

# **Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports**

## **(VTmtss) Survey Summary**

### **2020-2021**

#### **Response to Title 16 V.S.A. §2904**

**REPORT**  
August 9, 2021

**Summary Report to the Secretary of  
Education**

**Submitted by:**  
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**and Tracy B. Watterson (VTmtss Program Manager)**



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## **Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports (VTmtss)**

The VTmtss Framework articulates the components of an effective school system that are necessary to provide each and every student with the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports and services they need to succeed. The framework provides a systemic approach to decision making for excellence and equity within a culture of continuous improvement.

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

### **What is the Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports Survey?**

The Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports (VTmtss) Survey provides the Agency of Education with the data to fulfill legal requirements in [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.”

The data is used to facilitate priority setting and supports provided by the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) to the field. Applications include:

- Informing the AOE 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, and
- Informing the identification and provision of technical assistance supporting Vermont’s implementation of Act 173 and Education Recovery needs.

### **Response Rate**

This year’s submission rate was 85 percent representing 246 schools across 52 Supervisory Unions and Supervisory Districts (SU/SD).

### **A Note on This Year’s Data Collection**

Compared to our last survey, this year’s VTmtss Survey encompassed a more comprehensive systemic approach through new and revised questions and categories. Trend data is shared for the SY16-17, SY17-18, SY18-19, and SY20-21 school years whenever possible. In cases where questions and categories are new to this year’s survey, trend data could not be captured. All data is self-reported. Note: an assurance replaced the annual survey for the SY19-20 school year.

## **Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports Survey Findings**

Questions one through five asked for principal and superintendent contact information, school name, total student population and grade span of school.

## **Educational Support Team (Survey Questions 6-10)**

*Question 6. For how many students was a request for assistance made to the Educational Support Team (EST) for the first time this school year?*

*Question 7. Of the students in Question 6, how many received an Educational Support Team (EST) plan?*

*Question 8. Of the students in Question 6, how many had 504 plans developed for the first time this school year?*

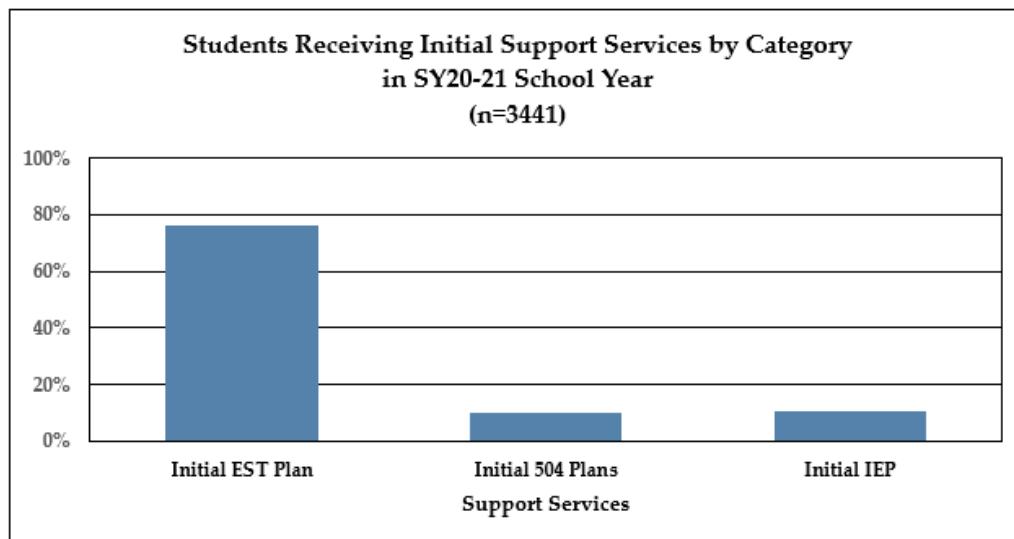
*Question 9. Of the students in Question 6, how many received a request for assistance for a special education evaluation for the first time this school year?*

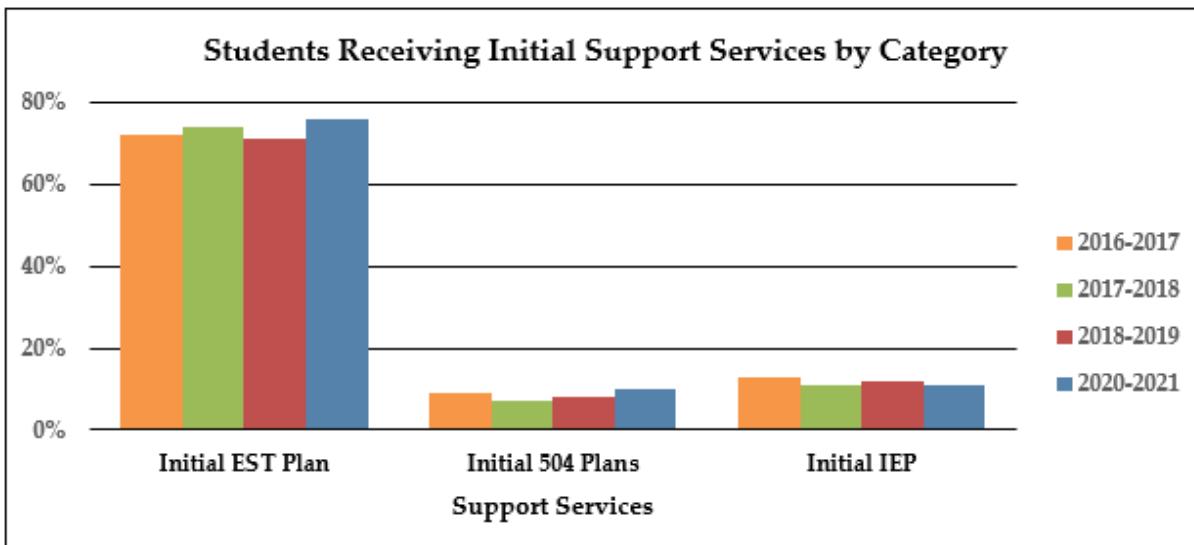
*Question 10. Of the students in Question 9, how many had an Individualized Education Programs (IEP) developed for the first time this school year?*

Based on survey results, across the 246 schools reporting: In the SY20-21 school year, 3,441 initial referrals were made to an Educational Support Team (EST). Of those initial referrals 76 percent (2,618 students) received an initial educational support plan, ten percent (356 students) received an initial Section 504 plan, and 16 percent (543 students) received a special education evaluation. Of the group of 543 students who received an initial special education evaluation, 70 percent (376 students) were found eligible for special education services and received an initial Individualized Education Program (IEP); approximately 11 percent of the 3,441 students were newly referred to the EST.

The AOE has determined that effectively supporting ESTs is a critical part of responding to the goals of Act 173. This survey data will be used to inform the development and implementation of EST-related guidance and supports.

The following graphs represent the percent of students receiving initial services by category: EST Plan, 504 Plans, and IEP for the current school year, and during the past five school years (exclusive of SY19-20).





The data below compares initial support services over a four-year collection period. Consistently during this period, about 30% of initial evaluations for special education services resulted in the student not being eligible for an Individualized Education Program.

If you would like more information about the questions in the **Educational Support Team** section of this survey, contact Tom Faris at [Thomas.Faris@vermont.gov](mailto:Thomas.Faris@vermont.gov).

### **Reporting Requirements of Title 16 Funding (Survey Questions 11-20)**

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.

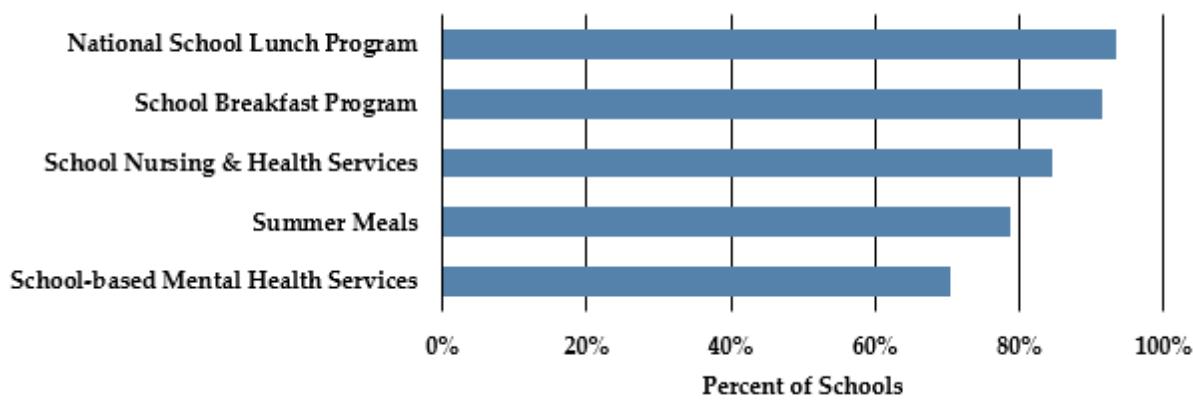
All survey data provided below reflects data compiled across the 246 schools reporting.

#### **Health and Nutrition Services and Supports**

*Question 11. Which of the following School Health and Nutrition Services and Supports are part of your school's multi-tiered system of supports? Check all that apply.*

The five most common categories of Health and Nutrition Services and Supports offered by schools include National School Lunch Program (93 percent), School Breakfast Program (91 percent), School Nursing and Health Services (85 percent), Summer Meals (79 percent), and School-based Mental Health Services (70 percent).

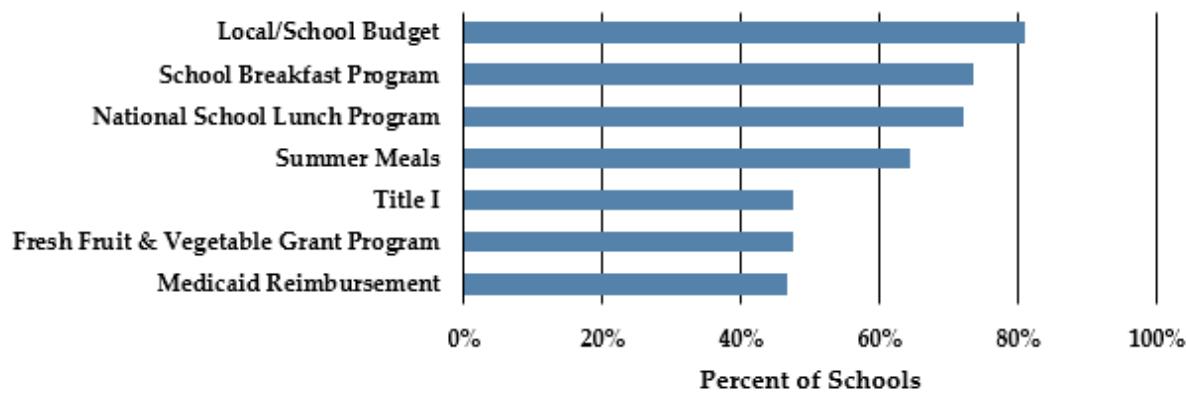
### **Five Most Common Categories of Health and Nutrition Services and Supports**



*Question 20. Please select all funding sources for the School Health and Nutrition Services and Supports. Check all that apply.*

The seven most common funding sources for Health and Nutrition Services and Supports are Local/School Budget (81 percent), School Breakfast Program (74 percent), National School Lunch Program (72 percent), Summer Meals (64 percent), Title I (48 percent), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant Program (48 percent) and Medicaid Reimbursement (47 percent).

### **Seven Most Common Funding Sources for Health and Nutrition Services and Supports**



Data indicate Medicaid Reimbursement decreased by 15 percent this year compared to 62 percent for the SY18-19 school year. Data from SY17-18 and SY16-17 indicated 52 and 64 percent.

## Note on SY20-21 Survey Revisions

This year's survey provided options for the specific programs that are part of Federal and State Funding for the Federal Child Nutrition Programs: National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant Program, After School Snacks or Meals, Summer Meals, and Food Service Equipment Grants. Past surveys only offered the option of Child Nutrition Programs. In addition, Title I, Title IV, and Title V were listed separately instead of grouped as Consolidated Federal Programs.

### **Summer Meal Program, School Snacks, and Farm to School Activities**

*Question 12. Thinking about a typical summer, if you don't offer a summer meals program, what are the barriers preventing you from doing so?*

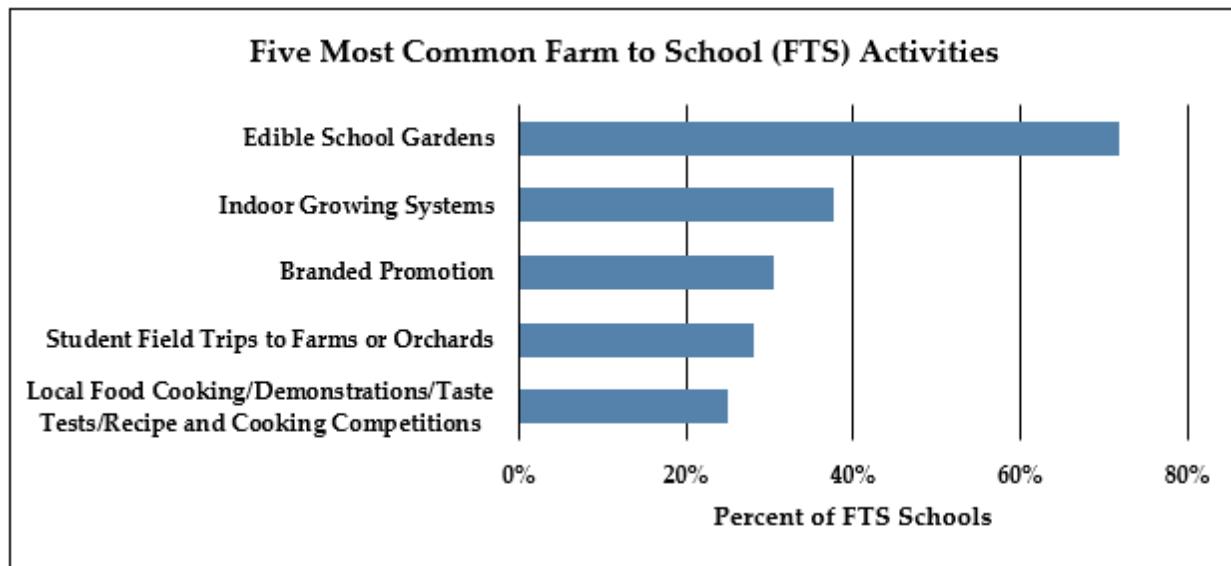
*Question 13. Thinking about a typical school year, if you don't offer after school snacks or meals, what are the barriers preventing you from doing so?*

*Question 15. In what ways has Farm to School (FTS) been embedded into school practices and policies? Check all that apply.*

Open-ended questions regarding possible barriers to summer meal programs and school snacks, what Farm to School (FTS) activities took place, and FTS embedded in school practices and policies resulted in 67 percent of schools indicating one or more FTS activities.

*Question 14. Which Farm to School (FTS) activities took place in your school during the past school year? In this case, 'activities' refers to educational activities involving food, agriculture, or nutrition. Choose all activities which apply.*

The five most common Farm to School (FTS) activities: include Edible School Gardens (72 percent), Indoor Growing Systems (38 percent), Branded Promotion (30 percent), Student Field Trips to Farms or Orchards (28 percent), and Local Food Cooking/Demonstrations/Taste Tests/ Recipe and Cooking Competitions (25 percent).



This is the first time this question has appeared on the survey.

## **Health Education and Substance Abuse Prevention**

*Question 16. Our school provides health education to the following grades. Check all that apply.*

*Question 17. Our school provides substance use prevention to the following grades. Check all that apply.*

*Question 18. Which substance abuse prevention programs does your school offer?*

*Question 19. Does your school have Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with substance abuse treatment providers?*

Two questions relating to Substance Use/Abuse Prevention Programs were added to this year's survey, identifying which grades provide health education and substance use prevention.

Responses distributed throughout grade levels. Twelve percent of schools have a Memorandum of Understandings for Substance Abuse Treatment Providers. When asked to identify the substance use prevention programs their school offers, 19 percent of schools reported no substance abuse prevention program or left the question unanswered.

If you would like more information about the questions in the **Reporting Requirements of Title 16 Funding** section of this survey, contact:

**Health Services and Supports:** Sue Yesalonia at [Susan.Yesalonia@vermont.gov](mailto:Susan.Yesalonia@vermont.gov)

**Substance Abuse Prevention:** Beth Keister at [Beth.Keister@vermont.gov](mailto:Beth.Keister@vermont.gov)

**Nutrition Services and Supports:** Rosie Krueger at [Mary.Krueger@vermont.gov](mailto:Mary.Krueger@vermont.gov)

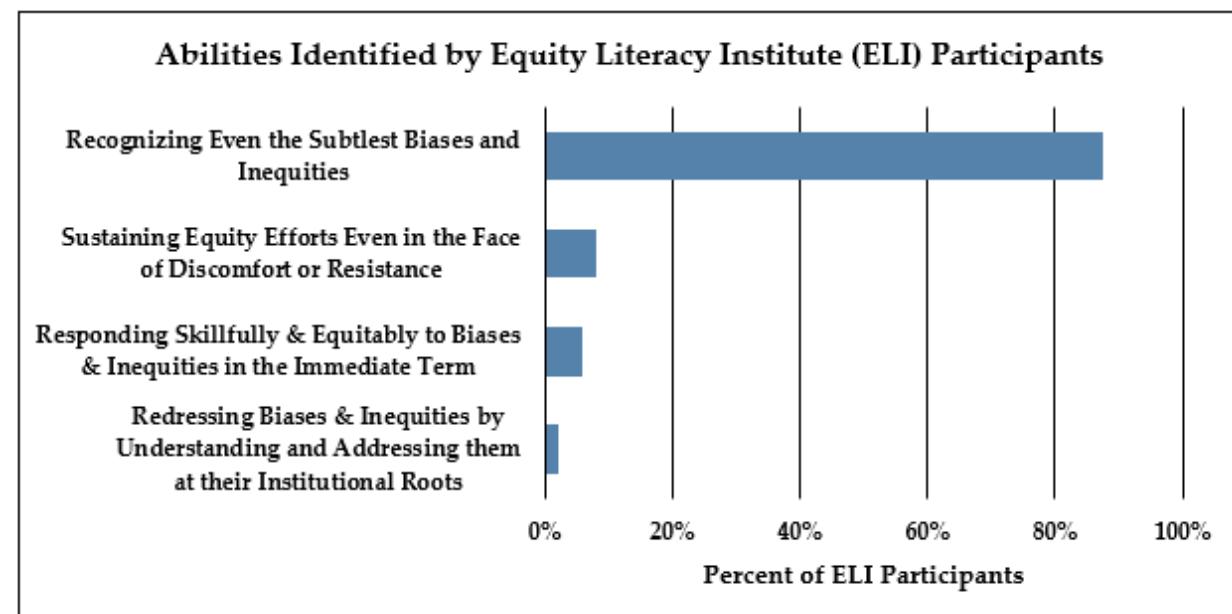
## **Equity Literacy (Survey Questions 21-25)**

Five questions regarding Equity Literacy were added to the survey this year to replace previous years' Culturally Responsive Practices survey questions. All survey data provided below reflects data compiled across the 246 schools reporting.

*Question 21. Has your staff participated in professional learning related to any of the following abilities identified by The Equity Literacy Institute?*

*Question 21a. If yes, check all that apply. (See the choices for the abilities in chart below.)*

Fifty-six percent of schools responded that staff participated in professional learning focused on abilities identified by the Equity Literacy Institute (ELI). The following data show the responses of identified ELI abilities during this professional learning.



This is the first time this question has appeared on the survey.

*Question 22. Are abilities related to equity literacy included as part of the educator evaluation?*

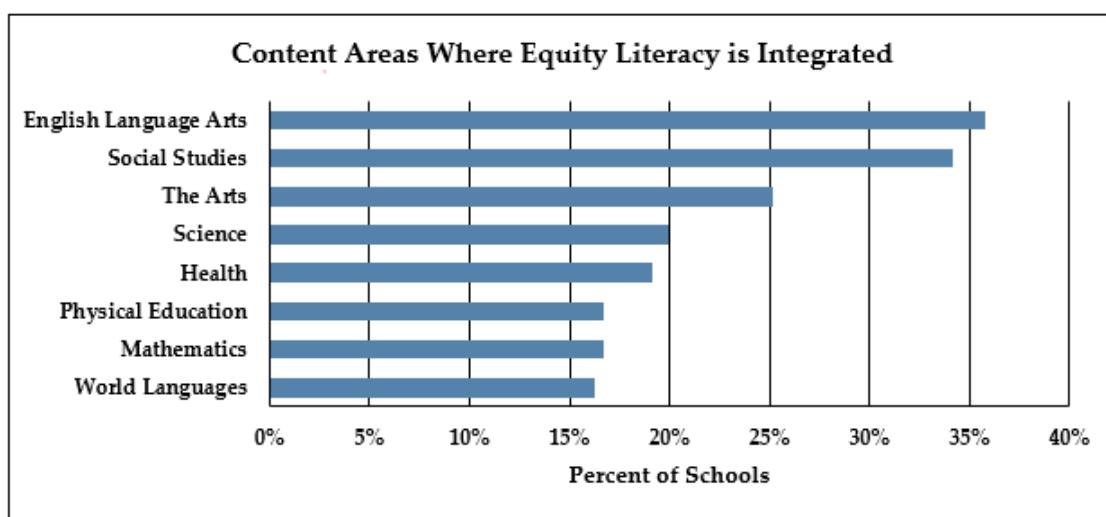
*Question 22a. If yes, which abilities are addressed?*

Seven percent of schools reported that equity literacy practices are included as part of the educator evaluation. Those principals answered an open-ended question with a narrative response indicating which equity literacy abilities are addressed in the educator evaluations.

*Question 23. Is equity literacy integrated across content areas?*

*Question 23a. If yes, which content areas? Check all that apply. (See the content areas choices in the chart below.)*

The data indicates that equity literacy is integrated into English Language Arts (36 percent), Social Studies (34 percent), The Arts (25 percent), Science (20 percent), Health (19 percent), Physical Education (17 percent), Mathematics (17 percent), and World Language (16 percent).



*This is the first time this question appeared on the survey.*

*Question 24. What data are collected regarding equitable participation in extra-curricular activities?*

*Question 25. Which positions or groups within your educational system are responsible for issues related to equity and inclusion?*

Additionally, data were collected regarding equitable participation in extra-curricular activities, and which position or groups within the education system are responsible for issues related to equity and inclusion. These questions were open ended with narrative responses.

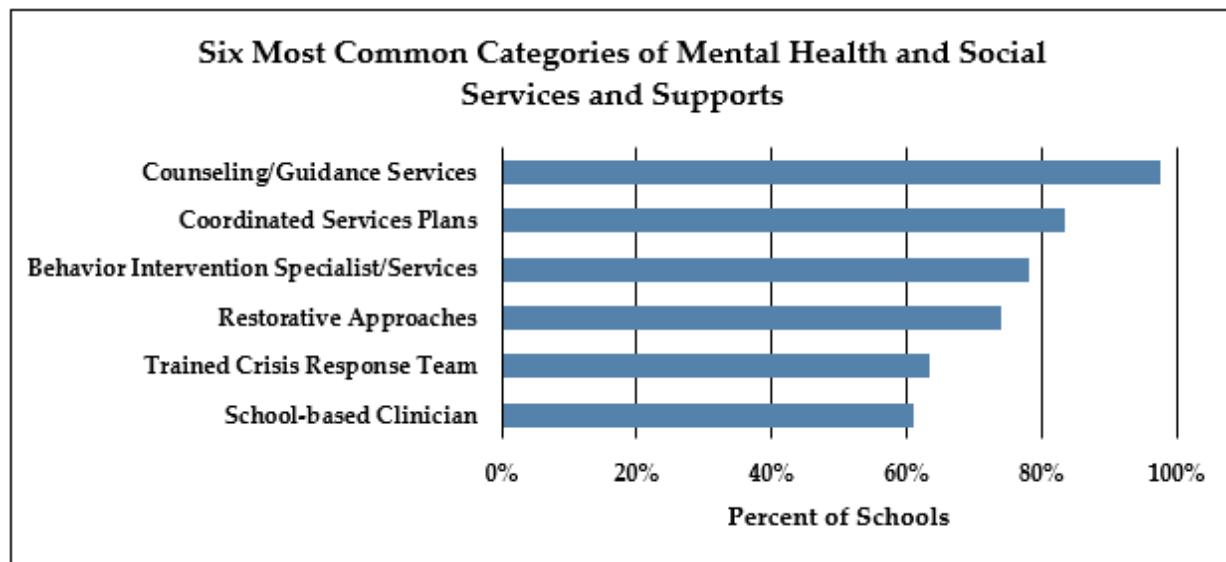
If you would like more information about the questions in the **Equity Literacy** section of this survey contact: Martha Deiss at [Martha.Deiss@vermont.gov](mailto:Martha.Deiss@vermont.gov).

### **Mental Health and Social Services and Supports (Survey Questions 26-31)**

All survey data provided below reflects data compiled across the 246 schools reporting.

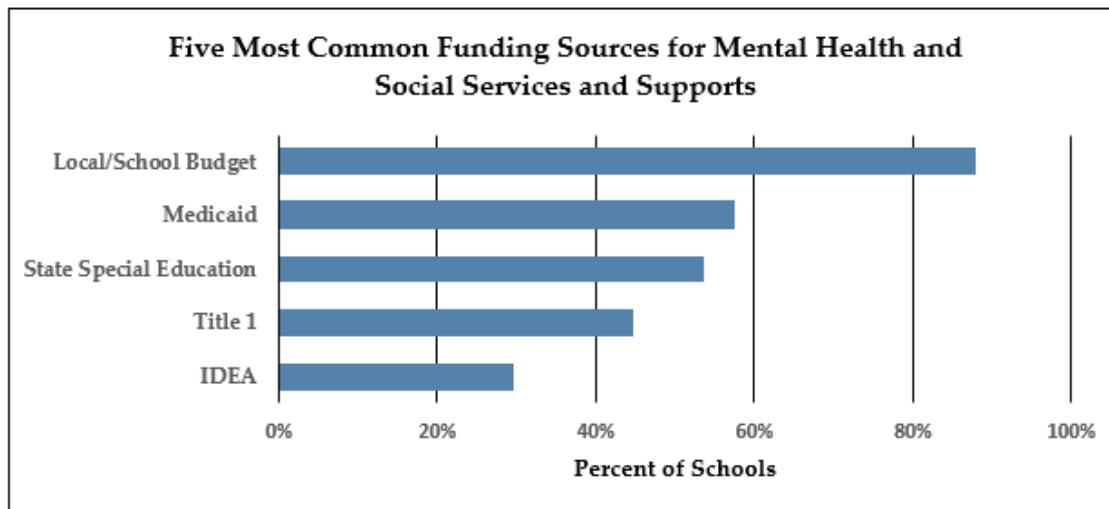
*Question 26. Which of the following Mental Health and Social Services and Supports are part of your school's multi-tiered system of supports? Check all that apply.*

The six most common categories of Mental Health and Social Services and Supports offered by schools include: Counseling/Guidance Services (95 percent), Coordinated Service Plans (83 percent), Behavior Intervention Specialist/Services (78 percent), Restorative Approaches (74 percent), Trained Crisis Response Team (63 percent) and School-based Clinician (61 percent). Options included Family Support Personnel, Restorative Approaches, Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), Peer Mentoring, and Suicide Prevention Training, but not Schoolwide Discipline Plan.



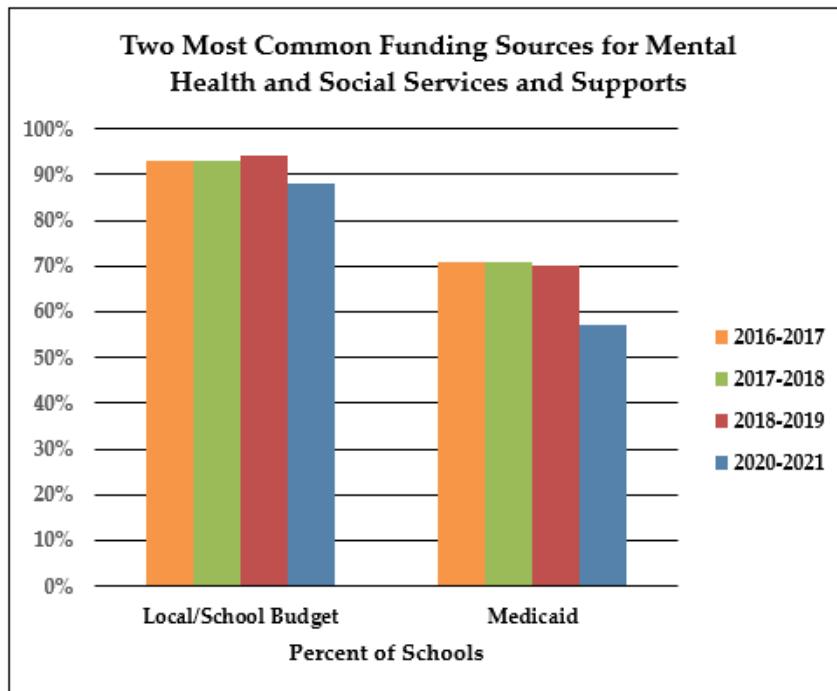
*Question 31. Please select all funding sources used for the Mental Health and Social Services and Supports. Check all that apply.*

The five most common Mental Health and Social Services and Supports funding sources were Local/School Budget (88 percent), Medicaid (57 percent), State Special Education (54 percent), Title I (45 percent), and IDEA (30 percent).



This year's data indicates a six percent decrease in Local/School Budget and a 13 percent decrease from last year in Medicaid as funding sources for Mental Health and Social Services Supports. Title I, Title IV, and Title V were offered as separate options instead of grouped as Consolidated Federal Programs.

The data below compares the two most common funding sources for Mental Health and Social Services and Supports as indicated over four years.



## **Staff Trained in Trauma-Informed Practices (Survey Questions 27-30)**

All survey data provided below reflects data compiled across the 246 schools reporting.

*Question 27. What percentage of your staff has been trained in trauma-informed practices?*

*Question 28. What trauma-informed training would you recommend for others to engage in?*

*Question 29. Which positions or groups within your educational system are responsible for issues related to trauma-informed practices?*

*Question 30. Does your school have a Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with your local Designated Mental Health Agency or other local mental health agencies or providers?*

One hundred percent of staff in 34 percent of Vermont schools have trained in Trauma-Informed Practices, with only three percent of schools having no staff members trained.

In the past the choice of “50% of staff being trained” was an available option. This year’s survey mistakenly omitted a 50% option, so trend data is not available.

This year’s data compared to SY18-19 data, shows a three percent decrease in the number of schools reporting 100 percent of their staff trained in Trauma-Informed Practices and three percent, indicating no change, in the number of schools reporting zero percent of their staff trained in Trauma-Informed Practices.

Principals identified which Trauma-Informed training they would recommend and which positions or groups within their educational system are responsible for issues related to Trauma-Informed Practices.

Fifty-four percent of schools have a Memorandum of Understandings with a local Designated Mental Health Agency or other mental health agency or provider.

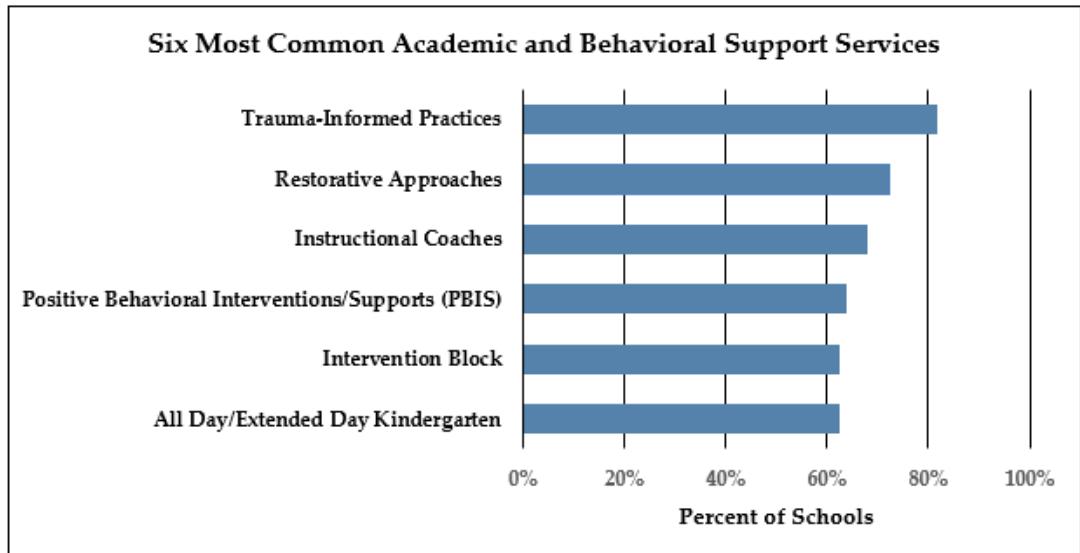
If you would like more information about the questions in the **Mental Health and Social Services and Supports** section of this survey, contact Meg Porcella at [Meg.Porcella@vermont.gov](mailto:Meg.Porcella@vermont.gov).

## **Academics and Behavioral Services and Supports (Survey Questions 32-33)**

All survey data provided below reflects data compiled across the 246 schools reporting.

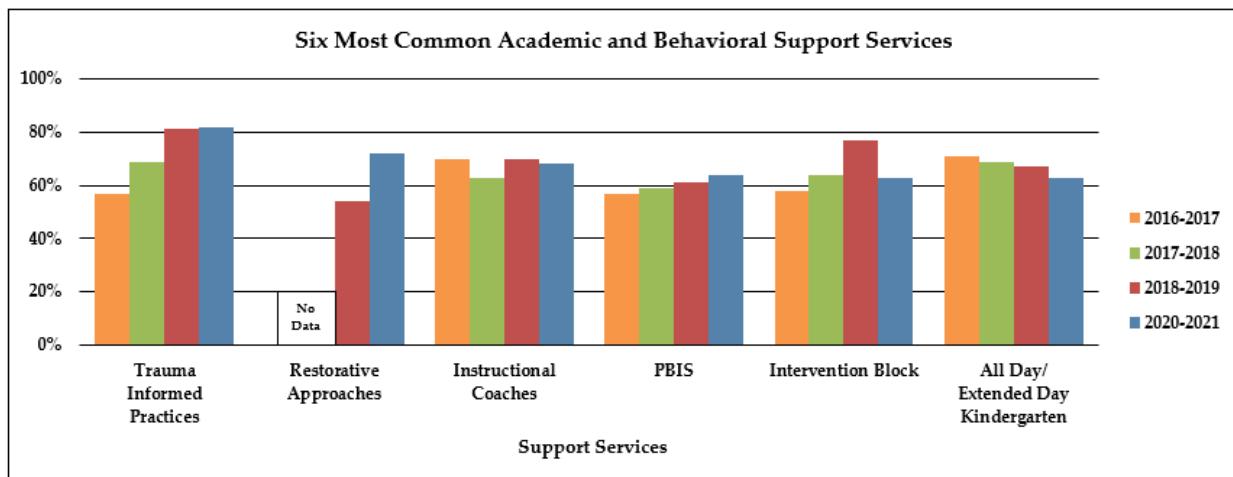
*Question 32. Which of the following Academic and Behavioral Services and Supports are available to any student as part of your school’s multi-tiered system of supports? Check all that apply.*

All schools offer Academic and Behavioral Support Services. The six most common Academic and Behavioral Support Services include Trauma-Informed Practices (82 percent), Restorative Approaches (72 percent), Instructional Coaches (68 percent), Positive Behavioral Interventions/Supports (PBIS) (64 percent), Intervention Block (63 percent), and All Day/Extended Day Kindergarten (63 percent).



This year's data indicates an increase of 18 percent for Restorative Approaches support services and a 14 percent decrease in Intervention Block compared to SY18-19 data. Restorative Approaches data was not collected for SY16-17 and SY17-18. Study Supports and Advisory were additional categories this year, though not among the top six support services.

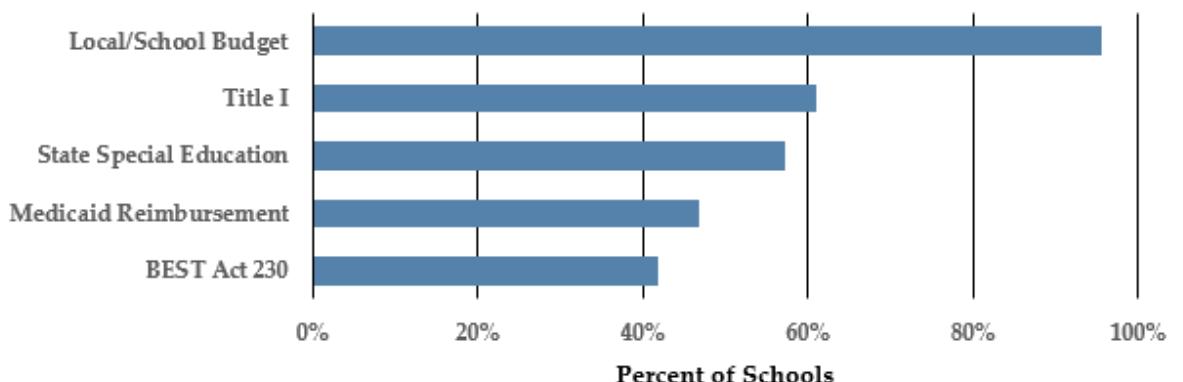
The chart below represents this year's six most common Academic and Behavioral Support Services categories over the past four years.



*Question 33. Please select all funding sources for the Academic and Behavioral Services and Supports. Check all that apply.*

The five most common Academic and Behavioral Support Services funding sources were Local/School Budget (96 percent), Title I (61 percent), State Special Education (57 percent), Medicaid Reimbursement (47 percent), and BEST Act 230 (42 percent).

### Five Most Common Funding Sources for Academics and Behavioral Support Services



This year's data indicates a 16 percent increase in State Special Education, a five percent increase in BEST Act 230, and a 12 percent decrease in Medicaid Reimbursement support and services compared to SY18-19. In addition, Title I, Title IV, and Title V were offered as separate categories this year instead of grouped as Consolidated Federal Programs.

If you would like more information about the **Academics and Behavioral Services and Support** questions in the section of this survey, contact:

**Early Education:** Kate Rogers at [Kate.Rogers@vermont.gov](mailto:Kate.Rogers@vermont.gov)

**VTmtss:** Tracy Watterson at [Tracy.Watterson@vermont.gov](mailto:Tracy.Watterson@vermont.gov)

### **VTmtss Capacity Building (Survey Questions 34-36)**

All survey data provided below reflects data compiled across the 246 schools reporting.

*Question 34. What area(s) of growth did your SU and/or school focus on this year to build capacity for multi-tiered system of supports?*

*Question 35. Was your school's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) informed by a review of your VTmtss Framework?*

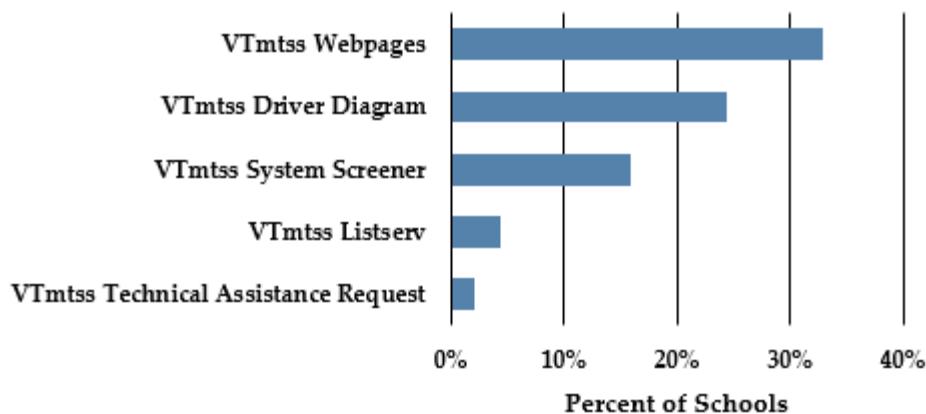
Principals shared areas of growth their SUs and schools focused on this year to build capacity for a multi-tiered system of supports.

Seventy-eight percent of schools reviewed their VTmtss Framework to inform their Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP).

*Question 36. Which of the following VTmtss Team opportunities did your school use to inform and support your VTmtss Framework? Check all that apply.*

Data indicates schools used the VTmtss Webpages (33 percent), the VTmtss Driver Diagram (24 percent), the VTmtss System Screener (16 percent), the VTmtss Listserv (11 percent), and the VTmtss Technical Assistance Request (five percent) to inform and support their VTmtss Framework.

### Opportunities Used to Inform and Support VTmtss Framework



Data indicates 53 percent of schools used one or more VTmtss Team opportunity to inform and support their VTmtss Framework.

This is the first time this question appeared on the survey.

If you would like more information about the **VTmtss Capacity Building** questions in the section of this survey, contact:

**VTmtss:** Tracy Watterson, VTmtss Program Manager, at [Tracy.Watterson@vermont.gov](mailto:Tracy.Watterson@vermont.gov)

For questions regarding this report, contact Nancy Hellen, VTmtss Coordinator, [Nancy.Hellen@vermont.gov](mailto:Nancy.Hellen@vermont.gov).