



# Alternative Revenue Sourcing Situation Report:

## Educational Addendum

September 27, 2011

# Educational Addendum to Alternative Revenue Sourcing Situation Report

## Project Background

In August 2011, Bronner Group, LLC (BRONNER) issued an Alternative Revenue Sourcing (ARS) Situation Report for the State of Vermont per the solicitation of Vermont State Auditor Thomas M. Salmon, CPA. Intended to complement the State's ongoing Strategic Planning process, the ARS Situation Report outlines the current funding situation in Vermont, as well as provide targeted, evidence-based, innovative alternative sourcing strategies to address funding challenges.

## Purpose of Addendum

Thought-leaders from key state agencies were invited to provide their input on existing funding sources, financing challenges, and public-private partnerships to harness all available institutional and experiential knowledge. Over twenty individual agency, departmental, and Legislative leaders were interviewed in July 2011. As a product of these interviews, an Alternative Revenue Sourcing Situation Report was presented to the Auditor's Office in late August, and was subsequently disseminated to stakeholders in all realms of Vermont state government. Although some agencies and Departments chose to abstain during the initial data collection phase due to political directive, upon review of the Situation Report, it was agreed that it was in the best interest of the state to pursue creative solutions to existing and future funding shortfalls specifically related to acute needs in Education. The Vermont Department of Education, in conjunction with State Auditor Thomas M. Salmon, has requested this addendum to the Situation Report addressing education-specific funding issues.

## Funding for Education

An additional interview with a Department of Education Commissioner, Rae Ann Knopf, found two primary Departmental challenges that would benefit from additional ARS focus, as a supplement to the Distance Learning and Higher Education Partnerships issues discussed in the Situation Report:

- **STATE TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE.** Hybrid instruction and technological innovation in the classroom are prominent points of discussion among K-12 education. ARS strategies are sought to enhance technological infrastructure throughout the state that would allow the use of blended teaching approaches, while also strengthening access to, curriculum for, and delivery of professional development programs for educators.
- **RESOURCES FOR EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.** The rapid advancement of teaching methodologies and blended learning approaches requires high-quality training and retraining of educators. Though well-informed and technologically-advanced educators are essential to maintain a high-performing education system, and are an essential complement to ensuring aforementioned technological infrastructures are properly administered and utilized, traditional funding is often scarce in this area.

## Alternative Revenue Sourcing Strategies for Education

BRONNER applied its proprietary Feasibility Rubric to education ARS strategies to assist Department of Education thought leaders in developing actionable next steps.

### Feasibility Rubric

	FEASIBILITY IS EXCELLENT, PARTNERSHIP IS IMMINENT, AND/OR SHORT-TERM, LESS LABORIOUS ACTION FROM VERMONT IS PROJECTED TO REAP SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS.
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ISSUE TOPIC	ISSUE DESCRIPTION	ARS STRATEGY	BEST PRACTICES	FEASIBILITY CODE
		<p><a href="#">Program in Education</a>. With a goal of providing technology in the hands of teachers and students across the globe, Intel provides technological solution to education systems around the country, likely at a discount.</p> <p>4. Encourage schools to partner with <a href="#">Good360</a>, the world’s largest online product donation marketplace, which solicits product donations from brands including HP for donations to charities and schools. Hardware and software donations are included. While this does not necessarily supply infrastructural components, saving money on equipment can act as both a cost-saving measure and a good-faith effort toward infrastructural stewardship.</p>		          
<p><b>INCREASED AND ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATORS</b></p>	<p>In effort to successfully implement and harness the advantages of the aforementioned infrastructural advancements, professional development activities must be in-place, accessible, and progressive for educators, both generally and in relation to the administration of new technologies enabled by statewide infrastructure.</p>	<p>1. Partner with the Verizon Foundation’s Thinkfinity.org platform to serve as a <a href="#">State Education Partner</a>. Thinkfinity allows State Education agencies to share best practices and enhance program development, in addition to providing web-based and in-person professional development for educators to utilize the high-quality blended teaching materials developed by Thinkfinity’s Content Partners.</p>	<p>New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Illinois, Michigan, Virginia, Ohio, Indian, Texas, Georgia, Alabama, <a href="#">and many others</a>.</p>	

**Next Steps for Actualizing Success**

These proposed strategies should be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary, cross-functional team of government thought-leaders to catalyze dialogue about the feasibility and determination of next steps related specifically to education, and to the holistic Vermont fiscal climate, as recommended in the ARS Situation Report.