

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents and Principals *RH*
FROM: Secretary Rebecca Holcombe, Ed.D.
SUBJECT: AOE Staff Re-Alignment
DATE: August 29, 2016

Over the past few months we have been working to reorganize our work, staff and processes in order to better support the needs of our schools and their Supervisory Unions/Districts. This effort has been largely shaped by feedback from the field and efforts to implement the Education Quality Standards.

I am very grateful for our AOE staff, who all worked hard to transition to our new structure, even as they continued to provide service and support to the field. This transition would not have succeeded without their hard work, generosity of spirit and commitment to providing better support to our school systems.

To help you and your staff understand some of our changes, four of the teams that support work related to the Education Quality Standards have created one-page documents that summarize the work they do and how they can support your school system. Specifically, these four new teams are organized as follows:

1. **Personalization and Flexible Pathways** - supports implementation of Act 77 including flexible pathways and personalized learning plans.
2. **Proficiency Based Learning**- supports all content areas and the development of proficiency-based learning graduation requirements and learning targets in addition to the local assessment systems required by EQS.
3. **Multi-Tiered System of Supports**- supports the ongoing implementation of MTSS and all of the myriad alternatives including PBIS, SWIFT, EST, and Restorative Practices.
4. **Education Quality Assurance**- supports all school systems in the development of continuous improvement plans and the Integrated Field Reviews developed over the past year.)

Moving forward, all teams will strive to reduce the regulatory burden on our school systems by coordinating efforts, particularly when tasks overlap the work of separate AOE workgroups. In the next month, members of these teams may reach out to you for assistance in planning or continuing work that supports your system.

We value your comments; your feedback helps us become more effective, please feel free to submit questions, concerns or comments here: (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HTB8SWX>). As always, thank you for all you do, every day, to support and challenge the children of Vermont.



Personalization and Flexible Pathways

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS FOR VERMONT'S EDUCATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS ¹

2120.1 Instructional Practices

2120.2 Flexible Pathways

2120.4 Personalized Learning Plans

Technical Assistance and Support

The Vermont AOE believes that personalization and flexible pathways improve student outcomes by creating authentic, student-centered learning opportunities that increase student motivation and engagement in their learning.

OUR TEAM SUPPORTS PERSONALIZATION BY:

- Sharing best practices and model documents designed to assist school districts
- Guiding development and implementation of personalized learning processes, personalized learning plans and k-12 personalized instruction
- Organizing and implementing professional learning in collaboration with other AOE teams and field partners

OUR TEAM SUPPORTS FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS BY:

- Guiding development and implementation of flexible pathways to graduation opportunities, including:
 - dual enrollment and early college
 - virtual learning and blended learning
 - work-based learning
 - expanded learning opportunities
 - career technical education and adult education
- Providing guidance around mapping flexible pathways experiences to proficiencies and PBGRs
- Creating collaborative partnerships that build capacity for community and instructional leadership around flexible pathways

Key Resources

- **Summary of Act 77** - A brief and comprehensive synopsis of the Flexible Pathways Initiative;
- **Personalized Learning Glossary**- A summary and definition of pertinent terms and concepts; accompanies our technical assistance and support materials (under development);
- **Personalized Learning Process Manual**- A guide to support the implementation of the personalized learning process at the local level (under development).

Key Staff

- Division Director, Personalization and Flexible Pathways (TBA)
- Toni Marra, Program Coordinator, Dual Enrollment and Early College
- Veronica Newton, Program Coordinator, Personalization and Flexible Pathways
- Sigrid Olson, Program Coordinator, Personalization and Flexible Pathways

¹ <http://education.vermont.gov/state-board/rules/2000>



Proficiency-Based Learning Team

ESSENTIAL SUPPORT FOR VERMONT'S EDUCATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (EQS)

- EQS 2120 Curriculum & Instruction
2120.1 Instructional Practices 2120.5 Curriculum 2120.7 Graduation Requirements

Technical Assistance & Supports

Vermont AOE believes that a strong commitment to a proficiency-based learning system will improve educational outcomes for all students. Proficiency-based learning requires a shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning that provides equitable opportunities for each and every student. As a result, students are empowered to take ownership and provide evidence of their learning.

OUR TEAM SUPPORTS PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING (PBL) BY:

- providing guidance and promoting high-quality, evidence-based professional learning for educational leaders focused on implementation of standards, alignment of curriculum to standards, and best instructional practices;
- creating collaborative partnerships that build capacity for instructional leadership and proficiency-based learning;
- supporting school systems to develop proficiency-based, local assessment systems that complement our statewide assessment system;
- coordinating our work with other teams at the Agency and developing shared messages for the field.

Key Resources

- **Content Standards & Supports:** Guidance on content-specific standards, resources, curriculum, & assessment.
- **Local Comprehensive Assessment System Guidance:** This guidance document explains the essential structures and supports needed within a local assessment system.
- **Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR) Sample Documents and Resources:** Sample graduation requirements for literacy, mathematics, science, global citizenship, artistic expression, health education, physical education, and transferable skills are supplemented with an introduction and glossary.
- **Transferable Skill Sample Scoring Criteria and Resources:** A bank of resources for infusing transferable skills into curriculum including scoring criteria, tasks, and sample student work developed by Great Schools Partnership and the AOE.
- **Messaging the Shift to Proficiency-Based Learning (PBL):** A review of essential shifts happening in Vermont school systems and the research that supports it. (under development)
- **Model Policy on Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements (coming in 2017)**

Key Staff

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| • Pat Fitzsimmons, Team Leader | • Vacant, English Language Arts Specialist |
| • Gail Hall, Science Specialist | • Vacant, Global Citizenship Specialist |
| • Kathy Renfrew, Science Specialist | • Vacant, Health/Physical Education Specialist |
| • Emily Titterton, Arts Specialist | • Vacant, Mathematics Specialist |



Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS FOR VERMONT'S EDUCATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS

EQS 2121.5 Tiered System Of Academic And Behavioral Support

16 V.S.A. §2902- MTSS and EST

State Board Rule 2194- MTSS and EST

Technical Assistance & Supports

The Vermont AOE believes that Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) improves student outcomes by building capacity within schools and supervisory unions to meet the academic and behavior needs of all students. We believe that all students, including those with the most extensive needs, should experience high-quality instruction within inclusive educational settings.

Our team will support the field in using MTSS to maximize student outcomes by:

- establishing key criteria, expectations, and resources for implementation of the ten Guiding Principles and five components identified in the Vermont Multi-Tiered System of Supports Response to Intervention and Instruction (MTSS-RtII) Field Guide 2014,
- reviewing and disseminating research that demonstrates the link between a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and improved outcomes for all students,
- supporting data-based problem-solving approaches and effective leadership across all levels of our public education system,
- providing technical assistance focused on continuous improvement by building common language and understanding of equity and excellence for all in schools that provide a continuum of supports to meet the needs of each and every student,
- providing professional learning opportunities, resources, guidance documents, networking opportunities, and tools to support implementation of an MTSS: academics and behavior, and
- providing leadership and guidance regarding all aspects of Safe and Healthy School Climate identified in the Vermont Education Quality Standards and by Data Snapshots and Integrated Field Reviews.

Key Resources

- [MTSS-RTII Field Guide Vermont](#) an overview of Vermont's multi-tiered approach to RtII, describing its major guidelines on key components of a MTSS, and the varied ways it can be implemented.
- [SWIFT: Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation](#) a national K-8 technical assistance center that builds school capacity to provide academic and behavioral support through equity-based inclusion.
- [PBiS: Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports](#) Vermont Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (VTPBiS) is a State-wide effort designed to help school teams form a proactive, school-wide, systems approach to improving social and academic competence for all students.

Key Staff

Tracy B. Watterson, Program Manager (MTSS)

- Vacant, Coordinator (MTSS)

Richard Boltax, Coordinator (MTSS)

- Vacant, Coordinator (MTSS)



Education Quality Assurance

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS FOR VERMONT'S EDUCATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS

2125 Continuous Improvement Plan

2126 System for Determining Compliance with EQS

Technical Assistance and Support

The Vermont AOE believes that a continuous system of improvement, informed by data and on-going professional growth contribute to improved student outcomes and high-quality schools.

OUR TEAM SUPPORTS INTEGRATED FIELD REVIEWS (IFR) BY:

- leading and supervising review teams and ensuring the fidelity of the process;
- providing technical assistance related to the IFR report findings; and
- organizing and managing the appropriate professional learning and support for all areas in the report, in collaboration with essential AOE teams.

OUR TEAM LEADS A STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT BY:

- training and support for applying an improvement science approach to continuous improvement planning;
- guiding the administration of comprehensive needs assessments and implementation of continuous improvement plans;
- differentiating support for and monitoring of continuous improvement plans;
- organizing and managing systems of Networked Improvement Communities (NICs) in which schools can test and revise improvement theories, as well as share promising practices; and
- assisting school systems in leveraging federal dollars through:
 - implementing the school improvement grant application and approval process;
 - guiding the development and implementation of comprehensive support and improvement programs, and targeted support and improvement programs, as described in Every Student Succeeds Act, as well as monitoring the implementation and impact;
 - organizing and coordinating the support system, in collaboration with other AOE teams; and
 - facilitating sessions at the Annual CFP Conference.

Key Resources

- **Education Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework**-Our quality improvement framework and statewide system of support for education quality and continuous improvement.
- **Continuous Improvement Plan Template**-Essential components for the comprehensive needs assessment and continuous improvement plan.
- **EQS Research and Resources Companion Document**-A companion to EQS, including success criteria, guiding questions, research, and resources to support effective implementation of EQS components

Key Staff

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| ▪ Josh Souliere, Assistant Director | ▪ Vacant, Education Quality Coordinator |
| ▪ Donna Stafford, Education Quality Manager | ▪ Vacant, Education Quality Coordinator |
| ▪ Lori Dolezal, Education Quality Manager | ▪ Vacant, Education Quality Coordinator |
| ▪ Jesse Roy, Education Quality Coordinator | |