



Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Annual Report  
December 2022

# Introduction

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) seeks to provide a high quality, effective learning environment for all students. The Virginia Board of Education has identified this as its first priority within the VDOE's Comprehensive Plan 2018-2023. Ongoing Board priorities include supporting teachers, school, and community leaders in providing effective support to a diverse student body.

As a part of this effort, the VDOE established the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS) and the VTSS-Research and Implementation Center at Virginia Commonwealth University to support implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). The VTSS, led by the VDOE, collaborates with state universities to provide coaching, technical assistance, and professional learning to school division teams to establish and sustain implementation of their MTSS. The vision of the VTSS is to build sustainable multi-tiered systems of supports through collaboration with divisions, schools, families, communities, and students that results in equitable and improved academic, behavioral, and social emotional outcomes for all.

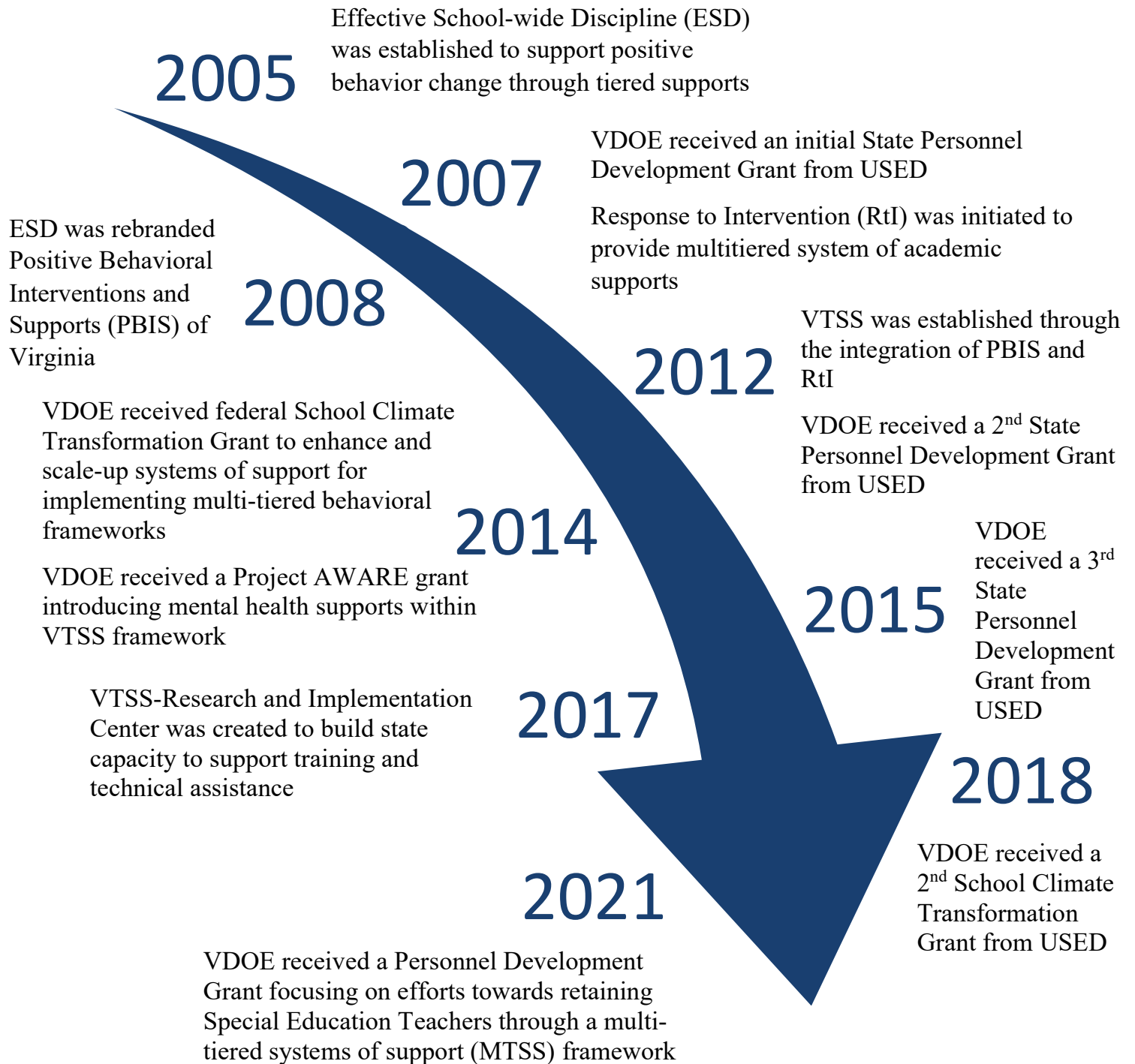


Through this network of technical assistance, VTSS State Systems Coaches work with school division teams to establish a decision-making framework. This framework provides a system to integrate academic, behavioral, and social-emotional wellness supports. The VTSS approach facilitates the ability of divisions, schools, and communities to provide multiple layers of support to students in an effective clearly defined process.

## Report Structure

In this report, implementation efforts are reported for the domains of reach, process, capacity, and outcomes along with VTSS focus areas of early childhood and family engagement which both highlight VTSS implementation efforts.

# Timeline of Support for Tiered Services Initiatives in Virginia



# State Professional Development Grant

*Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports: Empowering Educators through a Systems Approach to Implement Evidence-Based Practices*

This initiative has resulted in the expansion and enhancement of VTSS along with the integration and alignment of improvement efforts in the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), including collaboration efforts with Special Education Program Improvement (SEPI) and the Office of School Quality (OSQ). In grant year 5, VTSS continued to assist LEAs with implementation while working toward a return to the basics and solidifying Tier 1 practices. Year 5 highlights include continued alignment of Early Childhood pilot sites.

# School Climate Transformation Grant

*Enhancing State and Local Capacity to Implement and Sustain VTSS: A Multi-Tiered System of Supports*

This project targets building the capacity of the state to offer high quality, evidence-based professional learning and coaching services; increasing opportunities for divisions to improve the fidelity of implementation of a tiered framework inclusive of practices and innovations at advanced tiers and those that specifically address mental health and substance use behaviors; and fortifying the infrastructure of an aligned system by coordinating with Federal, State, and local resources to install and implement visionary solutions to current realities. In grant year 4, VTSS provided 25 training events and 538 technical assistance events. Events focused on strengthening Tier 1 supports in response to continued pandemic impacts. Year 4 highlights include resource development, expanded use and refinement of coaching plans, completion of revisions to advanced tiers training to include family engagement efforts, and expanded use of differentiated coaching supports within the VDOE. Additionally, the VDOE developed a virtual training series that aligns evidence-based substance use prevention, information on substance use identification, and evidence-based prevention methods in a MTSS framework.

# Personnel Development Grant

*Creating Capacity for Change and Continued Professional Growth: Integrating Comprehensive Retention Planning into the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports*

Through this grant the VDOE will provide targeted training and follow-up coaching for special education teachers; development of a retention plan focused on special education teachers integrated in district leadership team implementation of VTSS; and capacity building at the state education agency level focused on best practices to support school districts in retaining highly qualified special education teachers. In grant year 1, VTSS has partnered with Chesapeake City Public Schools to pilot this initiative and improve special education teacher retention. VTSS is leveraging Canvas as a learning management system to support scale up as the work continues.

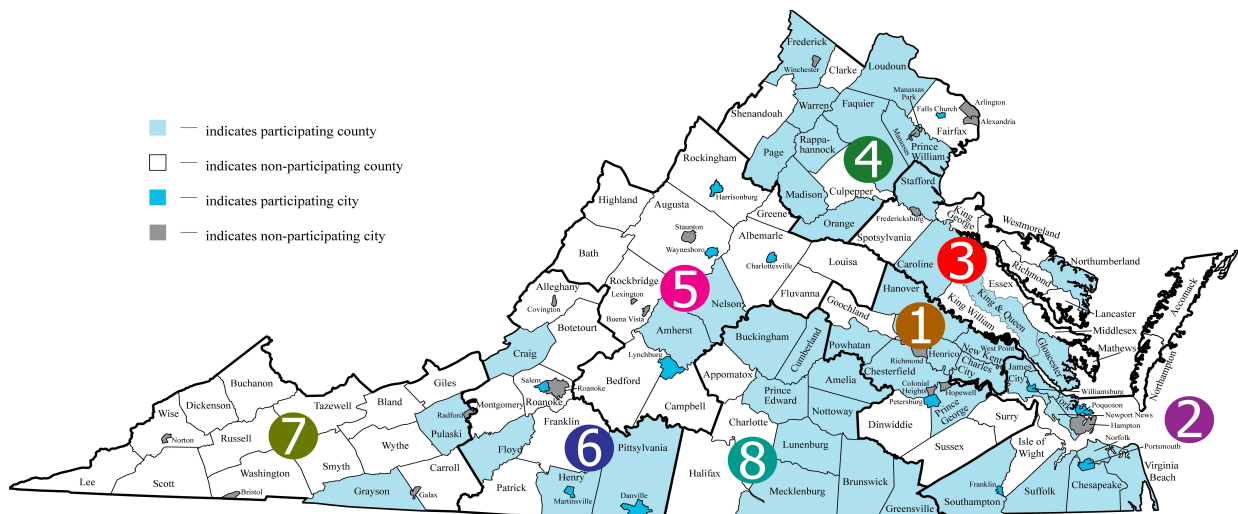
# Reach

The Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports provides coaching, technical assistance, and professional learning opportunities to nearly 50% of Virginia's school divisions.

**65**  
Divisions

**618**  
Schools

**711,466**  
Students



## Professional Learning Events

In 2021-2022, the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports staff hosted professional learning events for **1,115** participants.

## Website Visitors

In 2021-2022, the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports had **9,939** individual website visits.

## Professional Learning Participants

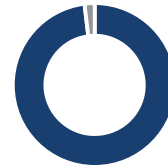
- Early Childhood Personnel
- Central Office Personnel
- School Administrators
- Division/School Coaches
- General Education Teachers
- Special Education Teachers
- Parents/Family Members
- Related Service Providers
- Student Services
- Community Mental Health

# Process

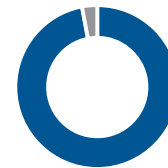
## Training Events

**12** training events from June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022

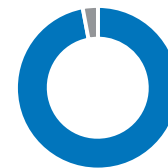
**1,115** total participants across events



**98%** of participants **agreed or strongly agreed** that the training events aligned with their division's standards and goals



**97%** of participants **agreed or strongly agreed** that the training events emphasized the impact of the content on student outcomes



**97%** of participants **agreed or strongly agreed** that the training events improved their knowledge of VTSS

Applying Effective Strategies to Positively Impact Student Success (and not lose your mind) in this Challenging Year.

## VTSS Open House Pop In Event

An *innovative* event offering several 90-minute sessions to meet the current needs of educators.

**131** attendees across the sessions

The event focused on practices most beneficial for managing classrooms. Content included:

- Building positive relationships
- Encouraging a supportive environment
- Engaging students
- Providing effective feedback
- Meeting challenges with curiosity and a few new strategies

VTSS Open House Pop In  
Professional Learning  
February 24, 2022

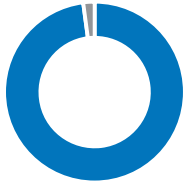
# Technical Assistance and Coaching

VTSS has a cadre of trained and skilled state Systems Coaches to provide technical assistance (TA) and coaching at the regional and local level.

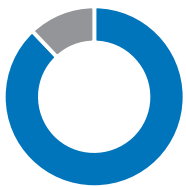
## During the 2021-2022 Academic Year

Events are between June 1, 2021 and May 30, 2022:

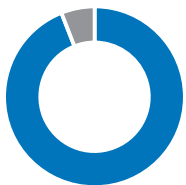
Of the divisions that responded to a survey:



**98%** agreed or strongly agreed that the collaborative work between their division leadership team and VTSS is valuable to implementing tiered systems of supports in their division.



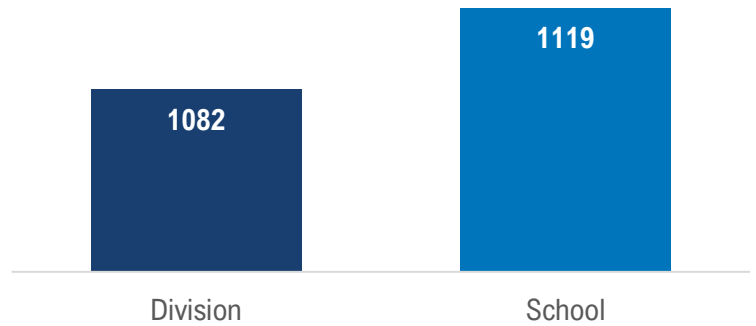
**88%** agreed or strongly agreed that VTSS Systems Coaches have helped their division team develop a framework to implement tiered systems of support with fidelity.



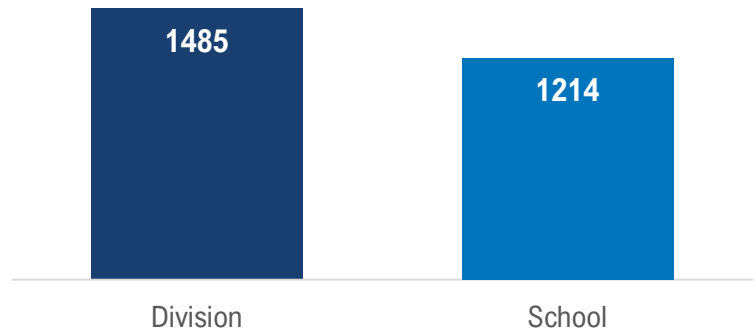
**94%** agreed or strongly agreed that support from VTSS Systems Coaches resulted in identification of action items that will help build the sustainability of VTSS in their division.

Each year VTSS Systems Coaches write coaching plans for the divisions they support. They select focus areas for coaching supports to improve implementation of multi-tiered systems of supports within divisions.

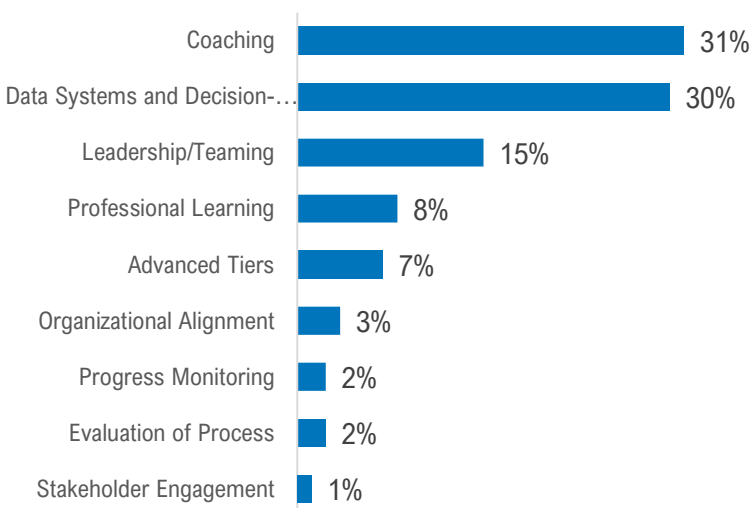
# of TA/Coaching Events



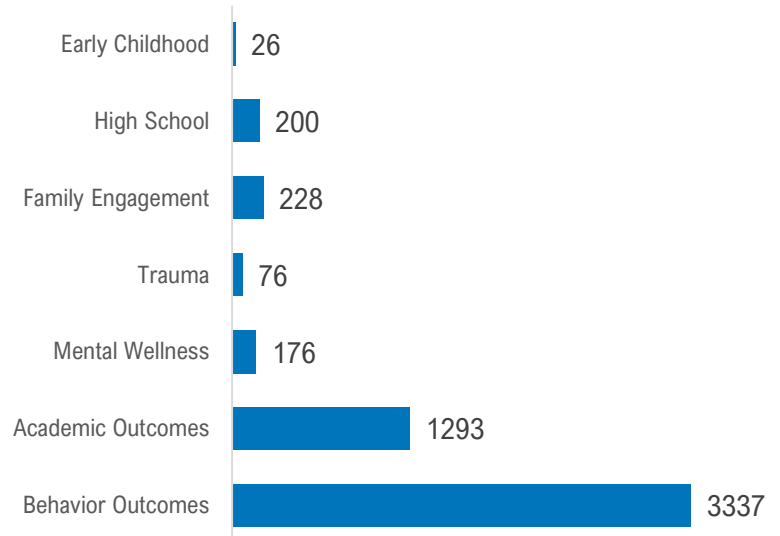
# of Hours of TA/Coaching



% of 2022-2023 Coaching Plans by Focus Area



# of TA/Coaching Events



# In-Person Summer Networking



## VTSS Division Coaches and Coordinators Summits

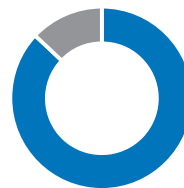
VTSS held two *in-person* summits for division coaches and coordinators during Summer 2022.

**44** division coaches & coordinators from **18** divisions

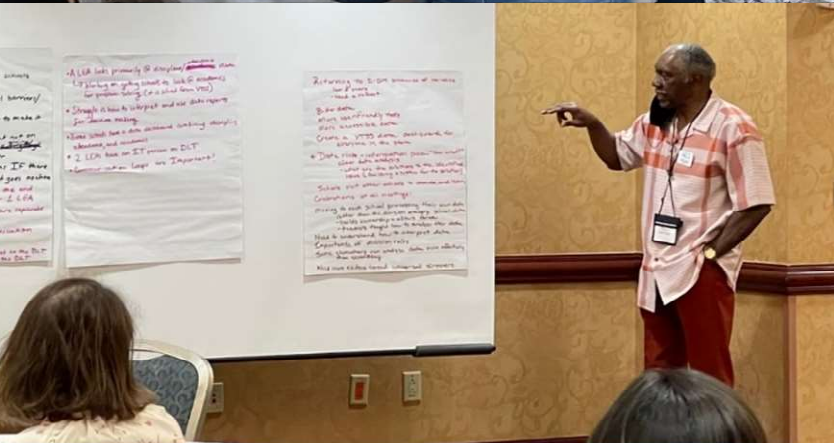
**Purpose** was for participants to engage in:

- Networking and Collaboration
- Start school year inspired and connected
- Of attendees who responded to the event evaluation,

Of attendees who responded to the event evaluation,



**87%** agreed/strongly agreed that this event **facilitated opportunities to network** with other division coordinators and coaches.



## State Coaches Gathering Gather, Grow, and Dream

VTSS held a two-day *in-person* State Coaches Gathering on August 30 & 31, 2022.

**40** State Systems Coaches and VTSS Personnel/Collaborators

**Purpose** of gathering was for State Systems Coaches to:

- Meet and reconnect
- Learn from colleagues
- Reflect lessons learned from division coaches and coordinators summits
- Work on identified goals and identify needs to move the work forward
- Collaborate on work for 2022-2023





# Capacity

## 30 divisions

have **acquired** the capacity to support building-level implementation of VTSS. Of these 30 divisions,

## 13 divisions

are **fluent** in the capacity to support building-level implementation of VTSS.

**84% of divisions** have at least one **internal coach** to support schools in their implementation of VTSS

## VTSS State Systems Coaches

VTSS State Systems Coaches serve as a liaison between a division leadership team and the school leadership teams to guide systems intervention and sustainable organizational change.

*“We have been extremely grateful for the support of our VTSS coaches who have connected us with other divisions and served as a liaison between our county and other state networks. They are always eager to share resources and engage in collaborative conversations to support our schools.”*

Loudoun County Public Schools

*“Our division's VTSS systems coaches are fantastic. They are always available by email or phone to share their expertise and knowledge and just listen. They are consultants extraordinaire when it comes to their working knowledge and transfer of technical data. We would be lost without them!”*

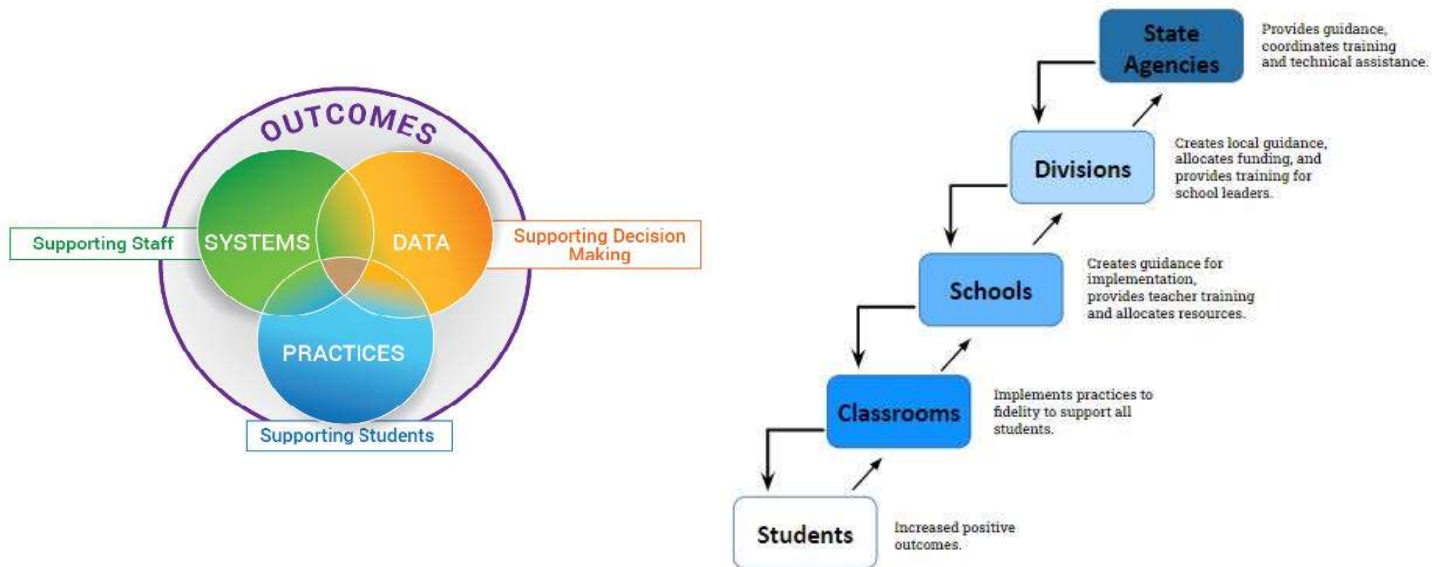
Frederick County Public Schools

## VTSS Resources

- VTSS Implementation Matrix
- Division Initiative Mapping
- Resource Map and Tier Definitions
- Assessment Map
- Action Planning
- Division Capacity Assessment
- SWPBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory
- Academic Tiered Fidelity Inventory
- Coaching Service Delivery Plan
- Evidenced Based Practice Selection Tool

# Outcomes

The Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports utilizes student outcome measures for academics, behavior, and wellness to guide decision making at all levels of practice.



*“Over the past two years, our schools have revamped, updated, or completely rebuilt their Tier 1 implementation to meet the needs of students post pandemic. Additional instruction and acknowledgement of prosocial, organizational, behavioral, and academic skills is supporting development of positive school climate. Schools are also including digital citizenship expectations in their behavior matrices to reflect our division’s shift to 1:1 devices for all students.”* Nick Kier, Student Services Specialist, Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools

*This school year, Amelia County Public Schools has been focusing on using a problem-solving process to make data-informed decisions around behavior and attendance. To support internal coaching, professional learning and coaching have been provided to work with school coaches and leaders on using data to guide decisions so that the process trickles from division to school. The process also supports the School Improvement Plans as a first step in aligning their school improvement processes to MTSS.* Amelia County Public Schools

# Early Childhood

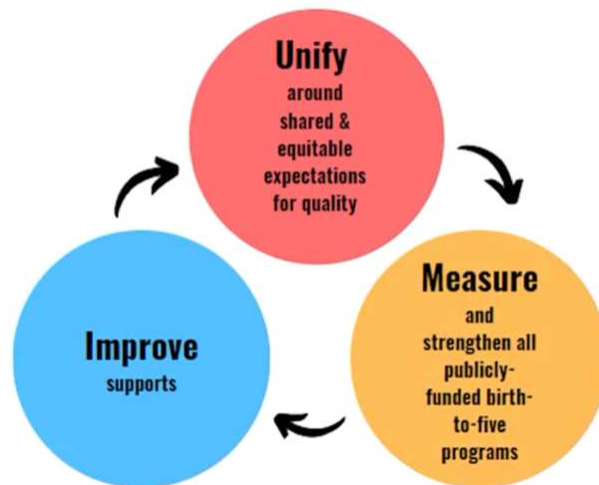
## Preschool is Growing Up with VTSS

Early childhood care and education in Virginia is experiencing a rebirth in a very dynamic way. The primary driver for this rebirth is a vision where all children in Virginia have the opportunity to enter school ready.

The VTSS structure offers the necessary framework to build one cohesive, multi-tiered system of supports spanning from preschool through the early elementary years. The VTSS Early Childhood pilot has been investigating the systems level components and adjustments necessary for implementation and evaluation in schools serving young children. Initially, VTSS enlisted 3 school divisions as partners in this pilot to improve student outcomes. Click on the promotional video to learn more:



## Virginia's Unified Early Childhood System



Scan to learn about VQB5:



## Frederick County, VTSS Early Childhood Partner

Before the pilot, the preschool programs were thought of as separate entities. As a result of participating in the pilot, preschool is no longer a standalone entity and there is more collaboration among vertical teams and between schools:

- Preschool teams join the kindergarten teams during professional learning opportunities.
- Kindergarten teams work with 1<sup>st</sup> grade teams to develop stronger vocabulary transitions for our students.
- At the beginning of a school year, teachers have a better understanding of where a child is developmentally.
- Schools collaborate when a preschool feeds students into multiple sites.

*“I felt like I was in more of a community and I felt like I fit in with elementary better than when I was working alone.”*

*Angela Blevins, Supervisor of Early Childhood Programs, Frederick County Public Schools*

Frederick County also used data informed decision-making to identify professional learning and resources on early literacy. Teachers are now looking at data a little differently and understand that they have the data to change their instructional practice to benefit students.

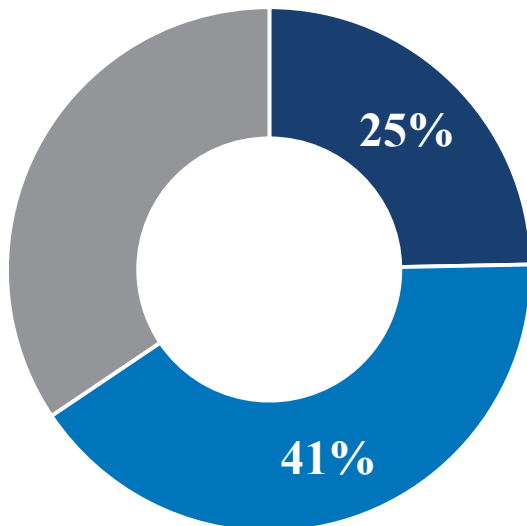
# Family Engagement

## Family Partnerships

Family Engagement in VTSS is “...an active, interactive, dynamic, and ongoing process in which family members and key stakeholders engage as equal partners in decision-making, planning, and implementation to support children and adolescents across settings.”



25% of School Leadership Teams (SLTs) **include a family member(s)** and 41% of SLTs **have a plan to include a family member.**



*“We have seen a change in culture and reach in regards to Family Engagement at Caroline County Middle School (CMS) through our VTSS practices. At CMS we want our community and families [engagement] with our students. We are working to invite families in for the fun times, like our 1st quarter color run, but also to help invest in guiding our scholars toward success through mentorship, other reward activities, and transparent information so that our community helps reinforce our efforts. As is said- it takes a whole village to raise a child- and at CMS we welcome the investment to help our Eagles soar.”*

Amanda Fletcher, English Teacher, Caroline County Middle and Herbert Monroe, Assistant Superintendent, Caroline County Public Schools

## Resources

Formed Families Forward and VTSS partnered to create a series of Family Engagement Resources for divisions and schools.

[Family Members on VTSS Teams](#)

[Promoting Equity in Education Through Family Engagement](#)

[Trauma Sensitive Approaches for Home and School](#)

[Strengthening Family Engagement in VTSS](#)

[Family Engagement in VTSS](#)

**100%** of divisions that accessed a resource reported the resource as **valuable**

# Collaborators

We would like to thank all those who collaborate with VTSS to make this work possible. Click on a logo to learn more.



VTSS is supported by grants from the US Education Department:

- State Personnel Development Grant (H323A170018)
- School Climate Transformation Grant (S184F180014)
- Personnel Development Grant (H325P210003)

VTSS Implementation Collaborators:

- VTSS Research and Implementation Center (RIC) at Virginia Commonwealth University
- Virginia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Centers
- Old Dominion University, Center for Implementation and Evaluation of Education Systems (CIEES)
- Formed Families Forward

