

Vermont Project AWARE-SEA Grant  
Annual Progress Report

The purpose of the Annual Progress Report is to for you to share information about how grant funds have been used to pursue your programmatic goals and objectives, and to demonstrate progress in meeting those goals. This process should assist you in documenting the implementation of your grant.

You are welcome to submit your Progress Report in any format. The outline below is offered to assist you, but you are not required to follow it. However, you must include all of the elements described in the Notice of Award (which align with the information requested below).

If you have any questions, please contact your Government Project Officer (GPO).

The due date of the report is determined by your grant start date:

If your grant started on September 30<sup>th</sup> (Cohort 1 grantees) your report is due on December 31, 2019

If your grant started on November 30<sup>th</sup> (Cohort 2 grantees) your report is due on February 28, 2020

The Progress Report must be submitted as a .pdf to the "View Terms Tracking Details" page in the eRA Commons system. For more information on how to upload a document in response to a tracked term in eRA Commons, see Section 4: "Additional Materials – grantee," in the User Guide located at:

[https://era.nih.gov/files/TCM\\_User\\_Guide\\_Grantee.pdf](https://era.nih.gov/files/TCM_User_Guide_Grantee.pdf)

#### Grantee Contact Information

A. Grantee Name: Vermont Agency of Education

B. Grant #: SM080977-01

C. Project Director Name: Alicia Hanrahan

D. Project Director Email: [alicia.hanrahan@vermont.gov](mailto:alicia.hanrahan@vermont.gov)

E. Person(s) completing this form (if not the Project Director or if in addition to the Project Director):

Marni Troop (AOE), Marianna Donnally (DMH), Sarah Guckenbug (WestEd)

#### Part I. Program Activities

For each of the types of Program Activities listed in Table 1, below, please reflect on your work over the course of the year and share the following:

1. Key Accomplishments related to the goals, objectives and outcomes identified in your application
2. Changes from the original plan
3. Problems or challenges encountered, and steps taken to overcome these challenges

\*NOTE: Complete this document in MS Word and take as much space as you need in each cell of the table.

SUMMARY: The VT AWARE Project this year experienced difficulty with engaging Local Education Agencies (LEA) staff in grant activities. All three LEAs suffered staffing shortages via unfilled positions and staff resignations. This shortage resulted in overburdened staff who had to navigate continual COVID-related recovery planning and action, state mandated activities, coverage for vacant positions, and other obligations, often causing grant activities to be put on the back burner. Despite this, Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU) and Slate Valley Unified Supervisory Union (SVUSU) District Community Leadership Teams (DCLT), accomplished many grant-related activities this year, including attending an in-person training and technical assistance day provided by our national and state Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) contracted vendors (provided under our Old Dominion University contract). And Greater Rutland County Supervisory Union (GRCSU) successfully implemented a universal screener within all of their schools and produced several internal surveys used to monitor LEA-wide knowledge and utilization of social, emotional, and mental health services and supports. The grant’s LEAs demonstrated their commitment to the wellbeing of students, staff, and families, even in the face of increased adversity.

TABLE 1.

Activities	Key Accomplishments	Changes to Original Plan	Challenges and Solutions
<p>Increase and improve access to culturally competent and developmentally appropriate school- and community-based mental health services, particularly for children and youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance or Serious Mental Illness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State guidance was provided to the educational field on mental health screening, referrals, and treatment for students</li> <li>• AWARE Training for LEA staff from contracted vendors is ongoing. Examples of trainings are noted elsewhere in this table.</li> <li>• All three LEAs implemented a universal screener and used it at least once. There were 2,225 screens, 80 referrals to services, and 35 accessed services.</li> <li>• LEAs continue to provide mental health services after school and throughout the summer through partnerships with local organizations.</li> <li>• While there have been workforce turnover and vacancies at the local level impacting the project, the State Project AWARE team has remained steady and has broadened the Project’s connections with state leads on Student Support Services, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, and Continuous Improvement.</li> </ul>	<p>None</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges with COVID-19 restrictions continue to delay implementation. Use of virtual meeting platforms has resolved many setbacks.</li> <li>• Staffing for mental health positions has remained a significant obstacle statewide.</li> <li>• Several key staff positions at the local level were vacated at the end of the 2021/2022 school year, including an LEA coordinator and a principal, but they are actively being advertised, filled, and/or integrated into other existing positions. Some positions have been filled.</li> <li>• A survey of school-based mental health staff, conducted by our evaluation vendor, WestEd, indicated that while there are services and supports available in schools for students with mental health needs, there is confusion about school and district procedures related to mental health support and supporting students with suicide ideation. This is actively being</li> </ul>

			addressed through training and coaching provided by AWARE contracted partners.
Develop school-based mental health programs staffed by behavioral health (BH) specialists to screen for, provide early intervention for and to address any ongoing mental health needs of children with symptoms consistent with a mental disorder(s) or SED.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All three LEAs implemented a universal screener and have used it at least once.</li> <li>LEA grant coordinators and school teams were trained in Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) implementation to strengthen the mental health components within the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support.</li> <li>All LEAs have protocols in place for youth who express suicide ideation. Staff continue to receive training and technical assistance from the Umatter Suicide Prevention program.</li> </ul>	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All activities for this goal were delayed primarily due to COVID-19, yet activities are in process.</li> <li>LEA leadership teams, continue to assess how its existing mental and behavioral health personnel can fulfill this goal and identify continued gaps. This goal serves as an opportunity for LEAs and mental health agencies to work together, through participation on DCLT, to systemically make decisions and issue guidance.</li> </ul>
Conduct outreach and engagement with school-aged youth and their families to increase awareness and identification of mental health issues and to promote positive mental health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contracted vendor Center for Health &amp; Learning (CHL) trained 158 people across the three LEAs on Umatter suicide prevention, suicide risk screening, transition planning, and suicide post-vention</li> <li>Slate Valley Unified Supervisory Union (SVUSU) hired a therapeutic recreation specialist.</li> <li>All three LEAs continue to provide social, emotional, and mental health information through family engagement initiatives and/or through a family engagement coordinator.</li> <li>Additional trainings, such as Youth Mental Health First Aid and Teen Mental Health First Aid, are being provided by funding outside the AWARE grant,</li> </ul>	None	All activities for this goal were delayed primarily due to COVID-19 and are in process.

	<p>although they were originally planned to be funded through the grant.</p>		
<p>Connect families, schools, and communities to increase engagement and involvement in planning and implementing school and community programs for school-aged youth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A DCLT survey showed that most respondents either agreed or felt neutral that the DCLT represented family and students. All three LEAs have either a dedicated family engagement coordinator or have incorporated family engagement into their team's efforts.</li> <li>• Greater Rutland County Supervisory Union (GRCSU) hired a family coordinator/family engagement specialist who has created parent/student leadership groups and conducted surveys. One survey asked families about which types of activities they would like to participate in at the school (movie night, game night, etc). The engagement specialist also created a process form to assist planning organizers from inception, through funding, to post event feedback.</li> <li>• OSSU hired a family engagement specialist</li> <li>• SVUSU partnered with Rutland Parent Child Center for after school programming and community-based activities (bike helmet giveaways, end of year dances, etc.)</li> <li>• SVUSU began outreach to communities and families, promoting wellness and resiliency through sharing information about resources available to them.</li> </ul>	<p>None</p>	<p>All activities for this goal were delayed primarily due to COVID-19 and are in process.</p>

<p>Help school-aged youth develop skills that will promote resilience and promote pro-social behaviors; avert development of mental and BH disorders; and prevent youth violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The AWARE State Team continues to clarify how ISF supports Vermont’s Multi-Tiered System of Supports (VTmtss)</li> <li>• Umatter Suicide Prevention for Schools was implemented, contributing significantly to TR1 figure below.</li> <li>• Contracted vendor Up for Learning implemented their Getting to Y program and Community Connections in all grant participating schools. Focus of programs include utilizing student voice, examining climate data, collaborating on solutions, asset mapping, and community building.</li> </ul>	<p>None</p>	<p>All activities for this goal were delayed primarily due to COVID-19 but are in progress</p>
<p>Equip schools with the ability to immediately respond to the needs of youth who may be exhibiting behavioral/psychological signs of a severity indicating the need for clinical intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All three LEAs implemented a universal screener</li> <li>• All three LEAs have a protocol in place (including training) to address suicidal ideation. CHL and the ISF coach (provided through the Old Dominion Contract) have been gathering information about existing protocols with the goal of revising them to encompass protocols for all requests for assistance. We have achieved nearly 60% of our grant goal to assist students across the three LEAs through an ISF oriented request for assistance protocol.</li> </ul>	<p>None</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All activities for this goal were delayed primarily due to COVID-19 and are in process.</li> <li>• A mental health staff survey indicated there is confusion about school and district procedures related to mental health support and supporting students with suicide ideation. Contracted vendors have begun communicating with LEA coordinators to create a plan to remedy this confusion.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop an infrastructure that will sustain and expand mental health and behavioral health services and supports for school-aged youth when federal funding ends.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The AWARE State Team and contracted vendors are engaging in <i>ways of work</i> meetings and a quality improvement process to improve implementation and sustainability of grant goals.</li> <li>• OSSU has changed the AWARE LEA Coordinator position to an MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) Coordinator position, which is a sustainable position that can continue systemic integration of</li> </ul>	<p>None</p>	<p>All activities for this goal were delayed primarily due to COVID-19 and are in process.</p>

	<p>social-emotional learning, mental health, and academic facets of MTSS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VT AOE and the Agency of Human Services (AHS) plan to update the Act 264 Interagency Agreement to incorporate learnings and protocols from VT Project AWARE and revise the funding model structures with the “success beyond six” model.</li> </ul>		
--	--	--	--

**PART 2. Performance Data and Evaluation**

A. SPARS

(Should align with data in the SPARS System)

VT Performance Measure Data			VT AWARE Grant Goals			Goal & Reason goal not achieved (if applicable)
SPARS Indicator	2020/21 Annual Total	2021/22 Annual Total	Grant Total	Total Project Goal	Percent of Goal Reached	
Training (TR1)	787	523	1310	400	Exceeded	Goal: The number of (non-mental health individuals who have received training in prevention or mental health promotion.
Workforce (WD2)	448	104	552	781	70.7% reached	Goal: The number of people in mental health and related workforce trained in mental health-related practices/activities that are consistent with the goals of the grant.

						There were some delays in trainings due to COVID-19, and related workforce availability/scheduling challenges
Policy (PD1)*	4	6	10	3	Exceeded	Goal: The number of state and local policy changes completed as a result of the grant. Local policy may refer more precisely to written protocols/procedures (eg Requests for Assistance)
Partnership (PC1)	7	12	19	10	Exceeded	Goal: The number of organizations that entered into a formal written inter/intra-organizational agreement (e.g., MOUs/MOAs) to improve mental health-related practices/activities that are consistent with the goals of the grant.
Screening (S1)	15	2225	2240	630	Exceeded	Goal: The number of school-aged youth who have completed a universal screener.
Referral (R1)	36	80	116	215	54.0% reached	Goal: The number of Requests for Assistance on behalf of students made as a result of universal or targeted screening.

						Schools and districts are in early stages of developing tracking systems for referrals
Access (received services after referral) (AC1)	31	35	66	88% Average	86% reached	Goal: The number and percentage of school-aged youth receiving school or community-based mental health or related services after referral in each LEA along with the specific services received. Schools and districts are in early stages of developing tracking systems for access to services/outcomes

- Greater Rutland County Supervisory Union (GRCSU)
  - The LEA coordinator collects data (mental health standards for screening, mental health services requests, mental health treatment and follow up, youth who express suicide ideation at the school level) and has reported that some of the GRCSU schools have “partially completed” these written documentations and protocols.
- Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU)
  - Has written documentation for youth who express suicide ideation
  - “Universal Screening Procedure” provides guidance on screening. The document and protocol have not yet been adopted at the SU level.
  - March 2022 report “OSSU Social Emotional & Behavioral Health” contains links to a parent letter, status of screening as of the report date, data points, what the data suggests, and steps moving forward.
  - Drafting a document with protocols on screening and referrals that will be included in the MTSS guidance. This work was done after review of examples from other states, including a NH AWARE school they have consulted with.
- Slate Valley Unified School District (SVUSD)
  - Has LEA written documentation for:
    - mental health standard for screening
    - mental health services requests
    - mental health treatment and follow up
    - and for youth who express suicide ideation
  - “Fair Haven Union High School Protocol for Presentation of Suicidal Ideation/Intent/Behavior” was created May 2021



- “2021-2022 Slate Valley Local Common Assessment Plan” which provides an overview of academic-related assessments in each grade and includes the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Screener in the assessment calendar.
- “2022-2023 Slate Valley Local Common Assessment Plan.” This plan includes all the assessments and screenings, including universal screening. It includes information on grades, purpose, use of results, and dissemination plans.