

Integrated Field Review Report

REPORT

January 17, 2018

Springfield School District

Final Report

Site Visit: November 6, 2017

Submitted by Josh Souliere



Schools & Enrollment

School	Approximate Enrollment	Grade Span
Elm Hill School	264	K-2
Riverside Middle School	255	6-8
Springfield High School	430	9-12
Union Street School	269	3-5

Springfield SD participated in the Vermont Agency of Education's Integrated Field Review (IFR) on November 6, 2017.

During the afternoon of the IFR training, the Visiting Team reviewed artifacts provided by Springfield SD. During the full day visit, the Visiting Team participated in interviews of the Superintendent, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Director of Special Services, counseling staff, intervention staff, teaching staff, students, parents, and administrators. In addition, the Visiting Team observed classroom instruction and other Springfield SD learning environments through observations and facilities tours led by students.

The Visiting Team gathered data regarding the implementation of Education Quality Standards across the system related to Academic Proficiency, Personalization, Safe Healthy Schools, High Quality Staffing, and Investment Priorities.

Visiting Team

Name	Role	Organization
Andrew Jones	Director of Curriculum	Mill River Unified Union School District
Debra Fishwick	Principal	Mill River Unified Union School District
Kelsey Manwaring	3rd Grade Teacher	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
Brian Hill	Chief Academic Officer	Mill River Unified Union School District
Lindsay Levesque	Social Studies Teacher	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
Molly Stoner	4th Grade Teacher	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
John Gagnon	Principal	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union
Abigail Ladd	1st Grade Teacher	Two Rivers Supervisory Union
Tiffany Cassano	Principal	Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union
Josh Souliere	Assistant Director of Education Quality Reviews	Vermont Agency of Education
Lori Dolezal	Education Quality Assurance Manager	Vermont Agency of Education
Toni Marra	Dual Enrollment & Early College Program Coordinator	Vermont Agency of Education
Tom Faris	MTSS Coordinator	Vermont Agency of Education
Marianna Charalabopoulos	Education Quality Assurance Coordinator	Vermont Agency of Education

Academic Proficiency

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize a coordinated curriculum in all subjects for each Supervisory Union/District that is aligned to the standards adopted by the State, instruction in all subjects and the transferable skills, a local assessment system for determining student achievement, multi-tiered systems of support for learners in meeting those standards and participation in the State assessment system.

Findings:

1. District staff is working toward creating a coordinated curriculum through curriculum mapping, scope and sequence and common assessments.
 2. Teams of teachers regularly work in Professional Learning Communities focused on curriculum mapping, identifying learning targets and proficiency scales, and examining student work.
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1. There is evidence that a common instructional framework is implemented with consistency across the SD.
 2. In some schools, Instructional Coaches conduct walkthroughs, provide instructional feedback, and collaborate with teachers on changing instructional practices to meet students' needs.
 3. Interview and observation evidence indicates the level of student engagement in learning varied across the SD.
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 2. There is a lack of clarity and understanding for parents and teachers regarding proficiency based learning, grading, and reporting, and how it all comes together.
 3. The district is working toward the development of proficiency scales in content areas and professional development has been provided to support implementation; however, scales for transferable skills have not been addressed.

Commendations

1. Springfield SD has developed a framework and in which teams of teachers work in professional learning communities to drive SD-wide innovations, which include mapping of curriculum, identifying learning targets and proficiency scales, and analyzing student work.
2. Springfield SD has committed professional development and resources to coordinate curriculum, develop common assessments, and scope and sequence of those curricula.

Recommendations

1. Springfield SD should continue to work on addressing the inconsistencies in the ways students are assessed from school to school, and develop a common assessment plan to be implemented with fidelity across all schools.
2. Springfield SD should examine and improve the communication of proficiency based learning, grading and reporting to teachers, parents and students to improve clarity SD-wide.

Personalization

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize development of personalization through the creation and use of Personalized Learning Plans, flexible pathways to graduation, Career and Technical Education and instructional strategies that personalize learning for students.

Findings:

Personalized Learning Plans

1. Personalized Learning Plans are in the beginning stages of being implemented grades 7-12.
2. Development and implementation of Personalized Learning Plans are being supported through School Counselors, the online platform of Naviance, and oversight of everything provided by a Multiple Pathways Coordinator.

Flexible Pathways

1. A variety of Flexible Pathways are offered at the high school level, evidence indicates students, parents, and teachers understand what is offered and the process to access them.

Full Breadth of Courses

1. Core educational classes are offered and flexible pathways exist, but most students report they have limited options and they wished more learning opportunities existed.

Student Voice and Choice

1. High school students have a flex block and enrichment time where they can exercise student choice.
2. Observation and interview evidence indicates student choice and voice is limited when it comes to the instruction in core academic subject areas, but more non-traditional classes offer more opportunities for them to provide input into their learning.

Commendations

1. Springfield SD has begun their implementing their Personalized Learning framework in grades 7-12, and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the process.
2. Springfield SD students and other stakeholders have a clear understanding of the Flexible Pathway options available to them, and how to access those pathways.

Recommendations

1. Springfield SD should examine the Flexible Pathways offered to students to ensure students have a breadth of options that are meeting their needs.
2. Springfield SD should examine ways in which they can incorporate more student choice and voice into core academic learning, as they have in several other academic areas.

Safe Healthy Schools

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize the establishment of learning environments that promote the social and physical health of students, facilities that promote learning and security, support for preventing disciplinary infractions and responding appropriately when transgressions occur and engaging in inter-agency work to support students beyond the school day.

Findings:

Multi-tiered System of Supports

1. Observation, artifact and interview evidence indicates that a common MTSS framework or guidelines do not exist from school to school.
2. As evidenced by interviews with teachers and parents, there is a common concern across the SD on providing effective tier one instruction that will meet the needs of their student population.
3. Evidence indicates there are inequities in intervention and enrichment opportunities from school to school, particularly those that occur during regular school hours.

Social/Emotional Health

1. Teachers in elementary schools have been trained in Responsive Classroom, and evidence indicates all are implementing the program with consistency.
2. Interview evidence with teachers and parents indicate there is a large need at all schools for increased trauma-related mental health supports, additional teacher professional learning, and possibly additional staff.

Physical Well-Being

1. There is a District Wellness Committee that addresses food programs, emergency planning, ensures staff are well trained, oversees protocols for suicide prevention and awareness, and additional student and staff wellness programming.
2. Some teachers and students report they do not feel safe in their building due to the level of inappropriate behavior and lack of staffing.

Physical Environment

1. While most schools appear newly renovated and physical environments are safe/healthy, some school buildings are in need of repair and/or possible renovations.
2. Artwork, social curriculum projects, behavioral expectations, and other student work were posted throughout the hallways and common areas of most schools.

Commendations

1. Springfield SD has a Wellness Committee that addresses school specific and SD-wide needs in relation to student and family wellness.
2. Most Springfield SD schools have inviting environments, including the posting of student art, social curriculum projects, core subject projects, and behavioral expectations throughout their schools.

Recommendations

1. Springfield SD should ensure all schools have adequate funding to address improvements needed to the physical structure of their buildings.
2. Springfield SD should develop a common MTSS framework to be implemented across all schools to help ensure equitable instruction, intervention and enrichment opportunities.

High Quality Staffing

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize the role of all school leaders in improving student learning and establish the expectation that school leaders will have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities in order to focus on improving student learning by ensuring that professional staff are appropriately licensed, a system of appropriate needs-based professional learning is available and aligned with staff evaluation and supervision policies, continuous improvement.

Findings:

Professional Development

1. There is a strong commitment to professional development within the district that is well received by the educators within the system.
2. Staff feel well supported regarding the professional development that is focusing on Proficiency Based Learning.

Staff Evaluation

1. Springfield SD has a clear, outlined teacher and administrator evaluation model that is implemented with consistency throughout the system.
2. Some interviewees feel there could be more collaboration in the sections of their evaluations where they develop professional goals.

Leadership

1. Most teachers in the district feel their administrators are easy to communicate with, supportive, and they feel valued by them.
2. Springfield has been able to focus on developing those in leadership positions from within the SD.

Staffing

1. Some interviewees report concerns over inadequate staffing or staffing patterns to address behavior interventions, personalized learning, tiered interventions, and enrichment opportunities.
2. Parents report their teachers are responsive to communication, are easily accessible to parents when needed and they feel supported.

Commendations

1. Springfield SD has provided adequate professional development opportunities to staff in regards to proficiency based learning and other areas, and routinely include staff input into professional development opportunities.
2. Springfield SD teachers are easily accessible to parents, provide clear communication, and provide support to parents when requested.

Recommendations

1. Springfield SD should provide more collaboration between administrators and teachers when developing professional goals in teacher evaluations.
2. Springfield SD should examine and address concerns regarding staffing and/or staffing patterns to address behavior interventions, personalized learning, tiered interventions and enrichment opportunities.

Investment Priorities

The Vermont Education Quality Standards require that Supervisory Unions carry out their work in accordance with the fundamentals of accounting procedures, provide the full range and breadth of resources, and facilities to support student learning while doing so at a funding level supported by the local community and conduct the business of schooling in accordance with laws that govern education.

Findings:

Continuous Improvement Planning

1. Springfield SD has an identified Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) process where the SD has a CIP, each school is required to align one of its goals with the SD CIP and develop two additional goals based on their own data.
2. All teachers and parents interviewed reported they were not a part of the CIP planning process.

Student Data System

1. Multiple databases for Proficiency Based Learning, Personalized Learning Plans, and student data gets confusing for teachers.
2. PowerSchool is consistently used as the primary student data system K-12.

Financial Alignment

1. Per interviews and observations, the access to and use of technology has discrepancies between buildings.
2. Community has input into the budget process per parent interviews and other forums; however, some feel their voice is not heard.

Communication

1. Most parents interviewed stated communication from teachers is adequate, and once initiated by the parent teachers are always helpful; however, parents report they would like better communication and transparency from Central Office.

Commendations

1. Springfield SD has a continuous improvement planning approach that includes schools linking their improvement goals to the SD goals, and the process is understood and consistent throughout the SD.
2. Springfield SD uses PowerSchool across all schools consistently as their student data management system.

Recommendations

1. Springfield SD should ensure all schools have equitable access to technology, and the professional learning to integrate technology into instruction.
2. Springfield should examine their use of multiple databases to oversee SD-wide innovations to address concerns over it becoming unmanageable and confusing to teachers, and possibly other stakeholders.