

**AOE Shared School District Data Mgmt System (SSDDMS)
Project Charter**



State of Vermont

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Revision History

Version	Date	Author(s)	Revision Notes
1	11/30/2017	Alena D Marand	Initial Draft
2	12/08/2017	Alena D Marand	Incorporated Sean Cousino’s feedback on scope, measures of success, and pricing and Lori Bibeau’s feedback on stakeholder impact
3	12/11/2017	Alena D Marand	Incorporated Tim Hollands suggestions to flesh out the contingencies of pricing and risks
4	01/03/2017	Alena D Marand	Updated first half of document after meeting with Emily – still need to complete review with Emily Byrne
5	01/08/2018	Alena D Marand/Emily Byrne	Emily finalized review and made edits.
6	01/29/2018	Alena D Berube (Marand)	Incorporated Tim Holland’s second round of edits
7	02/09/2018	Alena D Berube	Updating to reflect legislation to release \$3.1M

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Project Overview

This project is in response to legislation that aims to improve the consistency and comparability of Vermont’s school finance data ([Act 58 of 2015](#), amending 2014, No. 179 E.500.1) by creating and supporting the implementation of a Vermont schools Uniform Chart of Accounts (UCOA). The chart of accounts defines the hierarchy and relationship of accounts used throughout the Vermont school system to classify school finance revenues and expenditures. The new *Uniform* Chart of Accounts (UCOA) consists of 9 elements, which when used comprehensively throughout the state will render Vermont’s school finance data more consistent and comparable across Supervisory Unions and School Districts (SU/SD).

In this project, the AOE intends to work with local stakeholders (primarily supervisory union business managers) to lead the procurement of a fully vendor-hosted shared school district data management system (SSDDMS) that would support the implementation of the UCOA. This software solution and the UCOA would replace the many disparate systems and unique COA’s currently maintained by each SU/SD across the state.

The reasons for implementing the SSDDMS are many, but the top three are:

1. Centrally maintaining the UCOA in the SSDDMS reduces variance among SU’s/SD’s implementation of the UCOA, avoiding local interpretation, thus improving data quality and comparability.
2. This solution will allow for the more succinct management of the UCOA and associated business rules, reducing resources needed by the state to monitor SU/SD compliance.
3. Using a shared enterprise solution instead of maintaining more than 60 disparate systems will save tax payer dollars by leveraging economies of scale and reducing the local burden of negotiating and contracting for state and federally compliant software, and executing numerous system and/or version upgrades across multiple finance management systems over time

Project Objectives & Success Criteria

#	Objective	Success Criteria
1	Implement and begin using the SSDDMS before the legislative requirement for a fully operational UCOA by FY2020 (July 1, 2019).	The SSDDMS solution is implemented and used by adopting SUs/SDs by/before 07/01/2019.
2	Reduce annual software maintenance and licensing costs for finance and human resource data management in aggregate across Vermont school districts and supervisory unions.	Annual license and maintenance costs associated with school finance and human resource data management software are reduced by at least 25%.
3	Improve school finance and personnel data quality.	1. Error rate of Statbook and Teacher-Staff data received reduced by at least 25% (excluding errors that will be newly identifiable under the new system). 2. Number of new data “errors” not previously identifiable
4	Reduce school finance data collection time.	State, Supervisory Union, and School District labor hours to prepare and perform the Statbook Data Collection are reduced by at least 50% annually.

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Project Scope

In Scope:

- Vermont School System Uniform Chart of Accounts
- Statewide Business Rules for Recording Finance Data
- Standardization of Personnel Position Titles/Categories
- Software integrations to enhance value to business managers and other relevant local staff
 - May include integrations with such external databases as student information system, time and attendance modules (Aesop), transportation, special education etc.
- Business Process Analysis & Improvement
 - Between: State-supervisory union/district processes
 - Within: Standard supervisory union processes
- Implementation Project Management
- User Training
 - State (AOE)
 - SU/SD Administration (including business managers and their staff, human resource directors etc.)
 - SU/SD will train other local personnel (teachers etc.)
- Software Functional Areas: Payroll, Time & Attendance, Human Resources, Accounts Receivable, Purchasing & AP, Fixed Assets, Fund/Project/Grant Accounting
- Data Warehouse
 - Longitudinal storage for revenue/expense and other critical transactional data
- State and Federal Reporting
- Vendor Hosting
- Organizational Change Management
- Data Migration/Conversion Support
- Security

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Out of Scope:

- Student Information System Implementation/Standardization
- Interface with the State’s Oracle-Peoplesoft financial system known as the Vermont Integrated Solution for Information and Organizational Needs (VISION) where a separate and different COA structure is used, and is in no way affiliated with the federally aligned COA used by Vermont SU’s/SD’s.

Project Milestones, Deliverables & Schedule

Milestone/Deliverable	Target Delivery Date or Range
Project Start Date	March 2018
Kickoff Meeting	March 2018
Project Management Documents Delivered from Vendor (Implementation plan, Communication Matrix etc.)	March/April 2018
Business Process Review and Information Gathering	April 2018
SU Training Begins	April/May 2018
Finalize Project Plan/Timeline	May 2018
Installation for first wave entities’ Admin/Testers Complete	May 2018
Data Conversion, Migration & User Testing Complete	Jan 2019
Go-Live	March 2019
End-User Training	Jan – July 2019
Phase I End Date	July 1, 2019

Stakeholders

Stakeholder Group	Impact
Agency of Education School Finance	Will affect ease and quality of state and federal reporting, and managing the UCOA and associated business rules. In some cases, will automate reporting to the state by local education agencies. Will be involved in testing the new system.
LEA end users (Business Managers, School Treasurers, and Other Staff)	Will need to learn software to perform daily tasks. Will also assist in the migration of historical data and testing the new system.
State Board of Education	N/A, just need to be aware of project
VT School Boards	Approval required for local budget changes associated with this project.
Treasurer’s Office (Retirement)/Tax Dept.	District reporting on teacher retirement, unemployment, catamount healthcare, VMERS, VSTRS etc.

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VT Legislature	Higher quality/more frequent access to school finance and HR data that is more consistently reporting and comparable across districts
VT Principals & Administrators	Attend and provide staff training opportunities with budgeted funds
VT Superintendents	Attend and provide staff training opportunities with budgeted funds
VT Taxpayers	Cost of technology to manage and report this data as well as the cost savings associated with this project will ultimately be realized by VT taxpayers. Receive better decision-making by law-makers who will have more accurate and comparable data.

Estimated Project Cost

Description	One-Time Cost	Annual Recurring Cost
Implementation* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Configuration/Installation • Project Management • Business Process Analysis 	\$1,000,000	\$0
Hardware	\$0	\$0
Equipment	\$0	\$0
Operating Costs* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software/Licenses • SLA • Maintenance • Vendor Hosting 	\$0	\$800,000
State Labor**	\$234,090	\$102,714
District Labor***	\$450,000	\$
	\$	\$
Totals	\$1,684,090	\$902,714

*These costs assume migration of all VT Supervisory Unions by July 1, 2019. Depending on timing and adoption rates, implementation costs may be spread over the first few years, and yearly costs to operate will begin at a lower prorated amount and increase to the amounts reflected above as additional Supervisory Unions opt-in. See Assumptions, Constraints, Dependencies below for further detail.

**Labor costs reflect the FTEs required to perform activities related to School Finance data collection, data cleaning etc. These labor costs are projected at a lower amount than reported current labor costs (IT ABC form) because we expect process efficiencies to be delivered with this solution. There will be no reduction of staff. Rather, this will allow AOE and ADS staff hours to be reallocated to other activities (e.g. data analysis, data visualization etc.). Furthermore, these costs are associated only with core finance collection activities. There are likely other savings that can be achieved in other tangential collections (e.g. Special Education Finance, Teacher-Staff-Student Ratio data collection etc.)

***District Labor costs are costly to collect but would be required regardless of whether SSDDMS is adopted or whether districts have to implement the UCOA on their own. This labor reflects the additional FTE hours required to support SU/SD implementation (data conversion etc.).

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Assumptions, Dependencies & Constraints

#	Type (Assumption, Dependency or Constraint)	Description
1	Constraint – SUs must opt-in	AOE does not have the authority to require SUs to use the SSDDMS. If it is the desire of the Vermont Legislature to achieve 100% SU adoption of the SSDDMS, it may require local compliance through enacting statute.
2	Assumption/Dependency – SU adoption rate is expected to be adequate to render cost savings but currently unverifiable	While VASBO and its members have advocated for this project, it is still unclear how many SUs/SD's will actually adopt. This depends on the final funding model implemented by the state as well as speed to contract. Many SUs/SD's are under pressure to contract for a new solution, as their current vendor is sun-setting their product or they are merging districts and/or SUs, and as a result, in some cases must pick a vendor and consolidate their financial management systems.
3	Assumption – SU adoption rate is correlated with cost savings for VT tax payers	The more SU's/SD's that adopt the SSDDMS, the greater cost savings there will be for Vermont tax payers and the more process efficiencies we may gain as a state.
4	Dependency – Vendor pricing model	If the vendor pricing model is variable, the contingent factors, not simply the number of SUs, will have an impact on cost savings. For example, if student enrollment is part of the pricing model, whether or not large or small SUs adopt the SSDDMS will affect the extent of cost savings.
5	Dependency – Funding	While Finance and HR software already exist as line items in each district's budget, it is yet to be determined whether AOE will set up a fee for service from those who opt-in, or whether it will be possible to pay for state-wide access to the SSDDMS straight off the top of the EdFund.
6	Constraint – Implementation deadline of July 1, 2019	Legislative mandate requires that the UCOA be implemented by SUs/ SDs by Fiscal Year 2020.
7	Dependency – which SUs adopt the new software will determine the extent of cost savings.	There is great variance in the amount that SUs currently invest in their technology. Whether SUs with larger or smaller contracts for their existing solution opt-in, will affect the extent of cost savings.
8	Assumption – there will be an at least 50% reduction to the state and local labor required to complete State and Federal reporting.	We expect process efficiencies in reporting to result from greater integration of local and state databases as well as the adoption of the uniform chart of accounts (business managers will no longer have to translate their local chart of accounts into the state chart of accounts manually).
9	Assumption – AOE is required to monitor UCOA compliance	By statute AOE is required to support SUs/SDs in the recording and reporting of SU/SD/School financial transactions according to the UCAO.

Project Risks

#	Risk Description	Impact (H/M/L)	Probability (H/M/L)	Risk Plan
1	Fewer SUs opt-in than expected	Contingent on pricing/ payment structure.	M	Educate on process efficiencies. Advocate for economies of scale and cost savings. Select a vendor (or negotiate with vendor ahead of time) and build in contract reduction/proration of pricing contingent on adoption rates where appropriate.
2	The vendor does not deliver on time	H	L	Request a one-year extension for the UCOA implementation from the legislature.

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3	Local SMEs of SUs adopting the SSDDMS do not/or are unable to participate at necessary level	H	M	Be clear about expectations of SMEs up front. Have a “second in line” should the original SME not have the time to see the project through. Provide clear concise deliverables and deadlines. Follow up often.
4	Legislature could fail to fund ongoing cost of operating the SSDDMS	H	L	If the legislature does not fund the project off the top of the Ed fund, the AOE could establish a charge-back formula to the SUs/SDs. The amount charged back to SUs/SDs would still be expected to be lower than the amounts otherwise budgeted locally. The funding formula for the cost of ongoing operations for this project will be finalized by the end of the legislative season (approx. May 2018).

Approvals

Name	Role	Signature and Date
Sean Cousino	Project Coordinator	
Emily Byrne	Project Sponsor	
Rebecca Holcombe	Executive Sponsor	
Tim Holland	State Project Manager	
Jana Riddle	Technical Lead	
Alena Berube	Business Lead	