

State Personnel Development Grant

The Newsletter for Vermont's SPDG

January 5, 2017

Volume 1, Issue 3

From the Desk of: *Happy New Year*, by Meg Porcella, SPDG Co-Director

Spotlight: *State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Moves MTSS towards Implementation Fidelity*, by Sue Cano, SSIP Co-Coordinator & SPDG External Systems Coach

vtMTSS Village: *Secondary Transition Academy*. By Amy Gaumer Erickson

Highlight: *Five Steps for Trauma-Informed Ed. Leadership*. Education Week Article by Tiffany Anderson, superintendent, Topeka, Kansas, public schools

Data Snapchat: Please take the [online survey](#), if you have not already done so.

Upcoming Training 2016-2017 Save the Dates!

Upcoming training opportunities through the SPDG will be posted here. Contact your systems coach with questions about registration.

Literacy:
[VRI at UVM Event](#)

Behavior:
[PBIS PD Calendar](#)



From the Desk of: Happy New Year!

Welcome to 2017 and the third SPDG Newsletter! This time of year, it seems natural to reflect on past work while planning for what's next. In the world of Vermont's SPDG, we have spent the past several months forming the structure for the next SPDG. Our original vision evolved as a result of the feedback we received, and the resulting plan is nearly ready to be unveiled. Please stay tuned. Also, if you've not yet done so, please [participate in a brief survey about training/meeting evaluation forms](#). And finally, I would like to say a special thank you to Amy Gaumer Erickson and Sue Cano for contributing to this edition of the newsletter.

Spotlight: State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Moves MTSS towards Implementation Fidelity

Vermont's State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) is the result of an extensive data review to identify how the state should focus its efforts to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities. The data analysis revealed that students identified as having an emotional disability (ED) in grades 3-5 were underperforming in mathematics. It also revealed that these students did not have regular access to core classroom instruction. The SSIP is designed to support and learn from schools as they operationalize a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) for academics and behavior with fidelity in grades 3, 4 and 5. This information will be used to improve outcomes for all students with disabilities across the state.

Three schools are participating in the SSIP pilot: Green Street School in Brattleboro, Newport Town School, and Lyndon Town School. Their goal will be to investigate what is needed to achieve full integration of MTSS and PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Supports) while integrating the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and created trauma-informed learning environments. The belief is that implementing and integrating these system change practices with fidelity, while creating opportunities for family involvement, will produce improved outcomes for students.

SSIP has developed an extensive stakeholder group to guide the work. Stakeholders have asked the Agency to focus on the integrated implementation of MTSS and PBIS with fidelity. Recent input from the group revealed positive feedback for the Agency about its swift and comprehensive abilities to take input and put it into action in the field within a pilot phase. While pilot schools are busy with initial systems analysis and professional learning in math, trauma, and UDL, the Agency is working on strategies to improve communication among stakeholders, support family engagement, and begin the collection of baseline evaluation data from schools.

Academy participants say:

“I was able to make a real difference for my students”

“I have benefited from the resources that have been offered to me as I developed a plan for one of my students. I have seen him complete more assignments and take ownership of his learning as a result of these resources and the help I have been able to give him. The facilitators were quite helpful in giving me the resources that I needed and offering advice.”

The contents of this document were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, #H323A120017. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer, Polly Maccini.

The VT SPDG page coming soon to:
education.vermont.gov

It Takes a Village: The Secondary Transition vtMTSS Academy

We, as educators, know that students need interpersonal skills to be successful in school and life, but how can we teach these critical skills (e.g., assertiveness and conflict management) while teaching our curriculum? The Secondary Transition vtMTSS Academy can support you in embedding these critical skills into your academic content. As one Academy participant stated, “I did not see at first how I could implement goal setting in my subject and grade but was very successful after trying it out. It will be a great tool for the future.”

In collaboration with the Vermont Agency of Education, Research Collaboration at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning offers this free, online professional development opportunity for school personnel across the state of Vermont. To date, more than 50 educators have participated in the Academy with the vast majority (91 percent) finding success in implementing instruction that directly impacted student outcomes.

The *Academy* is an online community of educators from across the state. Presented in a variety of media, this virtual academy focuses on classroom instructional strategies that support students in mastering research-based [intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies](#) shown to improve in-school and post-school success. The Academy’s content provides a springboard for participants’ reflection on their current practices and discussions with colleagues throughout the state. General and special educators are encouraged to apply to participate. The Spring 2017 eight-week session will begin in late January and will focus on teaching students to be more assertive and better manage conflict. Participants can receive up to 30 continuing education hours through Academy participation. [Apply online for the Academy.](#)

Highlight: Five Steps for Trauma-Informed Education Leadership Article

The following is an excerpt from an article by Tiffany Anderson, superintendent, Topeka, Kansas, public schools and is used with permission. [Read the full article on Education Week.](#)

“Schools in high-poverty communities are more likely to serve families that have experienced trauma. Whether families deal with homelessness, lack of access to such basic resources as food and health care, or unsafe neighborhoods with high crime rates, these adverse experiences trigger toxic stress—which has an impact on a child's developing brain. If children do not receive support to deal with this stress, they are more likely to experience long-term academic and social-development delays.”