

## Educational Support Teams (EST): Making Connections with VTmtss

**Purpose:** This document is intended to be used by school systems who are reviewing and improving their Educational Support Teams (EST). This document would be most effective when used in conjunction with the [VTmtss Systems Screener](#), the [VTmtss Framework](#), and the [VTmtss Driver Diagram](#) as an organizational tool for action planning.

### Terms within this document:

- **Performance Indicator (PI) Categories** are the essential elements representing what an effective EST should include. (See [Educational Support Team \(EST\) Practice Profile](#).)
- **Performance Indicators** begin to describe what a school system would want to realize, within each PI category, and are a part of how the AOE will evaluate LEAs' implementation of Act 173. (See [Act 173 Technical Guidance: Educational Support Teams in School District Systems](#).)
- **Effective Practices** are examples of what best practice within each Performance Indicator.
- **Relevant VTmtss Driver Diagram Component Indicators** are the VTmtss Framework Component (its corresponding characteristic and indicators located within the component tab of the VTmtss Driver Diagram) to support EST improvement conversations: Systemic and Comprehensive Approach (SCA), Effective Collaboration (EC), High-quality Instruction and Intervention (HQII), Balanced and Comprehensive Assessment System (CBAS), and Expertise (E)

**If a school system has identified improving their educational support team as a priority, this is how they should use this document:**

1. Complete the VTmtss Systems Screener to help your school system articulate its systemic strengths and areas for improvement and inform how you approach your educational support team improvement work.
2. Decide which PI Category(ies) to focus on in your improvement work.
3. Use the VTmtss Driver Diagram to frame your action planning around your selected Category(ies).
  - a. Use the Performance Indicators and Effective Practices as reference points for what you should be working towards.
  - b. Focus on the Relevant VTmtss Driver Diagram Component Indicators within your VTmtss Driver Diagram conversation, to help guide the direction of your action planning.

If you have questions about this document or this process, please contact Tracy Watterson, VTmtss Program Manager, at [tracy.watterson@vermont.gov](mailto:tracy.watterson@vermont.gov).

### Contact Information:

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## PI CATEGORY 1: THE EST SYSTEM IS COORDINATED AT THE SU/SD LEVEL

Performance Indicator	What does effective practice look like?	Relevant VTmtss Driver Diagram Component Indicators
<p><a href="#">EST</a> Meetings are part of the master schedule.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EST meetings are scheduled through the school year. The meeting schedule is frequent enough to address all referrals and follow-ups in a timely manner.</li> <li>• Meetings follow established norms with assigned roles, including a facilitator, recorder and timekeeper.</li> <li>• Norms and required roles are reviewed periodically to consider whether they are followed or need modification. All EST members are scheduled to attend every meeting and the list of members conforms to <a href="#">AOE recommendations</a>.</li> <li>• At least one member is a member of a district level team that is charged with EST oversight. Some team meetings include discussion of potential systemic improvements that could build capacity in the general education classrooms.</li> <li>• All team meetings include discussion of who else needs to know about team decisions.</li> <li>• All decisions are documented, including timelines and staff responsible.</li> <li>• Agendas are prepared prior to the meeting and include any review or discussion items previously scheduled.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Effective Collaboration:</u></b> <i>(characteristic 2, indicator 2)</i> School structures support ongoing collaborative engagement focused on improving student outcomes in behavior, academics, and social-emotional learning.</p>

Performance Indicator	What does effective practice look like?	Relevant VTmtss Driver Diagram Component Indicators
<p>Equitable distribution of personnel across the district's schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing and <a href="#">scheduling</a> the EST are planned in advance of each school year and are a priority in the school and district master schedules.</li> <li>• School and district administration ensure that appropriate staff are assigned to the EST.</li> <li>• Assignment to an EST does not conflict with other responsibilities.</li> <li>• An administrator participates in every EST, yet the administrative role is generally seen as facilitative, not directive.</li> <li>• All team members have an equal voice.</li> <li>• SU/SD administration uses data and input from all ESTs to ensure that shared district staff are assigned across <del>all</del> schools in the district in a manner that ensures access by students with the greatest needs.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#"><u>Expertise:</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>(characteristic 2, indicator 1)</u></a></p> <p>The appropriate expertise is allocated and aligned to targeted areas of need.</p>
<p>Interventions &amp; supports adequately funded.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School and district administration use EST data and input to ensure that there is adequate funding for supports and interventions.</li> <li>• School and district administrative teams make frequent use of EST data to <a href="#"><u>determine needs and plan improvement.</u></a></li> </ul>	<p><a href="#"><u>Systemic and Comprehensive Approach:</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>(characteristic 1, indicator 1)</u></a></p> <p>The collective vision of growth and improvement is characterized through the structures and modes of operation.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Expertise:</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>(characteristic 2, indicator 2)</u></a></p> <p>Programs, policies and resource allocation decisions allow access to the appropriate expertise.</p>

## PI CATEGORY 2: THE EST SYSTEM HAS CLEAR STRUCTURE AND PROTOCOLS

Performance Indicator	What does effective practice look like?	Relevant VTmtss Driver Diagram Component Indicators
Documented team structure & norms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings follow established norms with assigned roles, including a facilitator, recorder and timekeeper.</li> <li>EST meeting practices are exemplars of best practice for school/district meetings. Other school/district meetings have similar practices.</li> </ul>	<p><u><i>Effective Collaboration:</i></u> <u><i>(characteristic 2, indicator 1)</i></u> There are purposeful collaborations formed to meet specific needs, have defined norms, roles, responsibilities, and processes.</p>
Documentation of communication protocols of/for the EST process for all stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All decisions are documented, including timelines and staff responsible.</li> <li>The school and district make <u>family engagement</u> a priority and a focus for continuous improvement. EST data about family involvement is one measure used in this planning.</li> </ul>	<p><u><i>Effective Collaboration:</i></u> <u><i>(characteristic 2, indicator 3)</i></u> There are respectful school-family and school-community partnerships that include participation in decision making, input into improved student learning, and culturally responsive teaching.</p>
Resources & continual needs-based professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some team meetings include discussion of potential systemic improvements that could build capacity in the general education classrooms</li> <li>Teachers often invite other staff to observe their classes, review lesson plans and discuss assessments. Professional practice is seen as a shared area for continuous improvement.</li> </ul>	<p><u><i>Expertise:</i></u> <u><i>(characteristic 3, indicator 2)</i></u> Expertise is used flexibly and efficiently to develop, maintain, and employ resources as needed to ensure success for all students.</p> <p><u><i>Expertise:</i></u> <u><i>(characteristic 1, indicator 1)</i></u> All educators, staff, family, and community members view themselves as lifelong learners.</p>

**PI CATEGORY 3: THE EST SYSTEM INCLUDES A ROBUST DATA COLLECTION & VISUAL ANALYSIS**

Performance Indicator	What does effective practice look like?	Relevant VTmtss Driver Diagram Component Indicators
<p>Documented use of multiple student-level data sources to inform decision making and establish progress monitoring.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team discussion typically includes a <a href="#">review of data</a> and an opportunity for clarifying questions.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Students are aware of learning objectives</a> and can accurately self-evaluate their progress.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#"><i>Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment System:</i></a> <i>(characteristic 1, indicator 5)</i></p> <p>A range of trustworthy and relevant data used to solve problems and make decisions.</p> <p><a href="#"><i>High-quality Instruction and Intervention:</i></a> <i>(characteristic 3, indicator 4)</i></p> <p>Intervention is tailored to specific student needs and uses progress monitoring and other high-quality assessment information to inform decisions.</p>
<p>Documented evidence that trends in student needs feed CNA process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District administration understands that EST referrals often indicate systemic needs and responds accordingly.</li> <li>• District administration examines disaggregated demographic data about students referred to the EST to detect any over-representation of students by race, gender, economic status, disability.</li> <li>• The EST makes time to review the referral process and the fidelity of implementation. This includes general data about causes and sources of referrals. This data is shared with school and district teams for <a href="#">CNA/CIP development</a>.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#"><i>Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment System:</i></a> <i>(characteristic 1, indicator 3)</i></p> <p>A shared focus on using assessment information to improve instructional practices and outcomes.</p>