusiastically."

- MIDI teacher on the impact of the project on her students

listening and evaluating music, notation skills and understanding musical elements,

composing music, critiquing work, asking more specific question for feedback, and

processing and applying constructive criticism received. Students have developed personally

through an **increased motivation to learn** and an **increase in student self-esteem and**

confidence in themselves as individuals and musicians. Overall, teachers have seen an increase

in the quality of student work related to their classrooms participation in VT-MAP. Regarding the Digital Audio Initiative,

the project coordinator commented that it is premature to report impact on student participation, however students have developed skills in creating digital audio projects. The project was successful in

"This project has given new life to the music program at our school. In the four years I have been teaching here, general music education has gone way beyond singing songs for forty-five minutes. The composition work fits extremely well with the curriculum that I have been developing. I'm not sure I would continue teaching music if I were not involved in this project! I certainly would feel out in left field if my students did not have this opportunity."

- MIDI teacher on the impact of VT-MAP on her curriculum

that the coordinator was able to develop a set of standards to share online work and several schools were able to post work online.

ARTT

ARTT teachers reported that students have **developed skills in the use of mixed media, critical thinking, critique and reflection, asking appropriate questions for feedback, improved arts**

vocabulary, and analytical skills to improve work. Students have also shown an **increased motivation to learn as well as an increase in student self-confidence.** Overall, students who have participated in the project have demonstrated learning, some beyond their grade level, and have shown a higher quality of work.

"This project has been extremely beneficial to our visual arts program. Communication skills have expanded dramatically and camaraderie between teachers in the project has increased. There has been a revival of dynamics in our arts curriculum."

- ARTT teacher on impact of the project on her curriculum

"Online experience brings out the "special" in all kids. One student I had was an outcast. One of his pieces was selected to be presented at the Gathering. It was a very rewarding experience for him to meet the artist mentors. This validated his feeling that it is ok to not be like everyone else. He showed the ability to follow through with a project, talk with artists, and participate in a show. This was a very empowering experience for him."

- ARTT teacher on impact of the project on her students

VYP Online

Since VYP Online is a new addition to the online community, most of the teachers involved in this project reported that it is too early in their involvement to notice impact on students. However a few teachers reported that students have **developed enhanced writing and critiquing skills.** Further, in one Career Center involved in the partnership, several students have been placed in post-secondary institutions.

"The online exchange seems to have piqued student interest in looking at more plays and made some more open to criticism."

- VYPO teacher on

the impact of VT-MAP on her students

Community Response and Support for Arts Education

Students, teachers, school principals, school boards, parents, and local communities of the grant schools have given a positive response to VT-MAP. Most **students** are enthusiastic about the project and are excited to share their work and get back responses. Students are also excited to hear or see other student's work online. Several teachers mentioned that feedback provides an important stimulus for students to reflect and explore new directions artistically. **Teachers** involved in VT-MAP are thrilled and excited about the online exchange and to be a part of this new step in arts education. Teachers are appreciative of the hardware, software, and other technology they have received through the grant. Teachers feel that this project enhances their curriculum and validates their teaching. They are also excited by the learning that takes place as students work online and hear/see other students work and work through their own pieces.

Teachers report that the general response of the **principal** and **school board** is positive, supportive, enthusiastic, and impressed. Parents are also enthusiastic and supportive about the work their children are doing in the arts. Several teachers note that it is important to share this work with parents so they understand the process and what their child is doing, as well as allowing them to see their child's creativity. Although most teachers have shared the project only with their **school community**, a few teachers have sent press releases to local newspapers about events and achievements, posted work on their school website, and written articles for their school newsletter. One VYP Online teacher noted that they presented two plays written by students at the University of Vermont. Parents and the community were very excited and impressed with the quality of student work.

Facilitators and Barriers

The teachers reported that support from VT-MAP administration, project coordinators, mentors, and other teachers is crucial to the introduction of the online forum and technology into the classroom. Teachers stress that the commitment of project administrators and coordinators, technological skills, and time and effort to be available for assistance has ensured that the classrooms are connected to the Internet, technical problems are dealt with, and that teachers have the appropriate administrative support from their school technicians, principals, and school boards. Several teachers have also acknowledged the support from other teachers at conferences to learn about ideas they have for teaching and integrating the technology into the curriculum. Furthermore, the technical support person within several schools has assisted with getting computers functioning, online, and troubleshooting as problems arise. Most teachers also acknowledged their own commitment, time, and effort put forth to integrate this project into the classroom. Support from school principals, school board members, parents, and other teachers within the school is also recognized by the grant teachers as influential in the success of the first year of the project. One teacher commented that a parent had donated a computer to her classroom. Teachers involved in VT-MAP reported that professional development through the Summer Institute in July 2000, follow-up workshops held locally, and *The Gathering* in November of each grant year helped participants learn, network, and share their strategies and experiences with one another.

The two major barriers reported by many teachers included lack of time and computer stations. Several teachers also faced issues with access to the Internet and availability of technical support within the school. A few teachers reported experiencing frustration with technology, such as slow server speed and small monitors, financial limitations within school budgets, and lack of support from school administration.

Recommendations

This is the final year of funding for the Vermont Millennium Arts Partnership from the current sources. Thus, the evaluators have made the following recommendations for project sustainability. Recently, the Vermont MIDI Project and ARTT have established their independent identities through the formation of the non-profit Vermont MIDI/ARTT Project, Inc. The evaluators recommend that this organization continue to use of online mentoring programs as planned, implemented the use of online protocols. The evaluators recommend that the project coordinators continue to identify project impact on students and arts learning opportunities based on the Vermont and National Standards of Education. Interviews with teachers show that there is a strong sense of dedication and belonging to the online community, which should continue to be fostered through annual conferences, workshops, student showcases, and online support.

At the current time, funding is not available for future evaluation. However if this situation were to change, the evaluators would like to continue working with the Vermont MIDI/ARTT Project, Inc. to document project process and outcome. The evaluators propose to introduce the use of a case study approach for evaluation, closely following several teachers over time through interviews, site visits, and student focus groups and interviews. This approach will provide a more in-depth review of project process and impact on students.

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Introduction

Art educators continually search for new ways to improve opportunities for students to learn the Arts, excite students about learning, and facilitate the learning process. Further, teachers often try to expose students to different mediums that their newfound skills can be applied. The Vermont Millennium Arts Partnership (VT-MAP) is an Internet-based arts education program that, through the use of the latest technologies, is working to facilitate student learning through an online exchange among students, teachers, artists, musicians, and other professionals.

VT-MAP is based on the groundbreaking work of the WEB Project and its initiatives, the Vermont Musical Instrument Digital Interface Project (MIDI) and Art Responding Through Technology (ARTT). The Partnership is a program of the Vermont Arts Council, operating in conjunction with MIDI, ARTT, Vermont Young Playwrights Online (VYP Online) (Vermont Stage Company), the Vermont Alliance for Arts Education, and the Vermont Department of Education. Funding is provided through a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Technology Opportunities Program, with other funding coming from the Jesse B. Cox Charitable Trust, Josephine Bay and C. Michael Paul Foundation, the State of Vermont, IBM, and Bell Atlantic.

This past year, from July 2000 to July 2001, VT-MAP rewarded grants to twenty-four schools (39 classroom teachers) in twelve counties throughout Vermont. An additional 10 schools participated in a new forum for playwrighting, receiving assistance in software purchases only. Classroom involvement in VT-MAP exposes students to the art, musical, and written creations of their peers, the language of critique in the Arts, the critique of their work by professional artists, and the creative possibilities available through the use of technology. VT-MAP has three overall grant goals:

- To increase Vermont public awareness of, and support for Arts education.
- To improve opportunities for students to learn the Arts.
- To increase the use of computers and Internet technology in Arts education.

Evaluation Design

The Center for Rural Studies (CRS) at the University of Vermont is the evaluator for VT-MAP for the three-year grant period from July 1, 1998 to July 30, 2001 and has been affiliated with the project since it was at a proposal stage. This is the second year evaluation report for VT-MAP (Fiscal Year July 1, 2000 to July 30, 2001). This evaluation report relies heavily upon qualitative data collected through online and paper surveys, with supplemental quantitative data. This evaluation report builds on the first year analysis, documenting the "process" and "outcome" of the project. Project "process" refers to the experience that takes place in the classroom, including:

- The development of classroom level goals.
- Online and in-classroom activities,
- Facilitators and barriers, and
- Professional development activities for networking and skill building.

Project “outcome” refers to the outcomes of teacher and student participation in the online forum and related classroom activities. These outcomes include:

- Progress made towards grant and classroom goals,
- Project impact on arts curricula,
- Impact on student performance and achievement based on Vermont and National Standards.
- Response to the project and Arts education in general at the classroom, school, community, and state-wide level, and
- Recommendations for the future.

The outcomes of the project are the result of improved opportunities for students to learn the Arts and the increased use of computers and Internet technology in Arts education. Ultimately, VT-MAP has the vision that improved opportunities for students to learn the Arts through technology and local and statewide advocacy of the project will increase Vermont public awareness of, and support for Arts education.

Methodology

Evaluation Design

This past year, CRS continued to collect qualitative from teachers on both project process and outcomes on a biannual basis. Further, CRS interviewed, interacted, and observed teachers at the Summer Institute 2000 and 2001 and the Gathering in November 2000. CRS also conducted a focus group and telephone interviews at the end of the grant period to collect specific data on project impact in the classroom, and anecdotal evidence to support this impact. CRS continued to offer teachers both online and mail survey options.

Survey Instruments

CRS used qualitative data collected from paper and online survey instruments to evaluate VT-MAP this past year. CRS in conjunction with VT-MAP administrators, and the Vermont MIDI and ARTT coordinators developed all survey instruments. The following provides an outline of the survey instruments used, the response rate to the surveys, and data analysis methods employed. The complete surveys are available in the appendix of the report as noted below. The findings of the surveys are integrated in the body of the report.

Expectations Assessment

At the *Summer Institute – Integrating Arts and Technology* in July 2000, CRS administered an Expectations Assessment for the fourteen new grant schools of VT-MAP for 2000. This survey was distributed on the first day of the institute to gain insight on the teachers' initial perspectives of their involvement in the project, their classroom goals, and expectations for the first, second and third year of participation in the project. The survey consisted of four closed-ended questions relating to the impact of VT-MAP with respect to the grant goals, using a five point lichert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Teachers were also asked two open-ended questions about their classroom goals and expectations. Sixteen out of the thirty-six first year teachers responded to the Expectations Assessment for a response rate of 44%. (Appendix A)

Winter and Spring Mentor Reports

Online mentors were asked to complete an online report in January 2001 (Winter) and again in June 2001 (Spring). The Winter survey consisted of five open ended questions concerning their methods of mentoring and advice given, their perception of online mentoring with VT-MAP, and suggestions for changes and/or improvement of the online exchange. CRS and VT-MAP administrators decided to ask one additional question on the Spring report, regarding what they felt worked well about the online forum. A 100% response rate was received for both mentor reports. (Appendix B and C)

Winter Semester Questionnaire

The Winter Semester Report was administered online and in hard copy in February 2001 to the VT-MAP teachers of the thirty-four grant schools. It was designed to document the process and progress of each classroom half way through the school year of the first year of the project. The survey consisted of seventeen open ended questions regarding classroom goals, progress toward these goals, Vermont and National Standards being addressed in the classroom, impact on

student achievement, percent of posting that completed the request-respond-reply cycle, facilitators and barriers, online and in-classroom activity, changes in their curriculum, student and teacher response to the project, activities presented to their community and the reaction of that community, and areas of support or professional development needed for the future. The survey had four closed ended questions, three concerning online activity using yes/no response categories and one relating to barriers using a four point scale from no extent to great extent of how various barriers impeded their progress. Twenty-three of the fifty-nine teachers responded to the Winter Questionnaire for a response rate of 39%. It should be noted that the evaluators and VT-MAP administrator made several attempts to increase the response rate, including multiple reminders and offering teachers the option of completing the survey online, on paper, or via email. (Appendix D)

Spring Semester Questionnaire

The Spring Semester Questionnaire was administered online and in hard copy in June 2001. This survey followed-up with many of the questions asked on the Winter Semester Questionnaire. This survey also asked sixteen open-ended questions regarding teachers classroom goals and any changes made, progress towards goals, changes in their curriculum as a result of this project, how ideas raised in discussion about student projects on the online forum are incorporated into the classroom, percentage of postings that completed the request-respond-reply cycle, facilitators and barriers, need for additional support or professional development, activities presented to their community, and community reactions. This survey also addressed whether or not their classroom has received any additional equipment or resources and early evidence of impact on student achievement based on the Vermont and National Standards. This survey also asked three closed ended questions. One asked the extent to which ideas raised in discussion about online projects are incorporated into the classroom using a four point scale from no extent to great extent. The second asked if students had posted any work using a yes/no response category. The third repeated the barriers question from the Winter Questionnaire using the four-point scale from no extent to great extent. Twenty-eight out of the fifty-nine teachers responded to this survey for a response rate of 47%. Again, the evaluators and VT-MAP administrator made several attempts to increase the response rate, including multiple reminders and offering teachers the option of completing the survey online, on paper, or via email. (Appendix E).

Follow-Up Teacher Focus Group and Interviews

CRS, VT-MAP administrators, and ARTT and MIDI project coordinators decided to conduct an additional follow-up with teachers this past year. This questionnaire was designed as a focus group and interview guide to gather more in-depth information about the teachers experience in the project and anecdotal evidence of impact on students. This information was designed to further enrich this report, providing more documentation on "what happened" than the previous evaluation report. The questionnaire consisted of seven open-ended questions regarding student stories, changes in teaching styles in working with this project, student interaction with mentors, impact of student turnover rate in the classroom on their teaching, interaction with school principals and administrators, and their relationship with fellow teachers in the online forum. Eight teachers attended the focus group at the Summer Institute in July 2001 and five teachers responded individually to telephone interviews conducted from August to October 2001. These

teachers were randomly selected by VT-MAP administrators to provide a case study approach for the evaluation (22% of teachers). (Appendix F)

Evaluation Forms

CRS developed evaluation forms for the VT-MAP grant recipients at the *Summer Institute – Integrating Arts and Technology* in July 2000 (Appendix G) and *The Gathering*, the annual conference held in November 2000 (Appendix H). The evaluation forms were designed to offer feedback to the project administrators on what did and did not work at this workshop institute and conference and recommendations for improvements. (The report of the findings for *Summer Institute – Integrating Arts and Technology* and the *Gathering* are in Appendix I and J, respectively.)

The Vermonter Poll

In March 2000, The Center for Rural Studies conducted the “Vermonter Poll”, an annual statewide opinion poll about issues important to the state. Five questions on the Vermonter Poll were asked related to public funding for the arts and awareness of Internet-based arts education in Vermont, specifically the Vermont MIDI Project, Art Responding through Technology (ARTT), and Vermont Young Playwrights online VYPO. A total of 720 Vermonters responded to the poll. A complete report of the findings of this section is available in Appendix K of this report

Data Analysis

Qualitative data was analyzed using N-Vivo, a program designed to organize and analyze the content of qualitative material and various categorical and thematic grouping techniques. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), to provide frequency counts. All data was examined to determine trends and patterns in the experience of each school and the outcome of the project. Conclusions and recommendations were developed based on this analysis.

Online Participants

This past year, fourteen new schools participating in either the Vermont MIDI project or ARTT received grant funds under VT-MAP. These fourteen joined the ten previous grant schools from the 1999-2000 fiscal year and the existing online networks since 1995. During the 2000-2001 school year the Vermont Young Playwrights Online forum was organized and implemented in partnership with the Vermont Stage Company. Twenty-one schools expressed interest in participating initially. Ten schools followed through with visiting artist residencies and online discussion. The following provides a background of the twenty-four schools in the Vermont MIDI project and ARTT, including where the school is located, who is involved in the program, and how technology has been used in the classroom before the VT-MAP project.

1999-2000 Grant Recipients

Calais Elementary School

Calais Elementary School, located in Calais, has both a music teacher and an art teacher involved in the VT MIDI and ARTT projects, teaching students from K-6. The art and music classrooms at Calais became involved in this project with a foundation in the expression of art through technology. Students in the music program have composed music using MusicTime software and have used MIDI technology in student performances. The art classroom has used CD-ROM to introduce students to the work of the masters and as a source for digital images. This classroom also employs the use of a scanner and a digital camera. Before this grant, the arts department at Calais had a computer in their classroom and was in the process of getting an Internet connection.

Clarendon Elementary School

Located in North Clarendon, two art teachers involved in MIDI, one music teacher involved in ARTT, and a media/technology specialist have worked together as a team this past year to help students from K-6 and teachers make connections between art, music, and writing across disciplines. Prior to the start of this project, the art and music classrooms had begun the exploration of Adobe PhotoShop and use of MIDI software, along with use of the Internet, a digital camera, scanner, and LCD projector. The arts department had one computer and an Internet connection prior to this grant.

Craftsbury Schools

In Craftsbury Commons, the music teacher at Craftsbury School, one of the smallest public high schools in Vermont, exposed students from K-12 to the VT MIDI Project at the beginning of this school year through this grant. This classroom had limited experience with technology in the music classroom, as the teacher most often used the Internet for information related to curriculum, such as a unit on Jazz. The music classroom had one computer and an Internet connection prior to this grant. In Craftsbury Schools, the school board increased the music teaching position from .8 to 1 FTE for the 2000-2001 school year, to provide more time for the use of technology in the classroom. In Craftsbury schools, the technology coordinator moved hardware that was being replaced by an upgraded computer into the music classroom. Software for the computer was purchased through additional grant money.

Ferrisburgh Elementary School

At Ferrisburgh Elementary School, a music teacher, art teacher, and technology coordinator are involved in the project, teaching students in grades K-6. At the onset of this project, the arts classrooms at Ferrisburgh had had some exposure to the use of technology in the arts, as all students in the school attend a weekly class in technology. This class is often integrated with the art department. Students had used digitized photographs for a class exhibit and had used ClarisWorks Paint. The arts department did not have a computer in their classroom prior to this grant.

Ludlow Elementary School

Ludlow Elementary School had both an art teacher and a music teacher involved in ARTT and the VT MIDI Project this past year, teaching students in grades K-6. Located in the town of Ludlow, the arts classrooms had some experience with the use of technology in the classroom at the onset of the project. Students had previously used the Internet for research purposes, and had composed music on MusicTime Deluxe and other CD-ROMs for younger students. At the onset of this grant, the arts department had just received a computer in their classroom, but did not have an Internet connection. The art classroom at Ludlow Elementary School received a new computer through the school budget for the art classroom for this past school year (2000-01).

Mettawee Community School

The music and art teachers involved in MIDI and ARTT at Mettawee Community School, K-6, in West Pawlet had used the Internet for research purposes and digital images before becoming involved in the project. The art department had one computer for use in arts education, however they did not have Internet access as the computer did not have this capacity.

Mount Abraham Union High School

Mount Abraham UHS in Bristol had two persons involved in the MIDI project through the music department, teaching students in grades 7-12. This past year one teacher has joined VYP online. The music teacher at this school had previous experience in using MIDI keyboards and software, notation and sequencing, and the Internet before participating in this project. The music classroom did not have a computer prior to this grant. At Mount Abraham Union High School, the school budgeted for the music classroom to receive an additional computer through the technology plan for this past school year (2000-01).

Shoreham Elementary School

The main art teacher and third grade general teacher are involved in the ARTT project at Shoreham Elementary School, grades K-6. Before their involvement in this project, both teachers had used the Internet for research purposes in the classroom, as well as a digital camera to copy images into reports. The arts department had one computer and Internet connection in their classroom prior to this grant.

St. Albans City School

Two art teachers from St. Albans City School in ARTT taught students from K-8. The teachers had previous experience in using the Internet for projects and research. Further, one of the teachers was involved in the WEB Project as a community member. This teacher also has experience in using this technology in another school as a substitute art teacher. The art

department did not have a computer prior to receiving one through the VT-MAP grant. For this past school year, 2000-01, the art classroom at St. Albans City School had several tables installed for their current equipment through the school budget.

West Rutland School

West Rutland School has two music teachers involved in the VT MIDI Project teaching students in K-12. At the onset of their participation in the Partnership, the teachers and students had little opportunity to use the computers in the school labs for use in music classes. The music classroom did not have a computer prior to receiving one through the VT-MAP grant. Further, the music classroom at West Rutland School received an entire computer station through a donation from a parent for this past school year.

2000-01 Grant Recipients

Berlin Elementary School

Berlin Elementary School, located in Washington County employs one .8 FTE art teacher and two music teachers: a .6 FTE who also teaches theater and a .3 FTE. Instruction in arts and music is given to students in Kindergarten through sixth grade, and fifth and sixth graders take the theatre class. Teachers hope to gain competence in modern technology tools, and integrate the arts into their curriculums by allowing students critical feedback on their works from mentors. Prior to the initiation of this project, students had done one art project using PowerPoint. The music room had one old computer but the art room had nothing. The art teachers had experience using Microsoft Word, Corel, and Word Perfect. Berlin is a rural school of 260 students in Kindergarten through sixth grade. It is a divided town with no district community center. Consequently, the school often serves this purpose acting as the community educational and social center.

Burke Town School

Caledonia County's Burke Town School has a .5 FTE art teacher and a .4 FTE music teacher involved in the ARTT and MIDI projects. Instruction is given school-wide from Kindergarten through the eighth grade. Teachers anticipated the grant to aid them in the integration of arts into their classrooms by having art history information readily available through the Internet. They also hoped to become proficient in MIDI composition and open up opportunities for students to meet current technology standards. Prior to this grant, seventh and eighth grade students had been allowed the opportunity to use the Internet for research projects. Teachers had used the Internet for ideas for classroom lessons and other curriculum based research, but student access was very limited. Teachers had experience using the ClarisWorks, Microsoft Works, Microsoft Word, Lotus, and Print Shop programs. The music teacher also had experience with a digital camera through PhotoShop and a scanner. The art/music classroom had no access to computers. Burke Town is a Kindergarten through eighth grade school with approximately 200 students. Located far (two or three hours) from cities with educative institutions such as art museums or theaters, Burke students are relatively isolated from cultural exposure.

Danville School

Also located in Caledonia County, Danville School is a 500 student school with grade levels from Kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Students at Danville are in support of the arts, but

are underexposed. Prior to the grant, there was no access to computers in the art/music classroom and lab time for the arts program was scarce as they took last priority over the high school science classes. Teachers had experience with Microsoft Works, Microsoft Word, ClarisWorks, Lotus, Print Shop and Microsoft Publisher. The school employs 1.7 FTE art instructor and 1.6 FTE music instructor. Both interact with students from Kindergarten through twelfth grade. Goals include MIDI training for teachers and the opportunity for students to access arts and technology information, examples, and critical dialogue from the World Wide Web.

Hancock Village School

Hancock Village School, located in Addison County, has two teachers in art and music at .15 FTE involved in the VT-MAP project. One teacher works with the subjects of art and art history primarily teaching special education. The other teacher works with music, voice, theater, and dance. This classroom initially had a computer and Internet access in their classroom. At the onset, the primary teacher had experience in word processing, conducting Internet research and using the CD Rom and could use Claris Works, Simple Text, Netscape, Microsoft Internet Explorer, and Windows. She also had some familiarity with using a digital scanner. The teachers felt that their involvement in the VT-MAP project would enhance and improve their arts curricula by offering students the opportunity to share their work online and connect with other students, artists, and teachers through the state. Hancock Village School is located in a rural and geographically isolated community. Students do not have convenient access to any significant cultural events. However the teachers feel they the school has a strong community arts program, which exposes students to culture and discovery of ideas. Their involvement in the VT-MAP project will enhance their community arts program.

Mallets Bay School

Mallet's Bay School in Chittenden County employs one full time art teacher, one .3 FTE for art, one full time music teacher, and one .3 FTE for music. The physical education teachers also teach 8, 45-minute dance classes per year. Teachers' goals were to use computer technology to inspire student interest in the arts. They hope to allow students to use the Internet to visit art museums and other art students around the world as well as post work on the school's own web site for a community involvement element. The full time art teacher has experience with Apple Computers and Claris Works. Mallets Bay is located in Colchester, which borders Lake Champlain, Burlington, Essex, Winooski, and Milton. Students come from a broad range of background (rural and suburban) depending on which part of town they live in. Prior to the inception of this grant, the art room housed one donated IBM computer with Internet access and a printer for classes of approximately twenty-five students each.

Manchester Elementary and Middle School

Manchester School in Manchester, Vermont maintains one full time art teacher and two full time music teachers for grades K-8. Two teachers are also involved in VYP online. Their goals for the grant state that they wanted to create web sites for the art and music programs and allow students to learn HTML and participate in this project. They were also enthusiastic about the mentoring program that would allow students to seek advice and opinions on their work. Prior to the grant, the art teacher had participated in the Web Project's Summer Institute where she was introduced to digital imaging leading to the school's purchase of a digital camera. She also has software use experience with ClarisWorks and Microsoft Word. The Visual Arts classroom had

one old computer before this grant. Manchester is located too far from the cultural institutions in Burlington. Travel costs and time restraints make student field trips nearly impossible.

Milton Junior / Senior High School

Chittenden County's Milton High School employs 2 full time art teachers, one full time music teacher, a .5 FTE music teacher, and a full time theater teacher. One art teacher is responsible for grades 7-8 and the other for 9-12. The music and drama teachers cover grades 7-12. They hoped to incorporate technology into a large classroom setting with a wide array of musical skills. The grant was mainly to be used to purchase hardware and equipment and allow for technology training for teachers. Prior to the grant, Milton had Internet access for music classrooms and the teacher had experience in using the Internet of research. The Internet was not used in classrooms.

Richmond Elementary School

Richmond Elementary School, located in Richmond, has a music teacher involved in the VT MIDI project. The third and fourth grade students would be the first to receive this instruction and then eventually onto the entire school. The students have worked on group composition using "Music Time." The school does not have a computer lab and only recently has been wired for the Internet. The workstations are primarily 386 and 486 PCs connected via a Citrix Winframe network operating system - most are without sound. The music and arts rooms do not have access to the Internet or to the school's network. There is a need for another computer (music room) and a piano keyboard, so students can begin to use "Music Time."

Rochester School

Rochester Elementary School located in Rochester Vermont, and employs no full time people but has .50 FTEs (art), .95 FTEs (music), and .20 FTEs (theater). The technology coordinator and K-12 music specialist are working on this program. There is a need for grades 6-12. The tech coordinator is experienced in multi-track recording, digital imaging, and CAD design. The music specialist is experienced in researching on the Internet, Access, Excel, MusicTime and Cakewalk. The school has a computer lab and a technology lab and has access to the World Wide Web via computers in the classroom. They also have a network for the computer systems. Rochester has a population of about 1000 and is physically completely isolated due to mountain ranges to the east and west.

Twinfield Union School

Twinfield Union School is located in Plainfield, Vermont. The school employs one full time art teacher and two full time music teachers. There are also two physical education teachers who teach dance. This project would be used for students in all grades. Plainfield's population is 1302 with 460 households. The school has Internet connection to the art room. The school is wired to the Internet and has computers for the classroom. One art teacher is the coordinator for this program. The teacher of the program does not have any formal training in technology or art.

Waits River Valley School

Waits River Valley School is located in East Corinth, Vermont. The Technology Coordinator is the coordinator for this program, including one art teacher and an English teacher. There is also a teacher involved in VYP online. Three hundred and fifty-six students attend this school, and

the sending area covers ninety square miles and all of its villages are rural with widely dispersed populations. The school has some computers and a network. The network allows 10 users to connect to a modem that runs at 31,000bps. The library is networked and the computer lab is in the process of being networked.

Waitsfield Elementary School

Waitsfield Elementary School is located in Washington County, teaching 153 students from pre-kindergarten through sixth grade with multiple-age classrooms. Waitsfield employs three teachers involved in the VT-MAP project. One teacher is the technology coordinator who is actively involved in technology in education. The second is a music teacher employed full time teaching both music and drama. The third teacher is an art teacher employed at .3 FTE. Initially, there was one computer in their classroom with Internet access. Their school was also in the process of developing a technology plan that integrated the arts curriculum into it. As the one teacher is a technology specialist, she has extensive knowledge of the use of technology in education. Waitsfield Elementary School is located in a more rural area of central Vermont. Their geographic location and reduced budget for field trips has limited students' exposure to cultural activities and the arts.

Underhill Central

Underhill Central School is located in Chittenden County with one art and one music teacher working at 40% time. The music teacher has had previous experience working with music software to help students learn music composition, however initially she was in the process of working on getting a computer and Internet access in their classroom. Underhill Central School is located in a rural area of Jericho Vermont, with most students depending on the school's arts programs for exposure to cultural activities and the arts. The teachers are very excited to offer the opportunity of online exchange and improved ability to compose music through technology.

Underhill ID

Underhill ID School is also located in Chittenden County with one art and one music teacher working at 40% time (same teachers for Underhill Central School). The music teacher has had previous experience working with music software to help students learn music composition, however initially she was in the process of working on getting a computer and Internet access in their classroom. Underhill Central School is located in a rural area of Jericho Vermont, with most students depending on the school's arts programs for exposure to cultural activities and the arts. The teachers are very excited to offer the opportunity of online exchange and improved ability to compose music through technology.

VYP Online Schools

Mt. Abraham Union High School
Rutland High School
Mt. St Josephs
Lothrop Elementary School
Rochester High School
Hannaford Career Center
Rivendell Academy (Rivendell Interstate School District)
Twinfield Union High School

Bellows Free Academy
Rock Point School
St. Johnsbury Academy

Digital Audio Initiative through the Vermont MIDI Project
North Country Union High School
St. Johnsbury Academy

Online Participating Organizations and Agreements

VT-MAP is an Internet-based arts education program, providing an online forum to facilitate student learning through an exchange among students, teachers, artists, musicians, and other professionals. Three main organizations are involved in this project, including the two former initiatives of the WEB Project, the Vermont Musical Instrument Digital Interface Project (MIDI) and Art Responding Through Technology (ARTT). A recent addition to the online forum is the Vermont Young Playwrights Online (VYP Online), a part of the Vermont Stage Company. This is their second year working online through VT-MAP, whereas the Vermont MIDI Project and ARTT have been working online several years prior to the onset of VT-MAP. The Digital Audio Initiative is also a part of the Vermont MIDI Project established in 2000. The following provides a brief description of each organization and the various online agreements to which the online community subscribe.

History of the Online Forum

The Vermont MIDI Project began in January 1995 with a grant award from the Vermont State Legislature for Distance Learning. The impetus for the project were discussions that began in the Arts Assessment Design Team meetings and focused on difficulties meeting the National Standards in Music (specifically #4 in composition) for all students. The original members set out to explore using telecommunication and consulting with a professional composer as they learned about technology and strategies for teaching music composition in the schools.

1995 – based on early successes of the Vermont MIDI Project, a federal innovation technology challenge grant was submitted to the US Department of Education and awarded to the **WEB Project**. This \$2.5 million grant was for a five year period and was co-directed by Fern Tavalin for the purpose of demonstrating improved learning through the use of multimedia. The Vermont MIDI Project was one initiative under this grant. Sandi MacLeod, a music teacher and arts assessment design team member, become project coordinator and continues in the position today with the assistance of Peggy Madden, a composer.

1997 – ARTT (Art Responding Through Technology), the first replication of the Vermont MIDI Project, was formed under the leadership of Judy Tiplady. Present coordinator is Penny Nolte.

1998 – Vermont Arts Council was awarded a grant to continue and expand the work of the WEB Project and it's initiatives in online arts mentoring through the Department of Commerce Technology Opportunities Grant– the **Vermont Millennium Arts Partnership**.

2000 – Vermont Young Playwrights Online formed in 2000, replicating the models of MIDI and ARTT. The program is modeled as an extension of the in-class residencies conducted through the Vermont Stage Company

-Vermont MIDI Project and ARTT (Art Responding Through Technology) form a non-profit corporation to work for the sustainability of the projects. (<http://www.vtmidi.org>).

Vermont Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI) Project

Member schools of the Vermont MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) Project post student musical compositions online in a password protected site for the purpose of sharing and critique. The student pieces are created in music classrooms, often by small groups of students working together. Professional composers as well as teachers, pre-service educators, and other students reply to the compositions offering substantive feedback and encouragement about the work. Goals of the Vermont MIDI Project include:

- 1) Sustain and expand the online arts mentoring opportunities currently provided for music composition in Vermont
- 2) Provide professional development for music teachers and mentors
- 3) Develop instructional materials related to the project
- 4) Develop opportunities for growth and replication of the project (<http://www.vtmidi.org>).

Art Responding Through Technology (ARTT)

The ARTT branch of Online Arts Mentoring formed in 1997, as a replication of the Vermont MIDI Project at the request of art teachers. Students, artists, and teachers originally built an online forum to provide serious discussion and to give practical guidance in the use of elements and principles of design and to exchange techniques in the use of various media to help students improve expression. Overtime members of ARTT have worked together to modify this system so that it affirms students as artists, improves the quality of work presented, provides a model for respectful reflection and critique, and demonstrates the use of art vocabulary in online and in-class communication. (1999, Tiplady, Tavalin, and Roozendaal) (www.vtartt.org)

Vermont Young Playwrights Online (VYP Online)

Vermont Young Playwrights Online formed in 2000, replicating the models of MIDI and ARTT. The program is modeled as an extension of the in-class residencies conducted through the Vermont Stage Company. A visiting artist conducts a one or two-day residency to act as a dramaturge for middle and high school students. Students are instructed to write a ten-minute play. The manuscript is posted online where the visiting artists comments on the work. The student submits a revised script and re-posts the work online where it is then open to comment and discussion by the full online community.

Online Mentors

The mentors of the online forum play a critical role in the project as they are the professional artists and musicians who respond and critique student work in the "request-respond-reply" cycle, as developed by members of the WEB Project of which the Vermont MIDI Project and ARTT were initiatives from 1995-2000 (<http://www.webproject.org/connecting/reflect.html>). There are ten active mentors in ARTT and eight mentors for the Vermont MIDI project. There are also five mentors active in the VYP Online forum, for a total of twenty-three mentors practicing online.

In response to the Mentor Reports, the mentors discussed several different types of methods employed in the course of their mentoring as well as advice given to students. The methods and advice of the mentors is unique to each person as each artist has his or her own style of

critiquing, responding, and providing feedback to the students' work.

MIDI mentors begin their session of critique by down-loading, listening to and reading the score of students work in composition. Critiquing student work includes describing and analyzing melodic, rhythmic, harmonic and timbral elements, textures, colors, tones, structure, and performance. Mentors also provide information on music theory as related to composition, focusing on various theoretical concepts from various angles and styles as appropriate for the level of the student work. The ideal cycle is known as "request-respond-reply". In this cycle, students *request* feedback, mentors, teachers, and other students *respond*, and students *reply* by posting revisions. MIDI mentors vary their selections of postings to insure a fair distribution of attention to different levels of student work. Mentors also have the responsibility of addressing the requested feedback questions from students as well as any other concerns that need attention. Four mentors also mentioned that they have offered technical support in response to a request from a teacher. The MIDI Mentors reported that they spend between 2 and 5 hours per week acting as an online mentor. The average time spent was just over 2.5 hours per week.

Several mentors wrote that during the course of on-line mentoring, they provide advice to students on arrangement and production techniques, as opposed to strictly harmonic analysis. Several other mentors wrote that they provide specific comments on topics including harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic structure, form of the piece, the effectiveness of instrumentation of the piece, tonal components, and voicing. Several mentors outlined specific teaching methods that they use. One mentor wrote that he capitalizes any word that he feels the student should seek a definition in order to assist students in developing an enhanced vocabulary of music critique and composition. This mentor also mentioned that he often spells out solutions note by note to various compositional problems and often backs up his critique for improvement with his personal opinion, stressing to students that his opinions were personal and should not offend anyone.

Several mentors mentioned they offer listening examples to students that can help exemplify the mentor's comments/suggestions. One mentor specifically stated that he often refers students to popular artists/music that may have relevance in helping to convey the advice given. One mentor wrote that because music composition with MIDI requires the composer to act as a producer and engineer, she encourages students to think about these aspects of composition and offers suggestions to improve their skills in these areas.

Protocols for Sharing Files on the Vermont MIDI/ARTT Project, Inc. Web Site

The Vermont MIDI/ARTT Project, Inc. provides a password-protected web site for the purpose of sharing and critique of student work. Work should be posted "in progress," with the expectation that the student is open to receiving feedback. All interactions should be respectful, positive, and constructive.

Students

- In posting compositions, students will describe their assignment or "artistic intent." They will also include grade level, musical background and experience, and any other personal information that will guide the listener.
- The students will ask for specific feedback on their compositions, indicating what their next steps are, and how the observer can help them.
- When the feedback is received, the students will be willing to revisit their work, and to try some of the changes or suggestions offered.
- Students agree to acknowledge the responses they receive by describing what was helpful, and how they used the feedback in developing their work. Further uploads of the work in progress will generate more responses from mentors.

Teachers

- Teachers are responsible for respectful interactions on the site, and will screen postings of work and comments, guiding students through the description of their work and formulating questions for feedback.
- Each school will post at least four pieces by December, and another four by May of each year.
- Teachers are encouraged to use the site as a teaching tool in their classroom, critiquing compositions from other schools. Each school is responsible for posting one critique per month, whether by the teacher or a class.

Administrators

- Administrators of participating schools will provide appropriate technical support to ensure the success of the program.
- Teachers will be given two release days per year to attend professional development activities of the Vermont MIDI Project.

Mentors:

- Mentors will offer positive, constructive comments to student composers, appropriate to their age and experience.
- Mentors will make sure that pieces have received a response within 48 hours of their posting.

Technical:

- Any attached files should be in the following formats: .mid, .sib, .htm, .rm, .ram, .jpg, gif, txt, doc. Audio files should not be larger than 600k.