



Presentation to Vermont Association of School Business Officials

State of Vermont

Agency of Education

District Finance System Specification Project

Friday, March 11, 2016

12:30pm – 2:30pm



Agenda

1. Project “Kick-off”
2. Web Survey Findings
3. Phases and Activities
4. Questions and Discussion

Project Kick-off

- Request for Proposal
 - ✓ Released March 30, 2015
 - ✓ Project started mid-December 2015
- From the RFP
 - ✓ The Agency of Education is implementing a common chart of accounts for school district accounting and fiscal reporting. This is the first step in meeting a statutory requirement to create a common financial management system to enable districts, supervisory unions, local, and state officials to share fiscal data with each other, with the public, and with state officials to help ensure that uniform and high quality fiscal practices and accountability methods are in place.
 - ✓ This project will provide supervisory unions and districts with specifications required of school financial management and Enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems they purchase so that they can comply with state financial vertical data reporting requirements.

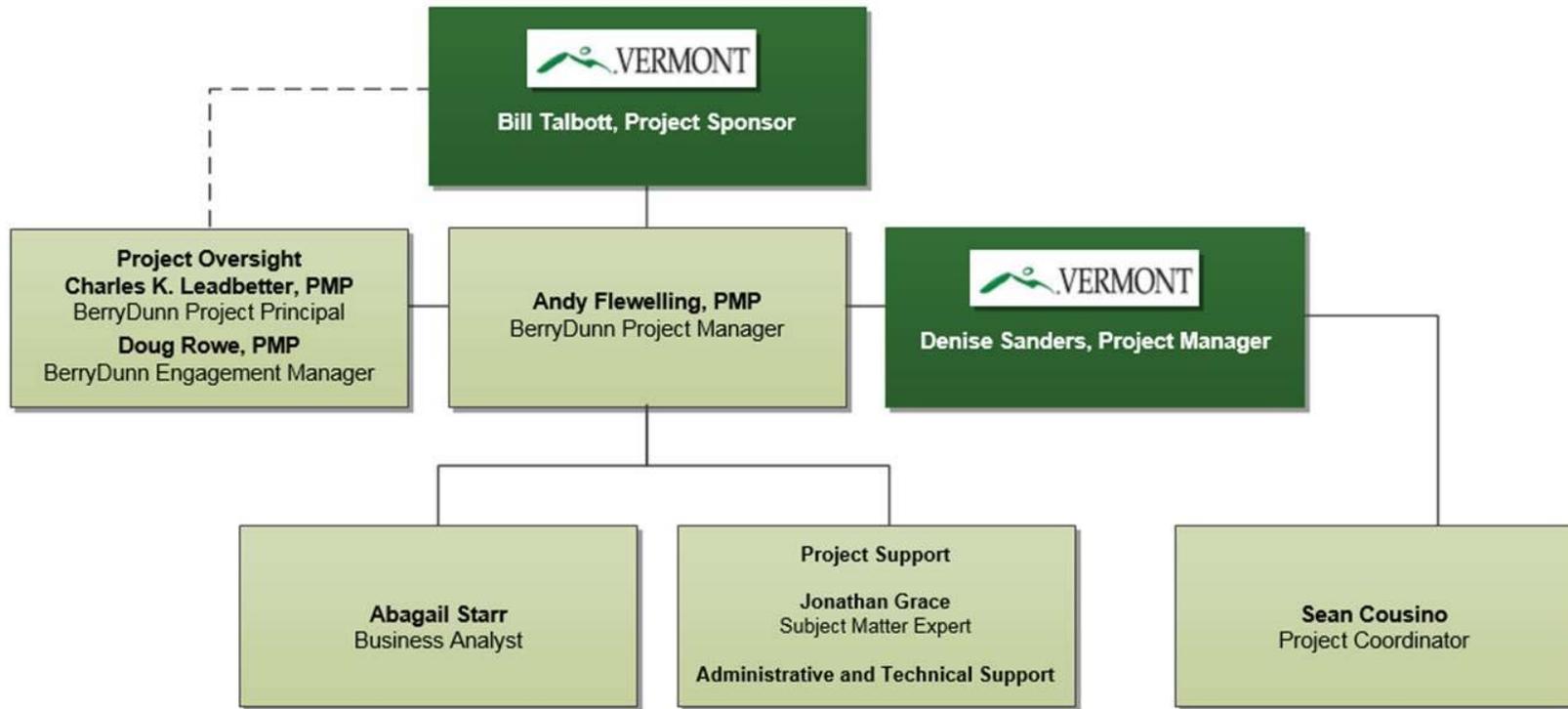
Introductions and Roles

- Vermont Agency of Education (VT AOE)
 - ✓ Bill Talbott , Project Sponsor
 - ✓ Denise Sanders, IT Project Manager
 - ✓ Sean Cousino, Subject Matter Expert and Project Coordinator
- Key Stakeholders
 - ✓ State of Vermont – Legislature
 - ✓ Vermont Agency of Education
 - ✓ Residents of Vermont
 - ✓ Supervisory Unions and District Personnel

Introductions and Roles (cont.)

- BerryDunn Project Team
 - ✓ Charlie Leadbetter, Project Principal
 - ✓ Doug Rowe, Engagement Manager
 - ✓ Andrew Flewelling, Project Manager
 - ✓ Abigail Starr, Business Analyst

Project Team Structure



In addition to the proposed core team members, we will draw upon the expertise of analysts and administrative resources from our consulting group to meet project needs.

Project Objective and Scope

- Project Objective
 - ✓ The District Finance System Specifications project shall provide supervisory unions and districts with specifications required of school financial management and ERP systems they purchase so that they may comply with state financial vertical data reporting requirements, specifically relative to:
 - Preliminary Budget
 - June Budget
 - Announced Tuition
 - Teacher/Staff Survey
 - Annual Statistical Report (Statbook)

Project Objective and Scope (cont.)

- Scope

- ✓ The scope of activities conducted to achieve the objective include the following:

- Surveying supervisory unions and supervisory districts to determine what is required to make district financial management systems currently in place compliant with State reporting requirements
- Creating specifications that district financial software available for purchase by Vermont's supervisory unions and districts must meet to be compliant with state vertical reporting requirements
- Working with the agency to compile and document business rules for implanting the newly completed uniform chart of accounts
- Preparing a cost analysis to determine the least cost option of achieving compliance

Project Objective and Scope (cont.)

- Scope
 - ✓ Additional activities...
 - Fact-finding to determine the current environment of existing financial management systems
 - Comparing the current environment with State reporting requirements
 - Developing business rules, determined in conjunction with VT AOE, for a new uniform chart of accounts
 - Developing a cost analysis to identify a best value option to achieve compliance
 - Defining district financial software specifications compliant with State vertical reporting requirements
 - Providing compliance with Vermont and industry standards

Project Deliverables

- Phase 1: Fact-Finding
 - ✓ Deliverable 1: Project Management Plan and Schedule
 - ✓ Deliverable 2: Status Reports and Updated Issues and Risk Logs
 - ✓ Deliverable 4: Web Survey Findings
- Phase 2: Specifications
 - ✓ Deliverable 2: Status Reports and Updated Issues and Risk Logs
 - ✓ Deliverable 5: Preliminary List of Specifications
 - ✓ Deliverable 6: Final List of Specifications

Project Deliverables (cont.)

- Phase 3: Business Rules
 - ✓ Deliverable 2: Status Reports and Updated Issues and Risk Logs
 - ✓ Deliverable 7: Business Rules for Implanting the Chart of Accounts
- Phase 4: Cost Analysis
 - ✓ Deliverable 2: Status Reports and Updated Issues and Risk Logs
 - ✓ Deliverable 8: Cost Analysis Report (possible cost options)
 - ✓ Deliverable 9: Executive Presentation
 - ✓ Deliverable 10: Change Management Plan
 - ✓ Deliverable 3: Project Closeout Report

Project Accomplishments

- What has been completed so far?
 - ✓ Contract Written/Approved
 - ✓ Developed work plan and project schedule
 - ✓ Designed and Distributed Web Survey
 - ✓ Completed Web Survey Findings Report
 - ✓ VT AOE Provided BerryDunn with Documentation
 - ✓ BerryDunn Reviewing Provided Documentation

Stakeholder Participation

- ✓ Complete Web Survey
- Participate in fact-finding sessions
- Participate in Joint Requirements Planning (JRP) sessions
- Inform business rules for implanting the uniform Chart of Accounts

Web Survey Findings

- Web survey was developed in conjunction with VT AOE to...
“...gather preliminary information from you, a stakeholder in this effort, to guide fact-finding sessions to be held in the near future. Your feedback, and your participation in those fact-finding sessions, directly influences the nature of the solution developed.”
- Fifty-seven (57) respondents completed a 58-question web survey which focused
“...on tools that you use to complete reports you submit to VT AOE, the time required to do so, issues you may encounter when doing so, workarounds you may have developed, and other factors.”
- The survey targeted the:
 - ✓ Stat Book
 - ✓ Budget
 - ✓ Teacher/Staff
 - ✓ Announced Tuition

Web Survey Findings (cont.)

- Key Findings:
 - ✓ Stat Book collection requires the most effort (as measured in hours) and resources (as measured in staff) of the four targeted collections.
 - ✓ Products from two software vendors were used by nearly 90% of respondents with the remainder spread across a small number of other vendors.
 - ✓ Microsoft Excel was routinely used for data extraction and manipulation to complete all four collections.
 - ✓ Reliance on external sources (e.g. accounting firms) was minimal.

Web Survey Findings (cont.)

- Stat Book Findings
 - ✓ What does it take to complete the process?
 - 65% reported requiring 40 or more hours to gather the data required
 - 89% reported the process requiring fewer than 5 people
 - 51% reported the process requiring more than two weeks of effort
 - Approximately 90% of respondents used an FMS solution from one of two vendors as a data source for the report
 - 93% use Microsoft Excel to gather, manipulate and report data
 - ✓ What works well?
 - Microsoft Excel proved to be an invaluable tool for the reporting process, for its ability to import, export, sort and manipulate data prior to submission
 - Approximately 10% of the responses noted helpful guidance from VT AOE
 - ✓ What could be improved?
 - Have the required data go directly from the FMS to VT AOE system
 - Provide a uniform chart of accounts
 - Eliminate redundancy in data selection and categorization
 - Improve the edit-check process and other aspects of Microsoft Access as a reporting platform
 - Eliminate the need to manually manipulate the data

Web Survey Findings (cont.)

- Budget Findings
 - ✓ What does it take to complete the process?
 - 56% reported requiring fewer than 10 hours to gather the data required
 - 98% reported the process requiring fewer than 5 people to complete this collection
 - 92% reported the process requiring less than two weeks to gather data and submit the report
 - Approximately 53% indicated they use their FMS solution as a data source for the report
 - In excess of 70% use Microsoft Excel or another tool to manipulate and report the data
 - ✓ What works well?
 - Approximately 42% of survey participants responded to how the Budget Collection process could be improved.
 - Of the responses, 24% suggested no improvements were necessary
 - ✓ What could be improved?
 - Provide upload directly from existing FMS
 - Eliminate data entry and utilize export to predetermined file formats
 - Provide (better) Apple/Mac compatibility
 - Indicate if changes have occurred since the Preliminary Budget Collection
 - Provide additional training

Web Survey Findings (cont.)

- Teacher/Staff Findings
 - ✓ What does it take to complete the process?
 - 94% reported the process requiring fewer than 5 people to complete this collection
 - 75% reported needing less than two weeks to gather data and submit the report
 - Approximately 74% of respondents used an FMS solution from one of two vendors as a data source for the report
 - 72% use Microsoft Excel to gather, manipulate and report the data
 - ✓ What works well?
 - Process is “Relatively simple.”
 - Excel was customize to what’s needed with the report.
 - ✓ What could be improved?
 - Reduce the amount of manual data entry
 - Provide more specificity on the positions being reported
 - Consolidate various state agencies’ data collections and databases
 - Provide the ability to do direct exports
 - Provide more user-friendly submission process

Web Survey Findings (cont.)

- Announced Tuition Findings
 - ✓ What does it take to complete the process?
 - 87% reported the process requiring fewer than 10 hours to gather the data
 - 98% reported the process requiring fewer than 5 people to complete
 - 96% reported requiring less than two weeks submit the report
 - Approximately 61% of respondents used an FMS solution from one of two vendors as a data source for the report
 - 78% use Microsoft Excel to gather, manipulate and report the data
 - ✓ What works well?
 - Many respondents suggested in, one manner or another, that the current process worked “fine”
 - ✓ What could be improved?
 - Better timing for the collection deadline
 - Better collection instructions
 - Revision to statutory provisions
 - Move to cloud-based collection
 - Ability to submit without signatures
 - Ability to confirm date submitted and accepted

Phases and Activities

- Timeline

ID	W	Task Name	Start	Finish	Half 1, 2016						Half 2, 2016							
					D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N		
1	1	Project Start	Mon 12/14/15	Mon 12/14/15	■	■												
3	2	Phase 0: Start-up	Tue 12/15/15	Fri 9/30/16	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
40	3	Phase 1: Fact-Finding	Mon 1/4/16	Thu 3/17/16		■	■	■	■									
51	4	Phase 2: Specifications	Fri 3/18/16	Fri 5/6/16				■	■	■								
59	5	Phase 3: Business Rules	Mon 2/1/16	Mon 6/27/16		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
69	6	Phase 4: Cost Analysis	Mon 5/9/16	Fri 9/16/16					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Phases and Activities (cont.)

- Phase 1: Fact-Finding

- ✓ Activities (remaining):

- Present web survey results
 - Identify fact-finding session participants
 - Conduct fact-finding interviews

- ✓ Deliverables:

- Deliverable 1: Project Management Plan and Schedule
 - Deliverable 2: Status Reports and Updated Issues and Risk Logs
 - Deliverable 4: Web Survey Findings

Phases and Activities (cont.)

- Phase 2: Specifications

- ✓ Activities:

- Develop preliminary list of specifications
- Conduct Joint Requirements Planning (JRP) sessions
- Develop and distribute refined specifications to JRP participants for validation

- ✓ Deliverables:

- Deliverable 2: Status Reports and Updated Issues and Risk Logs
- Deliverable 5: Preliminary List of Specifications
- Deliverable 6: Final List of Specifications

Phases and Activities (cont.)

- Phase 3: Business Rules
 - ✓ Activities:
 - Develop business rules for the common chart of accounts
 - Update Final List of Specifications as necessary
 - ✓ Deliverables:
 - Deliverable 2: Status Reports and Updated Issues and Risk Logs
 - Deliverable 7: Business Rules for Implanting the Chart of Accounts

Phases and Activities (cont.)

- Phase 4: Cost Analysis

- ✓ Activities:

- Determine possible options
 - Update existing installation with new chart of accounts and rules
 - Create purchasing vehicle for new SU system
 - Select and use a centrally operated system
- Interview vendors and other states to identify best practices
- Develop cost analysis report
- Review cost analysis report with VT AOE
- Present cost analysis findings and recommendations
- Facilitate work sessions and develop change management plan
- Review with VT AOE and revise as necessary

Phases and Activities (cont.)

- Phase 4: Cost Analysis

- ✓ Deliverables:

- Deliverable 2: Status Reports and Updated Issues and Risk Logs
- Deliverable 8: Cost Analysis Report
- Deliverable 9: Executive Presentation
- Deliverable 10: Change Management Plan
- Deliverable 3: Project Closeout Report

Questions and Discussion

