**What is the Vermont Mathematics Initiative (VMI)?**
The Vermont Mathematics Initiative (VMI) is a three-year, comprehensive mathematics professional development program. Now in its sixteenth year, the VMI has been developed to support highly effective mathematics instruction so that all children can learn the rigorous mathematics needed for success in higher education and the workplace.

**What is the mission of the VMI?**
The mission of the VMI is to significantly improve the teaching and learning of mathematics in grades PreK-12 across the state of Vermont. Through their VMI experience, teachers build strong mathematics content knowledge, develop the ability to conduct action research about their teaching practices, cultivate leadership skills, and apply this acquired knowledge and skill in their classrooms and at the school or district level to improve student learning.

**What is the academic component of the VMI?**
For each of the three calendar years a teacher is enrolled, the VMI offers four three-credit graduate level courses (two during the summer and one each semester during the academic year). Field work, including work with the participant’s VMI mentor, runs concurrently with each course. Participants can elect to pursue one of two Masters Degree options via application to the Graduate College. Upon completing the full three-year VMI program, a teacher will have earned 36 graduate credits and will have completed all of the requirements for a UVM Master of Teaching Degree (MST), awarded through the UVM Mathematics Department in the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (CEMS).

Alternatively, with six additional credits and a final e-portfolio, a teacher can earn the UVM Master of Education (M.Ed) Degree in the area of Curriculum and Instruction, awarded through the Department of Education in the College of Education and Social Services (CESS).

**What are some of the benefits to schools that participate in the VMI?**
In addition to coursework in mathematics content, pedagogy and leadership, the VMI provides support for participants in their schools. Throughout the program, VMI participants:

- Have immediate access to increased mathematics content expertise through the VMI staff, which includes mathematicians, mathematics educators, and master elementary and middle level teachers experienced in professional development.
• Receive ongoing professional development for enhancing their teaching effectiveness and for preparing to take on expanded leadership roles in their schools.

• Have opportunities to form partnerships with VMI staff and other participants resulting in the continuous improvement of learning opportunities for students and support for the mathematics component of their school’s Action Plan.

One should also note that a recently conducted program evaluation has shown that VMI teachers have attained a high degree of mathematics content knowledge and have made significant contributions to mathematics teaching and learning in their schools and across the state. Consequently, students in schools having a VMI trained teacher have experienced significantly higher achievement as compared to students in matched control schools.

**When does the program take place?**

The 2016 summer courses for new participants will be held in Burlington, at the University of Vermont, during the weeks of July 11 and July 18. Academic year course meetings will be held on Friday/Saturday “weekends”: three during the fall semester and three during the spring semester. *In addition, participants will be required to attend two additional Saturday sessions at UVM, engage in online discussion forums, attend tutorial sessions, and a 3-day Leadership Institute at the conclusion of their first year.*

**Who should apply?**

All teachers, including special educators, of grades PreK-12 are eligible for the program. Participants may represent a school or supervisory district. Specifically, applicants should be teachers who are:

• Dedicated to enhancing mathematics teaching and learning for all of their students.

• Enthusiastic about increasing their mathematics content knowledge in a supportive environment.

• Willing to share their increased knowledge of mathematics content and effective teaching with their colleagues through mentoring, peer coaching or other forms of professional development.

• Interested in supporting the development and implementation of their school’s mathematics curriculum as well as the mathematics portion of their school’s Action Plan.

• Committed to serving as mathematics teacher leaders in their schools and contributing to the appropriate use of local assessment results to improve instruction.

**What is the application process?**

For teachers enrolling in VMI and seeking a Masters Degree, the application is a two-step process. The online “VMI questionnaire” is the first step of the application process. The questionnaire can be found on the VMI website (go.uvm.edu/vmi) under the “Apply To The Program” tab. Once the VMI questionnaire is complete, a VMI representative will be in touch to schedule an interview. Selection into the VMI is based on information
included in both the VMI questionnaire and the interview. Applicants will be notified prior to April 22nd of their acceptance.

Once admitted into the VMI, participants can choose one of two Masters Degree tracks (M.S.T or M.Ed) and must apply directly to the Graduate College for application to the selected program of study. Further information will be made available at that point in the process.

**What is the cost?**

With satisfactory completion of a full calendar year’s courses, the VMI teacher will earn 12 UVM graduate credits (6 in the summer, 3 in the fall and 3 in the spring). Of those 12 credits, it is expected that the participant’s district will pay for at least 6 UVM graduate credits. (This is a common contractual benefit for teachers in many districts.) The remaining 6 credits are the responsibility of the teacher. Current tuition is $611 per credit, and one can expect a small increase for the 2015-16 academic year. Additional information can be found at [http://www.uvm.edu/~stdfinsv/?Page=graduate-tuition-vmi.html&SM=tuitionssubmenu.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~stdfinsv/?Page=graduate-tuition-vmi.html&SM=tuitionssubmenu.html)

Note: *The overall goal of the VMI is to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics in the VMI teacher’s school/district. The VMI teacher and the school/district leadership will work together to help achieve that goal. For that reason, we encourage the school and district to work creatively with the VMI applicant to increase the school’s or district’s share of tuition and correspondingly reduce the teacher’s share.*

A number of strategies have been suggested for doing so, including the following:

- A district develops an MOU with the teacher in which it agrees to pay for one or two courses over and above the Master Agreement in exchange for an agreement by the VMI teacher that she or he will not request any course tuition for a given time frame (e.g., three years) following completion of the VMI. The teacher would further agree that she or he will reimburse the district a prorated amount in the event that the teacher does not renew her or his contract during the life of the MOU period. In brief, such an agreement would give the teacher added tuition funding and at the same time would provide assurance to the district and school that their financial support would benefit the school in the long term. Both the school and the teacher benefit from this arrangement.

- Some districts pay stipends to teachers who take on leadership roles, for example, in curriculum, coaching, mentoring, etc. In this strategy, VMI participants would be able to "earn" additional tuition funding by fulfilling such roles in their schools. This arrangement has the advantage that the teacher’s participation in the VMI is tied directly to school impact.

- Title IIA and Title V funds can be used to pay for additional VMI tuition. Again, districts can work out MOUs for the number of years that an individual would be expected to work for the district.
Reminder: Federal tax code provides a number of options for tuition as a deductible expense.

Financial assistance

The VMI has limited funds available for financial support to qualified participants. These financial awards will cover tuition for up to one academic course per year and will be based upon a demonstrated need for assistance. Applicants must reapply each year. The following are general guidelines.

- Applicants must first utilize all of the funds for course tuition made available through the teaching contract and agreement with the local school board. Contracts often provide tuition for two courses per year as a contract benefit.

- Applicants must have requested additional financial assistance from the principal, superintendent, and local school board for tuition beyond the amount covered by the contract. Frequently, school districts have additional funds available for teacher professional development; and, as a consequence of NCLB requirements and recent stimulus funding, mathematics is a high priority. Also, many districts will support arrangements along the lines of those listed in the preceding section.

- The amount of the tuition for which the applicant is responsible would cause a financial hardship.

If you meet the above criteria and wish to be considered for financial assistance, please contact Meghan Kelly, VMI Program Coordinator, for detailed information and for a financial assistance application at vmi@uvm.edu or 802-656-8186.

Teachers who are interested in applying should not be deterred by questions related to cost. In a case of financial hardship we will work with the teacher and district to try to find a satisfactory solution.
Who are the instructors?

The VMI Leadership Team consists of the following individuals:

Dr. Ken Gross  
*Senior Advisor, VMI Founder, and Professor Emeritus of Mathematics, University of Vermont*

Judi Laird  
*Director*

Susan Ojala  
*Co-Director for Mathematics Content*

Robert Laird  
*Co-Director for Teaching/Learning and School Implementation*

Robert Rosenfeld  
*Co-Director for Statistics and School-Based Research, and Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Statistics, Nassau Community College*

Meghan Kelly  
*Program Coordinator and Finance Specialist*

Other members of the instructional staff include:

Dr. George L. Ashline, *Professor of Mathematics, St. Michael’s College*

Ralph Bernardini, *Mathematics teacher, Vergennes Union High School*

Dr. Priscilla Bremser, *Professor of Mathematics, Middlebury College*

Josh Bunker, *Mathematics Teacher, Rutland Middle School*

Doug Dickey, *Mathematics Lecturer, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, UVM*

Dr. Carol J. Eckels, *retired Principal, Leicester Elementary School*


Fran Huntoon, *Mathematics Instructional Specialist, VMI Instructor and Field Mentor*

Bill Jesdale, *retired Principal, Lincoln Community School*

Dr. Tony Julianelle, *Senior Lecturer in Mathematics, UVM*

Kiran MacCormick, *Dealer.com statistician*

Kathy Richardson, *Mathematics Teacher, The Putney School and Field Mentor*

Sandi Stanhope, *Primary Mathematics Specialist and Field Mentor*

Dr. Julie M. Theoret, *Professor of Mathematics, Johnson State College*

Dr. Jim Wright, *Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Westfield State University (MA)*