STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN / ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT: PART B

for STATE FORMULA GRANT PROGRAMS under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

For reporting on
FFY 2021

Vermont

PART B DUE February 1, 2023

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

17 - Indicator Data

Section A: Data Analysis

What is the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)?

To improve the proficiency of mathematics performance for students with disabilities in grades 3, 4, and 5.

Has the SiMR changed since the last SSIP submission? (yes/no)

NO

Is the State using a subset of the population from the indicator (*e.g.*, a sample, cohort model)? (yes/no)

YES

Provide a description of the subset of the population from the indicator.

Participation is voluntary and open to all LEAs; in SY2021-2022, 2 LEAs and one independent school chose to participate out of 52 total LEAs in Vermont.

Is the State's theory of action new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)

NO

Please provide a link to the current theory of action.

https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-vt-ssip-theory-of-action

Progress toward the SiMR

Please provide the data for the specific FFY listed below (expressed as actual number and percentages).

Select yes if the State uses two targets for measurement. (yes/no)

NO

Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2018	12.50%

Targets

FFY	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target >=	13.00%	13.50%	14.00%	14.50%	15.00%

FFY 2021 SPP/APR Data

Number of Students Proficient in Mathematics State Assessment	Number of Students Taking State Assessment	FFY 2020 Data	FFY 2021 Target	FFY 2021 Data	Status	Slippage
3	97	10.61%	13.00%	3.09%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable

The percentage of third, fourth, and fifth-grade students with disabilities at SSIP schools scoring proficient on the mathematics sections of the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) or the VT Alternate Assessment (VTAA) decreased by 7.51% (from 10.6% to 3.09%) between FFY 20 and FFY 21. Note: in the 2020-21 SY we had 9 and in the 2021-22 SY zero students from SSIP sites complete the VTAA. Although the state-wide average for students with disabilities at non-SSIP sites slightly increased (from 11.4 to 12.0%) between FFY 20 and 21, it remains lower than pre-covid results (e.g. FFY 17, 12.6%). Instructional challenges arose from virtual classrooms, hybrid and in-person learning. Potential root causes for slippage include a drop in the number of LEAs participating in SSIP, resulting in a smaller number of students with disabilities tested in this reporting period. Participation is open to all LEAs; in SY20-21, 5 LEAs chose to participate, which decreased to 2 LEAs and 1 independent school in SY21-22. Additional root causes include difficulty with learning losses observed among students with disabilities throughout the pandemic, and difficulties with coaches getting onsite, to provide classroom coaching significantly impacting the ability to change teaching behaviors. The Agency of Education also noted a change in participation rates for 2022 assessments, which makes comparisons

between years difficult. Many parents were hesitant to send students to school to complete assessments. As Deputy Secretary of Education, Heather Bouchey, remarked, “Results indicate that participation rates for 2022 are lower than they have been in years prior to the pandemic. While this makes meaningful comparison to prior years difficult, this lower participation and the results themselves highlight the critical Education Recovery work needed ahead of us.” (AOE, 2023) https://education.vermont.gov/press-release/preliminary-2022-statewide-assessment-results

Provide the data source for the FFY 2021 data.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and Vermont Alternate Assessment (VTAA)

Please describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR.

The reporting period for this SSIP: July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, SY 2021 -22 Mathematics proficiency data from the SBAC and VTAA are collected and analyzed by the staff in the VT AOE Division of Data Management and Analysis (DMAD) Assessment Team. The VT AOE Special Education Team also analyzed these data to explore correlations with other SPP/APR indicators. Aggregate data for all LEAs participating in SSIP (2 LEAs and 1 independent school chose to participate for SY21-22 but participation is open to all) are provided by the DMAD Assessment Team. Reports are provided by grade and by disability status with comparisons for non-SSIP participating LEA sites. The aggregate results are then provided to the VT SSIP Evaluation Team to allow for further data interpretation and SiMR reporting.

Optional: Has the State collected additional data *(i.e., benchmark, CQI, survey)* that demonstrates progress toward the SiMR? (yes/no)

YES

Describe any additional data collected by the State to assess progress toward the SiMR.

The VT SSIP has collected additional data to assess the degree of progress toward the SiMR. This included LRE data (Indicators 5, specifically 5a and 5b), parent involvement data (Indicator 8), and data to assess professional learning outcomes. The term “professional learning” is used to refer to multiple methods used to increase the knowledge and skills of VT SSIP participants to implement VTmtss and evidence-based mathematics practices. The multiple methods include: systems and instructional coaching, training, opportunities for collaboration with other implementing schools and LEAs, and resource provision.

In 2021-22, two training sessions were held. The expected outcomes for the two trainings were to:
- Increase participants’ knowledge to implement, or monitor the implementation of, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Practices in their work.
- Increase participants’ knowledge to facilitate meaningful mathematical discourse, pose purposeful questions, and elicit and use evidence of student thinking.

A total of 19 participants from 2 LEAs and 1 independent school attended two training sessions. Participants included general and special educators, administrators, academic coaches, and systems coaches. Across the two trainings, the average pre-test score measuring knowledge of the training content was 63%, increasing to 71% at post-test. Participants also reported the trainings were high quality, relevant, useful, and employed adult learning practices.

Research has demonstrated the importance of students receiving their primary instruction in general education settings. Students in general education settings are more likely to score proficient on content assessments. Reviewing VT LRE data from the last five years provided information on the type of educational settings in which students are receiving mathematics instruction.

Participating schools were supported in using data to review and use in writing Continuous Improvement Plans. During SY 2021-22 (the most current data available), 88% of students from participating VT SSIP LEAs in grades 3-5 received 80% or more of their instruction in general education settings, below the state average of 92%. The percentage of students in SSIP sites receiving 80% or more of their instruction in general education settings decreased by 1% from the previous year, while the state average increased by 1%. Based on these data alone, it is difficult to explain the differences between LRE rates statewide and in SSIP schools. As the VT SSIP sample is so much smaller, there is expected to be more year-to-year variance than in the state-level data. The small sample size can impact LRE rates positively or negatively.

SY 2021-22 was the second year in which the revised Parent Engagement Survey was administered. Prior to SY 2020-21, SEA personnel and representatives from the VT Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP), the Vermont Family Network (VFN), and the AOE monitoring team identified a number of challenges with the existing Parent Engagement Survey. These partners developed a new survey, with a reduced number of items expressed with greater clarity. The VT AOE increased their communication efforts with LEA staff about the importance of family feedback. 81.48% of parents with children with disabilities in participating SSIP sites reported involvement as a means of improving services and results, in contrast to 78.15% of parents of children with disabilities statewide reporting involvement. Discussion around formative mathematics assessment/ progress monitoring tools is ongoing. But, due to inconsistent practices among LEA sites participating in SSIP, the evaluation team has been unable to incorporate these data into our evaluation.

Did the State identify any general data quality concerns, unrelated to COVID-19, that affected progress toward the SiMR during the reporting period? (yes/no)

YES

Describe any data quality issues, unrelated to COVID-19, specific to the SiMR data and include actions taken to address data quality concerns.

Two ongoing data quality concerns have provided challenges to a more comprehensive evaluation of the SiMR and implementation of VT SSIP. These include the measurement of the fidelity of implementation of VT SSIP systems and instructional coaching and the collection of student achievement data.

Fidelity of Implementation

To assess the degree to which the VT SSIP systems and instructional coaching resulted in improved implementation of VTmtss and mathematics instruction, two fidelity of implementation instruments were developed in SY 2020-21. In collaboration with the VTmtss team, the VT SSIP Systems Process, Planning, and Outcome Tool (SPPOT) was created to measure the degree to which LEA teams achieved their SSIP-related outcome and process measures. During the summer 2021, the SSIP Evaluation Team and SSIP systems coaches reviewed the SPOTT for potential improvements. Revisions were made at that time to provide a greater emphasis on the identification of the data used to drive VTmtss change ideas. The SPPOT was used with two LEAs and one independent school in SY 2021-22. It was challenging for participating LEAs to proactively develop a SMART goal, and corresponding change idea(s), and to identify appropriate outcome and process measures. This process was also new to the SSIP systems' coaches. As a result, activities to achieve the SMART goal were frequently stopped or changed, depending on immediate needs in the LEAs. The VT SSIP Leadership Team will continue to provide support to systems coaches to improve this process and aid in data collection that directly measures system changes at participating sites.

In collaboration with the VT AOE Proficiency-Based Learning (PBL) Team, the mathematics fidelity of implementation tool, aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and NCTM Practice Standards, was also developed in SY 2020-21. The tool was established to define best practices related to student and teacher behaviors. The administration of the mathematics fidelity of implementation tool has been met with a significant amount of resistance. Some participating educators saw the tool as evaluative and not the conversational, information-providing tool it is meant to be. Some resistance was due to accessing virtual classrooms, and teachers due to COVID safety measures. Similar to the SPPOT, the mathematics fidelity tool and process were reviewed and revised during the summer of 2021. After input from the field and coaches, the fidelity tool included both teacher and student behavior observed. It was modified to include a more generalized rubric - to feel less evaluative and to be used as a self-assessment. While not as valid as direct observation of instruction, it does provide some data to assist in developing action plans and assessing progress over the course of the school year. At least one administration of the fidelity of implementation data was collected from five teachers. Two teachers submitted at least two administrations of the fidelity of implementation data.

Student Assessment Data

As expressed in previous SSIP reports, the collection of student-level achievement data (other than the SBAC and VTAA) has been a challenge. SSIP instructional coaches have had limited access to teachers to collect formative assessment data. School-based coaches have expressed concerns about requesting teachers to participate in additional activities to collect these data to support measurement of the SSIP, but also as part of MTSS. Concurrently, the varying types of assessments used by participating schools make cross-site comparisons difficult. Some schools are using more qualitative assessments, which makes a coherent analysis of student data more challenging. The VT SSIP Leadership Team continues to work closely with the inter-division PBL Team and the VTmtss team to explore new strategies to collect student formative assessment data. In SY 2020-21, the PBL team issued a guidance document to explain the use and demonstrate the importance of universal screeners to assist in identifying students needing additional supports or interventions. To address this gap, in SY 2022-23 SSIP provided Mathematics PD will specifically address formative assessments and progress monitoring practices.

Did the State identify any data quality concerns directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the reporting period? (yes/no)

YES

If data for this reporting period were impacted specifically by COVID-19, the State must include in the narrative for the indicator: (1) the impact on data completeness, validity and reliability for the indicator; (2) an explanation of how COVID-19 specifically impacted the State's ability to collect the data for the indicator; and (3) any steps the State took to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the data collection.

State Assessment Concerns

The SBAC was administered in the spring 2022. The administration of the SBAC was challenged by COVID protocols e.g., staff and student absences, changes to learning formats, gaps in learning. Schools reported that parents opted to keep students home during testing as there was no OPT-OUT option. As discussed previously, the resulting outcomes were lower than in years prior to COVID. It is likely the disruptions in how instruction was delivered (virtually or face-to-face), teacher absences, and other stressors caused by COVID that impacted the lower proficiency rates. This phenomenon was not unique to the VT SSIP, as states across the country had similar results.

Data Collection Challenges

VT schools varied in how instruction and administrative supports were provided during SY 2021-22, although to a slightly lesser degree than the previous year. This forced SSIP professional learning and coaching to be primarily provided virtually throughout the year. While the systems coaching worked well virtually, the instructional coach was limited in her ability to access teachers for training and coaching as a result of COVID school protocols, leadership's resistance to additional staff, and classrooms forced to be virtual as a result of student(s) testing positive. This impacted the ability to observe teachers, model appropriate practices, collect fidelity implementation data, and work with teachers to collect student formative assessment data.

Steps to Mitigate Impact

The SSIP coordinator meets regularly with each LEA implementing the SSIP to ensure capacity and make recommendations on how implementation might look within each LEA. The SEA was in close contact with special education directors and administrators to provide support in planning for the fall 2021 implementation. Messaging was part of check-in meetings of Special Education Directors as a resource for improving their Local Special Education Determination (LSED); part of the AOE monthly newsletter – "nuggets", Weekly Field Memos, continuing conversations with advisory panel and VFN, the state's parent center. Indicator stewards (for each indicator) continue to recommend SSIP as a means of supporting LEAs experiencing challenges in achievement.

Section B: Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

Please provide a link to the State's current evaluation plan.

https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-vt-ssip-evaluation-plan

Is the State's evaluation plan new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)

NO

Provide a summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy implemented in the reporting period:

Infrastructure improvement strategies used by the VT SSIP include (1) multi-level teaming infrastructure, (2) VTmtss Implementation/Systems Coaching, (3) Mathematics Professional Learning (Training and Coaching), (4) stakeholder engagement.

Teaming Infrastructure

The VT SSIP Core Team includes key personnel from numerous divisions within the VT AOE, including the DMAD, Education Quality (EQ) and Student Pathways Divisions, the VTmtss team. External members of the Core Team included the NCSI TA provider and the SSIP external evaluator. The purpose of the Core Team is to support and monitor SSIP activities and to gather stakeholder feedback to guide, and if necessary, make modifications to SSIP implementation and evaluation activities. The Core Team met seven times during this reporting period.

The VT SSIP Transformation Team includes the Core Team members described above, and the VT SSIP systems and instructional coaches. The Transformation Team is a key component in facilitating SSIP feedback loops, providing regular opportunities for Core Team members to learn from SSIP coaches on how to better support implementation. At the same time, the Transformation Team meetings allow the Core Team to share information with the systems and instructional coaches to disseminate to LEA and school personnel. This team met nine times during this reporting period.

The Evaluation Team includes members from the SEA special education team, representatives from the VTmtss and Student Pathways Teams, and the external evaluator. The Evaluation Team met three times during SY 2021-22.

The state-wide stakeholder team, representative of varied organizations/groups, met informally during this reporting period. However, the VT SSIP Director regularly reached out to stakeholders to gather their feedback and input on future SSIP activities.

VTmtss Implementation/Systems Coaching

The primary focus of SSIP systems coaching was to support LEA implementation of VTmtss strategies, with an emphasis on using data gathered through the VTmtss process to improve mathematics instructional and intervention practices, leading to improved student outcomes. During SY 2021-22, there were 81 systems coach contacts with participating LEAs and one Independent (private) school. Coaching sessions most frequently addressed data-based decision-making (n=36), developing or reviewing action plans (n=41), alignment to inter-division work (n=18), alignment with LEA Continuous Improvement Plans (n=16), and development and implementation of SMART goals to guide professional learning (n=15). The SSIP Core Team and Evaluation Team continually reviewed the systems coaching tools and processes used to support LEAs and schools, based on feedback from the systems coaches and SSIP participants. As discussed previously, the SPOTT was modified slightly based on feedback received.

Mathematics Professional Learning (Training and Coaching)

As discussed previously, two VT SSIP trainings were held during SY2021-22, involving 19 participants. The trainings were supported by ongoing SSIP instructional coaching. During this reporting period, there were 32 mathematics coaching activities provided by VT SSIP instructional coaches, at 8 schools among participating LEAs. All but one of the coaching contacts were virtual. The most frequent instructional coaching activities focused on evidence-based mathematical practices (n=6), reviewing action plans (n=4), providing guidance on implementing IEPs (n=4), and working with the mathematics fidelity of implementation tool (n=4). The SSIP instructional coach worked directly with district and/or school coaches when available, however much of the virtual instructional coaching was with school and district administrators to develop systems for supporting teachers. SSIP coaches had very limited access to teachers, regardless of virtual or face-to-face methods. Starting in SY 2022-2023, PD opportunities are being offered to schools virtually and range from 60-90 minutes once per month as a result of stakeholder feedback.

Stakeholder Engagement

During SY 2021-22, there were two SSIP site stakeholder meetings among SSIP Participants. The first meeting was the VT SSIP 2021-22 Kick-Off Meeting (October 16, 2021), held virtually with 28 SSIP participants. The purpose of the meeting was to share data from the previous school year, to provide an overview of professional learning to be provided in 2021-22, and to seek input from

participants on how to improve professional learning.

An end-of-year meeting was planned for May 19, 2022, to review the SSIP goals and objectives, to share data from SY 2021-22, and to gather their feedback on how to improve professional learning. However, there was limited interest from SSIP participants in attending another meeting, so an exit interview process was used to gather feedback from the participants. The results from these interviews are discussed in the next section.

VT SSIP staff met with the VT-SEAP in October 2021 to share the results from SY 2020-21 and to seek their input on the implementation and scale-up activities of the SSIP. During this meeting, the VT-SEAP members provided feedback on proposed SiMR target changes. Their feedback was mostly in the form of questions about why the SiMR was only for grades 3-5 when the greatest impact might be in early grades.

Describe the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved for each infrastructure improvement strategy during the reporting period including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Please relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up.

Teaming

The VT SSIP Core Team, Transformation Team, and Evaluation Team all met as scheduled during SY 2021-22. The CORE Team is responsible for monitoring and providing support to the VT SSIP systems and instructional coaches to facilitate their work with LEAs and schools. Job-embedded coaches are used to support scale-up and sustainability efforts. Data from the May 2022 VT SSIP Impact Surveys were used as evidence to support the impact of the VT AOE teaming structure. The 19 recipients of VT SSIP systems coaching were surveyed, with 10 (53%) responding. The eight participants in VT mathematics professional learning were also surveyed, with two responses (25%). All of the systems coaching respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the VT AOE has the necessary capacity to support and sustain the effective use of VTmtss. Each of the two respondents from the VT SSIP mathematics professional learning strongly agreed the VT AOE has the capacity to support and sustain the effective use of mathematics practices to impact student performance. Currently, SSIP participation is incentivized via LSED points within monitoring protocols. Beginning in SY 2022-23, LEAs with longstanding non-compliance issues will be required to participate in SSIP. (governance, TA, quality standards, monitoring)

VTmtss Implementation/Systems Coaching

VT SSIP systems professional learning focused on increasing the infrastructure of the AOE to support LEA's use of Vtmtss practices and to increase the capacity of LEAs to support their schools' implementation of a VTmtss framework. This included training on the use of driver diagrams and the identification of problems of practice and corresponding change plans. On the May 2022 VT SSIP Systems Coaching Impact Survey, all 10 respondents reported the VT SSIP systems coaches helped them to develop change ideas, and 90% of respondents were in agreement that they were better able to prioritize goals and identify/determine key change ideas (both 90%), and 86% felt the systems coaching helped them to better use the SPOTT. The systems coaching was perceived to have less of an impact on developing SMART goals and implementing activities to achieve their SMART goals (75% agreement). (quality standards, TA, PD, data)

As a result of the systems coaching, all (100%) respondents felt more confident in establishing a culture of learning and high expectations for all students, including students with disabilities. 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed their LEA or school has a greater capacity to support and sustain the effective use of mathematics instruction and VTmtss. All of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed their LEA or school uses data more deliberately to inform improvement efforts. (governance, data,TA, quality standards)

Mathematics Professional Learning (Training and Coaching)

Each of the two respondents to the May 2022 VT SSIP Mathematics Professional Learning Impact Survey were in agreement that the VT SSIP instructional coaching increased their knowledge of the eight NCTM essential mathematics practices.

Each respondent was in agreement that all aspects of the VT SSIP training and coaching impacted their knowledge to use evidence-based practices to meet the mathematics needs of all students and specifically, students with disabilities. Each respondent was in agreement that VT SSIP professional learning had an impact on classroom instruction and classroom engagement of all students and students with disabilities. The intermediate outcomes of improved classroom instruction and greater student engagement are hypothesized to lead to improvements in student performance that should impact the VT SSIP's SiMR. The focus on data systems and increasing the capacity of local coaches is important in fostering the sustainability of the use of evidence-based mathematics practices.

As stated earlier in the report, two SSIP training sessions were held during this reporting period, with 19 participants attending the two sessions. Across the two trainings, the average pre-test score measuring knowledge of the training content increased by 8%, with 71% of the participants reporting increased knowledge at the post-test. Other survey results show that 75% of the participants found the trainings to be high quality, 88% felt the trainings were relevant, 57% thought they were useful, and 81% of respondents agreed to strongly agreed that the trainings used adult learning practices, providing evidence that SSIP implementation was directly related to the SiMR. (accountability, data, PD)

Stakeholder Engagement

In previous years, stakeholder engagement was assessed through evaluation surveys implemented after stakeholder meetings or events, when appropriate. This included quantitative satisfaction and impact feedback, but more importantly, rich qualitative data were also collected to provide a more nuanced assessment. During this reporting period, there were two stakeholder meetings, although neither event had an end-of-event evaluation survey. The only specific stakeholder feedback was gathered through the previously discussed training evaluation data and the two impact surveys discussed above.

As mentioned previously, one meeting was held with the VT SEAP during SY 2021-22 to gather feedback on VT SSIP activities, gain input on future plans, and assist in reviewing the targets for the VT SSIP SiMR. Little feedback was received, with SEAP members reporting satisfaction with SSIP activities.

As stated in the previous section, exit interviews with personnel from the two LEAs and one independent school were conducted by the SSIP systems and instructional coaches in May 2022. The primary systems-related challenges mentioned by LEA personnel were related to (1) administrative issues, (2) a lack of data and/or data literacy skills, (3) LEA and school culture, and (4) the difficulty of implementing evidence-based practices. The LEA personnel were also asked to list areas they could celebrate. Examples of successful work included (1) the development of a common Educational Support Teams process, (2) a better understanding of Act 173 and the relationship of that policy with the SSIP, (3) the development of a master schedule, (4) building the capacity for layered supports that are truly supplemental, but do not supplant core instruction, and (5) we kept the work going with an ebb and flow throughout the year. Suggestions for next year included: (1) a continued focus on improving their MTSS framework, (2) developing strategies to better support teachers, and (3) focusing on the alignment between the SSIP, Act 173, the Continuous Improvement Process, and other related policies.

The exit interview data from the instructional coach was not as comprehensive as the data gathered from systems coaching participants. The primary challenges identified were turnover in administrators and lack of teacher interest and capacity. Examples of success included a willingness to collaborate among general and special educators, a better perspective of effective instructional practices, and increased knowledge of the relationship between SSIP and Act 173. Suggestions for next year included a need for better training, consistency in instructional coaching, and better planning and scheduling to guide professional learning. (accountability, monitoring, quality standards, systems improvement)

Did the State implement any <u>new</u> (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategies during the reporting period? (yes/no)

NO

Provide a summary of the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.

Teaming

The current teaming structure will continue in SY 2022-23 with the exception of the CORE team as it became redundant in scope. A greater emphasis will be placed on analyzing output and fidelity data on an ongoing basis. At each Transformation Team meeting, the SSIP Systems Process, Planning, and Outcome Tool (SPPOT) from at least one LEA will be reviewed. This will allow for feedback from the AOE to inform and improve the identified problem of practice and corresponding change idea(s) and SMART goals and to support coaches as needed. The external evaluator will also review the identified process and outcomes measures. Similarly, data from the mathematics fidelity tool will be reviewed. We are hopeful that greater participation of teachers from LEAs in “targeted” monitoring for their longstanding non-compliance LSED status will impact student outcomes on a larger scale.

VTmtss Implementation/Systems Coaching

The team structure will continue to support LEA Implementation Teams, during SY 2022-23. Intentional collaboration with the Monitoring Team will target support to LEAs required to participate in SSIP due to their Needs Assistance and Needs Intervention Local Special Education Determination (LSED) status. Also, the SSIP team will expand its reach to the AOE Family Engagement point person to directly support LEAs with low parent involvement rates.

The SPPOT was reviewed and revised at the end of both SY 2020-21 and 2021-22, primarily adding specific resources that connect VTmtss strategies to specific areas of the SPPOT (change ideas, measures, etc.), in addition to providing a space to prompt coaches to describe the data that inform their decision-making process to connect system improvement to coaching decisions. The SPPOT will continue to be reviewed to ensure the tool meets the needs of the SSIP implementation and evaluation.

The transformation team objectives will evolve to incorporate ongoing feedback and support to coaches that allow for a review of the quality and fidelity to coaching expectations according to best practices in coaching relationships.

Mathematics Professional Learning (Training and Coaching)

During SY 2022-23, the mathematics professional learning will look different as no viable candidates applied to the instructional coaching position. We have pivoted to monthly PD for math teachers, coaches, and interventionists provided by our national TA provider. The new approach will be reviewed to make sure the VT SSIP activities are implemented as designed and the VT SiMR is achieved. Feedback from SSIP stakeholders consistently addresses the quality, relevance, and usefulness of these Math sessions. Post-pandemic, teachers are clear about what more supports are wanted, SSIP seeks to provide those supports.

The use of the mathematics fidelity of implementation tool (renamed the VT SSIP Math Practices Scale for Instructional Growth) will provide a more accurate measure of how well teachers are implementing the desired mathematical practice areas with fidelity. This will also help mitigate data quality issues described previously. In addition to the scale (based on the NCTM best practices), the Math PD will focus on Assisting Students Struggling with Mathematics: Intervention in the Elementary Grades from the ies.ed.gov.

Stakeholder Engagement

Existing stakeholder engagement strategies will continue. This includes ongoing meetings and communication (through coaches) with SSIP LEA and school participants, teacher feedback, regular meetings with the VT-SEAP state-wide stakeholder group meetings, and cross-SEA division conversations. We will continue to explore other methods of stakeholder engagement to augment the current activities.

List the selected evidence-based practices implement in the reporting period:

1. Multi-Tiered System of Supports (VTmtss)
2. Professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS /NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices, and Assisting Students Struggling with Mathematics: Intervention in the Elementary Grades from the ies.ed.gov.
3. Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction (progress monitoring modules- NCII)
4. Systems and instructional coaching

Provide a summary of each evidence-based practices.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (VTmtss)

During SY 2021-22, the SSIP teams continued to collaborate with the VTmtss Team to provide systems-level professional learning activities to support LEAs in their efforts to develop a VTmtss framework, using MTSS tools to guide SSIP systems coaching efforts. The VTmtss team has a dedicated team member to serve on the VT SSIP Transformation and the Evaluation Teams. The VTmtss Framework is based on the most recent research and evidence related to implementing MTSS equitably so that all students have access to rigorous content and high-quality supports and interventions.

A primary collaborative activity is the ongoing development of the SPPOT, discussed earlier, to assess progress related to the systems-based continuous improvement SSIP goals. The systems coaches work closely with each LEA's Leadership Team to identify a systems-level problem of practice and SMART goal associated with the SIMR, relevant change ideas, and related process and outcome measures for each change idea along with timeframes for completion. Next, they identify process and outcome measures, with timeframes for completion. The SPPOT is reviewed at each team meeting.

Professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS Mathematics Practices/NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices.

As mentioned previously, two SSIP training sessions and 32 instructional coaching activities were conducted in SY 2021-22 to increase (1) teachers' capacity to implement the CCSS Mathematics Practices and NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices with fidelity and (2) local coaches' capacity to support teachers' implementation of CCSS Mathematics Practices and NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices. The VT SSIP continues to collaborate with staff from the Student Pathways Division to plan, implement, and evaluate VT SSIP mathematics professional learning activities. Similar to the systems professional learning collaboration with the VTmtss team described above, the Student Pathways Division's mathematics consultant is a member of the VT SSIP Core Team, Transformation Team, and Evaluation Team.

The purpose of the mathematics fidelity of the implementation instrument/process is to identify practices for teachers and coaches to focus on for ongoing coaching. These practices (NCTM) foster the development of aligned student behaviors (CCSS). A corresponding action plan guides the coaching and identifies desired outcomes. As discussed previously, the initial rollout of the fidelity of the implementation process was minimal in SY 2021-22, with only two teachers participating in two or more administrations of the fidelity tool.

Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction.

The VT SSIP systems and mathematics professional learning is anchored by data analysis and the use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction. Professional learning activities were evaluated through training evaluations, fidelity of implementation data, participant impact surveys, a coaching log dashboard, and stakeholder feedback. These data are reviewed on an ongoing basis, with subsequent corrections to implementation and/or evaluation activities and/or celebrations of success.

Data from the VT SSIP Coaching Log Dashboard indicated that systems coaching on the use of data to guide instruction were the most frequent systems coaching activity (n=36) during SY 2021-22. At the LEA and instructional level, the SPPOT and the mathematics fidelity of implementation tool were used to gather baseline and ongoing data to guide systems planning and to determine the necessary professional learning to improve mathematics instruction.

Systems and Instructional Coaching

VT SSIP has focused on improving the capacity of SSIP and LEA/school coaches to support ongoing VTmtss implementation and improved instructional practices. As stated previously, there were 81 systems coaching activities and 32 instructional coaching activities during SY 2021-22. The VT SSIP Core Team and other VT AOE staff provided support and guidance to the SSIP systems and instructional coaches, as needed.

Provide a summary of how each evidence-based practice and activities or strategies that support its use, is intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (e.g. behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes, and/or child /outcomes.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (VTmtss)/Systems coaching

The VTmtss framework's five components include A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach, Effective Collaboration, High-Quality Instruction and Intervention, Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment, and Professional Expertise. Research has shown that schools implementing a well-designed MTSS framework are in a better position to support high-quality instruction, increased data literacy practices by teachers and leaders, provide appropriate support for all students, and reduce false negatives to special education evaluations. Act 173 will require ALL LEAs to have MTSS as part of an RTI model for Specific Learning Disability Determinations by July 1, 2023.

Professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS/NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices.

Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction.

Instructional Coaching

The three evidence-based practices listed above are addressed together in this paragraph. The SEA offered SSIP sites mathematics professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS Mathematics Practices and NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices. This includes training sessions, and instructional coaching practices, with an emphasis on data analysis and the use of the data to inform and drive instruction. It is through these learnings, coaching, and changes in practice that we hope to improve teacher practices and ultimately, impact mathematics proficiency levels for all students with disabilities. Based on our data, Math PD sessions in SY 2022-23 will focus on teaching practices anchored in the recent Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Mathematics Intervention Guide.

Describe the data collected to monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change.

The VT SSIP Evaluation Team and the VT AOE VTmtss team developed the SPPOT to assess to what degree the systems' professional learning activities were being implemented with fidelity. The SPPOT provides a structure to guide and collect data to measure the progress of LEAs' implementation of the essential components of VTmtss. The development and review of the SPPOT are facilitated by the systems coaches to support each LEA's Leadership Team. The purpose of the SPPOT is to identify a problem of practice and related change idea(s) and SMART goal(s). Process and outcome measures, with timeframes for completion, are also established. The review of the SPPOT is an ongoing continuous improvement process to guide implementation and assess the attainment of the identified process and outcome measures.

During SY 2021-22 , 18 process measures were identified across the two participating LEAs and one independent school. A total of 13 (72%) of the process measures were completed.

The VT Mathematics Fidelity of Implementation tool and process is designed to align with the CCSS Practice Standards and the NCTM eight effective practices and was created to identify instructional practices that required additional professional learning support, either in additional training and/or sustained coaching. The plan is for baseline data to be collected at the beginning of each school year, with subsequent reviews during the year. An action plan is then developed to guide instructional coaching and to identify pertinent outcomes. At least one additional administration of the fidelity tool is to be completed prior to the end of each school year.

Similar to the SPPOT, this mathematics fidelity tool was tested in spring 2021. Modifications were made to the fidelity tool and process for SY 2021-22. However, there was resistance from participating LEAs and schools to use the fidelity tool. In some cases, there was no agreement among school personnel that the fidelity tool was relevant to their instructional practices, others felt it was too "evaluative" of their teachers. Five teachers were observed by their instructional coaches, although three teachers only had one observation. Of the two teachers with at least two observations, one scored slightly lower on the second observation, while the other had a minimally higher score on the final administration. Further work is necessary to obtain LEA and school buy-in to the fidelity process and the development of a more reliable administration process. The name of the tool has been changed after stakeholder feedback and is used as a growth self-reflection tool.

Describe any additional data (e.g. progress monitoring) that was collected that supports the decision to continue the ongoing use of each evidence-based practice.

Not applicable. All data collected have already been discussed.

Provide a summary of the next steps for each evidence-based practices and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (VTmtss)/Systems Coaching

We plan on continuing the use of systems coaches and the SPPOT to support LEA Leadership Teams to implement targeted components of the VTmtss framework. Systems coaches will be provided greater support by the VT SSIP Transformation Team in

the development and review of the SPPOT. At each Transformation Team meeting, the SPPOT from one participating district is reviewed and feedback is provided to the systems coaches. Expected outcomes are for the LEA Leadership Teams to achieve their identified process and outcome measures related to their MTSS-related problems of practice and associated change ideas designed to improve mathematics outcomes for students with disabilities in grades 3-5, as well as impacting the VT SSIP's SiMR.

Professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS Mathematics Practices/NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices and the IES Practice Guide: Assisting Students Struggling with Mathematics: Intervention in the Elementary Grades.

Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction.

Instructional Coaching

The focus on varied professional learning opportunities supporting the implementation of the three evidence-based practices listed above includes more in-person, classroom teacher-level support, observation and coaching. Monthly professional development (Dec 2022 – June 2023) will be offered to all teachers, coaches, interventionists, special educators and administrators responsible for math instruction in grades 3, 4, and 5, and will continue to focus on data analysis and the use of data to guide mathematics instruction, best practices in intervention, and the NCTM best practices.

Does the State intend to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications? (yes/no)

YES

If yes, describe how evaluation data support the decision to implement without any modifications to the SSIP.

The coaching and implementation data from the impact survey, the slow growth curve of improving instruction and interventions, and student outcomes along with feedback from participating LEAs in the year-end impact survey informed our decision to continue what we are doing with more targeted support than we have been able to provide through the pandemic. Based on that feedback support is still needed to improve the system of support, as well as specific teaching practices. So we do not want to abandon implementation, we want to continue to reach audiences with fewer interruptions than last school year.

Section C: Stakeholder Engagement

Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021, which are described in Vermont's FFY2020 SPP/APR. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr

VT AOE continues to make progress towards our goal of improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative stakeholder input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board (VCSEA); as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state. Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022 and some July 1,2023. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, continue to be based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, VCSEA and the Vermont Family Network (VFN). The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations provide direct and ongoing feedback on each resource released in response to the rule changes. Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment, and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities. VT AOE staff serving as individual indicator stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing technical assistance, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021, SPP/APR submission.

VT AOE continues to engage with stakeholders, including collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN. Part of this work includes but

not limited to –
- Meeting with VFN quarterly to review concerns and are partnering with them to coordinate a response to rule changes targeted at parents
- Collaboration with VCSEA in reviewing and providing feedback on changes to eligibility and evaluation forms that will impact indicator 11
- Surveying Special Education directors and administrators on needs related to Vermont Special Education rule changes
- Presenting SPP/APR results and collaborating on improvement activities to the VT-SEAP

Describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts.

As discussed earlier in the report, there were two stakeholder meetings during this reporting period, although neither event had an end-of-event evaluation survey. The only specific stakeholder feedback was gathered through the training evaluation data and the two annual impact surveys.

Kick-Off Meeting Feedback

On October 16, 2021, the VT SSIP 2021-22 Kick-Off Meeting was held virtually, with 28 SSIP participants. The meeting objectives were to share SSIP data from 2020-21, to provide an overview of professional learning to be provided in 2021-22, and to provide opportunities for participants to interact and give feedback on how the SSIP professional learning could be improved.

Exit Interview Results

There was limited interest from SSIP participants in attending the end-of-year meeting, planned for May 19, 2022. The intended purpose of the meeting was to gather their feedback on how to improve the professional learning, to review the SSIP goals and objectives, and to share data from SY 2021-22. In place of the meeting, an exit interview process was developed to gather feedback from the participants. The exit interviews were conducted by the SSIP systems and instructional coaches in May 2022, with personnel from the two LEAs and one independent school.

Earlier in this report, we provided the accomplishments and challenges mentioned by LEA personnel participating in the exit interviews. Specific feedback provided for the systems coaching was to maintain the focus on improving their MTSS framework, with an emphasis on aligning the SSIP, Act 173, VT State board of Education Rules Changes, the Continuous Improvement Process, and other related policies; and to develop strategies to better support teachers.

There was less exit interview data regarding the instructional training and coaching. As with the systems exit interview data, the successes and challenges they identified were discussed previously. The suggestions provided in the exit interviews included a need for more relevant training, increased consistency in instructional coaches, and improved planning and scheduling to guide the professional learning.

SSIP Impact Surveys

Participants from SSIP LEAs and schools were asked to provide suggestions for improving the SSIP on the May 2022 Impact Survey. While most of the information gathered was very positive, constructive feedback included:
- Having outcome-based goals that are more concrete and monitoring them regularly. Our goals were too big and the data that we would use to measure progress was not articulated.
- The systems coach worked effectively with our district leadership. It was less valuable with my own school leadership team.
- In-person meetings were the most effective.

VT SEAP Stakeholder Feedback

In October 2021, staff from the VT SSIP staff met with the VT-SEAP to share the results from SY 2020-21. Their input on the implementation and scale-up activities of the SSIP was also solicited at this time. The primary purpose of the meeting was to gather feedback from VT-SEAP members on the proposed changes to the VT SSIP SiMR target. Their feedback was mainly focused on widening the messaging about SSIP, and how the desire was that all LEAs would participate.

Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities? (yes/no)

YES

Describe how the State addressed the concerns expressed by stakeholders.

Exit Interview Results

Data from the May 2022 exit interviews were analyzed by the VT SSIP external evaluator and shared with the Core Team. Feedback was incorporated into RFPs for systems and instructional coaching and training for SY 2022-23. Consideration has also been given to the need to better oversee the systems and instructional coaching process and documentation. Strategies have also been discussed on how to reach out to additional LEAs and to work more directly with school administrators and staff. Given that the Special Education Monitoring team and the Technical Assistance Team have closely aligned LSED status to the supports of SSIP, the pool of expertise is greater.

SSIP Impact Surveys

The VT SSIP Core Team reviewed quantitative and qualitative data collected through the May 2022 Impact Survey. Based on participant feedback, we have continued to review the SPPOT instrument and process. We realize that more consistent oversight of

the process is needed to ensure the tool and process are used reliably. We are also strategizing on how to best access school administrators and teachers. That area of implementation has been a challenge, particularly with the challenges of entering school buildings, due to COVID.

VT SEAP Stakeholder Feedback

Messaging was increased to other LEAs during the summer, and SSIP supports were employed by the Special Education Monitoring team as a result of Needs Assistance Y3 / Needs Interventions determinations of 9 LEAs.

Additional Implementation Activities

List any activities not already described that the State intends to implement in the next fiscal year that are related to the SiMR.

Not applicable. All planned activities have already been discussed.

Provide a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes for these activities that are related to the SiMR.

Describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.

Not applicable. The primary barriers related to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic are the same as those reported in the 2022 SSIP Phase III report.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional).

17 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

17 - OSEP Response

17 - Required Actions