Joint School & Select Board Meeting

April 9, 2025

Presentation Overview

- District Profile
- Celebrations
- Challenges
- Legislative Support Needed
- Questions

Student and School Profile

A courageous and confident graduate…

- Knows self-value, seeks opportunities, uses their voice to stand up for what they believe.
- Knows and understands what they can do and lives their values through their speech and actions.

A lifelong learner…

- Is empowered and excited by complex and authentic learning opportunities.
- Has courage to admit you don't know something, acknowledges it and moves toward growth with curiosity.

A responsible and compassionate graduate…

- Takes care of their responsibilities to themselves and others and honors their commitments.
- Works to respect and understand the needs and feelings of others when you act.

A creative problem solver…

- Develops innovative ways to address complex issues.
- Invites collaboration to overcome challenges and barriers.

A resilient and healthy graduate…

- Is able to find physical, mental and emotional well-being in their environment.
- Is able to recover from and resume learning after a struggle.

An effective communicator…

- Students of all ability levels can clearly demonstrate their learning, feelings, needs and goals.
- Students can advocate for themselves and others in a way that shows respect and understanding.

Stowe Schools

Enrollment

Demographics

Early College

AP Offerings

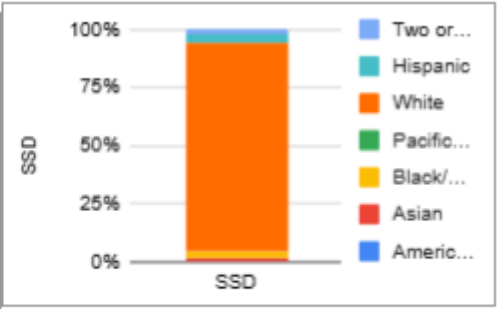
Avg. SAT Score

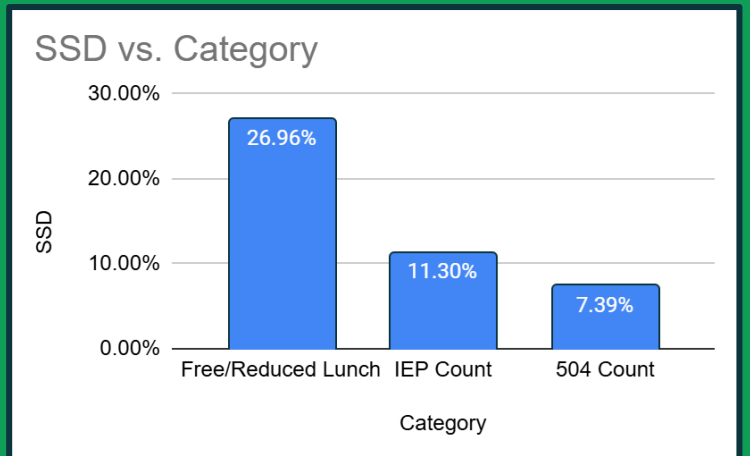
College Acceptance

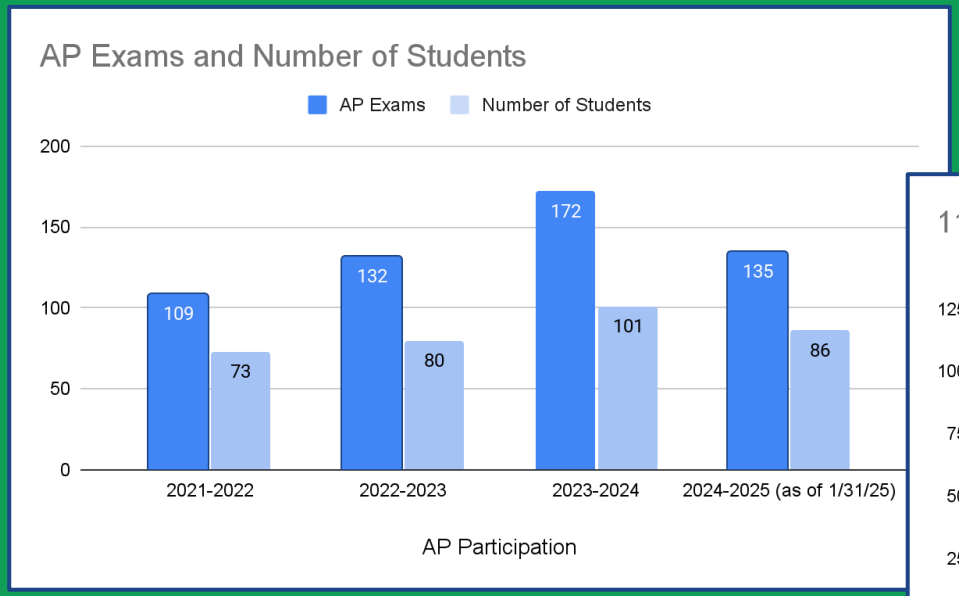
District Profile

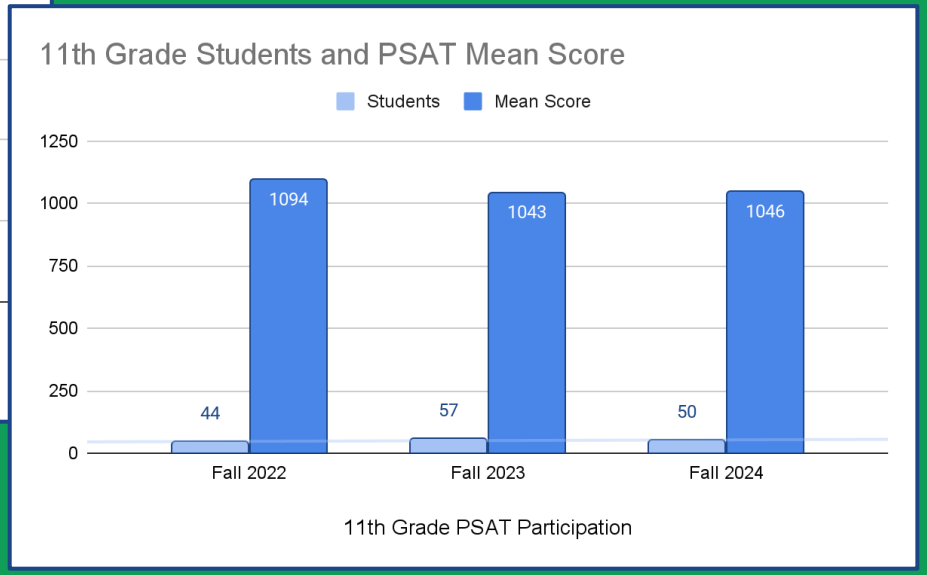
Grade Level	Count of Students
Prek	69
K	42
1	35
2	45
3	55
4	45
5	51
6	63
7	54
8	58
9	67
10	46
11	57
12	52
	739

Category	SSD
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.14%
Asian	1.01%
Black/African American	2.90%
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	0.00%
White	90.43%
Hispanic	3.62%
Two or More Race Cat.	1.88%









SAT Mean Score Summary 2023-2024			
	Reading & Writing	**Math**	**Total**
Stowe - 30 Students	617	583	1200
Vermont	575	537	1113
National	511	496	1007

(state average 1025, national average 997)

College Acceptance

Boston University
American University
Colorado School of Mines
Fordham University
University of Colorado Boulder
Pennsylvania State University
Park Campus
Purdue University

University of Vermont
5 honors college offers

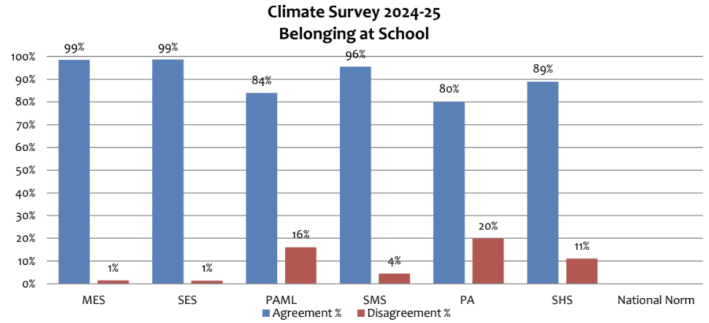
Vermont State University
Endicott College
Colby Sawyer College
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
University of Pittsburgh
Colorado State University
Elon University
University of Denver
St. Lawrence University
Stetson University
Merrimack College
Fairfield University
Quinnipiac University
James Madison University
University of Arizona
Beloit College
Cornell

Gettysburg College
St. Olaf College
University of South Florida
Florida International University
Florida Atlantic University
Indiana University-Bloomington
Michigan State University
Providence College
Colorado College
Chapman University
University of Oregon
Pace University
University of Kansas
Xavier University
Roger Williams University
Norwich University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Northeastern

Clarkson University
University of Alabama
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
University of Delaware
Plymouth State University
Oregon State University
Montana State University
University of Utah
University of New Hampshire
University of New England
University of Massachusetts-Amherst
University of Iowa
SUNY College at Plattsburgh
Amherst
University of Michigan

School Climate

Q1: I belong or I feel like I am a part of my school



National Norm data from Search Institute www.search-institute.org

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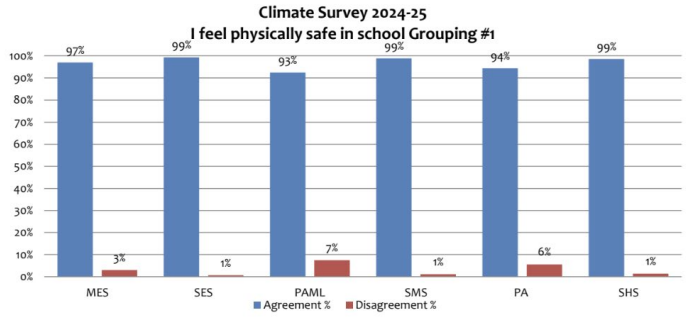
Q5: I feel physically safe in the school, or school is safe from outside threats



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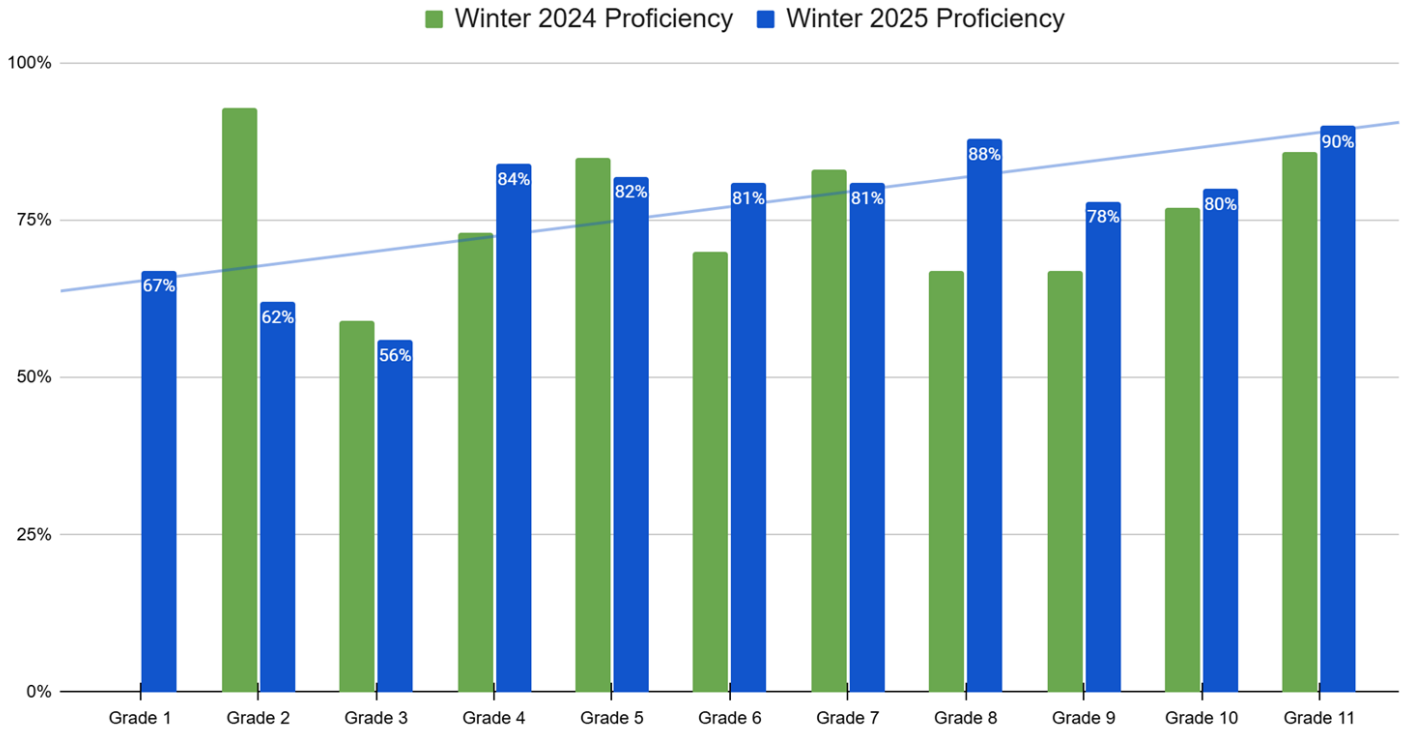
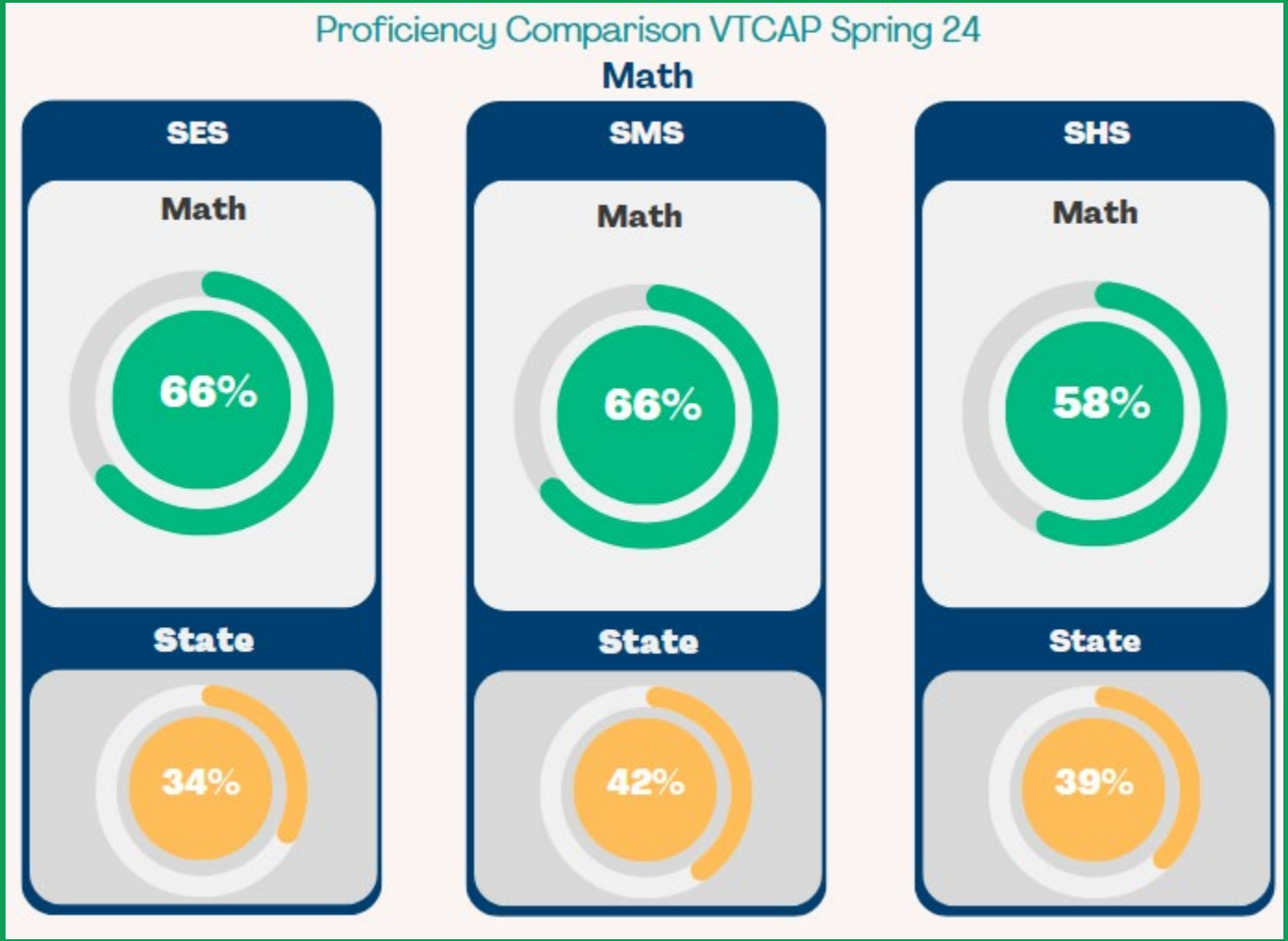
Academic Achievement

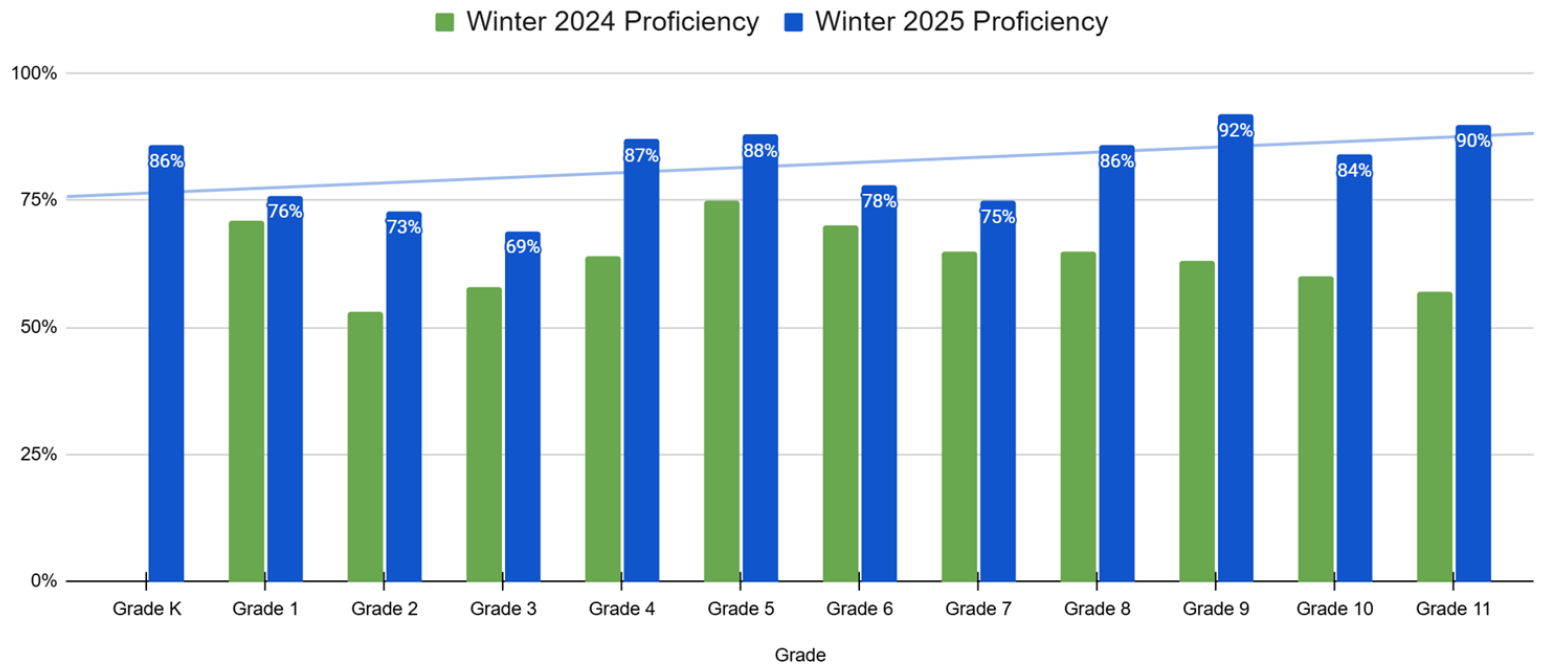
Winter Proficiency Comparison (2024 to 2025): At or Above 50 Percentile Rank in Math



STAR™ Assessments


Proficiency Comparison VTCAP Spring 24
Math
SES
Math
66%
State
34%
SMS
Math
66%
State
42%
SHS
Math
58%
State
39%

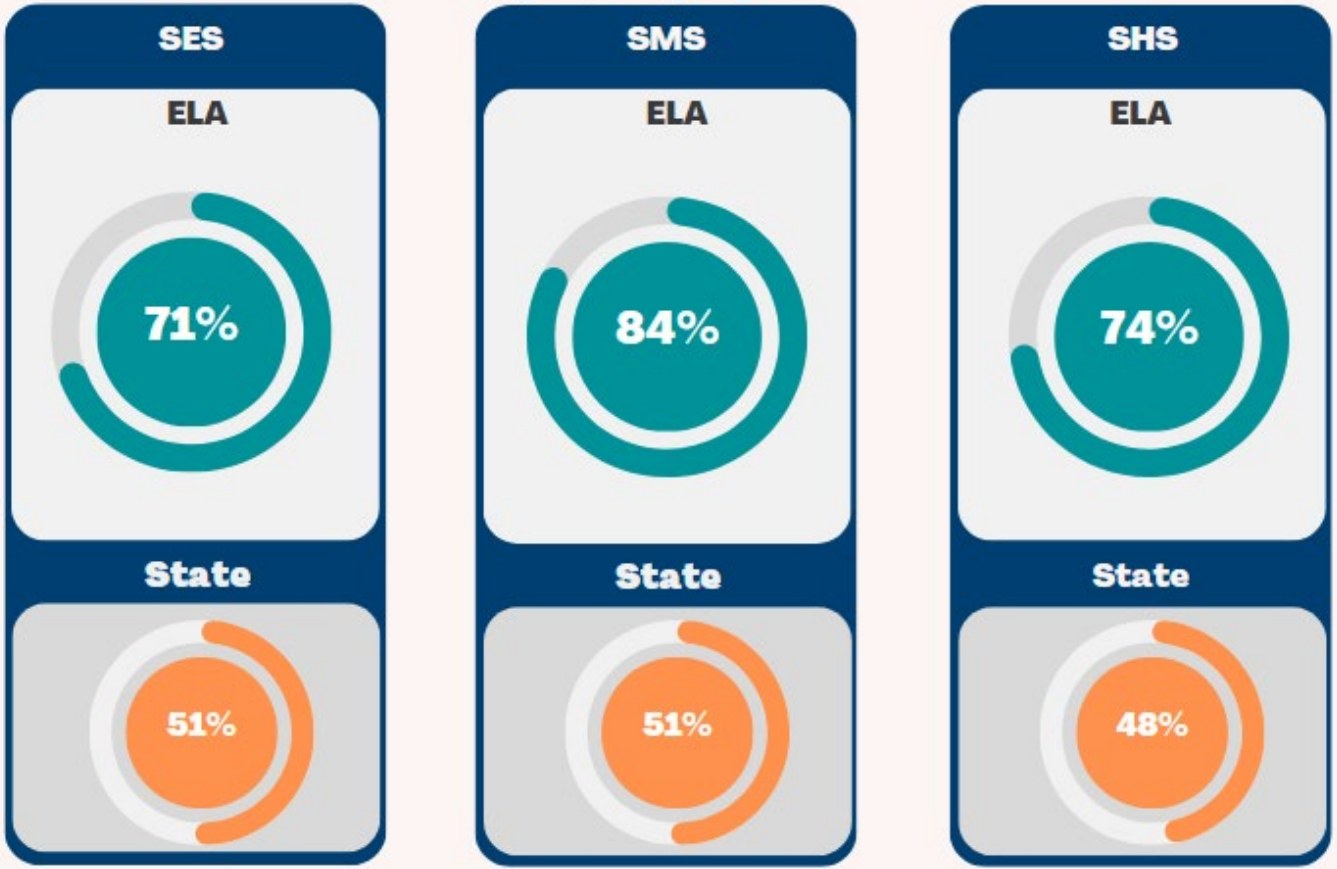
Winter Proficiency Comparison (2024 to 2025): At or Above 50 Percentile Rank in Reading

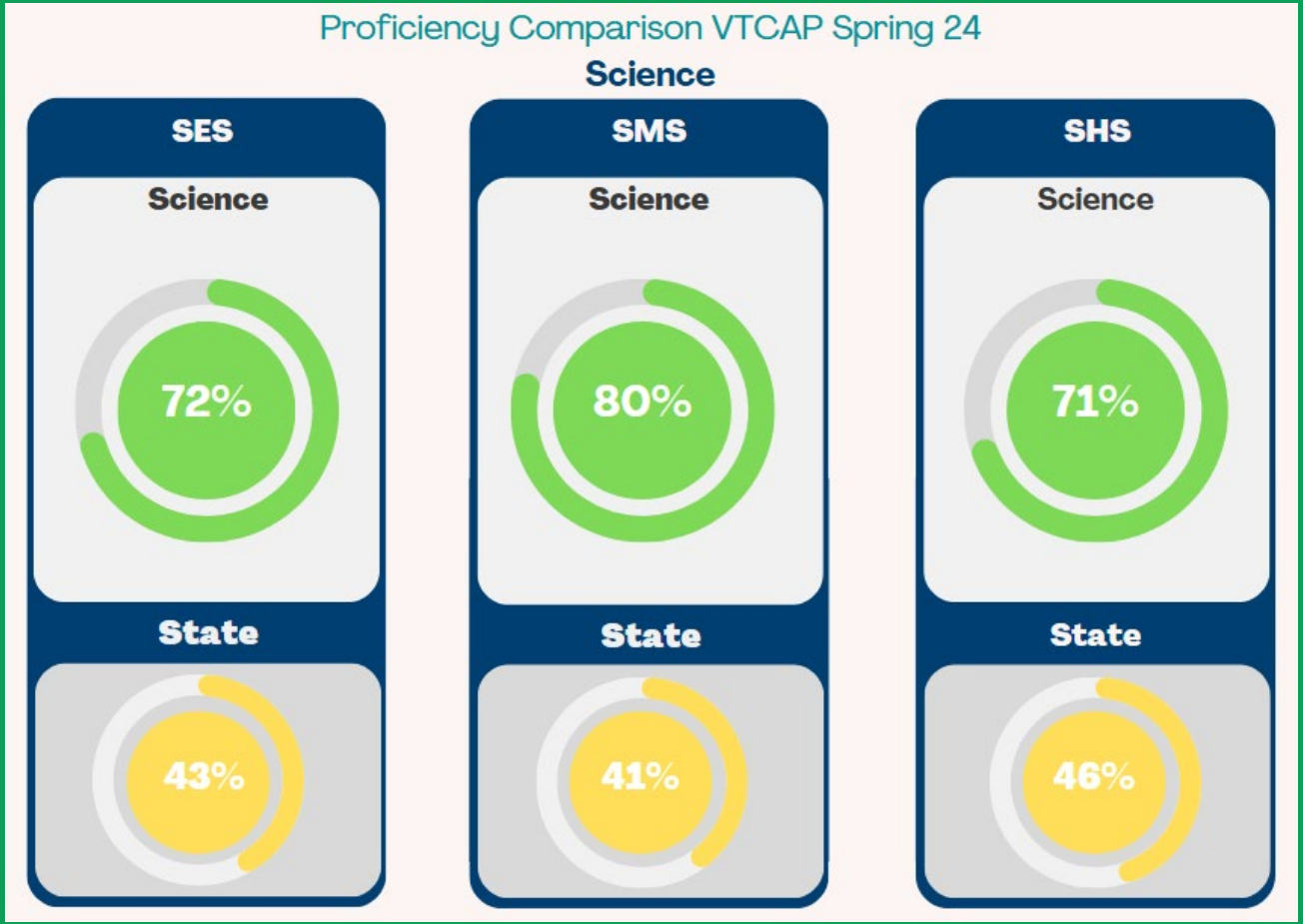


STAR™ Assessments

Proficiency Comparison VTCAP Spring 24

English/Language Arts




Proficiency Comparison VTCAP Spring 24
Science
SES
Science
72%
State
43%
SMS
Science
80%
State
41%
SHS
Science
71%
State
46%

Budget and Spending

Spending Comparison

Category	Stowe	Burlington	State Average
Budgeted Amount Per Student FY25	$23,071	$34,787	No Data Available
Education Spending Per Student FY25	$21,995	$27,465	$22,558
Weighted Spending Per Student FY25 (used for calculating tax rate)	$14,864	$13,890	$13,169
Tax Rate FY 25	$1.39	$1.40	$1.29

FTEs Comparison

Column 1	High School Size	High School Student:Teacher	SU Student to Staff Ratio 2024	# SU LTADM	FY25 Ed Spending	FY25 Actual Ed. Spending Per pupil
Barre	622	11:1	4.2	2,211.69	$40,871,402	$18,479.72
Colchester	716	13:1	4.4	2,321.49	$46,177,952	$19,891.51
South Burlington	817	11:1	4.0	2,575.08	$51,601,834	$20,038.92
EMUU	270	12:1	4.4	772.21	$15,523,902	$20,103.21
Champlain Valley	1291	14:1	4.2	4,125.77	$86,112,815	$20,871.94
Essex	1253	11:1	3.9	3,621.30	$76,570,171	$21,144.39
Stowe	220	11:1	4.4	746.00	$16,428,823	$22,022.55
Harwood	558	9:1	4.1	1,785.42	$40,376,282	$22,614.44
Hartford	505	10:1	3.6	1,308.49	$29,849,518	$22,812.19
Maple Run	892	11:1	3.9	2,398.54	$57,207,352	$23,850.91
Lamoille North	495	10:1	3.1	1,726.61	$41,587,398	$24,086.16
Burlington	991	13:1	3.9	3,437.94	$94,424,438	$27,465.41

Challenges

Current Challenges

- Enrollment Declines in early grades
- Legislative Uncertainty
- Infrastructure needs
- Affordability / Budget Constraints
- Housing
- Student Need

Legislative Support

Items of Concern

- District Consolidation
  - Current H.454 will design districts with a minimum of 4,000
- School Size Minimums
  - Current H.454 requires school size of 450 students
- Class Size Minimums
  - Limit student opportunities
- Evidence-based funding formula
  - Cannot be applied in the current governance structure

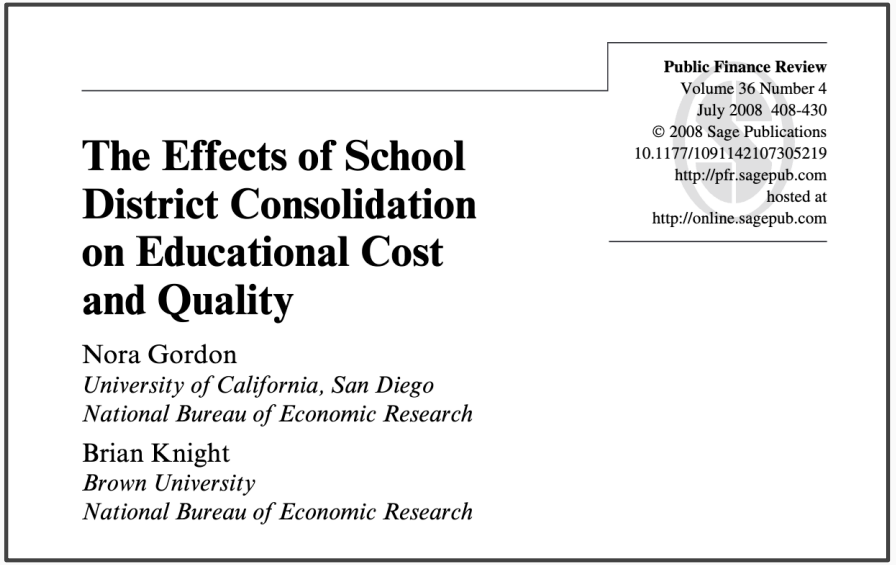
Claims around Consolidation

1. **Lower administrative overhead** at the district level, both by reducing the number of districts with separate central offices and having districts that operate at an efficient scale
2. **Improved staffing efficiencies** by being able to share staff across schools in a district and achieving evidence-based class sizes
3. Potential **reduced costs in purchasing and centralized service contracts** and fees
4. **Increased equity** between districts in terms of student need and community property wealth

Cost of Consolidation - What does the research say? (Gordon & Knight, 2008)

- Consolidation has no effect on pupil-teacher ratio, enrollments, or dropout rates.
- Overall spending increased as a result of consolidation.

"Although we lack detailed quality data on student outcomes, these findings suggest an absence of efficiency gains from either whole-grade sharing or consolidation" (Gordon & Knight, 2008).



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The Effects of School District Consolidation on Educational Cost and Quality

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National Bureau of Economic Research
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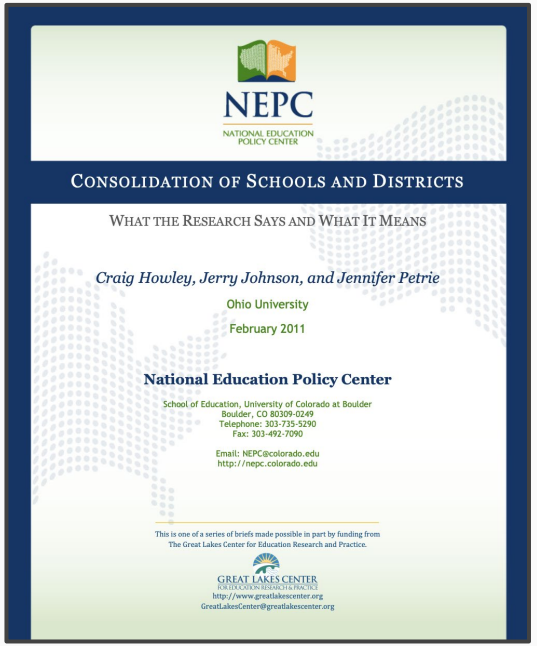
Gordon, N., & Knight, B. (2008). The Effects of School District Consolidation on Educational Cost and Quality. Public Finance Review, 36(4), 408-430. https://doi.org/10.1177/1091142107305219 (Original work published 2008)

Cost of Consolidation (National Education Policy Center, 2011)

“Research on the effects of contemporary consolidation suggests that new consolidation is likely to result in neither greater efficiency nor better instructional outcomes—especially when it results from state policy that implements large-scale **forced** consolidation.”

“Even when consolidation does produce a wider menu of educational experiences for students, evidence suggests that large school and district size **negatively** affects desirable academic outcomes.”

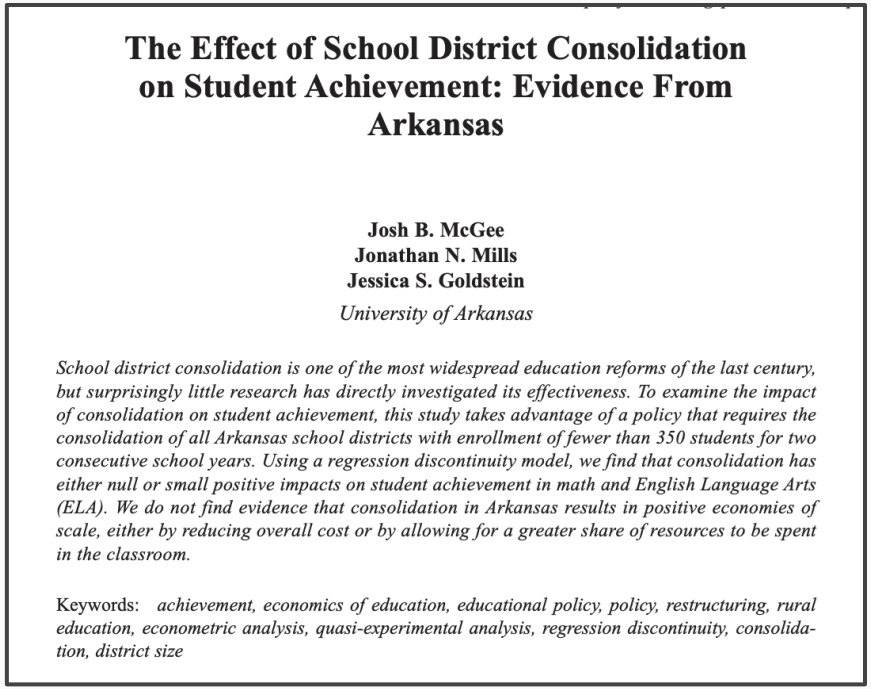
“A sizable body of research investigating school size has consistently found larger size to be associated with reduced rates of student participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities, more dangerous school environments, lower graduation rates, lower achievement levels for impoverished students, and larger achievement gaps related to poverty, race, and gender.”



Howley, C., Johnson, J., & Petrie, J. (2011). Consolidation of Schools and Districts: What the Research Says and What It Means. National education policy center.

Cost of Consolidation (McGee, Mills, & Goldstein, 2022)

School district consolidation does not appear to have had a large measurable impact, either positive or negative, on students' math and ELA performance. (McGee, Mills, & Goldstein, 2022)



The Effect of School District Consolidation on Student Achievement: Evidence From Arkansas

Josh B. McGee
Jonathan N. Mills
Jessica S. Goldstein
University of Arkansas

School district consolidation is one of the most widespread education reforms of the last century, but surprisingly little research has directly investigated its effectiveness. To examine the impact of consolidation on student achievement, this study takes advantage of a policy that requires the consolidation of all Arkansas school districts with enrollment of fewer than 350 students for two consecutive school years. Using a regression discontinuity model, we find that consolidation has either null or small positive impacts on student achievement in math and English Language Arts (ELA). We do not find evidence that consolidation in Arkansas results in positive economies of scale, either by reducing overall cost or by allowing for a greater share of resources to be spent in the classroom.

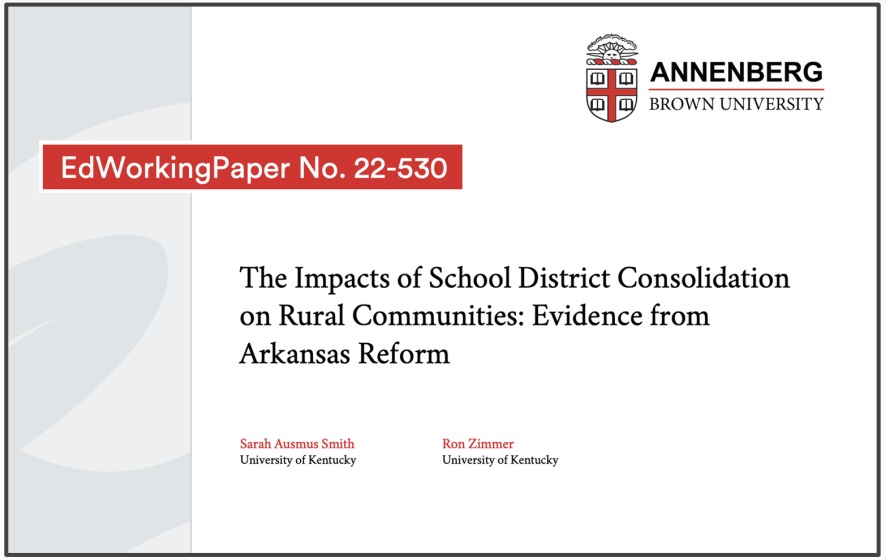
Keywords: *achievement, economics of education, educational policy, policy, restructuring, rural education, econometric analysis, quasi-experimental analysis, regression discontinuity, consolidation, district size*

McGee, J. B., Mills, J. N., & Goldstein, J. S. (2022). The Effect of School District Consolidation on Student Achievement: Evidence From Arkansas. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *45*(3), 482-495. https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737221133394 (Original work published 2023)

How Consolidation Impacts Communities (McGee, Mills, & Goldstein, 2022)

- This recent study explores how consolidation impacts rural communities.
  - 13-15% reduction in population
  - Decreased property values
  - Historically marginalized populations were disproportionately impacted.

When districts are forced to consolidate, it signals the removal of residential amenities leading to loss of population and housing values.

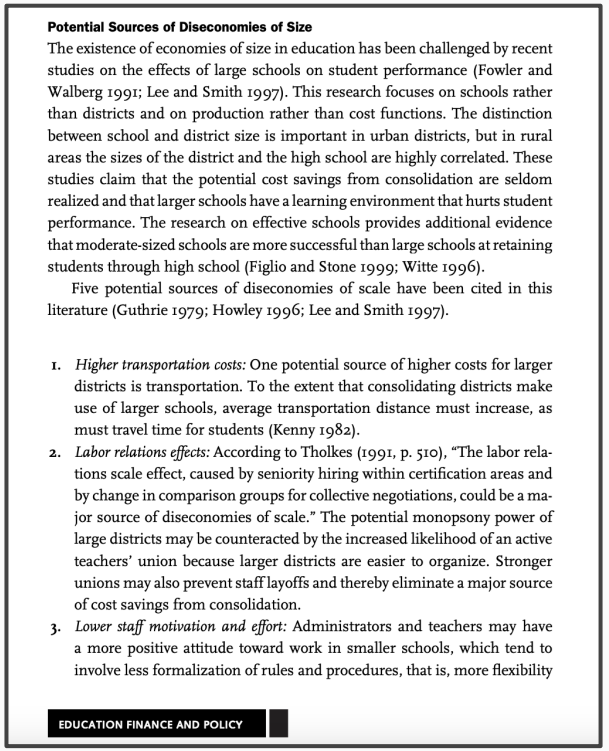


Smith, S. A., & Zimmer, R. (2022). The impacts of school district consolidation on rural communities: Evidence from Arkansas reform. Annenberg Brown University EdWorking Paper.

Cost of Consolidation (Duncombe and Yinger, 2007)

- This study is referenced often and reviews New York rural district consolidation
- State incentives were used to promote voluntary consolidation
- Transportation, labor relations, and capital improvement were noted as items that offset savings

We do not find economies of size in capital spending. Moreover, we find that consolidation results in large adjustment costs in capital spending, costs that grow throughout our sample period.



Potential Sources of Diseconomies of Size

The existence of economies of size in education has been challenged by recent studies on the effects of large schools on student performance (Fowler and Walberg 1991; Lee and Smith 1997). This research focuses on schools rather than districts and on production rather than cost functions. The distinction between school and district size is important in urban districts, but in rural areas the sizes of the district and the high school are highly correlated. These studies claim that the potential cost savings from consolidation are seldom realized and that larger schools have a learning environment that hurts student performance. The research on effective schools provides additional evidence that moderate-sized schools are more successful than large schools at retaining students through high school (Figlio and Stone 1999; Witte 1996).

Five potential sources of diseconomies of scale have been cited in this literature (Guthrie 1979; Howley 1996; Lee and Smith 1997).

1. *Higher transportation costs:* One potential source of higher costs for larger districts is transportation. To the extent that consolidating districts make use of larger schools, average transportation distance must increase, as must travel time for students (Kenny 1982).
2. *Labor relations effects:* According to Tholkes (1991, p. 510), "The labor relations scale effect, caused by seniority hiring within certification areas and by change in comparison groups for collective negotiations, could be a major source of diseconomies of scale." The potential monopsony power of large districts may be counteracted by the increased likelihood of an active teachers' union because larger districts are easier to organize. Stronger unions may also prevent staff layoffs and thereby eliminate a major source of cost savings from consolidation.
3. *Lower staff motivation and effort:* Administrators and teachers may have a more positive attitude toward work in smaller schools, which tend to involve less formalization of rules and procedures, that is, more flexibility

EDUCATION FINANCE AND POLICY

Duncombe, W., & Yinger, J. (2007). Does school district consolidation cut costs?. Education Finance and Policy, 2(4), 341-375.

Lamoille County: A Case Study

Cost of Leveling Up Contracts

Example: If a new district was created around the Green Mountain Tech Center, it would be composed of Lamoille North, Lamoille South, and Orleans South. Most likely, this would result in the leveling up of contracts to be equal to the highest paying salary schedule. Below is what that would look like in additional costs for **teachers only**:

Supervisory Union	Salary (Master's, Step 10)	Difference	# of Teachers	# of Students	FY25 Pupil Spending LTWADM	FY25 Pupil Spending LTADM	Cost to Level Up (teachers only - excludes other staff)
Lamoille South	$73,681		130	1,519	$14,395	$21,033	-
Lamoille North	$64,205	$9,476	204	1,727	$14,589	$24,086	$1,933,104
Orleans South	$65,376	$8,305	93	1,031	$14,092	$24,917	$772,365
Total							**$2,705,469**

Key Takeaway: Consolidation will improve teacher pay equity but **increase** taxes.

School Size Minimums?

Requests for Legislators

- Thoughtful and research-based approach
- Detailed modeling
- Community Engagement
- An approach built for Vermont