

Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Survey Summary

2016-2017

Response to Title 16 V.S.A. §2904

REPORT

January 2, 2018

**Report/Summary to the Secretary of
Education**

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Title 16 V.S.A. § 2904 Report

In 2013, 16 V.S.A. § 2904 was amended to substitute “Secretary” for “Commissioner”.

16 V.S.A. § 2904 requires that each superintendent shall annually provide to the Vermont Secretary of Education a status of the educational support systems* in each school in the supervisory union; how it is funded and how building the capacity of the educational support system is addressed in the School’s Continuous Improvement Plan. Included in the report will be a description and justification of how funds received due to Medicaid reimbursement under section 2959a are used.

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

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

This report is provided to the Secretary of Education, other Agency of Education (AOE) Teams. For the first time this report will be sent to Vermont public schools superintendents and principals. It is also available on the Vermont (VT) AOE website.

Executive Summary

The *Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Survey Summary 2016-2017* provides an analysis and evaluation of the data reported by 253 schools representing 53 Supervisory Unions and Supervisory Districts. This data, collected from approximately 84% of VT K-12 public school principals, is being used by the AOE MTSS Team to determine the professional learning and technical assistance it provides the field during SY17-18. According to the data, all schools reported implementing MTSS. Many schools shared success stories representing different stages of implementing MTSS.

Key Results

1. All schools reported some level of implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports.
2. Most students referred to the Educational Support Team (EST) received an initial EST support plan.
3. A smaller number of students were referred for further evaluation.
4. Schools reported a high need for additional supports in developing A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach, one component of a tiered system.

The AOE MTSS Team is developing professional learning modules based on the survey results. The [Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports Response to Intervention and Instruction \(MTSS-RtII\) Field Guide](#) states that A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach is foundational to a sustainable MTSS. Survey results indicate that this component is the least often implemented of the five and the component for which additional supports are most often requested. Therefore, the first professional learning module provided by the MTSS Team will address the importance and implementation of A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach. Future modules will focus on High-Quality Instruction and Intervention, and Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment. Modules will address the essential elements of each component; include a webinar, differentiated learning tasks, tools, resources, office hours, and instructions on how the modules can be used to meet requirements for re-licensure.

Technical assistance is available from the AOE MTSS Team by contacting Tracy Watterson, MTSS Program Manager, tracy.watterson@vermont.gov. Information about MTSS is located on the Multi-tiered System of Supports webpages. The webpages include Focus Component one-pagers, an updated definition of MTSS, guidelines on the role of an EST in an MTSS, and resources.

Finally, the report acknowledges that the analysis conducted has limitations. These limitations include that data was not provided by all schools, data was not compared with data from previous years, and all data was self-reported.

Introduction

The *Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Survey 2016-2017* data was collected in June 2017. The purpose of this data is to provide an update to the Secretary of Education on the status of each school's multi-tiered system of supports. The methodology used to collect this data was a survey with multiple choice items and open-ended questions. The data was reported by the principal of each school or their designee. The first item in the survey identified the principal and the second item identified the school. The remaining items addressed required information as well as information useful to the MTSS Team's annual work plan. Most questions required a response. The survey data was analyzed and reported by the AOE MTSS Team.

The collected data will be used to inform the Secretary of Education of the status of each school's multi-tiered system of support and the funding sources used to provide supports to students. In addition, the data will be used to inform the MTSS Team of the need for professional learning opportunities, technical assistance, and resources to support the SU/SD in their implementation of a tiered system of support. This data will also be shared with other AOE teams to support a common unity of purpose.

The data presented in this report was the most recent data available at the time of publication. The data does not include every public school in Vermont for the school year covered. 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.

Multi-tiered System of Supports Definition

A multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) is a comprehensive, evidence-based, and systemic framework for teaching and learning that unifies general and special education in an intentional, ongoing collaboration.

- MTSS is designed to meet students' academic and non-academic needs.
- MTSS provides students with differentiated and intensified assessment, instruction, and intervention.
- MTSS relies on appropriately qualified professionals and their expertise to implement the framework (adapted from the *VT MTSS Field Guide, 2014*).

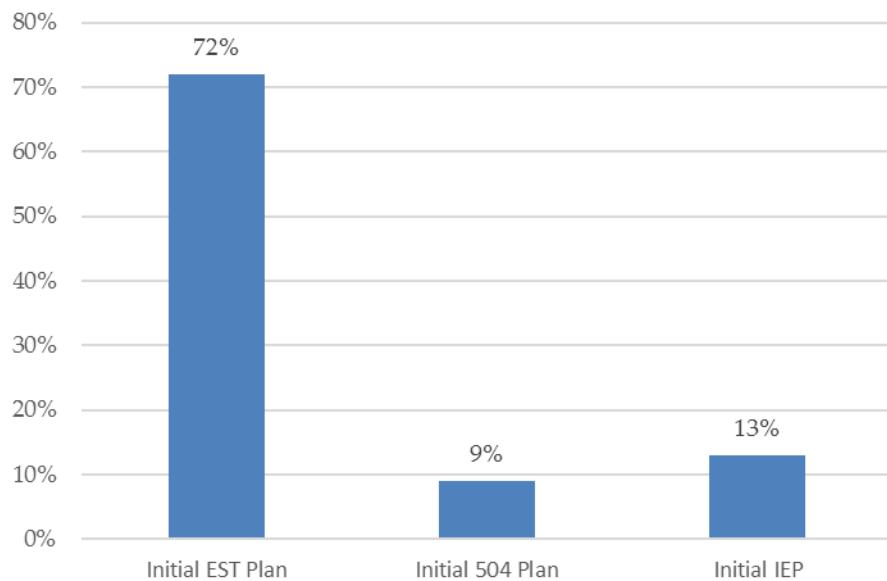
Multi-tiered System of Supports Survey Findings

Student Support Services

In the 2016-17 school year, an initial referral to an EST was made for 4,469 students. Of those students who were initial referrals to the EST, 72% (3,221 students) received an initial educational support plan, 9% (411 students) were referred for further evaluation and received an initial 504 plan, and 19% (832 students) received a special education evaluation. Of the group of 832 students who received a special education evaluation 69% (576 students) were found eligible for special education and received an initial Individual Education Program (IEP). This reflects 13% of the 4,469 students newly referred to the EST.

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

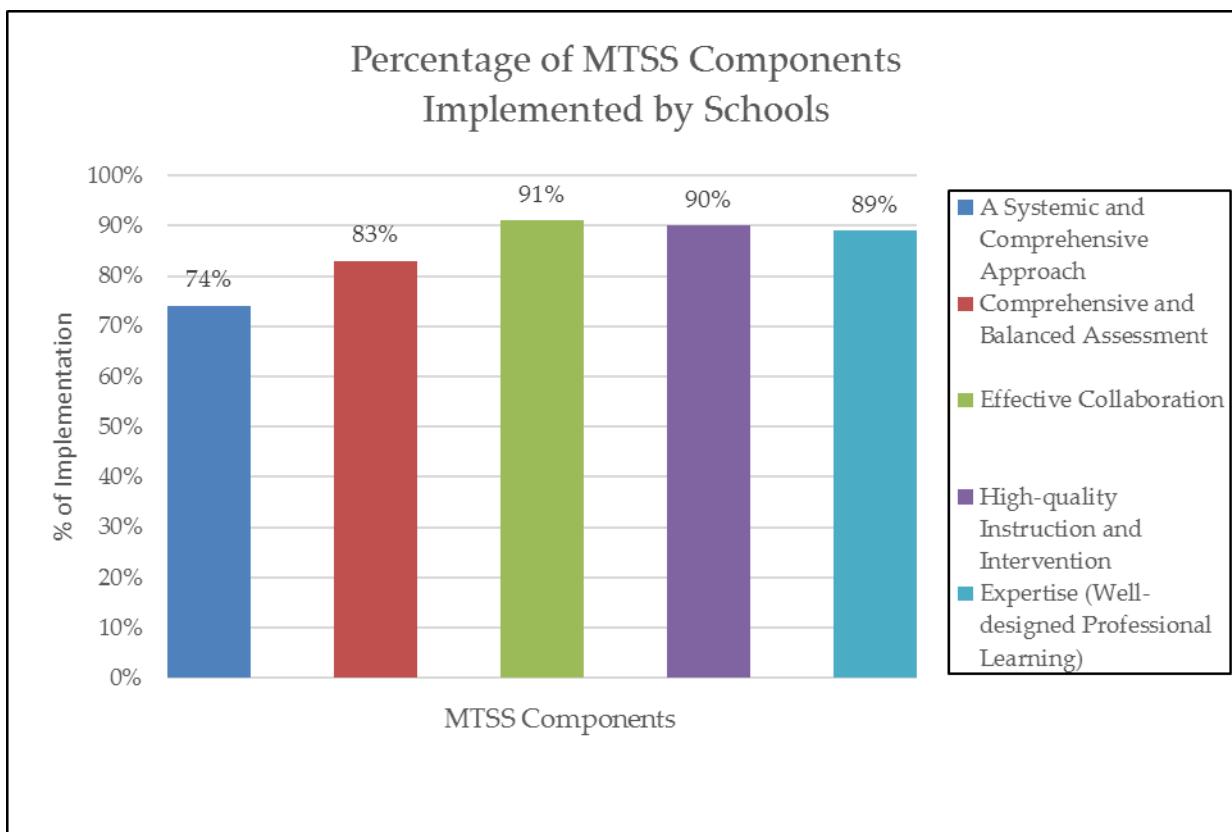
**Percentage of Students Receiving Initial Support Services
by Category (n= 4,469 or 100%)**



MTSS Component Implementation

All schools reported implementing one or more of the five components of MTSS.

The following graph represents percentage of MTSS components implemented by reporting schools: A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach (74%), Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment (83%), Effective Collaboration (91%), High-quality Instruction and Intervention (90%), and Expertise (Well-designed Professional Learning) (89%).

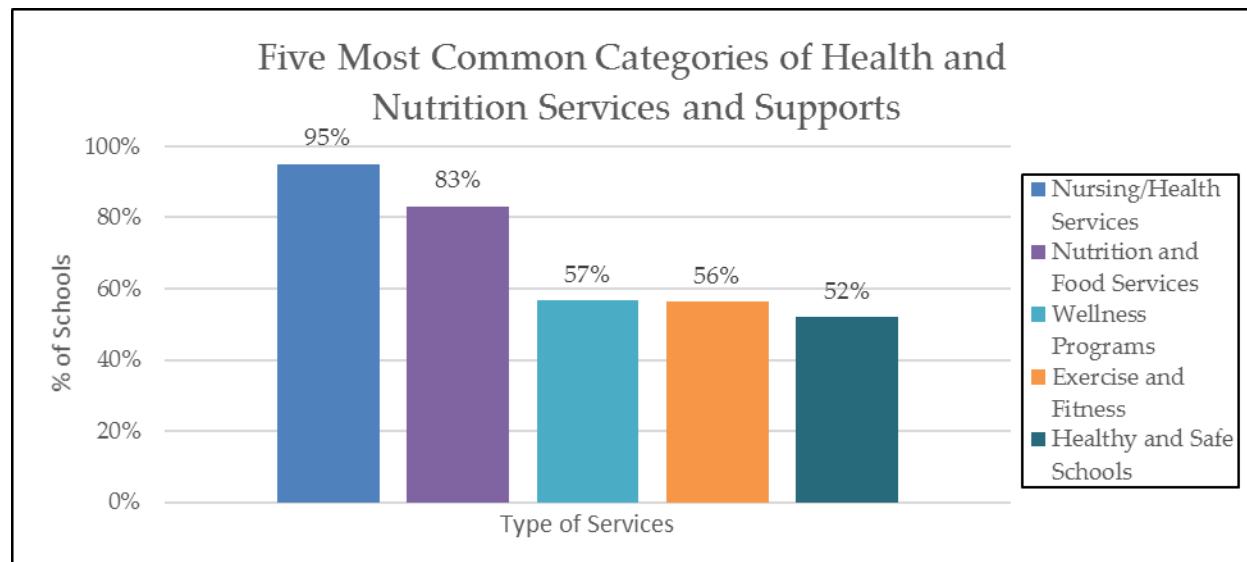


Reporting Requirements of Title 16 Funding

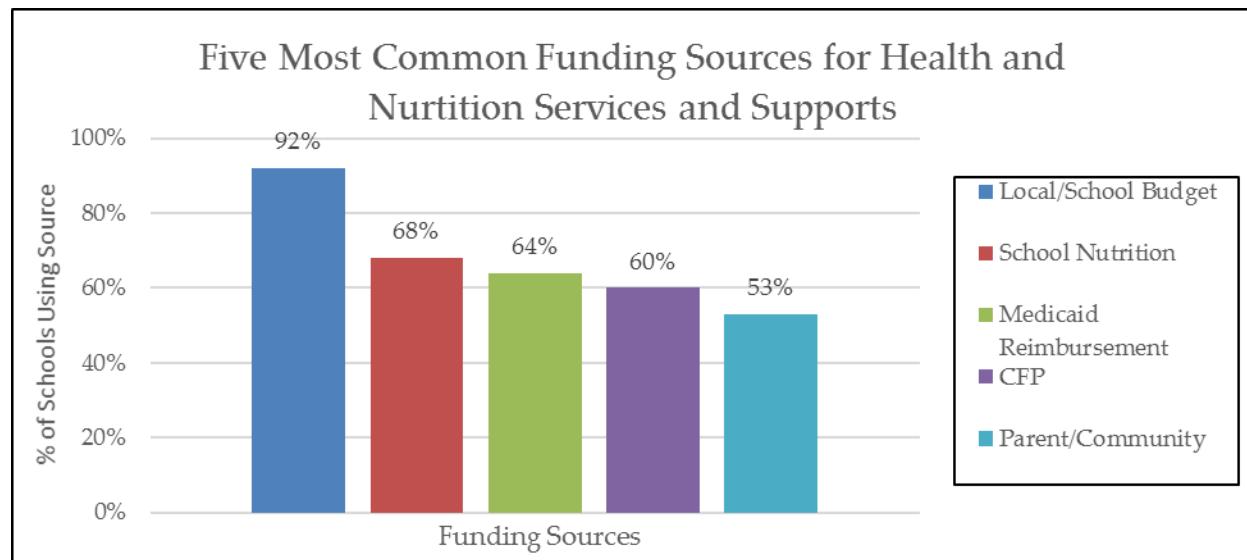
Based on the reporting requirement of Title 16, this section details the description and justification of how funding sources are used to support student services.

Health and Nutrition Services and Supports

The five most common categories of Health and Nutrition Services and Supports offered by schools include Nursing/Health Services (95%), Nutrition and Food Services (83%), Wellness Programs (57%), Exercise and Fitness (56%), and Healthy and Safe Schools (52%).

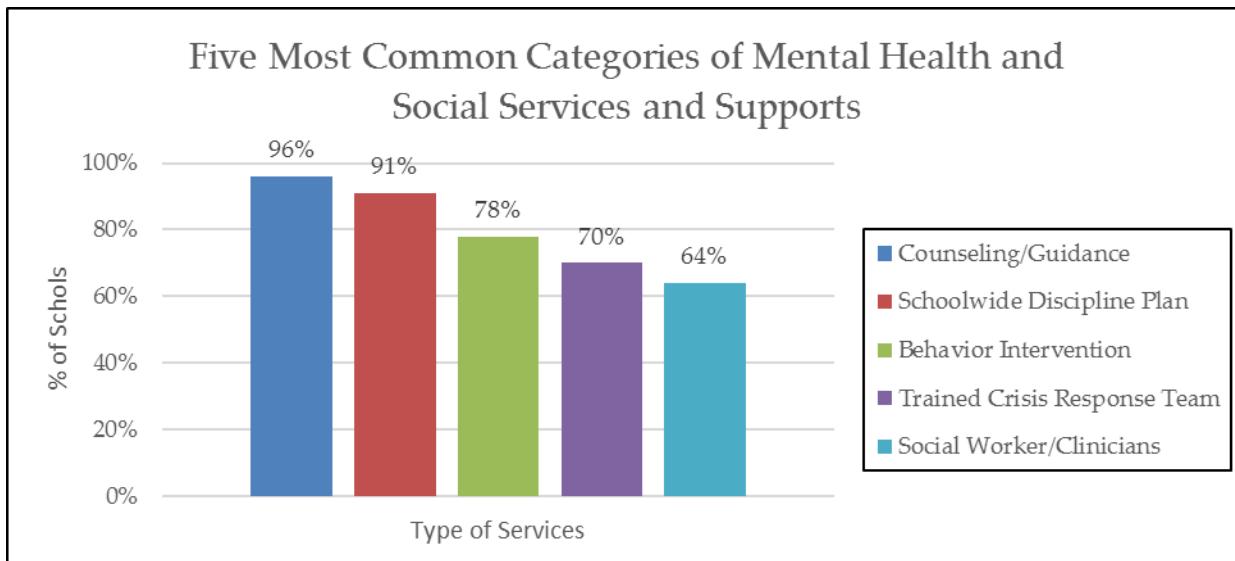


The five most common funding sources for Health and Nutrition Services and Supports are Local/School Budget (92%), School Nutrition (68%), Medicaid Reimbursement (64%), CFP (60%), and Parent/Community (53%).

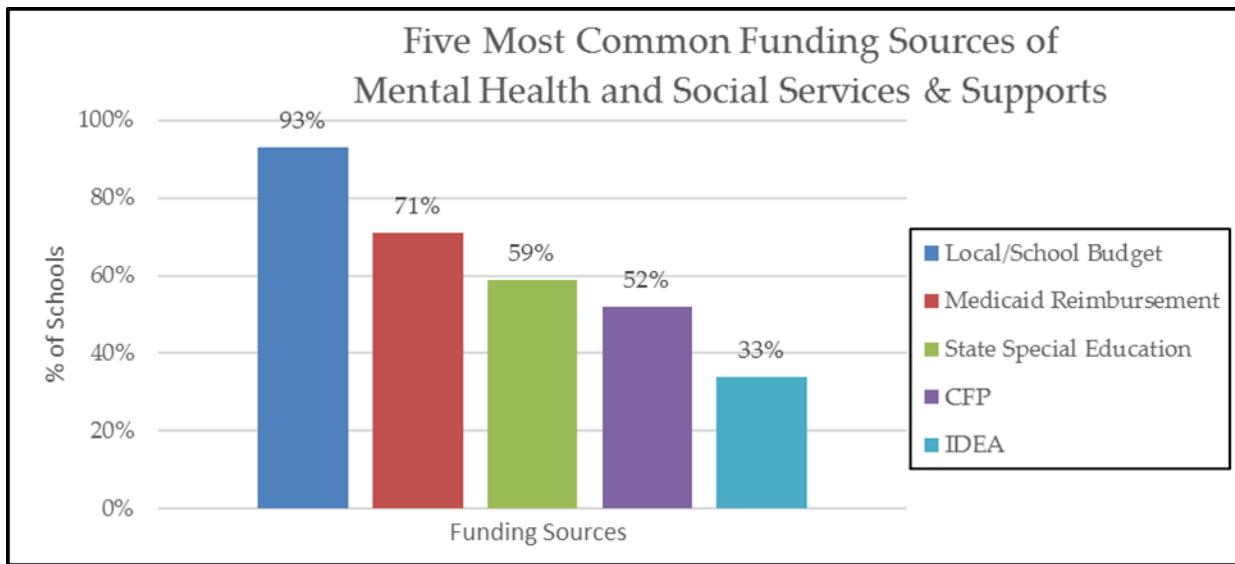


Mental Health and Social Services and Supports

The five most common categories of Mental Health and Social Services and Supports offered by schools include Counseling/Guidance (96%), Schoolwide Discipline Plan (91%), Behavior Intervention (78%), Trained Crisis Response Team (70%), and Social Worker/Clinicians (64%).

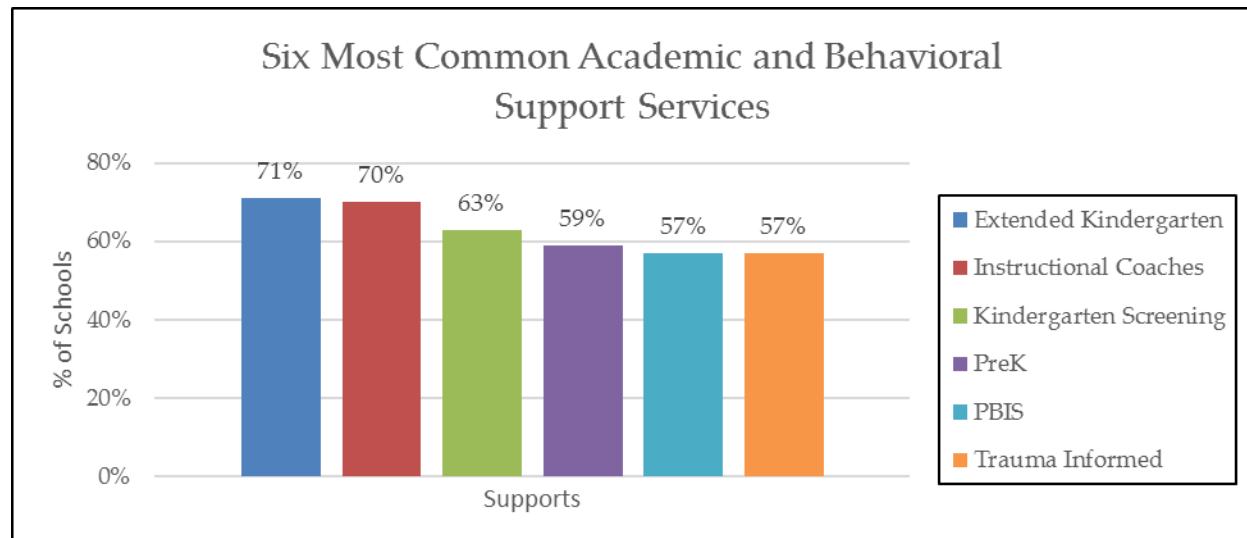


The five most common Mental Health and Social Services and Supports funding sources were Local/School Budget (93%), Medicaid Reimbursement (71%), State Special Education (59%), CFP (52%), and IDEA (33%).

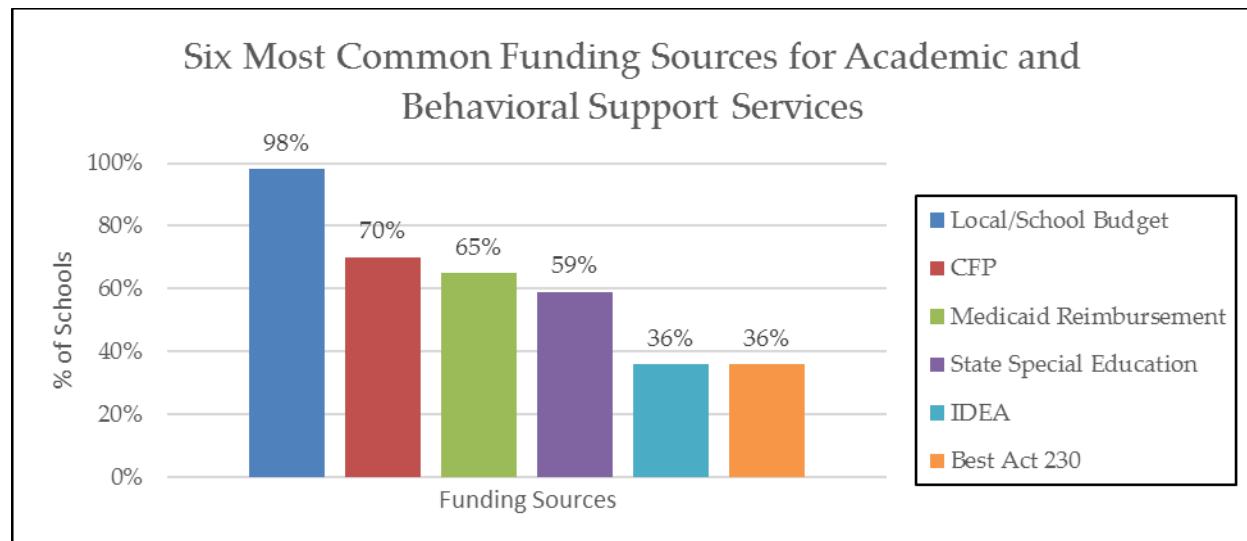


Academics and Behavioral Support Services

All schools offer Academic and Behavioral Support Services. The six most common Academic and Behavioral Support Services offered by schools included Extended Kindergarten (71%), Instructional Coaches (70%), Kindergarten Screening (63%), PreK (59%), PBIS (57%), and Trauma Informed (57%).



The six most common Academic and Behavioral Support Services funding sources were Local/School Budget (98%), CFP (70%), Medicaid Reimbursement (65%), State Special Education (59%), IDEA (36%), and Best Act 230 (36%).



Preventative Program for Substance Abuse Intervention

Forty-seven percent of schools have a preventative program for substance abuse intervention. Eighteen percent of schools have a Memorandum of Understandings for Substance Abuse Treatment providers. Substance abuse treatment is most often found in secondary settings, so it is not expected that all school engage Substance Abuse Treatment providers.

School Narratives

This section contains narratives of how schools; support new staff, evaluate the effectiveness of MTSS, their success stories, and their greatest needs for additional support in implementing an MTSS framework.

Support for New Staff

Seventy-five percent of schools reported providing procedures to support new staff in a multi-tiered system of supports. The type of procedures used to support new staff is not requested in the survey.

Evaluating MTSS Effectiveness

Sixty-five percent of schools reported having a process for evaluating the effectiveness of their multi-tiered system of supports. The type of processes for evaluating effectiveness is not requested in the survey.

School MTSS Success Stories

The survey asked principals to share multi-tiered system of support success stories.

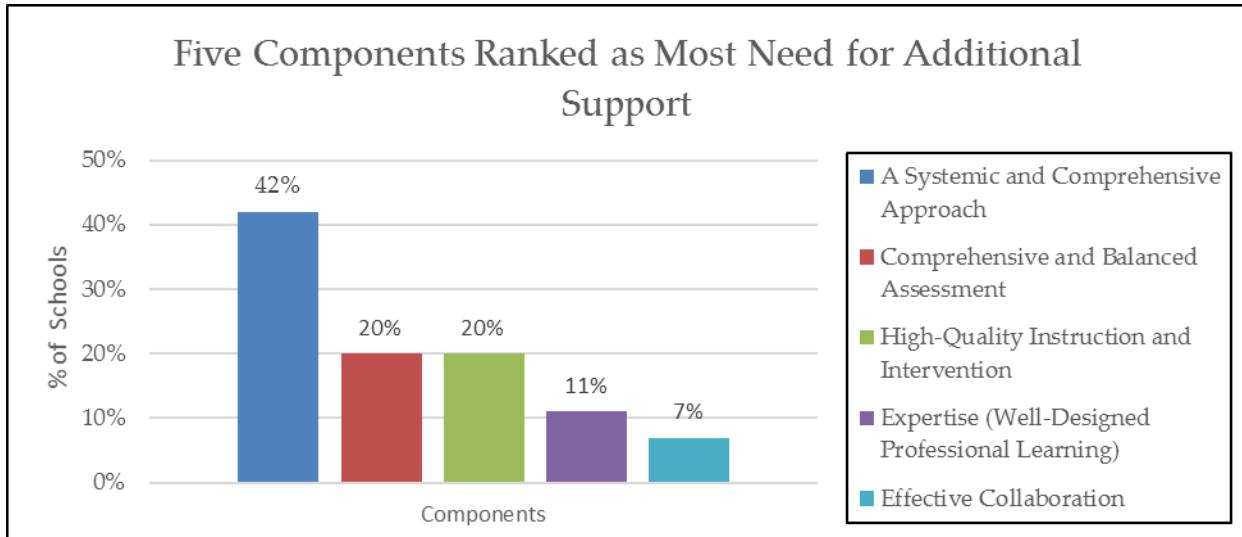
Responses were coded by themes and are included in the following table when they were reported by ten or more principals.

Table 1 – Top Seven Success Stories Themes

# of Occurrence	Theme
48	Universal Screening
48	Intervention (enrichment) Blocks/Intervention Programs
29	Effective use of (assessment) data to support students
23	EST and Use of an EST process
16	Effective Collaboration/Decision making between general education, special education, guidance and administration; Co-Teaching
14	Behavior plans/Support Plans/Intervention Plans/504 Plans/Action Plan that support individual student needs and result in improved behavior
13	PBIS: Check-In-Check-Out

Greatest Need for Additional Support

Forty-two percent of reporting schools identified A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach as their greatest need for additional support. Twenty percent identified both Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment and High-Quality Instruction and Intervention as the next greatest need. Expertise (Well-Designed Professional Learning) and Effective Collaboration were the least need for additional supports at 11% and 7% respectively.



Conclusion

Based on the results of this survey, all reporting schools are at some stage of implementation of an MTSS. Also of note is the use of local/school budget as the primary funding source to support services provided to students. Principals reported effectively supporting new staff in the implementation of a tiered system. Most principals shared success stories highlighting the various stages of implementation of an MTSS in their schools. Nearly every principal reported that the component Effective Collaboration was an area of strength and source of success. Furthermore, many principals are reported success in the use of universal screening, intervention (enrichment) blocks/intervention programs, and effective use of assessment data to support students in their MTSS. Positive feedback from principals demonstrated their efforts to implement an MTSS in their schools. However, we have not yet reached our goal of 100% of schools in full implementation.

The VT field guide identifies A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach as foundational to the other four components. Not only was this component reported as the least often implemented of the five but also the most often requested component for additional supports. Therefore, the MTSS Team will begin our professional learning module series with a focus on the importance of A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach. Our purpose for these modules is to lay a common foundation and understanding of the key elements of an MTSS while intentionally allowing SU/SDs to work within existing successful initiatives, programs, and evidence-based practices. Each module will include a webinar, differentiated learning tasks, tools, resources, and office hours for SU/SD leadership teams. Additional modules are being planned to focus on the High-quality Instruction and Intervention, and Balanced and Comprehensive Assessment components. Certificates will be made available for participants to earn re-licensure credits upon completion of the modules.

Technical assistance is also being provided through Focus Component one-pagers, an updated definition of MTSS, the role of an EST in an MTSS, and additional resources that are available on the [AOE website](#).

For more information about a multi-tiered system of supports, please reference:

[16 V.S.A. §2902;](#)

[Education Quality Standards \(EQS\), section 2121.5;](#)

[AOE MTSS webpage](#), or contact Tracy Watterson, MTSS Program Manager,
tracy.watterson@vermont.gov

The requirement is 100% of schools responding to the SY17-18 MTSS survey. With data reported by every principal, the MTSS Team's work will truly reflect the successes of and additional supports needed by VT educators in implementing their MTSS. We welcome your requests for assistance.

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