

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Department of Special
Populations and
Specialized Services



OPENER

- If you could compete in any sport in the Winter Olympics what would it be?



*Picture Credit Sports Illustrated

Overview of Presentation

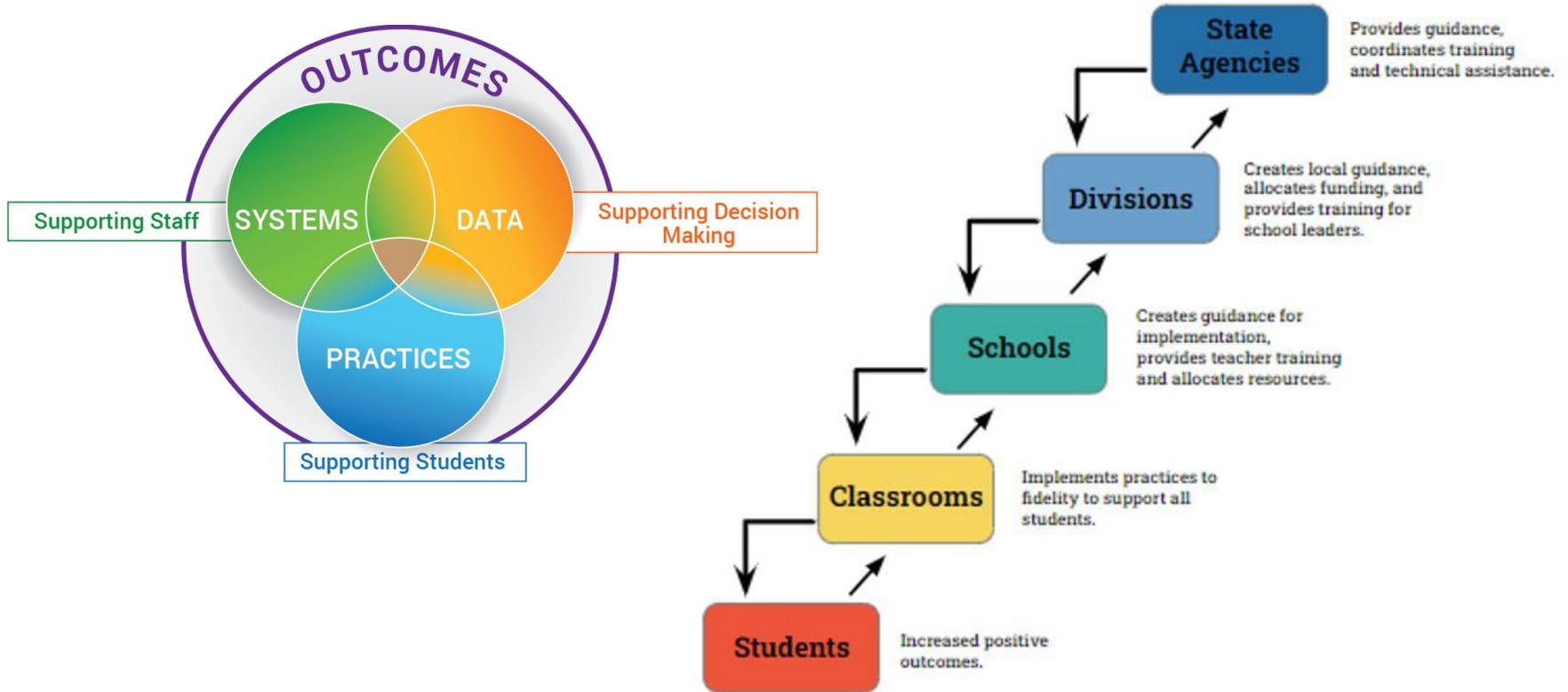
- Virginia's Creating Capacity for Change Collaborative
- Projects and Priorities
 - Focus of Recruitment and Retention of Critical Shortage Areas
 - Special Education
 - School-Based Mental Health
 - Increasing student access and achievement
 - Academics
 - Mental Health
- Evaluation
 - Process Improvement
 - Impact to Date
- Promising Next Steps

Creating Capacity for Change Collaborative: A Specialized Approach to Retention



- Led by the VDOE, a group involved in supporting staff and student outcomes through implementation of MTSS.
- Comprised of:
 - State Leaders
 - Division Leaders
 - School Leaders
 - Community Constituents

Systemic Approach



Technical Assistance Structure

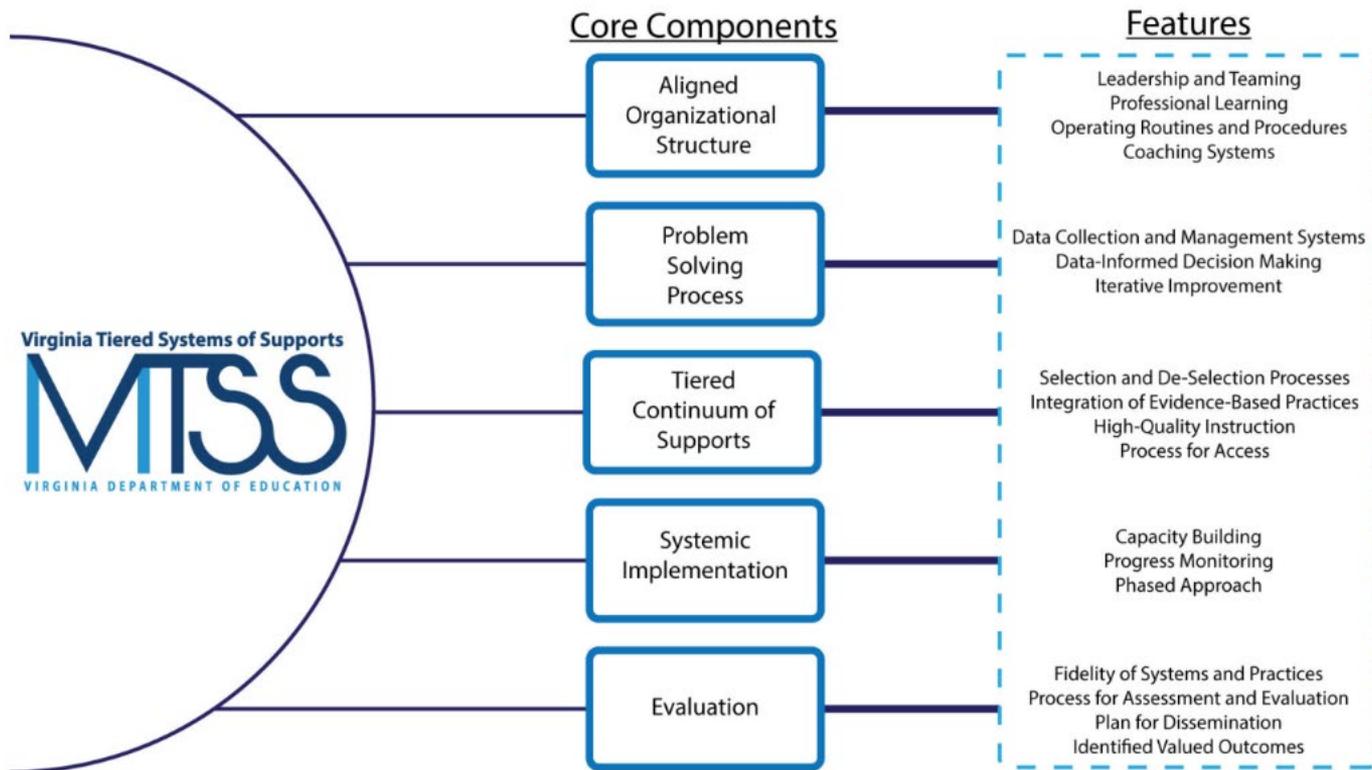
Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS)

The Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS) is a collective of organizations funded and led by the Virginia Department of Education charged with supporting school divisions with implementing and sustaining implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports. School division participation in the technical assistance and support offered through VTSS by the VDOE is voluntary.

The primary implementation partners include:

- Virginia Commonwealth University, VTSS-Research and Implementation Center (VTSS-RIC)
- The Virginia Department of Education's Regional Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) partners:
 - College of William and Mary
 - Old Dominion University
 - George Mason University
 - Radford University
 - James Madison University
 - Virginia Commonwealth University

Foundation



Building sustainable multi-tiered systems of supports through collaboration with divisions, schools, families, communities, and students.

Project Priorities

Virginia's Systemic Approach

State Personnel
Development
Grant 2023-2028

Personnel
Development
Grant 2021-2026

School Based
Mental Health
Grant 2020-2024

School Based
Mental Health
Grant 2022-2027

State Personnel
Development
Grant 2017-2022



Funding for Sustainability

Grant	Grant Manager
State Personnel Development Grant 2023	Michael Gregory, MTSS Coordinator
School-Based Mental Health Grant 2022	Dr. Erin Sturgis, MTSS Special Education Specialist
Personnel Development Grant 2021	Dr. Erin Sturgis, MTSS Special Education Specialist
School-Based Mental Health Grant 2020	Kristinne Stone, School Mental Health Grant Project Manager (2020)
State Personnel Development Grant 2017	Michael Gregory, VTSS Specialist

Mentimeter Breakout Activity

- In breakout rooms, take 3-4 minutes to talk about what alignment means to you in your SPDG work.
- Type key words, one at a time, into Mentimeter to populate an Alignment Word Cloud

Alignment of Efforts

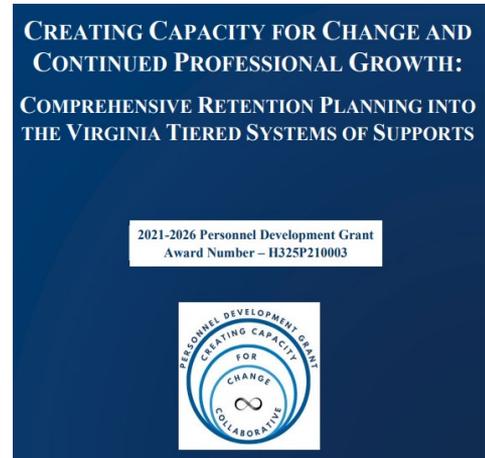
An intentional process that is always evolving to be responsive to the needs of a school community by organizing and connecting implementation systems, education units, and resources in an efficient and mutually impactful way. Alignment is how we improve our way of work and positively impact outcomes.



Personnel Development Grant 21

- Developed modules on evidence-based practices that support pre-service teachers, regardless of licensure pathway.
- Focused on retention of special education teachers through:
 - Providing targeted professional learning and coaching to data-identified groups of special education teachers
 - Building the capacity of administrators to provide tiered supports to teachers
 - Division-level comprehensive retention planning

Building capacity and sustainability by establishing systems.



School-Based Mental Health Grant

- Focuses on recruitment and retention of school-based mental health professionals (SMHPs) while also increasing student access to high-quality, targeted mental health support.
- VDOE directly funds a licensure pathway for School Social Workers.
- VDOE supports LEAs with project activities anchored in implementation science and application of MTSS core components.
 - LEAs collect student-level service data, Resource Map, align SMHP roles to specific services, and monitor progress.
 - LEAs establish multi-disciplinary teams and communication systems that support inclusive, comprehensive retention plans and service delivery.

Building capacity and sustainability by establishing systems.

R&R Grants in Practice

- The VDOE is:
 - Partnering with 9 LEAs directly through CCC and SBMH2
 - Supporting 3 LEAs who received direct funding for SBMH2
 - Partnering with 7 universities, 9 university centers, and multiple state and nation centers to provide training, coaching, and technical assistance to LEAs
 - Establishing alternate licensure pathways for SMHPs
 - Building the capacity of administrators to provide differentiated support to special education teachers based on need and pathway into education
 - Supporting LEAs with systems implementation that supports sustainability, including processes for establishing ongoing funding

State Personnel Development Grant 23

- Currently in year one (2023) of a five-year award (ends 2028):
 - Working in concert with the PDG and SBMH processes to assist school divisions in building systems to address provision of high-quality instruction and improved outcomes for students with disabilities. The SPDG addresses:
 - Delivery of high-quality professional development to educators with focuses on FBA/BIP, High Leverage Practices (HLPs), intervention selection, and clarity on integration of support for students identified with a disability in MTSS systems.
 - Building and implementing a state-level professional development plan for coaches providing support to school divisions in MTSS.
 - In partnership and alignment with other efforts providing technical assistance and support in systematic implementation of HLPs at the division and school levels.
 - Building out TA to state-level TA providers to generate consistency in supporting interfering behavior in the classroom.

Implementation Science Academy

- In 2023, the Virginia team developed Implementation Science Academy to ensure we were building the capacity and skill set of state and division level teams to effectively implement practices in a contextualized, scalable, and sustainable way.
- All levels within the cascading model of support are effectively utilized to ensure classroom level impact.

What is the Implementation Science Academy?

The **Implementation Science Academy (ISA)** is an interactive learning experience designed to help individuals and organizations effectively put **research, evidence, and proven practices into action**. Too often, valuable programs and interventions fail to achieve their intended impact—not because they lack merit, but because they are not implemented in ways that lead to sustainable, real-world results. ISA bridges this gap by equipping participants with the **tools, strategies, and frameworks** needed to turn evidence into effective, lasting practice.

Who is it for?

ISA is ideal for **educators, administrators, service providers, policymakers, and leaders** who want to strengthen their ability to implement and sustain evidence-based practices. No prior experience in **implementation science** is required—ISA is designed to be accessible and practical for individuals at all levels.

What will you gain?

By attending ISA sessions, you will:

- Learn **practical strategies** for effectively rolling out and scaling up programs.
- Understand how to **assess readiness** for change and overcome common barriers to implementation.
- Gain insights into **data-driven decision-making** to improve the success and sustainability of initiatives.
- Join a **collaborative community** of professionals dedicated to making a meaningful impact.

Why attend?

ISA goes beyond theory by offering **hands-on, actionable guidance** that empowers you to drive positive change. Whether you are launching a new initiative or strengthening an existing one, the academy provides the knowledge and skills to **increase your success and sustainability**.

Implementation Science Academy (ISA)



Session 1

- Key factors of Implementation Science (IS)
- Features of a usable innovation
- Assessing readiness for implementation
- Using data for innovation selection
- Implementation stages of practice



Session 2

- Implementation drivers and IS review
- Establishing a division wide data system
- Teaming structures and required roles for Implementation and Executive Teams
- Understanding practice profiles



Session 3

- Key features of usable innovations (HLPs/EBPs)
- Transformation Zones and their role in implementation
- Developing practice profiles for innovations
- Establishing structures for implementation teams



Session 4

- Understanding Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycles (PDSA)
- Applying PDSA Cycles within implementation
- Key features of communication loops
- Utilizing implementation planning to establish data collection and monitoring processes



Session 5

- Creating an implementation plan that establishes:
 - Transformation Zones
 - Professional development schedules
 - Coaching schedules
 - Data collection and monitoring plans
 - Alignment with existing work



Ongoing Coaching and Support

- Participating leadership teams receive:
 - Access to VTSS and VDOE professional learning
 - Monthly coaching sessions with state coaches to plan for implementation, scale, and sustainability
 - Funding to support implementation activities
 - Evaluation support from ODU CIEES



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Implementation Science Academy transforms great ideas into real-world impact!



Evaluation and Research

Reach

- Long standing partnership with external evaluators.
- Consistent evaluation for each grant.

Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports
MTSS
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
VTSS is who we are; MTSS is what we do!

The Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS), led by the Virginia Department of Education, collaborates with state universities to provide coaching, technical assistance, and professional learning to school division teams to establish and sustain the implementation of their multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). The purpose of this document is to share the reach of the VTSS during the 2024-2025 academic year.

STUDENT SUCCESS	ACADEMICS
	BEHAVIOR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

VTSS REACH	53	545	602,200
	DIVISIONS	SCHOOLS	STUDENTS

- 18 statewide professional learning events reaching 700 educators
- 750 division-level events
- 220 school-level events
- MTSS for Student Success 2024: Pathways to Integrated School Mental Wellness Conference with 240 participants
- 80% of VTSS schools are implementing Tier 1 with fidelity
- 93% of VTSS divisions report that collaborative work between their leadership team and VTSS is valuable to implementing MTSS
- 100% of VTSS divisions that accessed statewide professional learning report the learning as valuable

VTSS - Research and Implementation Center (vtss-ric.vcu.edu)

EVALUATION EVOLUTION

- Partnership with external evaluation team for 15+ years
- Recognition for the need for change
 - 2024-2025
 - Internal and external evaluation has shifted to support integrated and aligned evaluation of processes and dissemination not just outcomes
 - Comprehensive Evaluation Plan
 - Logic Model
- Dissemination Modalities
 - Executive Summaries with uniform templates,
 - data visualization,
 - updated annual report with one pagers

Virginia's Annual Updates on MTSS

Report Structure

This report is organized by implementation effort. For the VTSS, implementation efforts are reported by the domains of reach, process, capacity, and outcomes along with the VTSS focus of family engagement.

- Timeline of Support for Tiered Services Initiatives in Virginia
- Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports
 - *Reach*
 - *Process: Training*
 - *Process: Technical Assistance and Coaching*
 - *Capacity*
 - *Outcomes: Academics*
 - *Outcomes: Behavior*
 - *Outcomes: Chronic Absenteeism*
- Family Engagement
- Virginia's Professional Development Grant
- Virginia's School Based Mental Health Grant
- State Personnel Development Grant
- Implementation Science Academy
- Virginia Career and Learning Center (CLC) for School Mental Health Professionals
- Collaborators



Research to Practice Partnerships

- The VDOE MTSS Team is dedicated to supporting research to practice by:
 - Working with TA partners on literature reviews to guide LEA TA and coaching
 - Partnering with the Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium on multiple research projects
 - Supporting Mental Health in Schools
 - Teacher Retention
 - Seeking partnerships with the VCU School of Education's doctoral Capstone teams related to problems of practice



Thank You!



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Japeira Keys (also pictured)
VTSS Implementation Specialist

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