



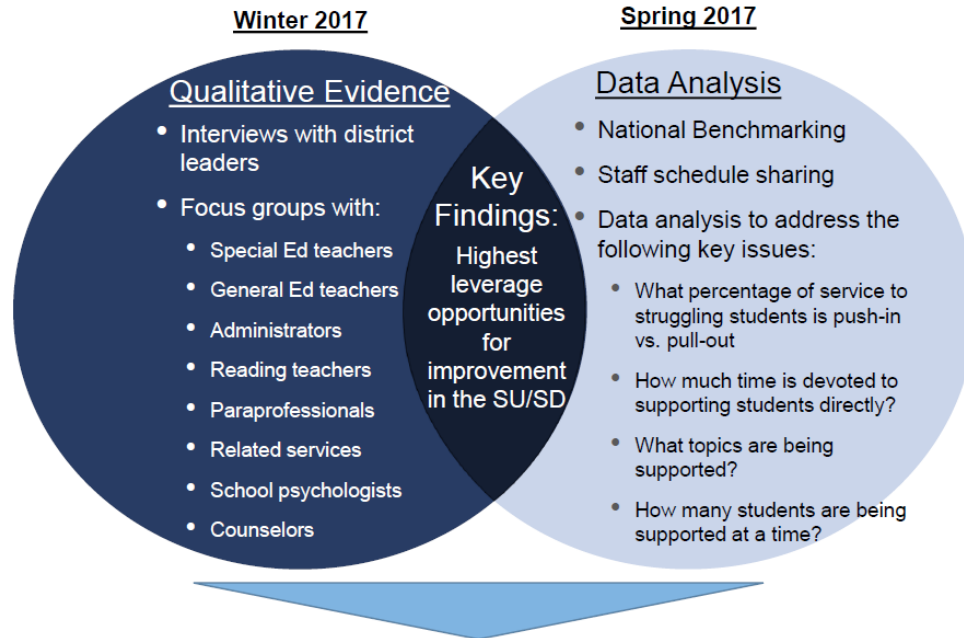
Expanding and Strengthening Best Practice  
Supports for Students Who Struggle  
Presentation to the  
State Board of Education  
February 21, 2018

## Background

- Legislation in 2016 session directed Agency of Education to contract for a study of the educational effectiveness, cost effectiveness and equity of services for struggling students
- The contract for the study was awarded to the District Management Group (DMG)
- DMG defines struggling students to include
  - Students with IEPs
  - At risk students without IEPs
  - English Language Learners
  - Non-readers
  - Students with social, emotional or behavioral needs
- Ten Vermont SU/SDs participated
  - Addison Central SD
  - Bennington-Rutland SU
  - Essex Westford SD
  - Franklin Northeast SU
  - Hartford SD
  - Milton Town SD
  - Orange Southwest SU
  - Orleans Central SU
  - Washington West SU
  - Windham Central SU
- The study took place during the 2016-2017 school year
- See next page for methodology

The project combined significant qualitative evidence and robust data analysis to build an understanding of services currently provided to struggling students, and provide each SU/SD with high impact opportunities.

**Diagnostic Methodology**



Each SU/SD received customized opportunities in spring/early summer



District Management Group

DMG identified 5 recommendations or opportunities based on the data collected in relation to a model for best practices. According to this model a best practice is a strategy that:

1. Has been proven in multiple settings
2. Is cost effective
3. Is practical, given the complexities of the public school system

As I present the opportunities DMG identified I'll raise questions, add comments and invite discussion about how the opportunities might affect educational equity.

## Opportunities

### **Ensure elementary Tier 1 (Core) instruction meets most needs of most students**

- Across the SU/SDs, 37% of elementary students struggle with reading
- General education teachers reported feeling ill-equipped to support struggling readers
- Current systems rely heavily on paraprofessionals to support students who struggle

### **Provide additional instructional time outside of core subjects to students who struggle, rather than providing interventions instead of core instruction**

- Few SU/SDs consistently provide additional time each day to students who struggle K-12
- Many elementary schools pull students out of core classes to provide reading support

### **Ensure students who struggle receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers**

- Paraprofessionals without strong teaching backgrounds often provide academic support

### **Create or strengthen a systems-wide approach to supporting positive student behaviors based on expert support**

- Many schools noted that resources were limited and teams were unsure how to gain access to expertise in behavior management, addressing the needs of students living with trauma, or other social, emotional and behavioral challenges

### **Provide students with more intensive needs specialized instruction from skilled and trained experts**

- Most schools rely heavily on the use of paraprofessional staff to support students with more intensive needs