

2021 Annual Report



Introduction

PBIS is an evidence-based framework for preventing and responding to problem behavior within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).

MTSS is a whole-school, data-driven, prevention-based framework for improving learning outcomes for EVERY student. Vermont's educational quality standards (EQS) require that schools have an MTSS framework in place for both behavior and academics.

This report focuses on the social, emotional, and behavioral learning encompassed within PBIS.

PBIS, tailored to a school community, provides a continuum of supports that, when implemented with fidelity and with equity at the center, leads to positive academic and behavioral outcomes.

When implementing PBIS without fidelity and without intentionally centering equity, unintended acts of oppression and harm can occur.

VTPBIS is diligently engaged in strengthening and transforming our systems and practices to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion to achieve equitable outcomes for all students.

—VTPBIS State Team [Commitment to Equity](#)

This report summarizes the evaluation process, results, and outcomes of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in Vermont's schools during the 2020-2021 school year.

"We do not want to go back to 'normal,' we want to create a new normal based on the opportunities we had last year."

—Hyde Park





Process

The Vermont PBIS team uses a variety of data points to track the **reach** of PBIS throughout our state, detail our **process** of implementing PBIS to **fidelity**, and document **outcomes** resulting from PBIS efforts.

Active PBIS Schools

The VTPBIS State Team maintains a directory of all active PBIS schools, which is updated annually. Schools new to PBIS complete a nine-step process as part of their introduction to the PBIS framework. You can learn more about this process on our website at: pbisvermont.org/helpful-information/getting-started/

Online Presence

The VTPBIS State Team provides a variety of online resources to educators across the state. We use MailChimp and Google Analytics to understand the reach and impact of our newsletter and website.

BEST/VTPBIS Professional Development Calendar

One of the online resources is the BEST/VTPBIS Professional Development Calendar, designed to meet the needs of schools across the spectrum of experience with PBIS. Our professional development calendar can be viewed here: pbisvermont.org/professional-development-calendar/

Training Evaluations

All training attendees are asked to complete a post-training evaluation survey that collects information on their satisfaction with the training, pre- and post-comparison of knowledge of the topic, and a pre- and post-comparison of preparedness to apply the knowledge gained.

Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)

VTPBIS schools are encouraged to complete the [Tiered Fidelity Inventory \(TFI\)](#) as part of their PBIS implementation. School teams are encouraged to use their TFI results to guide the development of their action plans.

Self-Assessment Survey & School Climate Surveys

Other instruments that schools may utilize as part of their self-assessment of their efforts to implement PBIS are the [Self-Assessment Survey \(SAS\)](#) and [School Climate Surveys](#).

Out-of-School Suspension Rates

The VTPBIS Annual Report also includes data on Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS) rates. Schools that are implementing PBIS should have lower rates of OSS than schools that are not implementing PBIS. In order to conduct this comparison, the VT PBIS team requests data on OSS rates from the Vermont Agency of Education.

Exemplar & Merit Schools

The VTPBIS Team invites school PBIS leadership teams to nominate their schools for recognition as “Exemplar” or “Merit Schools.” A call for self-nominations goes out in summer each year and schools are asked to provide evidence of their strengths in implementing PBIS. Applicants are evaluated based on their qualitative responses to the application questions using a rubric, as well as quantitative measures such as their TFI scores.

Note that during the pandemic, the VTPBIS team has used an alternative acknowledgement system. All schools who provide strong evidence of their understanding and implementation of PBIS practices were acknowledged as “Schools of Recognition.”

Behavior Observation & Data Forms

At this time, we are temporarily discontinuing the examination of Behavior Observation and Data Forms (formerly called Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs)) due to inconsistencies as a result of the pandemic, along with other concerns about consistency of recording between schools.



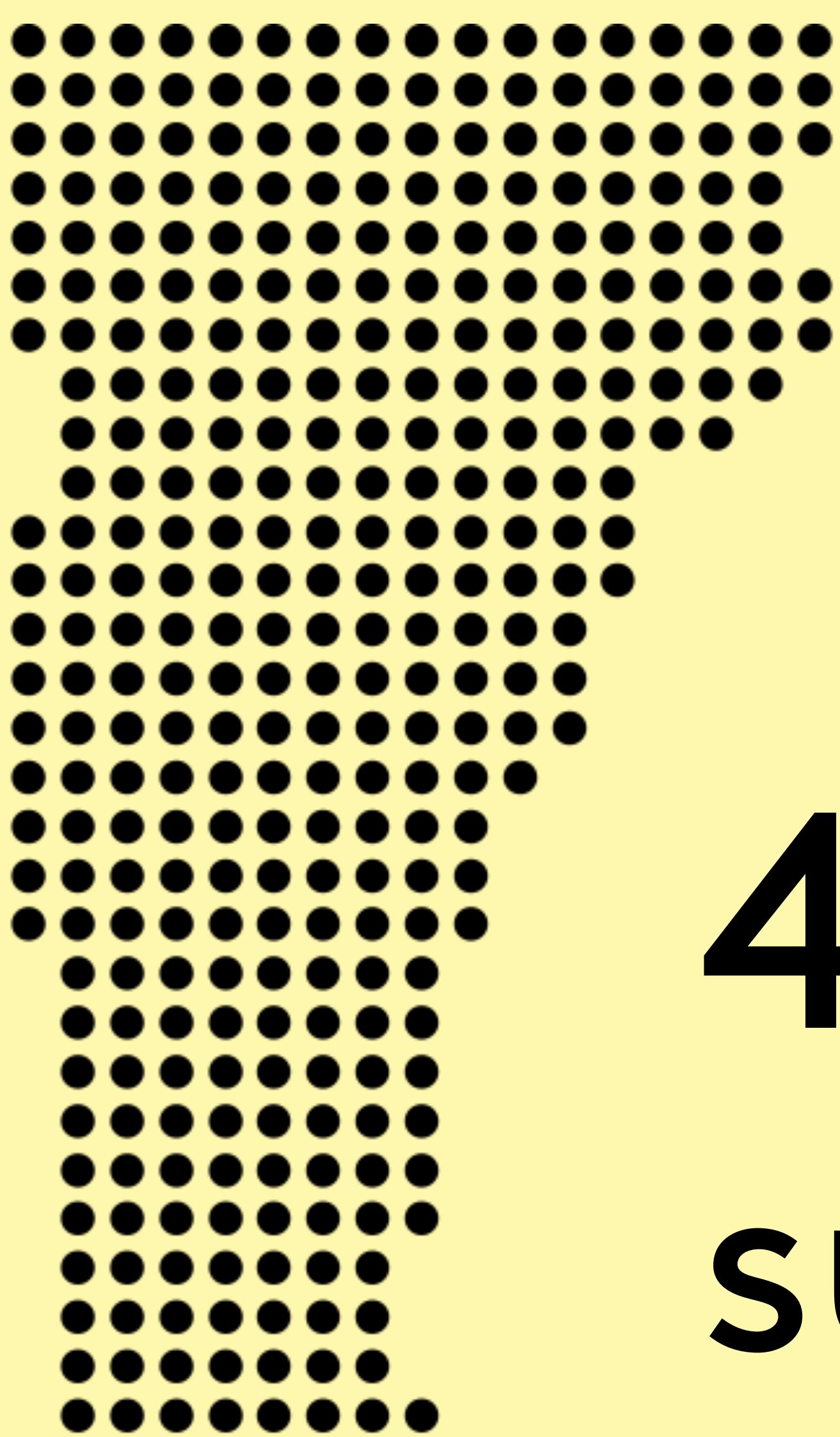
Results

The global pandemic has disrupted many aspects of our lives and, in particular, education.

Since March of 2020, Vermont schools have recognized the need to prioritize the MTSS framework as the organizational structure to support the social/emotional/behavioral and academic needs of students, educators, and families.

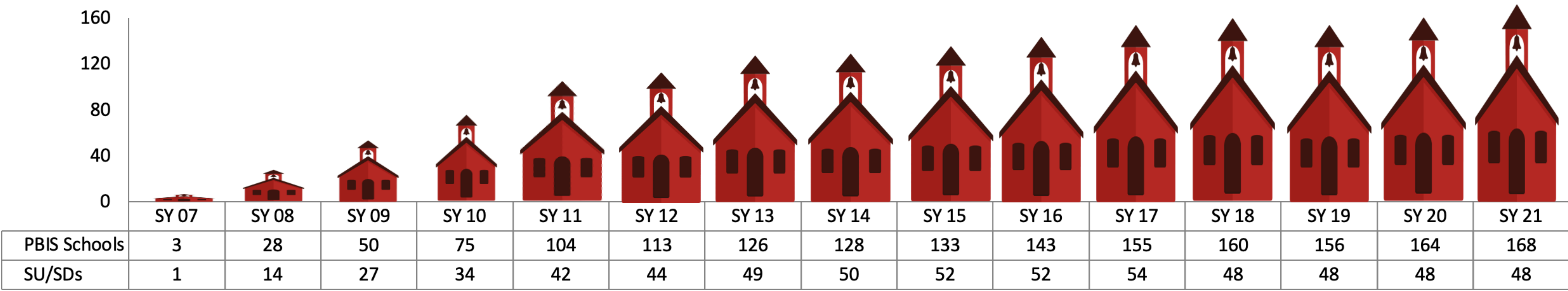
While schools tirelessly worked to successfully manage the many and complex variables of pandemic learning, the VTPBIS State Team implemented an action plan to provide support and resources that promote effective social/emotional/behavioral learning and wellness at school, at home, and during hybrid learning.

The following is a report of the 2020-2021 VTPBIS Action Plan, Goal One: Provide real-time professional development, resources, and support that promote effective social/emotional/behavioral learning and wellness at home, school, or through hybrid education.

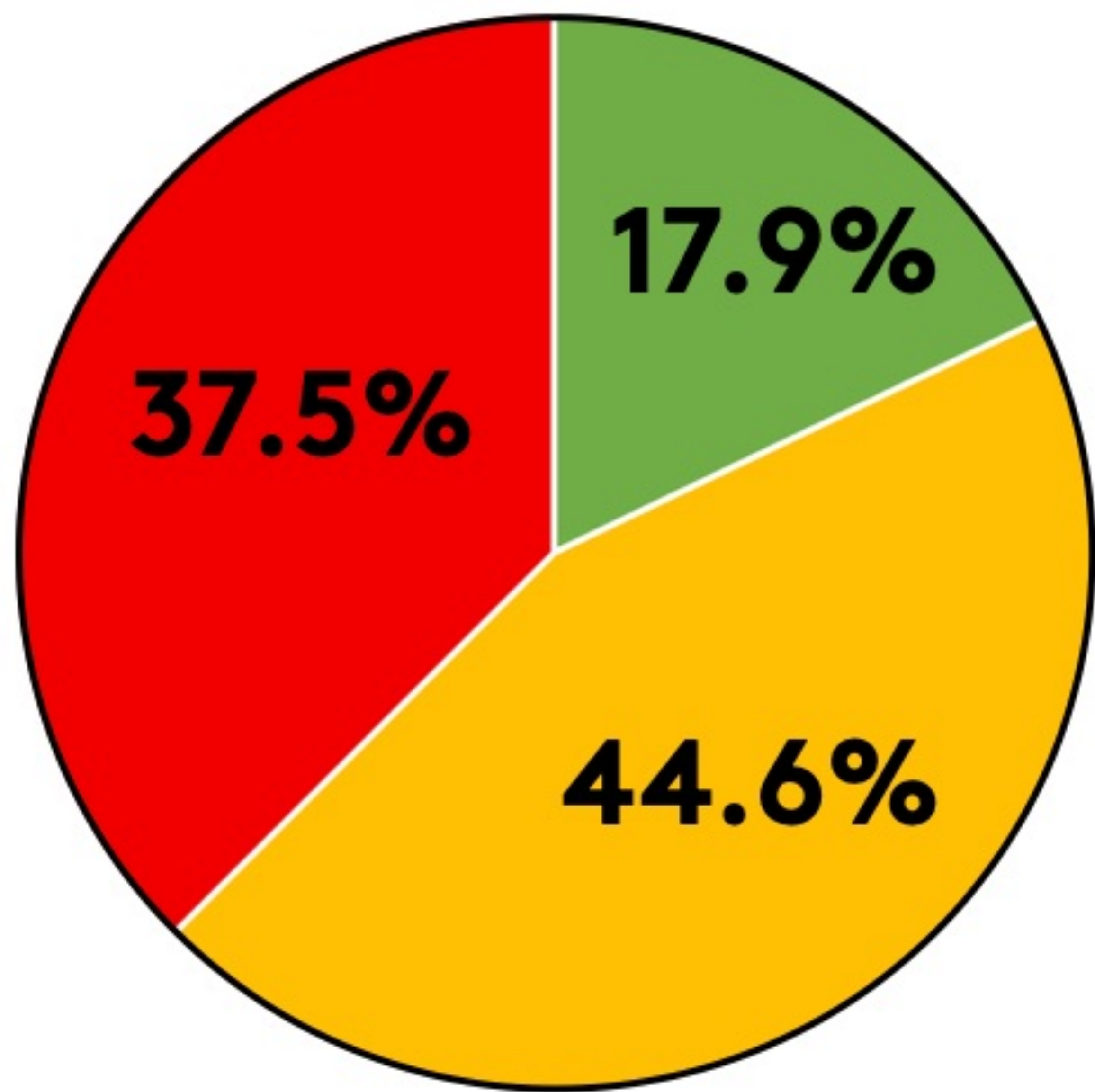


Where is VTPBIS?

168 schools
48 districts &
supervisory unions



SY 21 Percent of VTPBIS Schools by Level of Implementation (n=168)



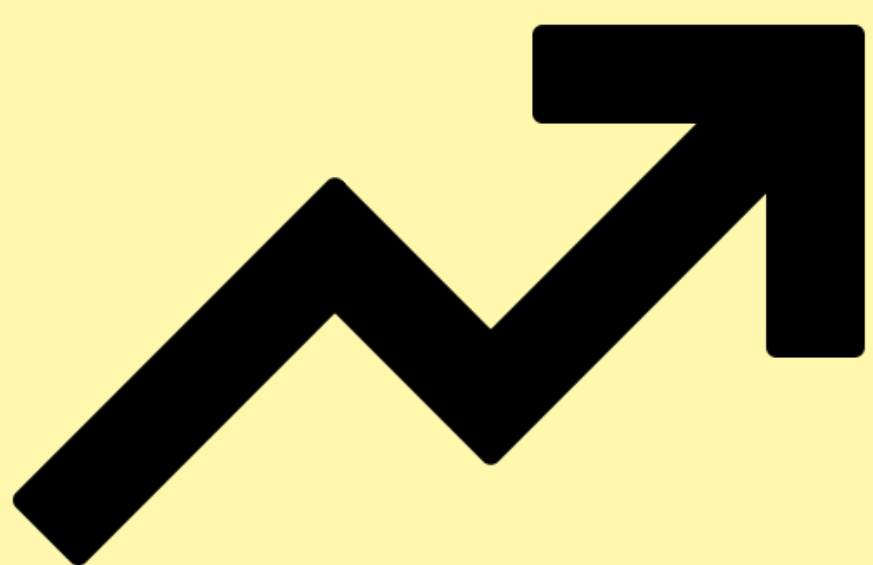
■ Universal ■ Targeted ■ Intensive

VTPBIS schools begin by implementing Universal practices that are developed to support *all* students.

Once these practices are in place with fidelity, schools move on to develop Targeted and Intensive systems and interventions to support students with greater needs.

Reach

Of the 168 VTPBIS schools, 44.6% have received training to implement Targeted Level PBIS interventions and 37.5% have received training to implement individualized interventions at the Intensive Level.



Online Presence

VTPBIS is able to reach a large audience through our bi-weekly newsletter, sent out through MailChimp, and our website, pbisvermont.org.



2021:

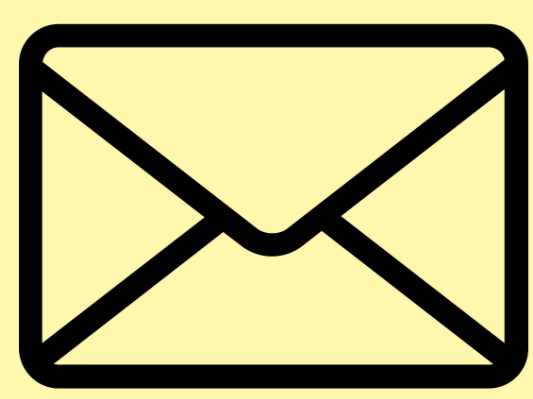
of Email subscribers

VTPBIS Updates

Website views

Website visitors

Reach



1,935



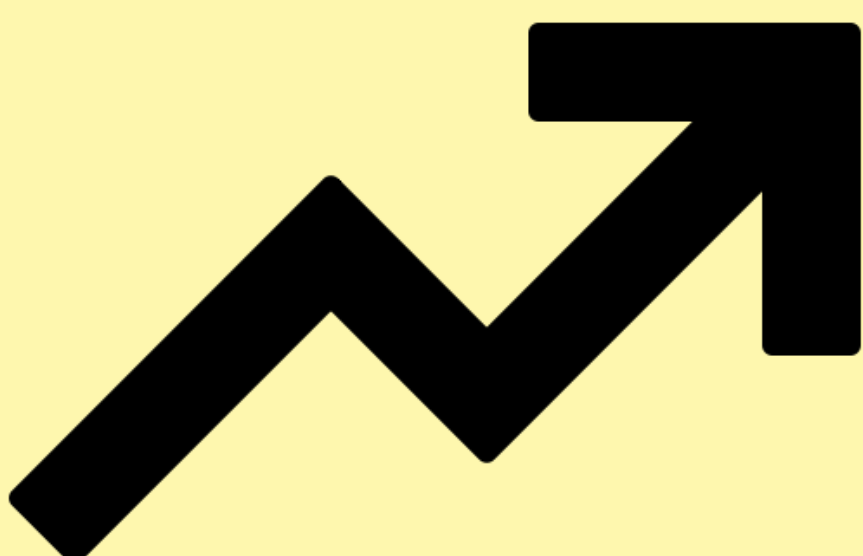
35



33,055



8,946



8

“

“It was a challenging year with remote teaching, in person teaching, closing, reopening, cleaning, masking, managing high levels of stress and anxiety within our community but we were able to persevere.

We are a strong community and when pushed to the limits we showed that ‘we got this.’”

—Parish Eiskamp
Blue Mountain School

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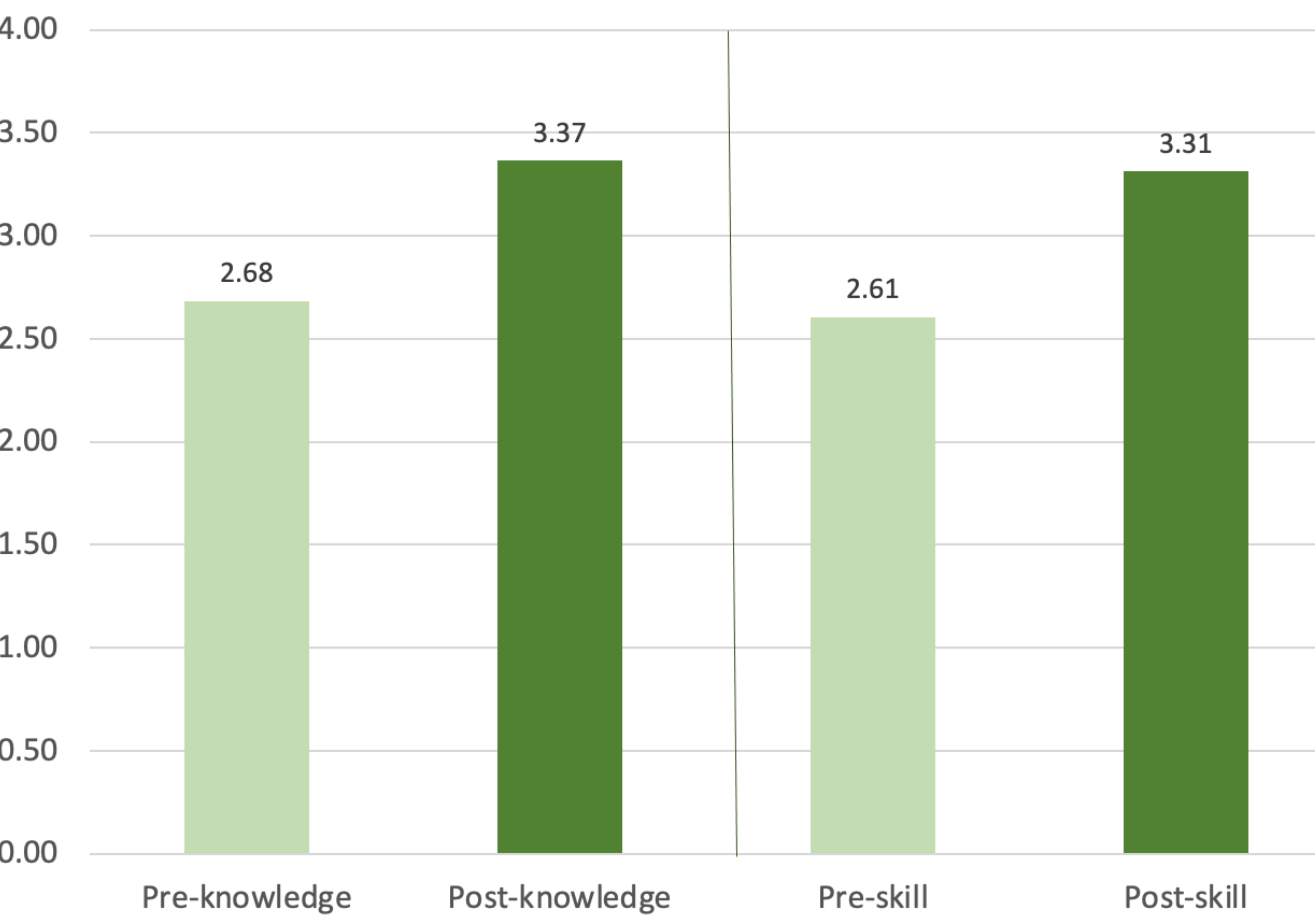


Professional Learning

Since March of 2020, Vermont schools have recognized the need to prioritize the MTSS framework as the organizational structure to support the social/emotional/behavioral and academic needs of students, educators, and families.

While schools tirelessly worked to successfully manage the many and complex variables of pandemic learning, the VTPBIS State Team implemented an action plan to provide support and resources that promote effective social/emotional/behavioral learning and wellness at school, at home, and during hybrid learning.

Pre/Post Knowledge and Skills



All learning events have been consistently well-received by individuals and school teams. Participants who attended trainings completed pre/post self-assessments of their knowledge and skill acquisition.

Overall, participants reported an increase in both knowledge and skills.

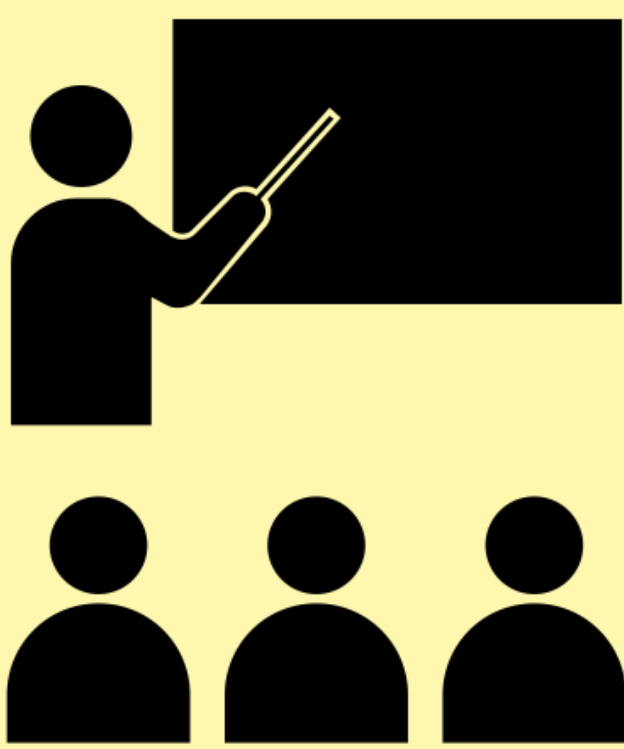
Self-ratings go from 1 (not at all) to 4 (proficient).

Process

31
web-based
trainings

1,241
participants

97.96%
Highly Satisfied/
Satisfied



BEST/VTmtss Summer Institute



The annual BEST/VTmtss Summer Institute is the most significant professional development event of the year, providing four days of learning and sharing of evidence-based practices within a VTmtss Framework.

This year’s theme was “Here Comes the Sun: Celebrating and Strengthening Resilience for All!”

“

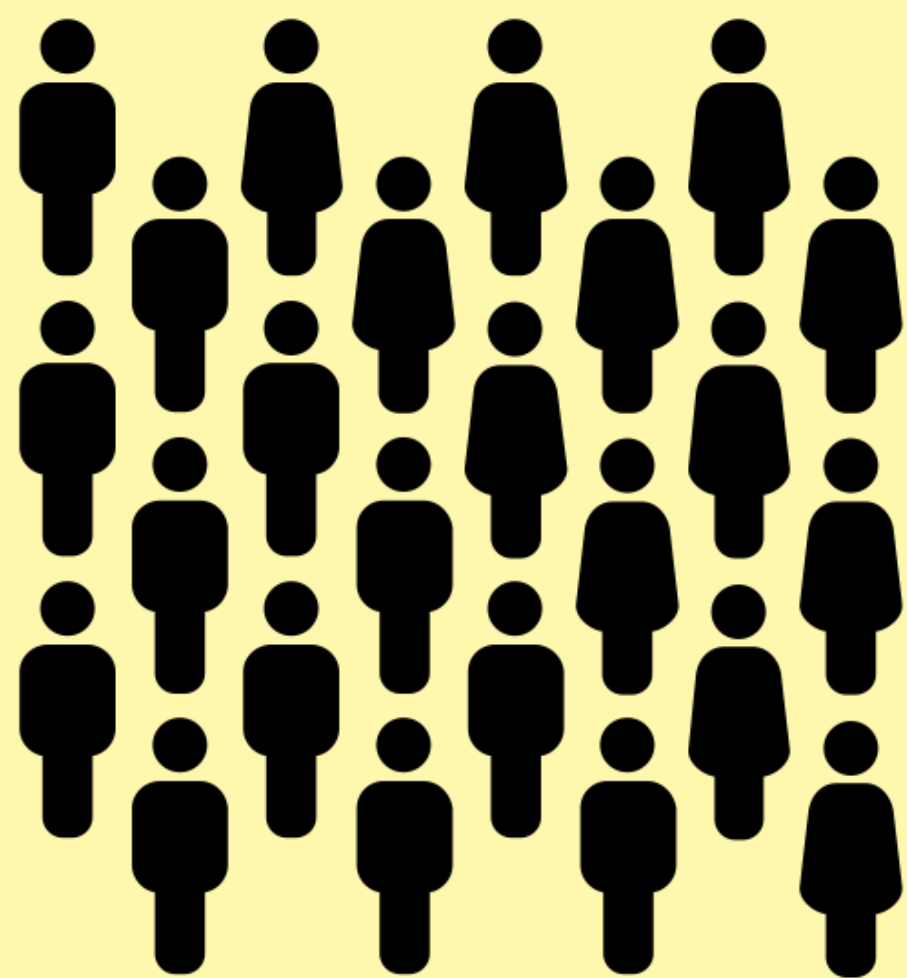
“This was a hit. Resource information alone was worth the time. Solid ideas and new approaches. Loved it.”

“You did a wonderful job of making everyone (well, me anyway) feel comfortable, included and heard. If we had to be virtual, you certainly made the best of it and all that it entails.”

”

Process

In attendance:
260
participants



representing
44
school teams



Resources

Another method of meeting the needs of schools where they are was to develop and collate easily accessible, current, and relevant resources.

New Online Resources, 2020-2021:

- [Social, emotional, behavioral resources during COVID-19](#)
- Updated pages on [family engagement](#), [mental health](#), and [PBIS-specific](#) resources
- [Webpage](#) with guidance and resources on screening for social, emotional, behavioral learning risks and challenges
- Introduction to [PBIS Microlearning](#)
- [Webpage](#) on equity resources

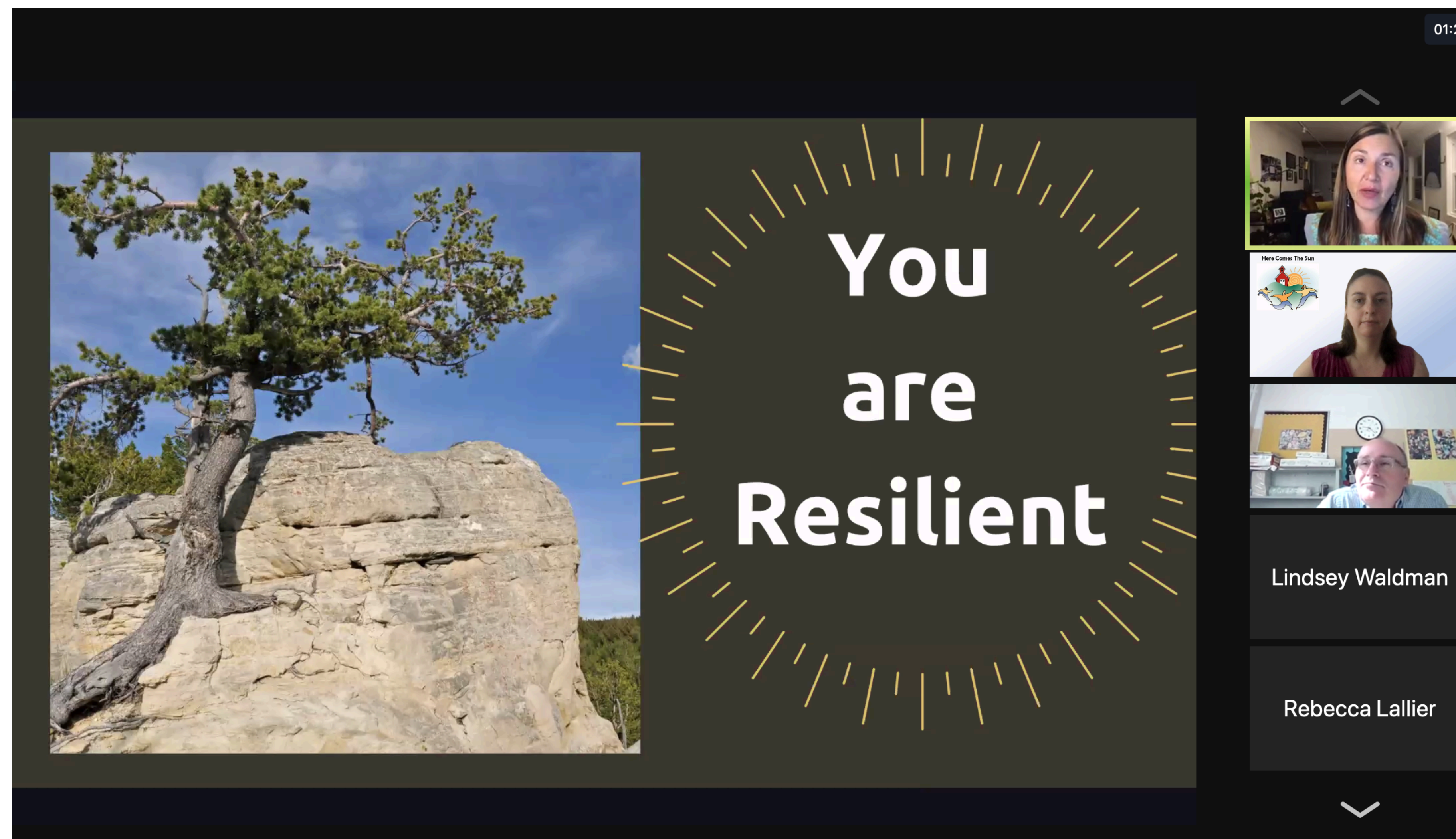
Process

To meet the multiple and diverse needs of schools during this time, the VTPBIS State Team conducted approximately 30 relevant [webinars](#) and posted a robust list of [resources](#) at pbisvermont.org



Technical Assistance & Coaching

VTPBIS Technical Assistance providers (TAs) help SU/SDs and schools navigate the process of exploring, implementing, and sustaining PBIS. This support is available through technology and/or 1-2 visits to the school.



In 2020-2021, we sent VTPBIS Monthly Friendly Reminders to coordinators about topics relevant to their role.

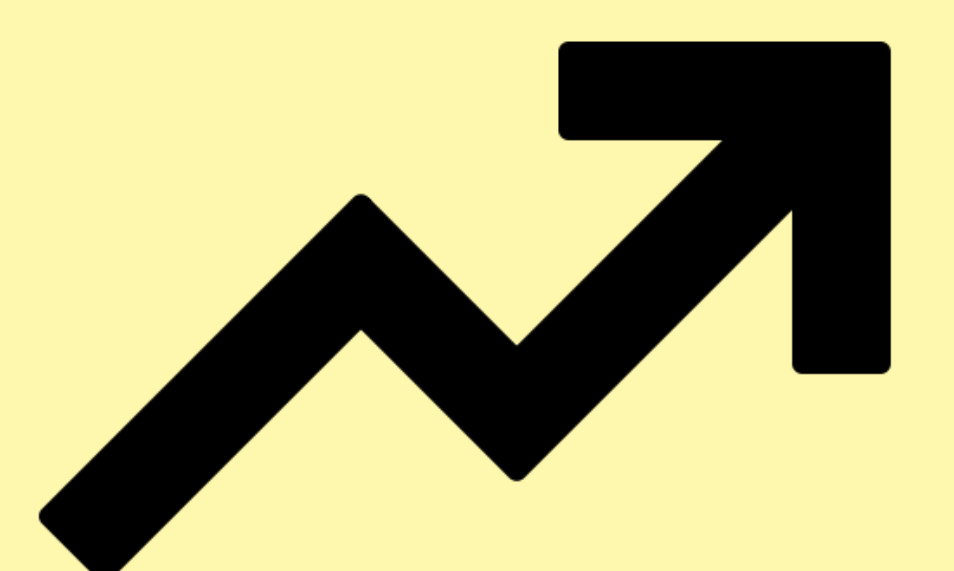
In addition, VTPBIS TA providers formally reviewed available data for all VTPBIS schools and shared observations and suggestions with each school three times during the school year.

Sometimes SUs/SDs determine that they need more in-depth coaching.

In 2020-2021, 13 VTPBIS state-approved coaches were available to support fidelity of PBIS evidence-based practices and development of local implementation capacity. Fifteen VTPBIS schools pursued coaching with VTPBIS coaches.

Process

We have increased our TA capacity this year from three TA providers to five in order to provide more frequent and in-depth support. We anticipate that schools will increase their engagement with coaches in the 2021-2022 school year as they settle into their “new normal.”



Equity

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, issues of racial justice came to the forefront.

This updated [VTPBIS Commitment to Equity](#) guides our work efforts and has resulted in the following accomplishments for SY 21:

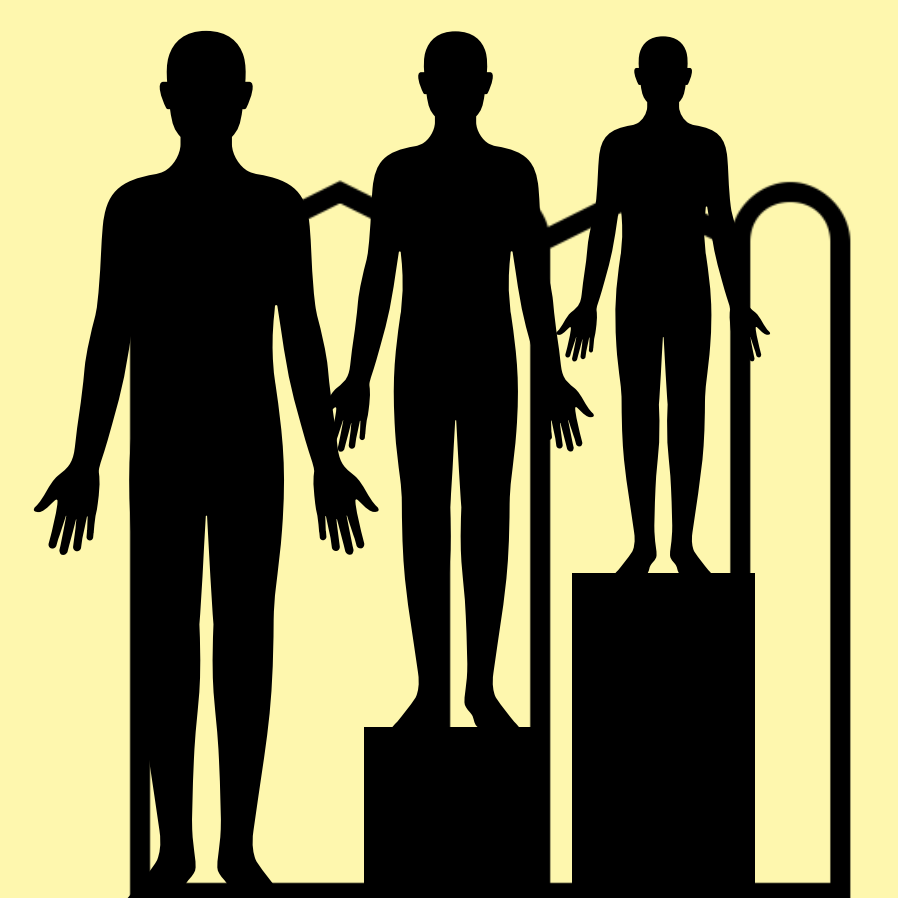
- Created [VTPBIS Commitment to Equity and developed Equity Action Plan \(updated\)](#)
- VTPBIS State Team participated in professional development
- Developed [equity resources page](#) on website
- Researched Vermont indigenous people history and teachings
- Developed [land acknowledgement and resources](#)
- Embedded equity learning into core VTPBIS training
- Enhanced family and student voice through surveys and interviews
- Provided training in how to analyze student race/ethnicity behavior data to assess disproportionality



Districts and schools are also prioritizing equity work and some have adapted their PBIS framework with an equity lens in mind.

Process

Goal Two of the VTPBIS Action Plan for 2020-2021 was to prioritize a focus on equity and anti-bias.



“

“Our team attended the equity strand at BEST in summer of 2021, so we are excited to continue in this area, by disaggregating our SWIS data and working together with staff to examine our definitions of ‘safe’, ‘respectful’, and ‘responsible’ with a culturally responsive lens, and possibly to adopt different values with community input.”

—Ottauquechee School

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Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)

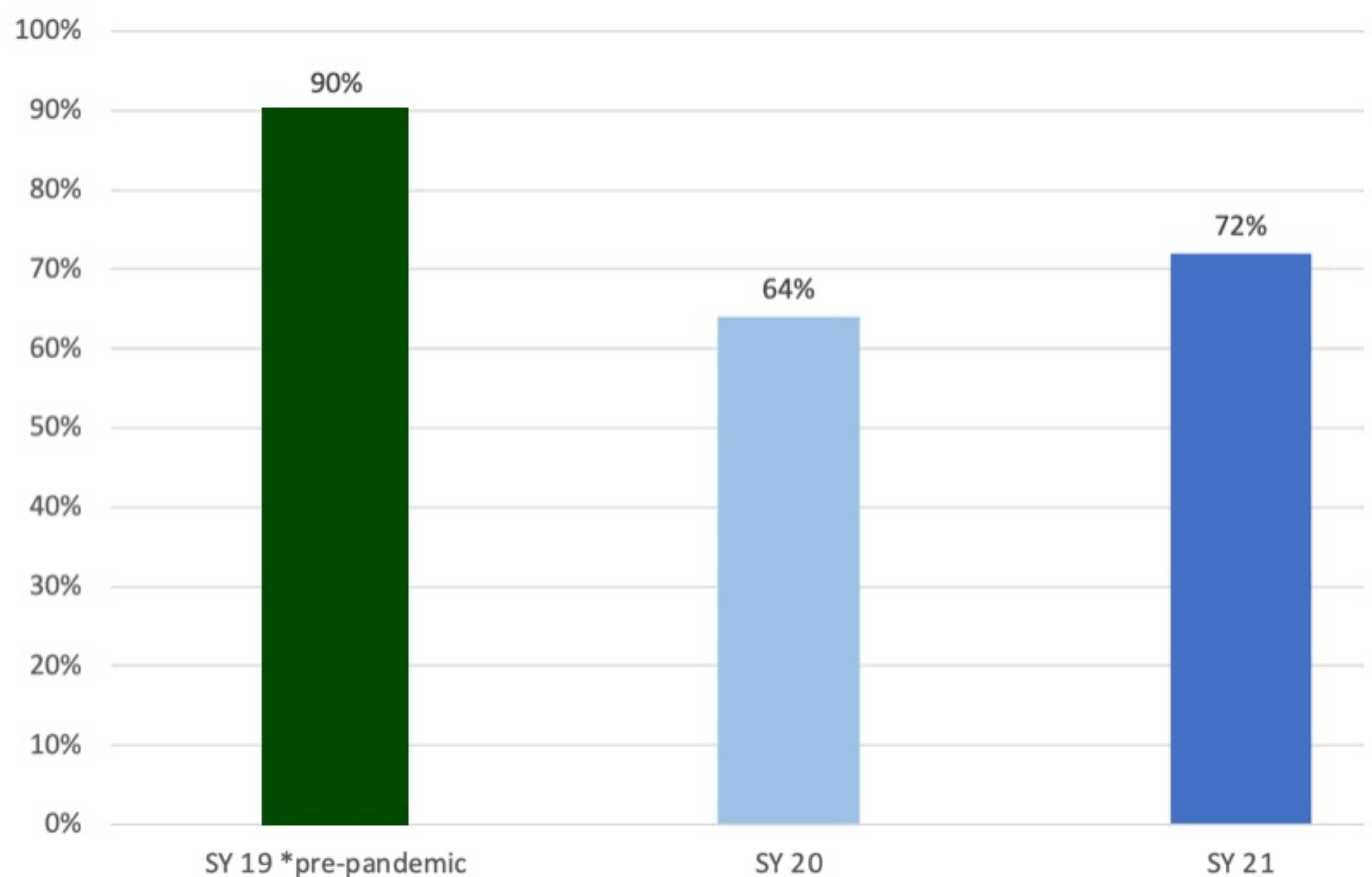
In order to efficiently assess implementation fidelity, schools complete the [Tiered Fidelity Inventory \(TFI\)](#) each year. The TFI allows schools to assess fidelity at one, two, or all three tiers of PBIS implementation. Schools are expected to complete the TFI at each tier they are currently implementing.

This year, of eligible schools, 118 schools (72%) completed Tier I of the TFI (up from 101 last year).

While we are still not at our pre-pandemic completion rate, it is evident that many schools are appreciating using this assessment as a way to celebrate accomplishments and prioritize items for action planning.

In typical years, we use completion and scores on the TFI to determine which schools are eligible for VTPBIS Merit and Exemplar status.

Tiered Fidelity Inventory Completion Rates



This year, the VTPBIS State Team decided, for the second year, to forego the traditional acknowledgement system.

We recognized that the measures we normally use to evaluate schools' implementation of PBIS need to change in response to the current circumstances.

Therefore, all VTPBIS schools who completed the TFI, Self-Assessment Survey (SAS), and/or School Climate Survey were invited to share additional narrative evidence of how they utilized, sustained, or improved their PBIS systems, data, and practices this year.

They were also invited to share data related to positive student social/emotional/behavioral/academic outcomes, along with any information related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Fidelity

We are not reporting on TFI scores this year. Instead, we focused on completion and action planning so schools would not be discouraged from reporting their scores, knowing implementation fidelity likely dropped this year during the pandemic.

Reflections

Finally, they shared lessons learned from last year that they are bringing into next year.

“Our district recognized the importance of prioritizing Social Emotional Learning and wellbeing due to previous school shutdowns and hybrid learning on-going throughout much of this year. Having an established and growing PBIS program and practice at [our school], which espouses SEL and wellbeing as priority, had us well prepared.”

—*Killington Elementary School*

“Because we were given the grace to focus more on the ‘whole child,’ our school, for the most part, was more peaceful, connected, and felt unified. We are taking many of our new practices into the new school year as well as expanding on many of the practices especially to build connections with families.”

—*Hyde Park*

“Our PBIS system held up, and best of all, we found a common tendency to look for the positive (that old 4 or 5:1!) and to respond thoughtfully, with careful analysis and action, to our persistent struggles.”

—*Ottawaquechee School*

“We revamped our curriculum map for the school to integrate more time for community building and built in learning targets that integrate social and emotional learning into the classroom content.

Doing this will help focus teachers more on the language they are using and modeling competencies in the areas of SEL.”

—*Cabot School*

”

Fidelity

43 schools nominated themselves and were recognized for their efforts (up from 18 last year). Schools that were recognized are designated in bold on the last page of this report.



School Climate & Self-Assessment Surveys

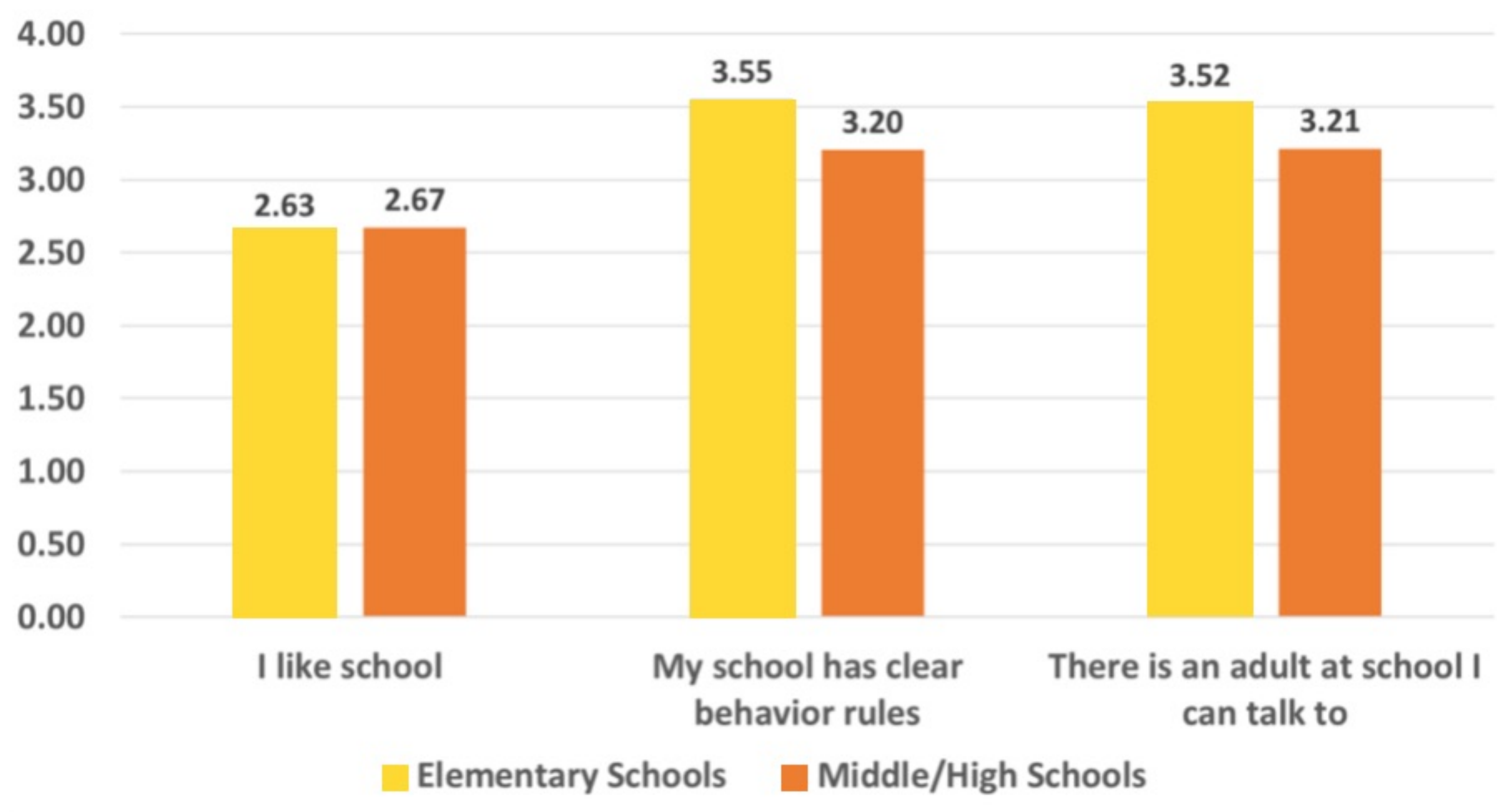
This year, the VTPBIS State Team encouraged VTPBIS schools to complete either or both the Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) and the School Climate Survey; 68 schools (41%) chose to complete the SAS.

At least 40 VTPBIS schools completed a school climate survey for either staff, students, or families this year.

Based on the survey data as of May 2021 from 27 schools — 19 Elementary Schools and 8 Middle/High Schools — we learned that overall:

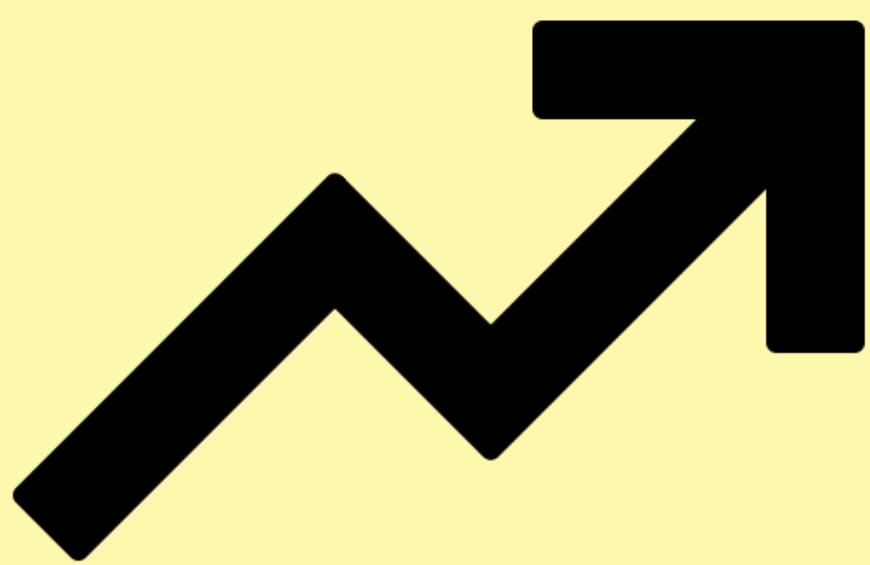
- *Students felt their school has clear rules for behavior.*
- *Students indicated there is an adult at school they can talk with if they need help.*
- *Students indicated less agreement with the statement “I like school.”*

SY 21 School Climate Survey Select Mean Scores from Students



Outcomes

Overall, 100 VTPBIS schools (61%) completed either the SAS, a school climate survey, or both.



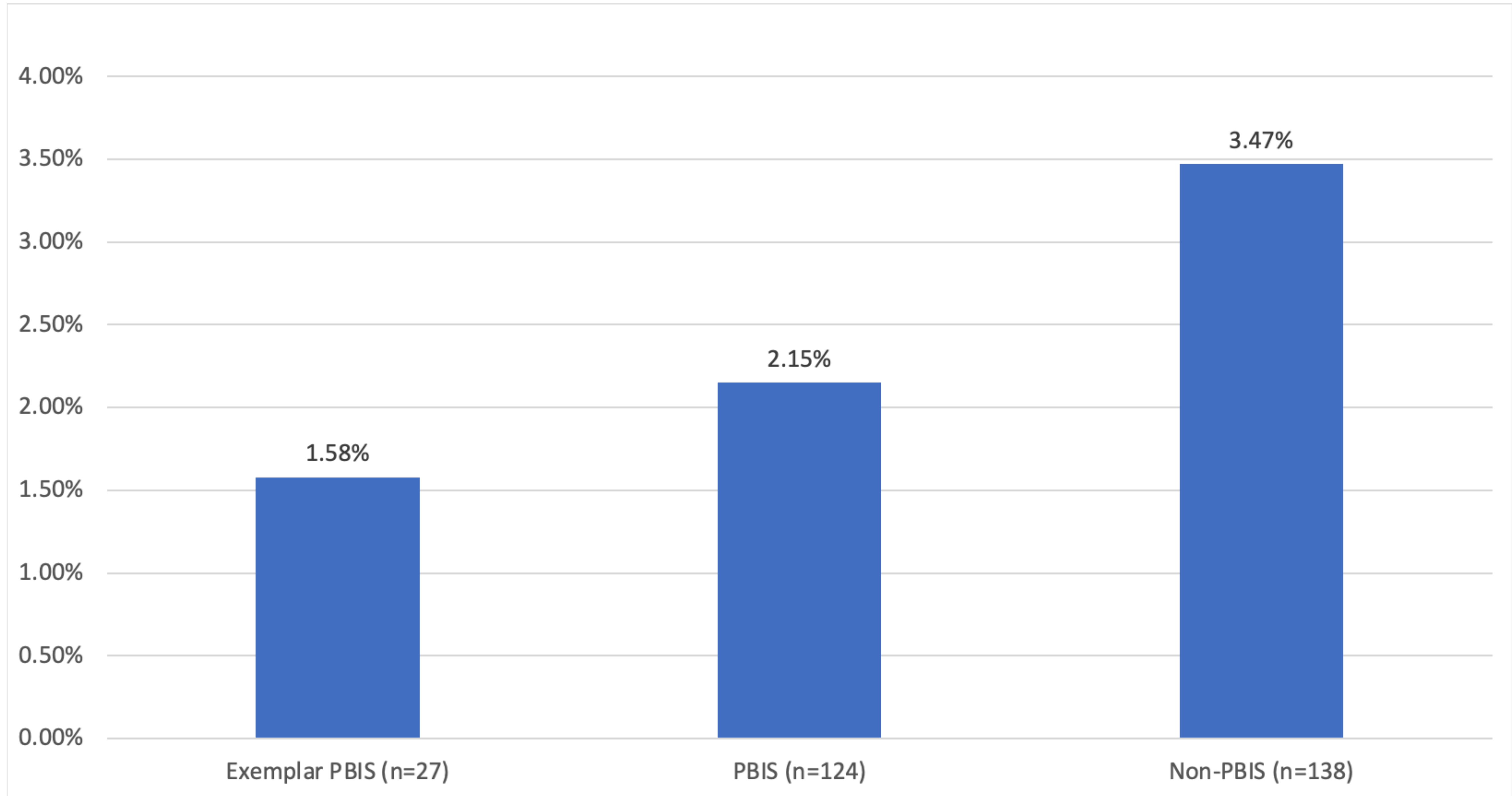
Out-of-School Suspension Rates

SY 19 Out-of-School Suspension Rates

Another way to assess the impact of PBIS on student outcomes is to review rates of out-of-school suspensions (OSS). We compare the rate of OSS across VTPBIS Exemplar schools, other VTPBIS schools, and non VTPBIS schools.

While the pandemic has likely skewed the data from the 2020 and 2021 school years, we are able to report on the 2019 school year's Out-of-School Suspension rates.

SY19 Percentage of Students with OSS



We found that VTPBIS Exemplar schools consistently had the lowest OSS rates and non-PBIS schools had the highest rates.





Summary & Recommendations

To meet the growing and changing needs of the school systems, the PBIS team increased technical assistance capacity; provided training and resources that encompassed strategies for in-person, hybrid, or remote learning; and prioritized equity.

As schools continue to adjust to “pandemic” learning conditions, the team was excited to see that more than 40 schools self-nominated themselves for recognition at this year’s PBIS Annual Forum.

The reach of PBIS across Vermont continues to grow each year as new schools are welcomed onboard and existing VTPBIS schools deepen their knowledge base.

Educators and school professionals continue to have very high levels of satisfaction with the VTPBIS team offerings, as evidenced in their evaluation scores and comments to the team.

These ratings were especially exceptional this year given the amount of “Zoom fatigue” that many of us are collectively experiencing. Schools also appreciated the various formats by which resources were made available, including electronic resources available on the Vermont PBIS website.

As we enter the third school year impacted by the pandemic the VTPBIS team continues to be flexible in the types of resources and supports we provide to Vermont schools, when those are offered, and how they are delivered.

SY 22 Action Plan for Sustainability

GOAL:

Focus on centering equity within PBIS

1

- Continue VTPBIS State Team professional learning
- Create a communication/dissemination plan (and materials)
- Use PBIS equity constructs to guide training, TA, and coaching
- Demonstrate how PBIS can include voice, choice, and ownership of all students, families, and staff
- Analyze fidelity and student data based by race/ethnicity to decrease disproportionality in school discipline
- Listen and learn from the educational experiences of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color

GOAL:

Ensure access to accessible resources & trainings

2

- Conduct trainings that are safe and accessible
- Focus training on SEL and wellness
- Update resources on www.pbisvermont.org
- Develop dissemination materials that schools can use when communicating about PBIS
- Encourage use of assessment tools (school climate, TFI) and student outcome measures (SWIS) for decision-making
- Promote use of VTPBIS TA and coaching

GOAL:

Create and share opportunities for staff, student, and family voice

3

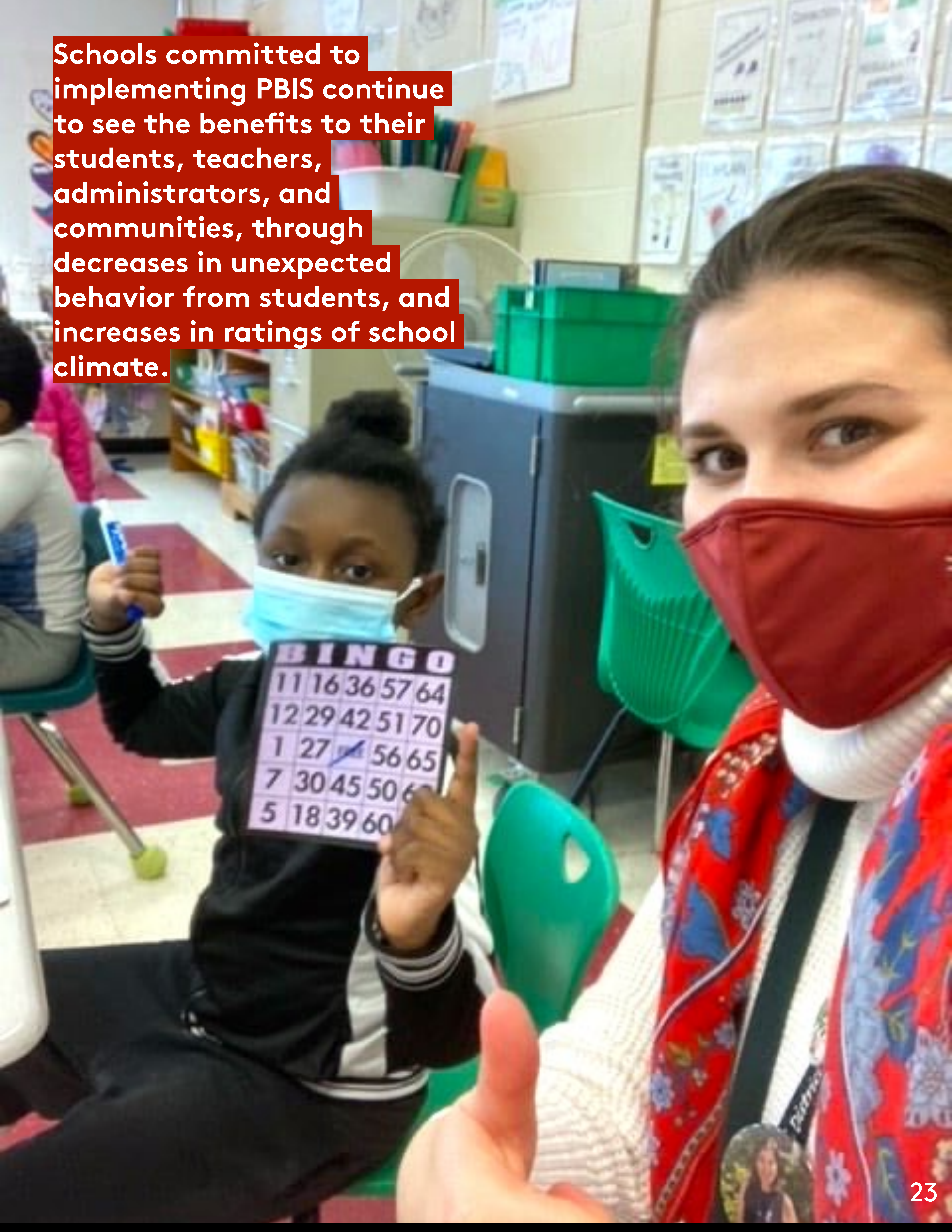
- Share resources for improving school climate and overall well-being by inviting staff, student, and family voice
- Continue to use and promote restorative approaches for reflection and wellness

During this time, we have all learned the importance of developing and maintaining authentic connections, and engagement with staff, students, and families continues to be a critical time to intentionally prioritize these efforts.



We continue to support a perspective of doing a few things well will have the greatest impact on student outcomes.

Schools committed to implementing PBIS continue to see the benefits to their students, teachers, administrators, and communities, through decreases in unexpected behavior from students, and increases in ratings of school climate.





pbisvermont.org



[Image credits](#)

VTPBIS is supported by the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) and administered by the Center on Disability and Community Inclusion (CDCI) at the University of Vermont.

CDCI

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- Sherry Schoenberg
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DMH

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- Laura Greenwood
- Tracy Harris
- Meg Porcella
- Josh Souliere
- Marni Troop
- Tracy Watterson



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
**CENTER ON DISABILITY &
COMMUNITY INCLUSION**



SY 21 VTPBIS Schools

A total of approximately 42,100 students were educated in VTPBIS schools during the 2020-2021 school year.

Addison Central
Albany Community
Alburgh Community
Allen Brook
Arlington Memorial Middle/High
Bakersfield Elem.
Barnet Elem.
Barre Town Middle & Elem
Barre City*
Barstow Memorial
Beeman Elem.
Bennington Elem.
Benson Elem.
Berlin Elem.
Bethel Elem.
BFA Fairfax
Bingham Memorial Elementary (Cornwall)
Blue Mountain Union
Braintree Elem.
Brewster Pierce Elem.
Bridport
Brighton Elem.
Bristol Elem.
Brookfield Elem.
Brownington Central
Burke Town
C.P. Smith
Cabot
Calais Elem.
Canaan
Castleton Elem.
Castleton Village
Chamberlin
Champlain Elem.
Charleston
Charlotte Central
Chelsea*
Chester-Andover Elem.
Clarendon Elem.
Concord
Coventry Village
Currier Memorial
Danville

Derby Elem.
Dorset
Dothan Brook
Doty Memorial
East Montpelier Elem.
Eden Central
Edmunds Elem.
Fair Haven
Fair Haven Union High
Fairfield Center
Ferrisburgh Central
Fletcher Elem.
Flood Brook
Folsom Education & Community Center
Georgia Elem. & Middle
Grand Isle
Green Street
Guilford Central
Hardwick Elem.
Hartland Elem.
Highgate Elem.
Hinesburg Community
Hyde Park Elem.
Integrated Arts Academy at H.O. Wheeler Elem.
Irasburg Village
Isle La Motte
J.J. Flynn Elem.
Jamaica Village
Jericho Elem.
JFK Elem.
Johnson Elem.
Killington Elem.
Kurn Hattin Homes
Lakeview Union
Lamoille Union Middle
Lincoln Community
Lothrop Elem.
Lowell
Lyndon Town
Malletts Bay
Manchester Elem.
Marion Cross
Middletown Springs Elem.
Miller's Run
Milton Elem.
Missisquoi Valley
Molly Stark

Monkton Central
Monument Elem.
Morristown Elem.
Mt. Abraham Union High
Mt. Anthony High
Mt. Anthony Union
Middle Neshobe
Newbrook Elem.
Newport Town
North Country UJHS
Northeast Primary
Northfield Elem.
Northfield Middle High
Northwest Primary
Oak Grove
Orange Center
Orchard
Orleans Elem.
Orwell Village
Ottauquechee
Otter Creek Academy
Otter Valley UHS
Peacham Elem.
Peoples Academy Middle Level
Porters Point
Poultney Elem.
Pownal Elem.
Proctor Elem.
Putney Central
Randolph Elem.
Reading Elem.
Richmond Elem.
Rick Marcotte Central
Ripton Elem.
Riverside Middle
Rochester
Robinson Elem.
Rutland Intermediate
Salisbury Community
Shaftsbury Elem.
Shelburne Community
Sheldon Elem.
South Royalton
St. Albans Town Educational Center
Stockbridge Central
Stowe Elem.
Summit Street

Sunderland Elem.
Sustainability Academy at Lawrence Barnes
Sutton Village
Swanton
Thatcher Brook Primary
Thetford Elem.
Thomas Fleming
Townshend Elem.
Tunbridge*
Twinfield USD #33
Union Elem.
Union Memorial
Vergennes Union Elem.
Vergennes Union High
Vernon Elem.
Waitsfield
Walden
Wardsboro Elem.
Washington Village
Waterville
Wells Village
Westford
White River Valley Middle
Wilder
Williamstown Elem
Williamstown Middle/High
Williston Central
Windsor
Wolcott Elem.
Woodbury Elem.
Woodstock Elem.

KEY

* New VTPBIS Schools

Bold: VTPBIS Schools recognized for positive PBIS outcomes in SY 21