

**Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
Survey Summary
2018-2019**

Response to Title 16 V.S.A. §2904

REPORT

September 10, 2019

**Summary Report to the Secretary of
Education**

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Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports (VTmtss)

The VTmtss Framework is a systemic approach to decision-making for excellence and equity within a culture of continuous improvement that focuses on successful outcomes for all students. This systemic approach:

- Supports the effective collaboration of all adults to meet the academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs of all students,
- Provides a layered continuum of high-quality, evidence-based instruction, intervention, and assessment practices that are matched to student strengths and needs,
- Relies on the effective and timely use of meaningful data,
- Helps districts and their schools organize resources to accelerate the learning of every student, and
- Engages and develops the collective expertise of educators, students, family and community partnerships.

What is the Multi-tiered System of Supports Survey?

The Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Survey provides the Agency of Education with the data to fulfill legal requirements under title 16 V.S.A. § 2904. This statute states; “Annually, each superintendent shall report to the Secretary in a form prescribed by the Secretary, on the status of the educational support systems in each school in the supervisory union.”

While [16 V.S.A. § 2904*](#) is Vermont statute, collecting the MTSS Survey data is a positive step in ensuring principals reflect current implementation efforts in their schools as well as areas for improvement and growth. The survey offers schools an opportunity to share success stories of their multi-tiered system of supports.

Thank you to all the superintendents and principals who ensured that the MTSS Survey data for SY18-19 was completed for the schools in your supervisory union or school districts. By completing the survey, you ensured that pertinent data is available for making decisions to improve education for all students.

*A request has been made for technical correction within the statute to change educational support system to multi-tiered system of supports.

Survey Logistics

The reporting window for the *Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Survey* ends on June 1st, or the next business day, of each year. The collected data is used to inform the Secretary of Education the status of each school’s multi-tiered system of supports and the funding sources used to provide supports to students.

The methodology used to collect this data was a survey with multiple choice items and open-ended questions. The principal of each school or their designee reported the data. Principals received their school’s survey data in August to inform their continued work to strengthen and expand their VTmtss. The survey data is analyzed and reported by the VTmtss Team.

The data presented in this report is the most recent data available at the time of publication. The report is not intended to be an exhaustive compilation of a school’s comprehensive system of educational services data, nor does it attempt to validate selected multi-tiered system of

supports practices reflected in the data by a school. The data reflects what the survey asks and what information is reported.

100 Percent Response Rate

The AOE is happy to report that there was a 100% survey response rate from schools this year. This year's data provides the VTmtss Team a more complete understanding of the status of multi-tiered system of supports throughout Vermont. The 2017-18 survey had an 85 percent submission rate and the 2016-17 survey had an 84 percent submission rate. Some questions were revised to provide clarity of understanding which benefit both schools in their continuous improvement and the AOE in our support.

Statement on Sharing of the Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Survey Summary

This report is provided to the Secretary of Education and other Agency of Education (AOE) Teams. This document will be available to Vermont public schools' superintendents and principals as well as on the [Vermont \(VT\) AOE website](#).

Executive Summary

The *Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Survey Summary 2018-2019* provides an analysis and evaluation of the data reported by 294 schools representing 55 Supervisory Unions and Supervisory Districts (SU/SD).

This data, collected from all VT K-12 public school principals, will be used to:

- Inform the VTmtss Team of the need for professional learning opportunities, technical assistance, and resources to support Supervisory Unions and School Districts (SU/SDs) to implement a tiered system of supports,
- Inform the identification and provision of technical assistance supporting Vermont's implementation of Act 173,
- Inform the Education Quality Assurance Team's work with schools identified for Comprehensive and Equity Supports, as well as provide networking opportunities through the VTmtss monthly Office Hour presentations and field guest presenters, and
- Support a common unity of purpose within the AOE.

The report acknowledges that the analysis conducted has limitations. All data was self-reported. Some of the terms in the data (ex: culturally-responsive practices, trauma-informed practices) were offered without providing a standardized definition, and were therefore open to some interpretation by respondents. And the addition of new survey questions this year meant that trend data wasn't consistently available, although 2018-19 survey data was compared to 2017-18 and 2016-17 data, where possible.

Key Results: (data was rounded to the nearest percent)

According to the data, all schools reported implementing MTSS. Ninety percent of principals shared success stories from different components of their MTSS framework or highlighted specific student success. Additionally:

1. Seventy-one percent of students referred to the Educational Support Team (EST) received an initial EST support plan.

2. Thirty-seven percent of schools reported that 100 percent of staff are trained in Trauma-informed practices.
3. There was a 15 percent increase in the use of Consolidated Federal Programs (CFP) and 12 percent increase in use of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act & Early Intervening Services (IDEA) as funding sources for mental health and social services and supports.
4. There was an 11 percent increase in the use of CFP as a funding sources for Academics and Behavioral Support Services.
5. Seventy-eight percent of principals rated their school's MTSS implementation characteristics as "making good progress" or "this is well established".
6. Schools reported the category of social emotional learning and behavior supports as the most requested for professional learning and the second most requested category for technical assistance as a way to strengthen their multi-tiered support systems.

*This survey question was revised for this year's survey.

For More Information About VTmtss

Technical assistance can be requested from the AOE VTmtss Team by contacting Tracy Watterson, VTmtss Program Manager, tracy.watterson@vermont.gov.

For requests concerning this report, including requests for compilations of responses, contact Nancy Hellen, VTmtss Coordinator, nancy.hellen@vermont.gov.

More information about VTmtss is on the [Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports webpages](#).

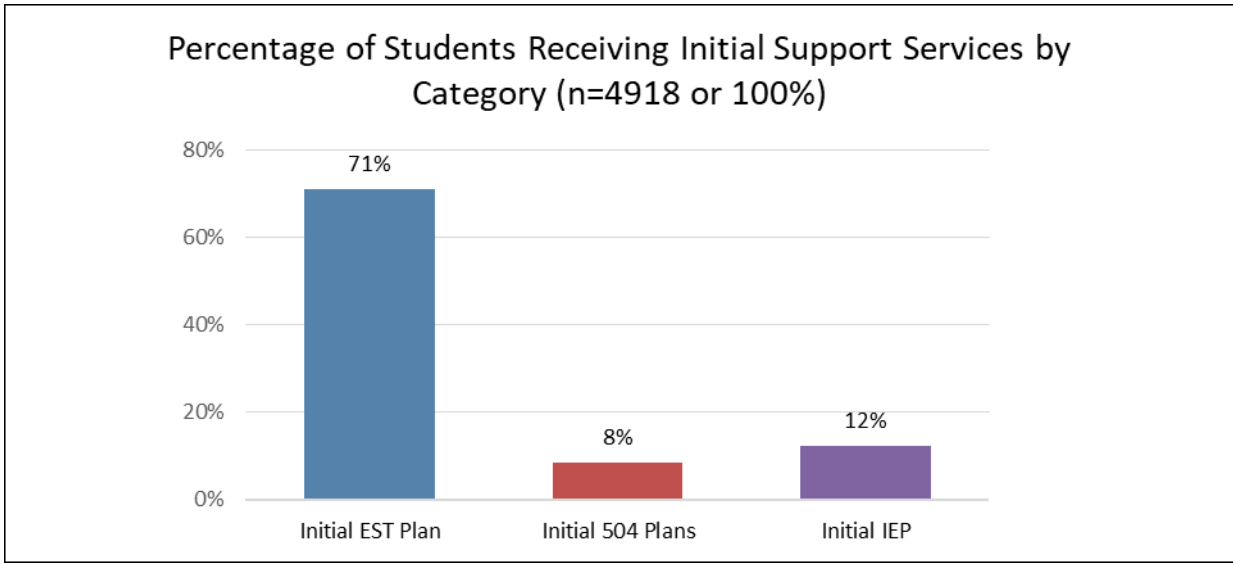
Multi-tiered System of Supports Survey Findings (data rounded to nearest whole number)

Student Support Services

In the 2018-19 school year, an initial referral to an Educational Support Team (EST) was made for 4,918 students. Of those students who were initial referrals to the EST, 71 percent (3,497 students) received an initial educational support plan, eight percent (414 students) were referred for further evaluation and received an initial 504 plan, and 17 percent (847 students) received a special education evaluation. Of the group of 847 students who received an initial special education evaluation, 71 percent (600 students) were found eligible for special education services and received an initial Individualized Education Program (IEP). This reflects approximately 12 percent of the 4,918 students newly referred to the EST.

The AOE has determined that effectively supporting ESTs is a critical component of implementing Act 173. This survey data will be used to inform the EST-related guidance and supports developed in response to Act 173.

The summary data below represents the percent of students receiving initial services by category: EST Plan, 504 Plan, and IEP.



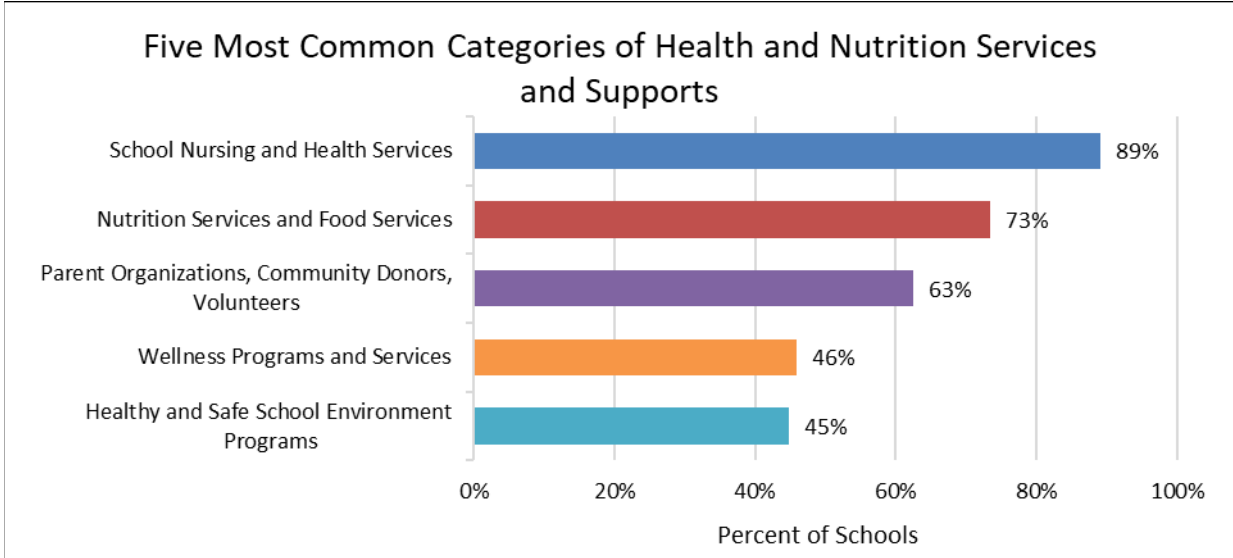
Data over the past three years suggests these percentages have fluctuated slightly by only one to three percent.

Reporting Requirements of Title 16 Funding

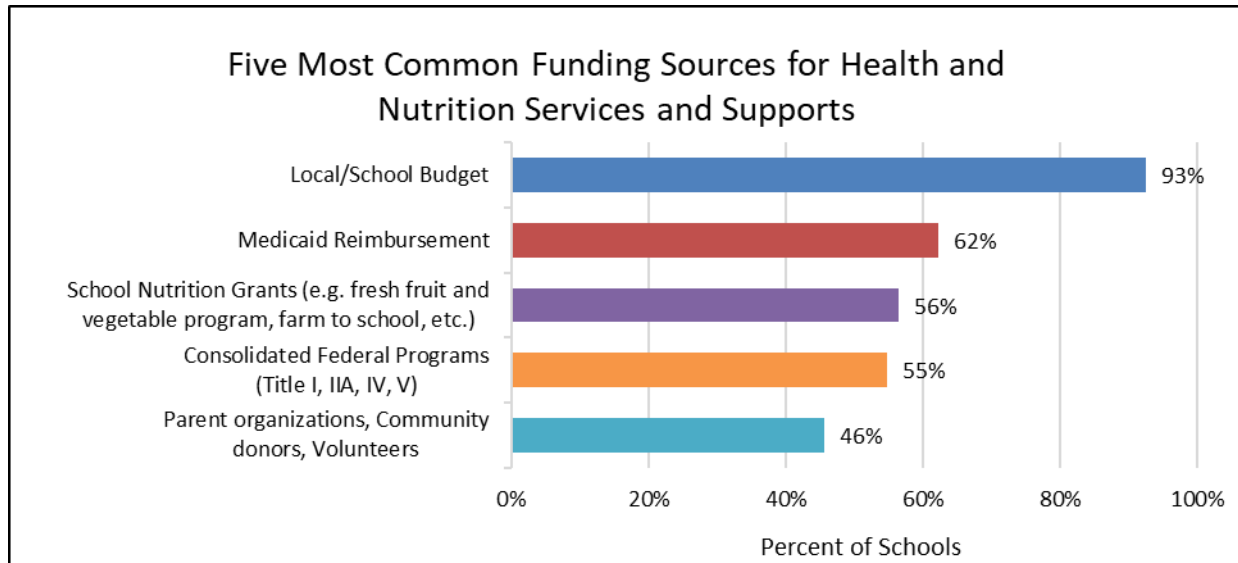
Based on the reporting requirement of Title 16, this section details the description and justification of how funding sources are used to support student services.

Health and Nutrition Services and Supports

The five most common categories of Health and Nutrition Services and Supports offered by schools include School Nursing and Health Services (89 percent), Nutrition Services and Food Services (73 percent), Parent Organizations, Community Donors, Volunteers (63 percent), Wellness Programs and Services (46 percent), and Healthy and Safe School Environment Programs (45 percent).

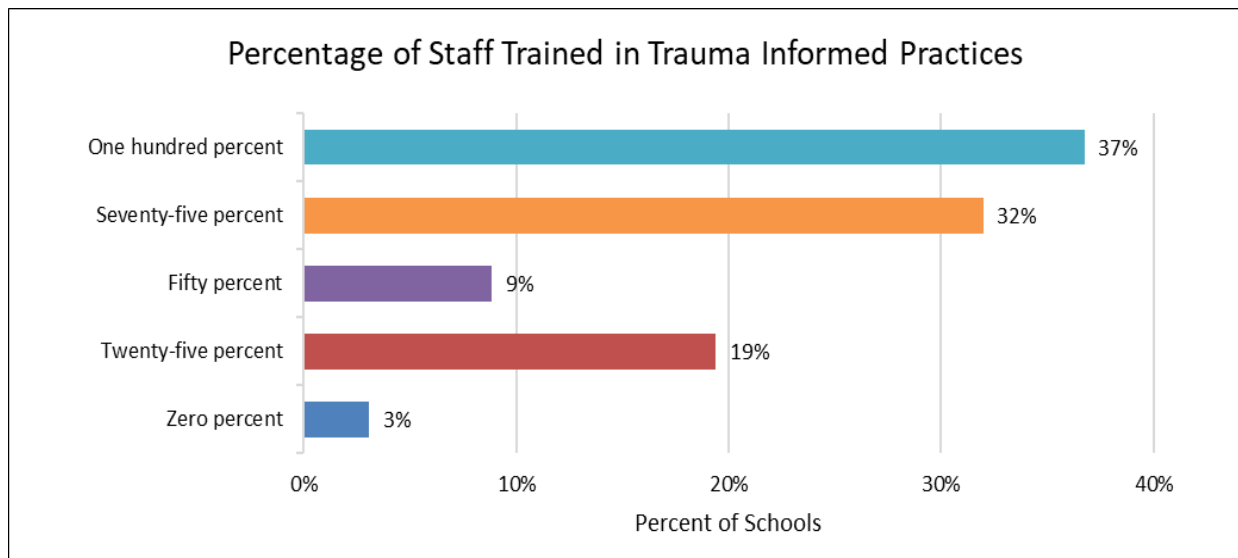


The five most common funding sources for Health and Nutrition Services and Supports are Local/School Budget (93 percent), Medicaid Reimbursement (62 percent), School Nutrition Grants (56 percent), Consolidated Federal Programs (CFP) (55 percent), and Parent/Community (46 percent).



Staff Trained in Trauma Informed Practices

Thirty-seven percent of schools reported that one hundred percent of staff are trained in Trauma Informed Practices. Thirty-two percent reported seventy-five percent of staff are trained, nine percent indicated fifty percent of staff are trained, nineteen percent indicated twenty-five percent of staff are trained, and three percent indicated zero percent of staff are trained in Trauma Informed Practices.



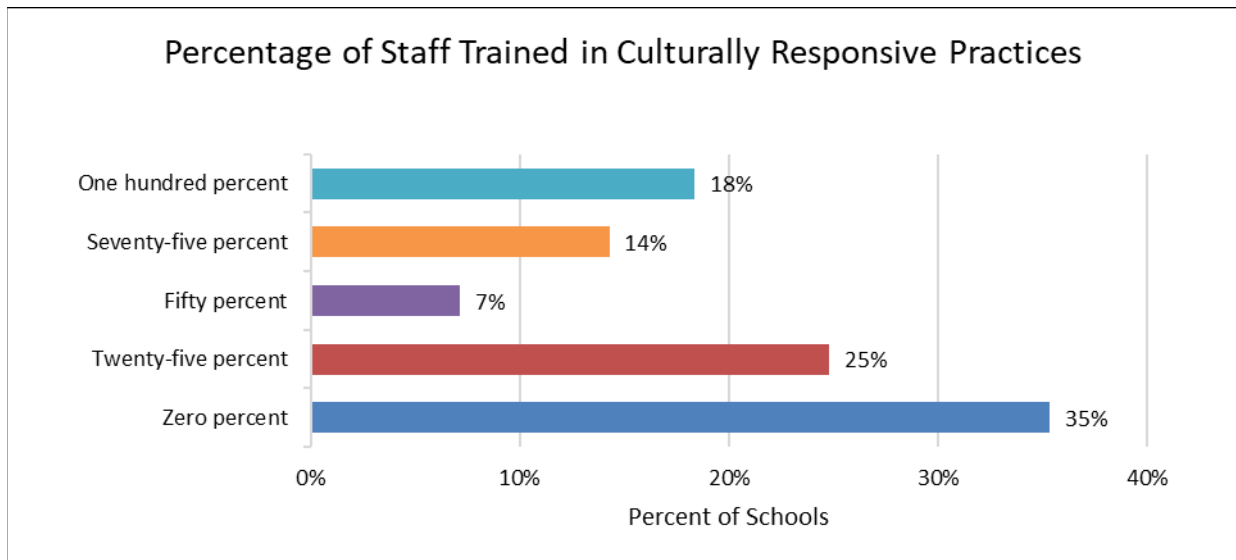
This year’s data compared to last year’s data, shows a five percent increase in the number of schools reporting one hundred percent of their staff trained in Trauma Informed Practices and a seven percent increase in the number of schools reporting 75 percent of their staff trained in Trauma Informed Practices.

Principals were asked to identify the Trauma Informed Practices training their staff participated in within the past three years. A compilation of responses submitted by 283 schools (96 percent) is available upon request.

Staff Trained in Culturally Responsive Practices

This year, two questions regarding culturally responsive practices were added to the survey.

Eighteen percent of schools reported that one hundred percent of staff are trained in Culturally Responsive Practices, 14 percent reported seventy-five percent of staff are trained, seven percent indicated fifty percent of staff are trained, 25 percent indicated twenty-five percent of staff are trained, and 35 percent indicated zero percent of staff are trained in Trauma Responsive Practices.



Culturally Responsive Practices Trainings

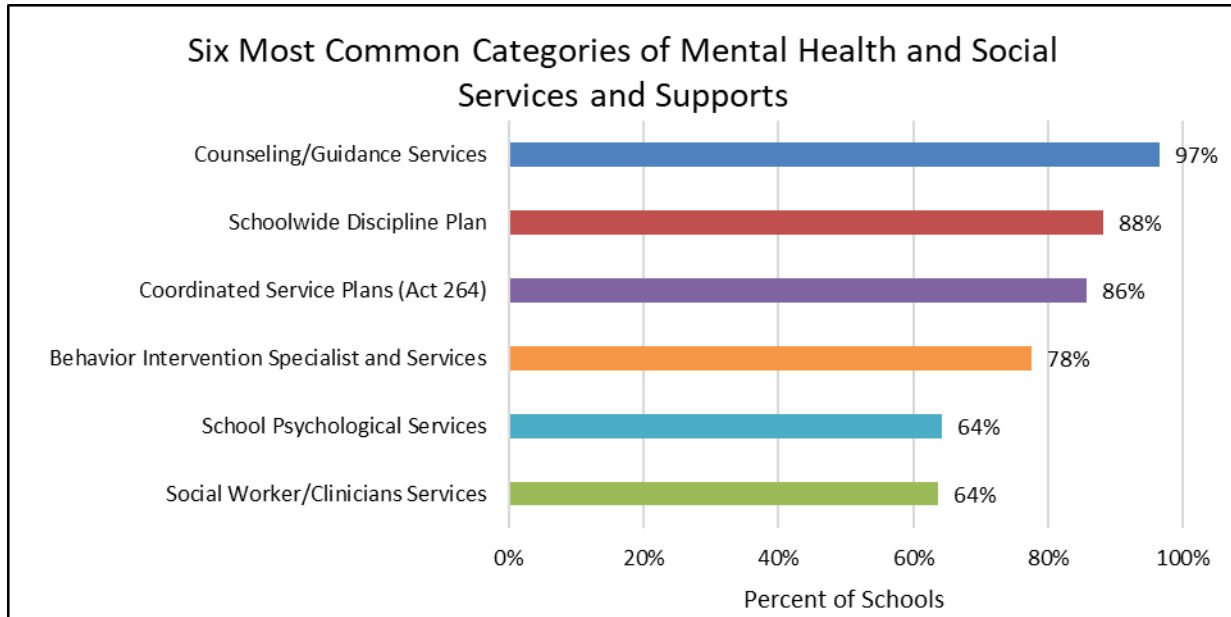
Principals were asked to identify the Culturally Responsive Practices training their staff participated in within the past three years. A compilation of responses submitted by 283 schools (96 percent) is available upon request.

Preventative Program for Substance Abuse Intervention

Principals were asked to identify the abuse prevention programs their school offers. The data shows twenty percent of schools provide prevention within the health education plan, and twenty-three percent responded that their school had a student assistance professional (SAP) or SAP program. Eighteen percent of schools have *Memorandum of Understandings for Substance Abuse Treatment Providers*. These responses were distributed throughout grade levels. Twenty-one percent of schools reported no prevention program or left the question unanswered. A compilation of responses submitted by 228 schools (78 percent) is available upon request.

Mental Health and Social Services and Supports

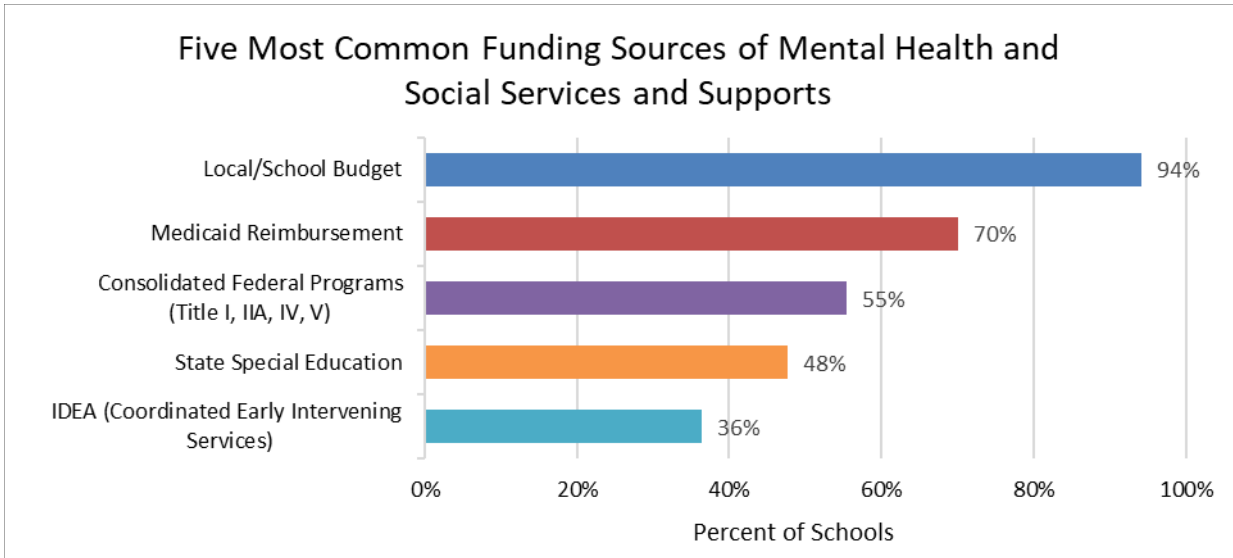
The six most common categories of Mental Health and Social Services and Supports offered by schools include Counseling/Guidance Services (97 percent), Schoolwide Discipline Plan (88 percent), Coordinated Service Plans (Act 264) (86 percent), Behavior Intervention Specialist and Services (78 percent), and School Psychological Services and Social Worker/Clinicians Services (64 percent).



The most common categories of Mental Health and Social Service Supports are similarly as aligned to last year's reported categories.

The questions relating to Substance Use/Abuse Prevention Programs were changed to include two distinct categories: Department of Health, and Other Sources. In addition, a narrative box was added to answer which substance abuse prevention services were offered.

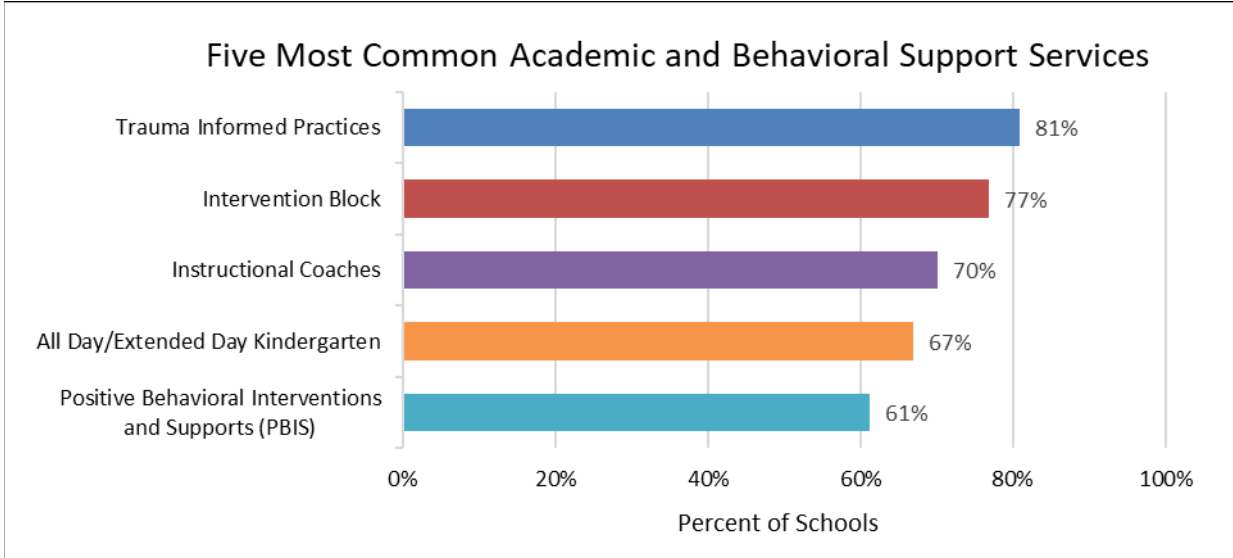
The five most common Mental Health and Social Services and Supports funding sources were Local/School Budget (94 percent), Medicaid Reimbursement (70 percent), CFP (55 percent) State Special Education (48 percent), and IDEA (Coordinated Early Intervening Services) (36 percent).



This year's data shows an increase in the use of CFP and IDEA funds by 15 percent and 12 percent respectively.

Academics and Behavioral Support Services

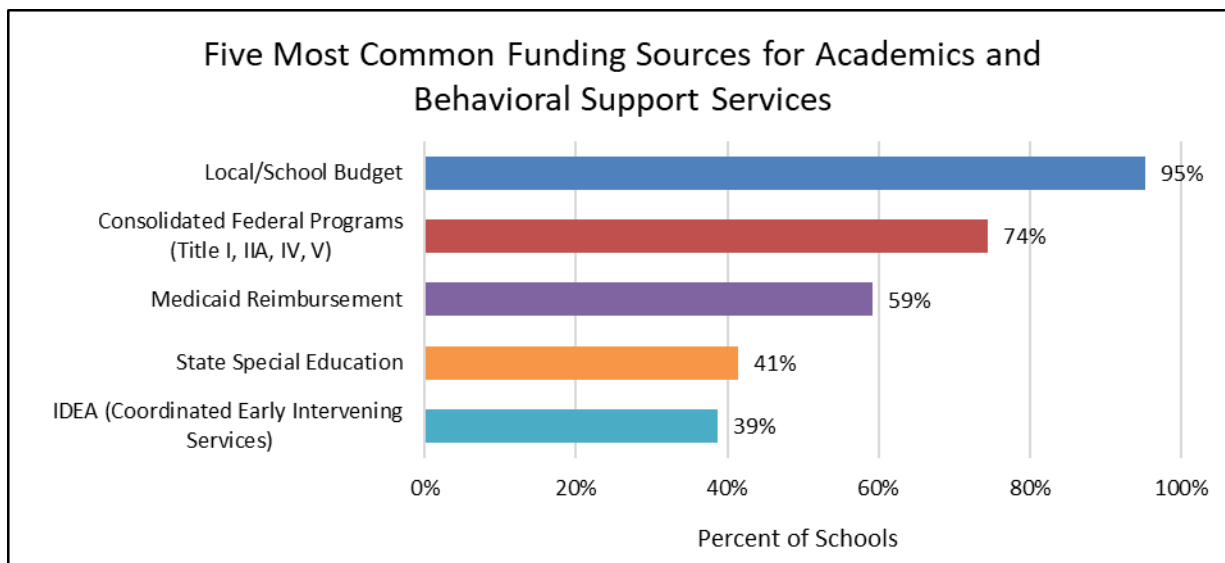
All schools offer Academic and Behavioral Support Services. The five most common Academic and Behavioral Support Services offered by schools included Trauma Informed Practices (81 percent), Intervention Block (77 percent), Instructional Coaches (70 percent), All Day/Extended Day Kindergarten (67 percent), and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) (61 percent).



This year's data shows Trauma Informed Practices increased by 12 percent, the same percentage increase as reported last year, Intervention Block increased by seven percent (last year's increase was six percent), and Instructional Coaches increased by seven percent this year.

In this question the option English Learners and PreK were removed as these are required academic and behavior supports.

The five most common Academics and Behavioral Support Services funding sources were Local/School Budget (95 percent), CFP (74 percent), Medicaid Reimbursement (59 percent), State Special Education (41 percent), and IDEA (39 percent).



This year’s data shows an eleven percent increase from last year in the use of Consolidated Federal Programs as a funding source, and a thirteen percent decrease in the use of State Special Education as a funding source.

Support for New Staff

Eighty-five percent of schools reported providing procedures to support new staff in a multi-tiered system of supports. This is an increase of twelve percent from last year. The type of procedures used to support new staff was not requested in the survey.

School Narratives

School MTSS Success Stories

Principals were asked to share multi-tiered system of supports success stories. The most frequently reported success stories were in the following general areas: Programs and Interventions, Data and Monitoring, Student Results (including individual student stories), Schedule Modifications, Staffing and Expertise, and Effective Collaboration. A compilation of responses submitted by 265 schools (90 percent) is available upon request.

Multi-tiered System of Supports Rating and Supports to Strengthen

Principals were asked to rate implementation characteristics of their multi-tiered system of supports as well as share types of technical assistance and professional learning topics to strengthen their MTSS.

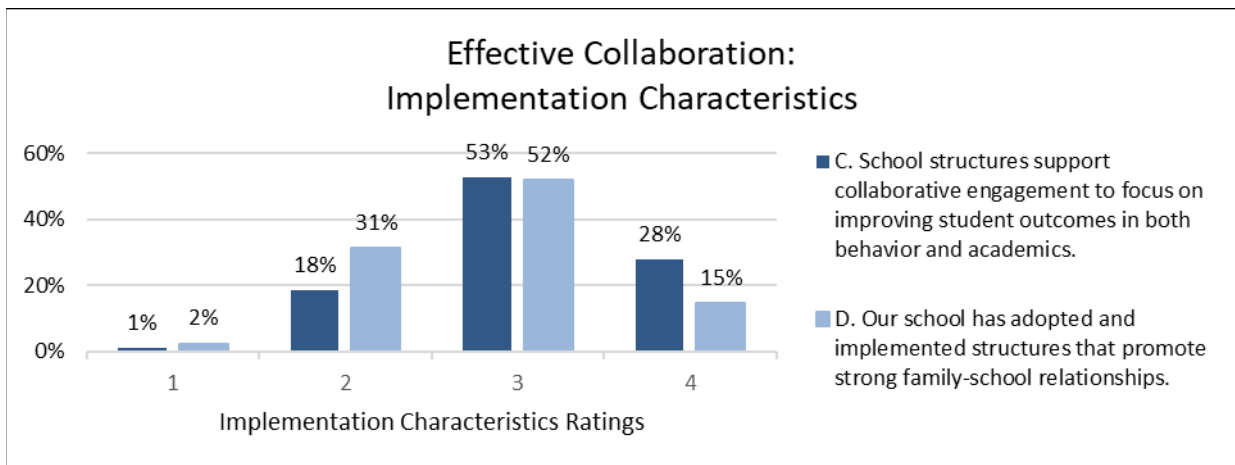
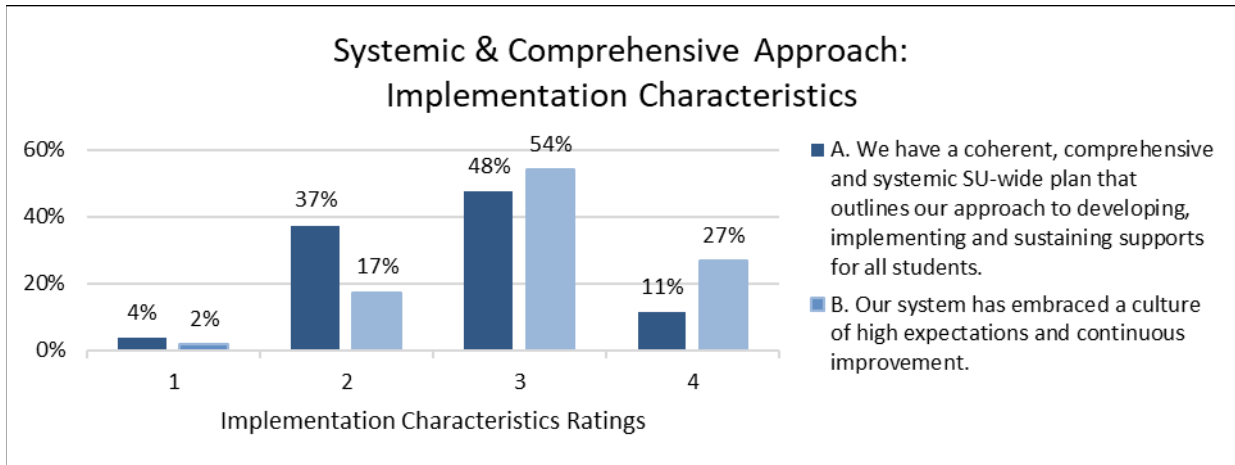
Rating of Multi-tiered System of Supports Implementation Characteristics

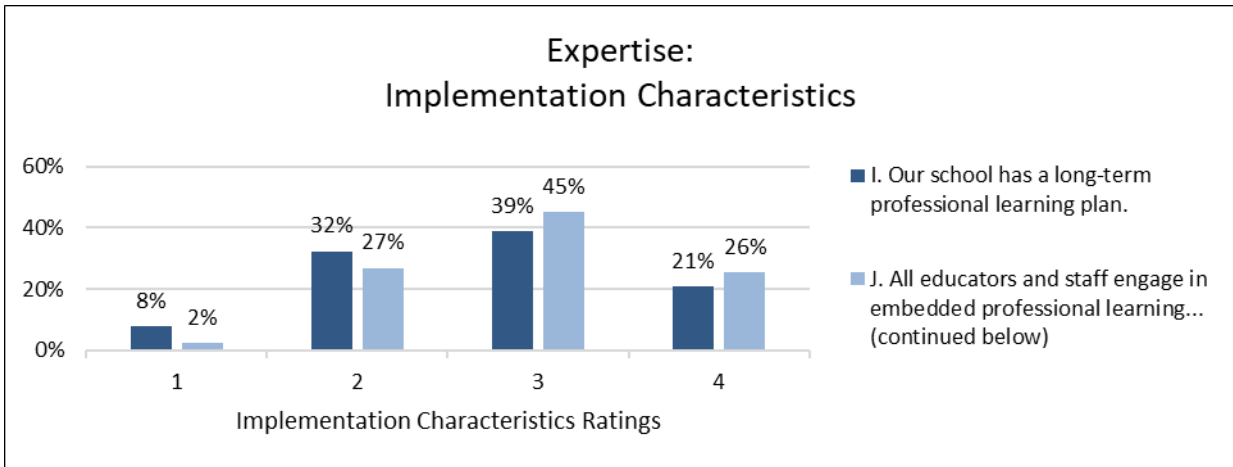
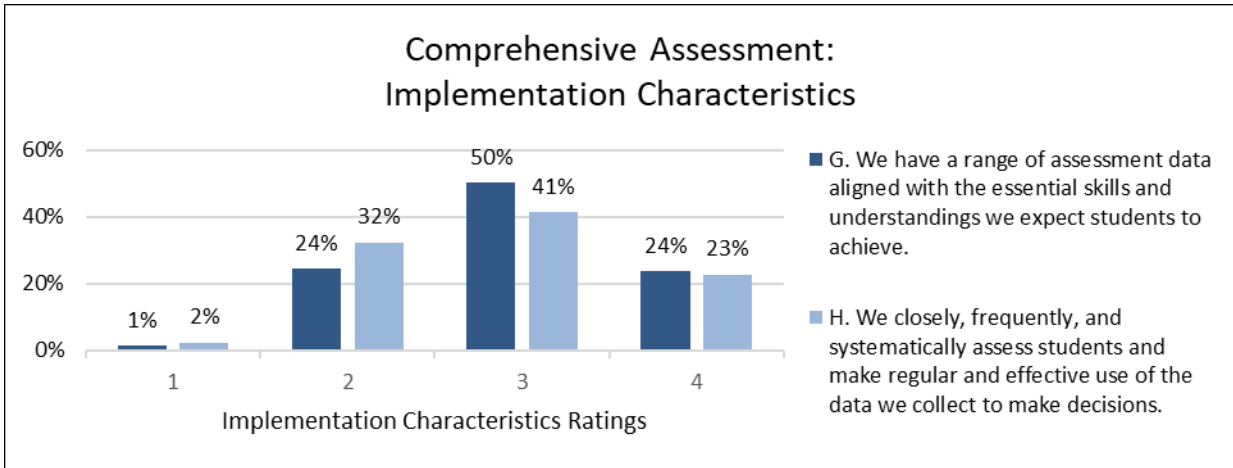
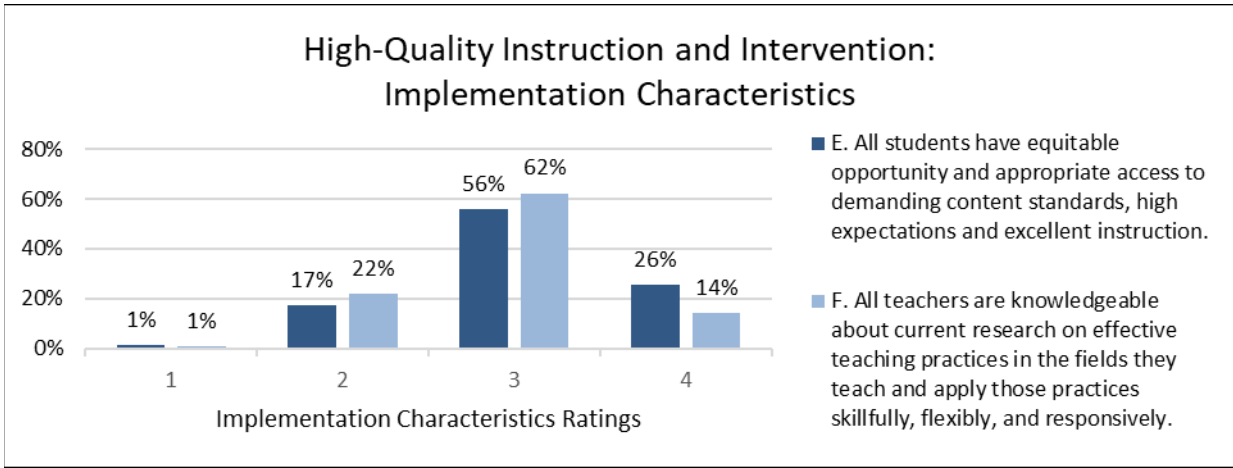
Principals were asked to rate twelve implementation characteristics of their school’s multi-tiered system of supports. Ratings are based on the principal’s understanding of multi-tiered system of supports in their school (see rating system above first graph below).

The five multi-tiered system of supports components are represented by a pair of implementation characteristics. In addition, the two implementation characteristics representing Culture of Continuous Improvement, and Decision Making for Excellence and Equity are paired. The following are graphs comparing the implementation characteristics for each component and topic.

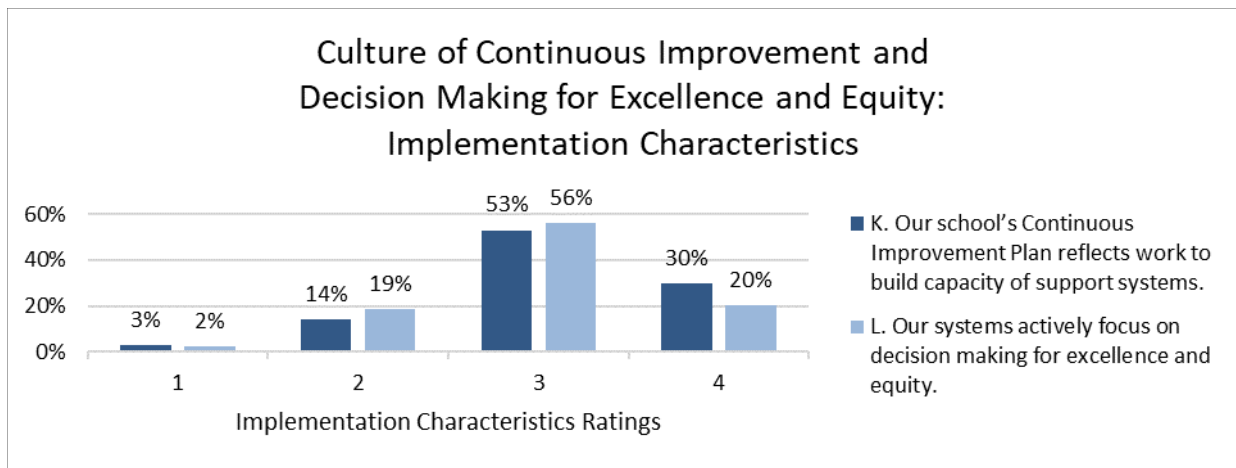
Implementation Characteristics Ratings

- 1 = We do not have this in our school.
- 2 = Starting to move in this direction.
- 3 = Making good progress.
- 4 = This is well established.





(J. continued from Expertise graph) ... that supports high-quality instruction and intervention, effective collaboration and implementation of a comprehensive and balanced assessment system.



The two implementation characteristics representing the Systemic and Comprehensive Approach component showed the largest variance in ratings.

The following results are compiled by the total of reported ratings of three and four for intervention characteristics.

The component High-Quality Instruction and Intervention was rated as furthest along in implementation. In addition, the implementation characteristics for Culture of Continuous Improvement and Decision Making for Excellence and Equity were also rated as furthest along in implementation.

Principals self-identified the following four implementation characteristics as the furthest along in implementation:

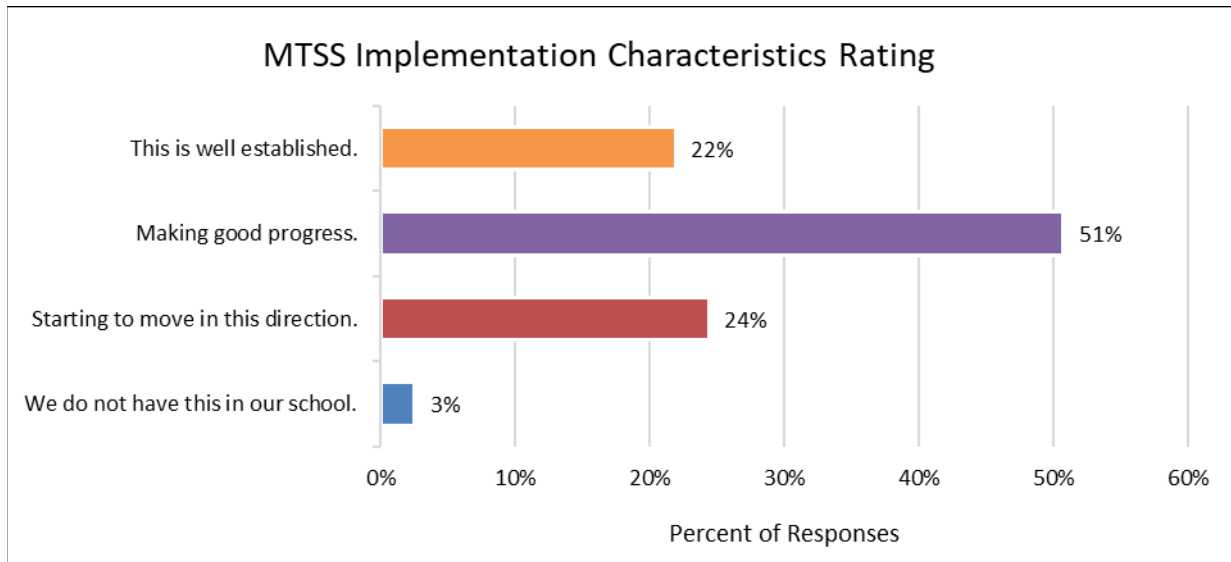
- K. Our school's Continuous Improvement Plan reflects work to build capacity of support systems. (Culture of Continuous Improvement)
- E. All students have equitable opportunity and appropriate access to demanding content standards, high expectations and excellent instruction. (High-Quality Instruction and Intervention)
- B. Our system has embraced a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement. (Systemic and Comprehensive Approach)
- C. School structures support collaborative engagement to focus on improving student outcomes in both behavior and academics. (Effective Collaboration)

Principals self-identified reporting the following four characteristics as being in the earliest stages of implementation:

- A. We have a coherent, comprehensive and systemic SU-wide plan that outlines our approach to developing, implementing and sustain supports for all students. (Systemic and Comprehensive Approach)
- I. Our school has a long-term professional learning plan. (Expertise)
- H. We closely, frequently, and systemically assess students and make regular and effective use of the data we collect to make decisions. (Comprehensive Assessment)

- D. Our school has adopted and implemented structures that promote strong family-school relationships. (Effective Collaboration)

The average ratings of all twelve implementation characteristics are represented in the graph below.



The data shows 22 percent of implementation characteristics rated as, “This is well established.”; 51 percent as, “Making good progress”; 24 percent as, “Starting to move in this direction”; and three percent as, “We do not have this in our school”.

Types of Technical Assistance to Strengthen MTSS

Last year’s question on needed supports to strengthen your school’s multi-tiered system of supports was expanded by asking two separate questions this year: one on technical assistance and a second on professional learning.

Principals were asked to list types of technical assistance the VTmtss Team could provide to strengthen their school’s multi-tiered system of supports. Eighty-five percent of schools responded.

When organized by general categories, approximately 26 percent of responses centered around data collection and utilization, 15 percent were centered around social, emotional, or behavior need, and nine percent included requests for on-site coaching, consultation, or analysis of the school's current system.

Types of Professional Learning to Strengthen MTSS

Principals were asked to list professional learning topics that would strengthen their school’s multi-tiered system of supports. Ninety- three percent of schools responded.

When organized by general categories, approximately 45 percent of responses indicated some form of social, emotional, or behavior supports; 24 percent centered around universal instruction and supports, and approximately nine percent regarded requests for data collection and utilization training.

Questions

For more information about a multi-tiered system of supports, or to request assistance, please reference the [AOE MTSS webpage](#), or contact Tracy Watterson, MTSS Program Manager, at tracy.watterson@vermont.gov.

To all those who took the time to respond to this annual survey, we thank you.