

# VTmtss February Office Hour

## Family Engagement

Through the Lens of  
VTmtss Framework



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# What Research Indicates

- When students report feeling support from both home and school, they have more self-confidence, feel school is more important and as a result tend to do better in school.
- Increased family engagement in schools is strongly associated with:
  - Faster rates of literacy acquisition among children
  - Increased rates of going on to secondary education among youth
  - Increased attendance rates among students
  - Decreased rates of school dropout among youth
- The literature also underscores the importance of even basic communication between school and home.

# Theory of Action

*If the AOE is fully committed to continuous improvement for [Vermont Education Quality Standards](#) (EQS) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) expectations, *then*, we will operate from a shared vision and collective responsibility and apply a systemic approach to continuous improvement by:*

- Engaging in partnerships with community members, families, institutes of higher education, other government agencies and other relevant stakeholders;

# Overview of VTmtss

The VTmtss Framework is a systemic approach to decision-making for excellence and equity within a culture of continuous improvement that focuses on successful outcomes for all students. This systemic approach:

- Supports the effective collaboration of all adults to meet the academic, behavioral, social emotional needs of all students;
- Engages and develops the collective expertise of educators, students, family and community partnerships.

# What - Family Engagement

- Families come in many variations, inclusive language
- Build trusting collaborative relationships
- Recognizing and respecting and addressing families' needs
- Embracing a philosophy of partnership



# Your Experience

- Consider a time you have felt welcomed and in partnership?

What was in place?

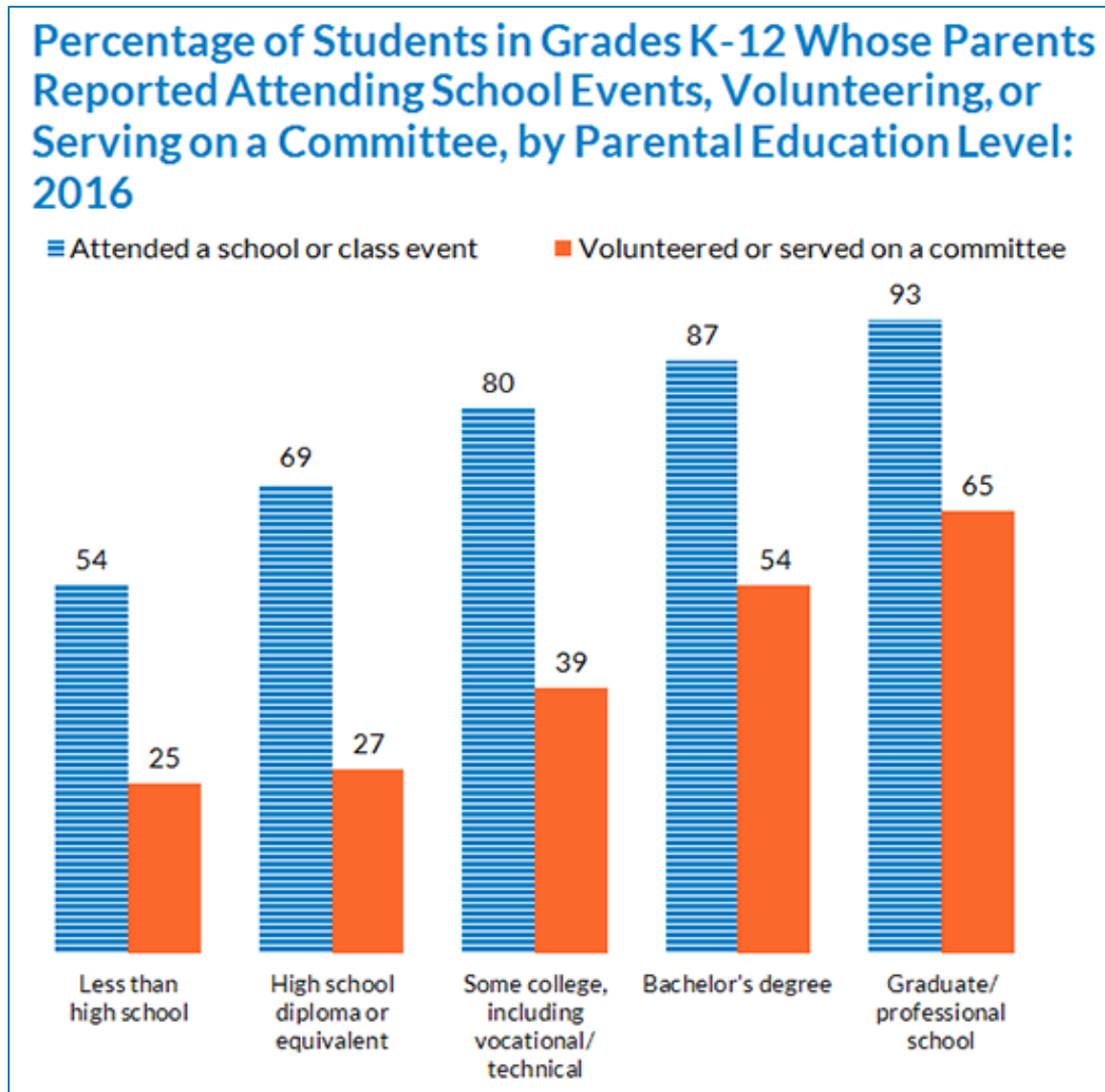
What words would describe this?



# Equity

- The **Agency of Education** implements state and federal laws, policies, and regulations to ensure all **Vermont** learners have equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities.
- Requirements:
  - Federal programs requirements
  - Special education
  - State laws & policies
- Guidance, Tools, Technical Assistance, Professional Development

# Differences by Parental Educational Attainment



Source:  
Child Trends



# Family Engagement Toolkit and Self-Assessment

- Available on Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports AOE webpage for all to use  
– under [Professional Resources](#)
- Created as part of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) in 2019



# 7 Core Principles of Family Engagement

- Creating a Welcoming Environment
- Building Effective Two-Way Communication
- Supporting the Success of Students
- Sharing Power and Responsibility
- Partnering with the Community
- Providing Equity and Access
- Ensuring Sustainability



- Each core principle includes a ‘What does it look like in practice?’ section.

This section is comprised of elements which provide a foundation of what is in place with the core principle as the focus.

## Core Principle: Creating a Welcoming Environment

- Element: Families have a personal relationship with one or more school staff members and feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions.

# Considerations for Family Engagement

- Considerations for Partnering with Families in Crisis
- Considerations for Partnering with Diverse Families

# Role-Specific Guidance

- Family Engagement for Administrators: A Whole-School Approach
- Family Engagement for Teachers: Building a Welcoming Classroom
- Family Engagement for IEP Team Members: Ensuring Meaningful Participation by Families
- Family Engagement for Other School Professionals



## Quick win

Encourage your staff to develop a statement that articulates what you value in family participation. Make sure that it is visible to families and referenced during family events and staff meetings or trainings.

# Family Engagement Self-Assessment

Rating system

Element	Not Yet In Place	Emerging Practice	Established Practice	Innovative Implementation	Score
Families have a personal relationship with one or more school staff members and feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions.	1	2	3	4	

# Final Self-Assessment Score

Core Principle	Total Score From Self-Assessment (Copy from above)	Maximum Available Points	Final Score Total/Maximum %	Priority Focus Area	Notes
Core Principle 3: Supporting the Success of Students		28			

# Continuous Improvement

## Action Planning for Family Engagement

- Four Steps for Action Planning: The Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle
- Brainstorming Worksheet:

For the priorities listed above, what are the unique considerations for different subgroups in your school?

What current initiatives and activities can be leveraged to support the priorities you have identified for family engagement?





# Understanding Current Family Engagement Practices

- Sample Process Agenda for Completing the Self-Assessment
- Gathering Feedback from Stakeholders on Family Engagement: Tips and Best Practices
- Family Focus Group Question Bank
- Family Survey Question Bank.

# Sample Process Agenda for Completing the Self-Assessment

## Sample Questions for “Family Engagement in Your School/District/SU”

- How do we approach planning family engagement activities from year to year? Do we have a family engagement plan?

## Sample Questions for “Determining Additional Data Collection Needs”

- How do you currently gather information from families about their experiences with the school?

# Planning Your Family Engagement Work

- Sample Process Agenda for Action Planning and Stakeholder Engagement
- Family Engagement Brainstorming Worksheet
- Action Planning and Stakeholder Engagement Template
- Sample Process Agenda for Sustainability Planning



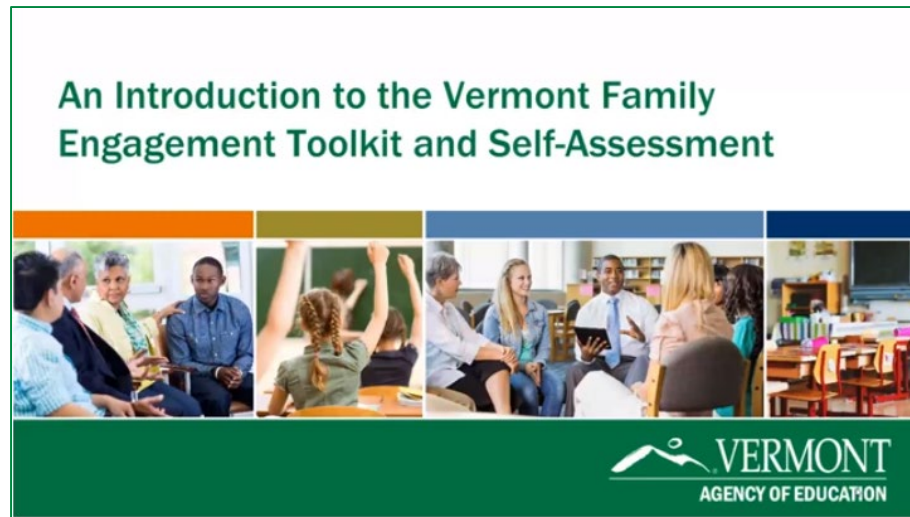
# Resources to Share with Families

- Partnering with Your Child's School: What Families Need to Know, Share, and Ask
- Resources for Vermont Families
- Preparing for and Participating in Your Child's IEP Team Meeting



# Introduction Video

An Introduction To Vermont Family  
Engagement Toolkit and Self-Assessment  
AOE VTmtss webpage  
- under [Professional Resources](#)



# Poll

Does your School Improvement Plan include these components:

Mark all that apply

- Social-emotional climate
- Family engagement
- Community involvement

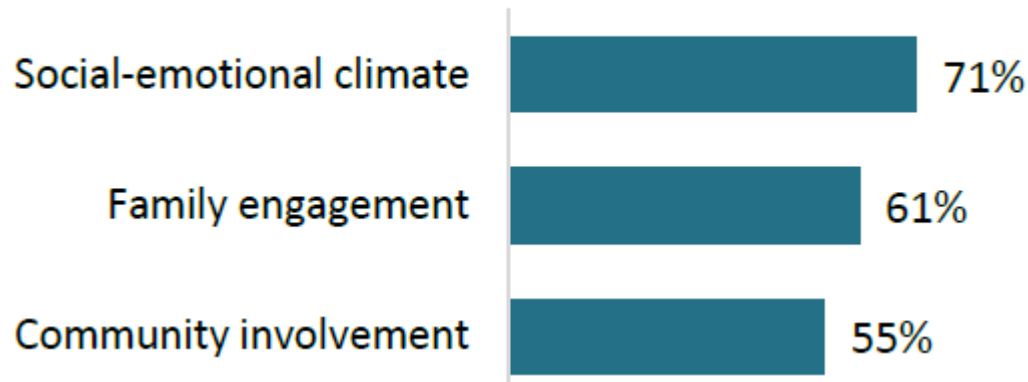
# Family Engagement in Schools

## Assessing the Family-School Environment:



Most schools (82%) review health and safety data such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) as part of the school's improvement planning process. More than half of schools have a School Improvement Plan that included social and emotional climate, family engagement, and community involvement.

### School Improvement Plan components



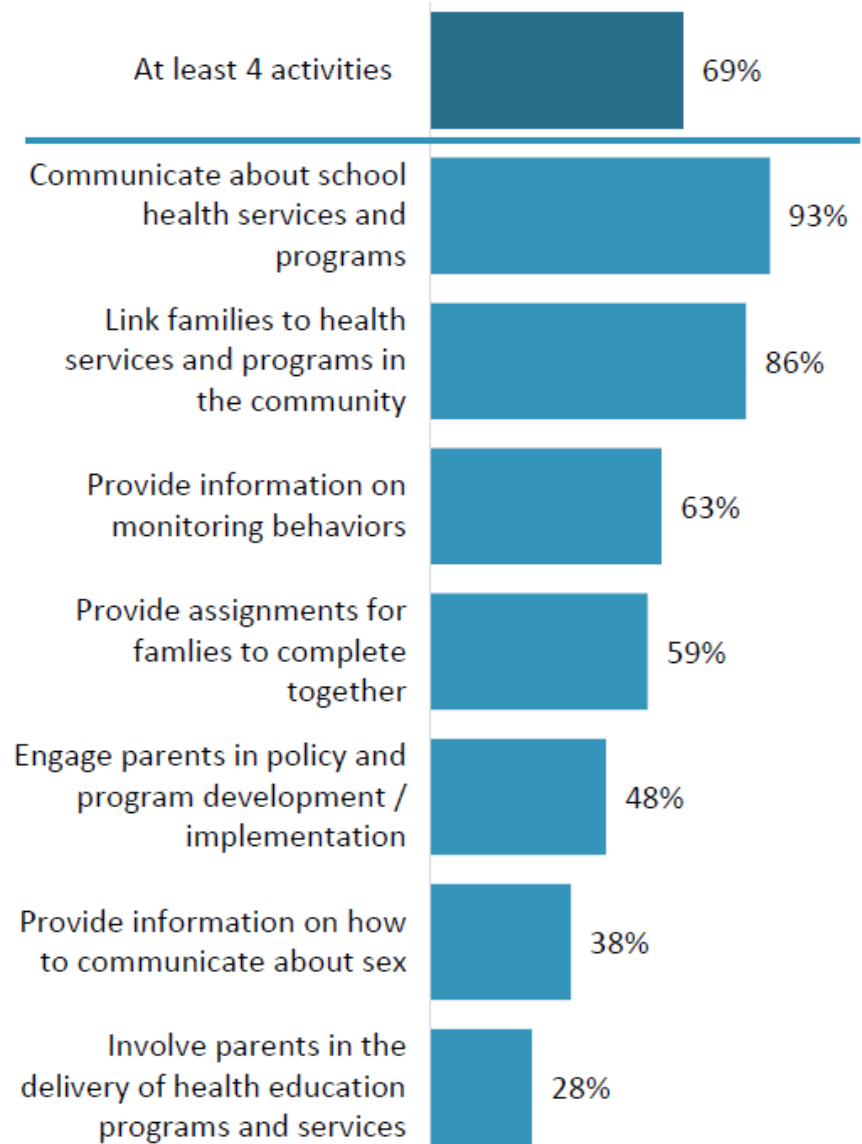
[2018 School Health Profiles](#)

Vermont Department of Health

# Vermont School Health Profiles 2018 Report

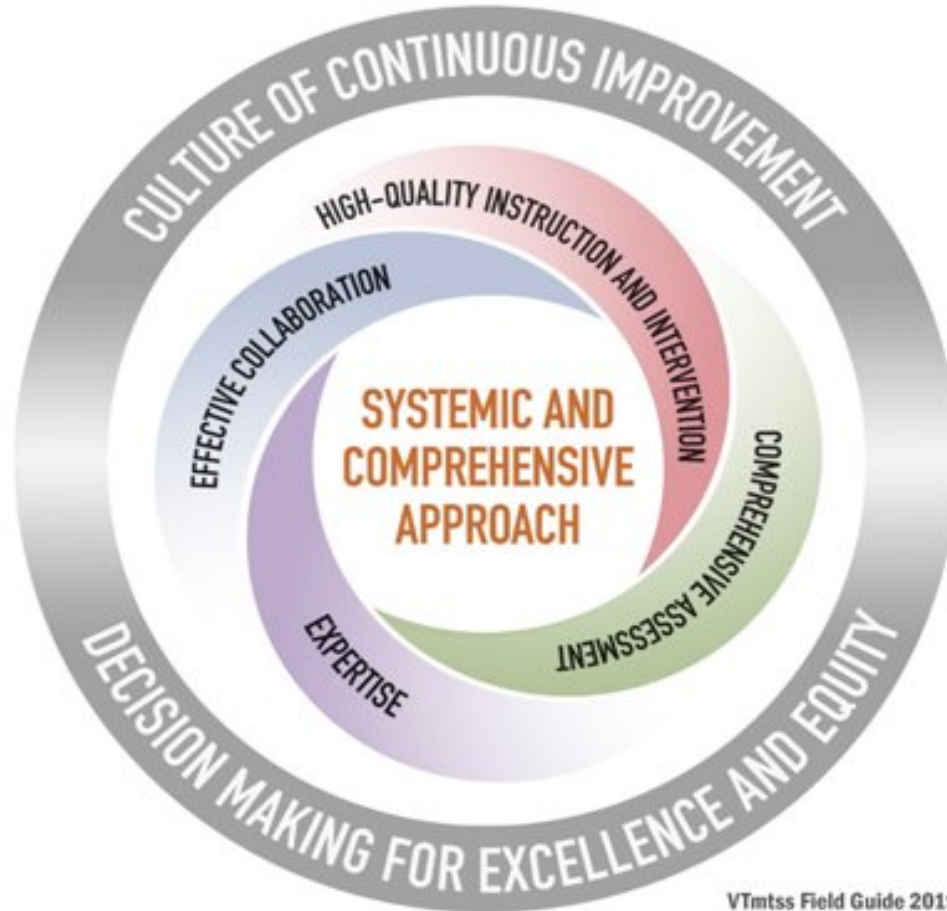
Working with Families  
Schools can increase parent and family engagement through a variety of strategies. Specific strategies are shown to the right. Overall, 69% of schools engage in at least four strategies, shown to the right, to increase parent and family engagement. High schools are significantly less likely than middle schools to implement parent engagement strategies (55% vs 75%).

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES





# VTmtss Framework



VTmtss Field Guide 2019

# The VTmtss Framework Components

**Systemic and Comprehensive Approach**

**Effective Collaboration**

**High-Quality Instruction and Intervention**

**Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment System**

**Expertise**



# VTmtss Components & Family Engagement Core Principles

- **Systemic and Comprehensive Approach**
- **Effective Collaboration**
- **High-Quality Instruction and Intervention**
- **Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment System**
- **Expertise**
- **Creating a Welcoming Environment**
- **Building Effective Two-Way Communication**
- **Supporting the Success of Students**
- **Sharing Power and Responsibility**
- **Partnering with the Community**
- **Providing Equity and Access**
- **Ensuring Sustainability**

# VTmtss Framework Tools *(draft)*

Tools	Intended Audience	Minimum Anticipated Time to Complete	CIP Overview Planning
VTmtss Framework Component Reflection Tools	SU or school leadership teams	~ 90 minutes: Allocate the time necessary for deep thinking and discussion. Consider multiple sessions to complete more than one Reflection Tool.	A set of tools for engaging in conversations to identify existing strengths and opportunities within each component of your system and to articulate problems of practice that need to be addressed.
VTmtss in Action Vignettes	All educators	~ 1 hour per Vignette: time to read and reflect/discuss with others	Examples of Vermont schools exploring problem of practice.
VTmtss Self-Assessment Tool (available Spring 2020)	A SU or School Leadership Team	~2-3 hours + time to gather data	A tool to provide a district or school with a clear process and the evidence to address the identified priorities in a driver diagram using the VTmtss Framework Components as the primary drivers.

# Resources & Contacts

## [VTmtss webpage Professional Resources](#)

- Family Engagement Toolkit and Self-Assessment
- An Introduction To Vermont Family Engagement Toolkit and Self-Assessment (video)

## [VTmtss Field Guide 2019](#)

## [Education Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework](#)

[Nancy Hellen](#) Vermont Multi-tiered System of Supports – Coordinator