

School ECS Compliance Status Report

January 24, 2022

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Background: In the spring of 2016, the Enhanced 911 Board resumed its work of assessing the capabilities of telecommunications systems in Vermont's schools. The assessment focused on whether existing multi-line telephone systems (MLTS), now referred to as Enterprise Communications Systems (ECS), could send accurate and specific location information to Vermont 911.

The phrase “accurate and specific location information” means that when a 911 call is placed from the school’s phone system, the 911 call-taker can see not only the physical address of the school building, but also the unique phone number in use and the specific location (room number, floor number, etc.) of the caller within the school. This information is also referred to as the “dispatchable location”. The ability of a 911 call-taker to see the dispatchable location information, and pass it on to emergency responders, is critical in events where a caller is unable to speak or does not know their specific location or phone number.

In the fall of 2016, only 60 of Vermont’s 304 public schools (less than 20%) had demonstrated the ability to send all required location information to 911. By July 1, 2019, the number of schools capable of sending this information had increased to 178, or approximately 58% of public schools. The increase was due in large part to heightened awareness of the requirements and the availability of funds through the 911 Compliance Grant Program (see page 3) to support technology upgrades in the schools.

July 2019: New Rule Governing 911 Requirements for Enterprise Communications Systems: In July 2019, the Enhanced 911 Board adopted a new [rule](#) to codify the 911 location requirements for ECS systems. In addition, a new requirement was incorporated to ensure that all users of an ECS system have the ability to directly initiate a call to 911 without having to dial any additional digit, code, prefix or post-fix. This requirement is commonly referred to as “[Kari’s Law](#)”.

Current Status: (See Figure 1 on p. 2) As of 1/24/2022:

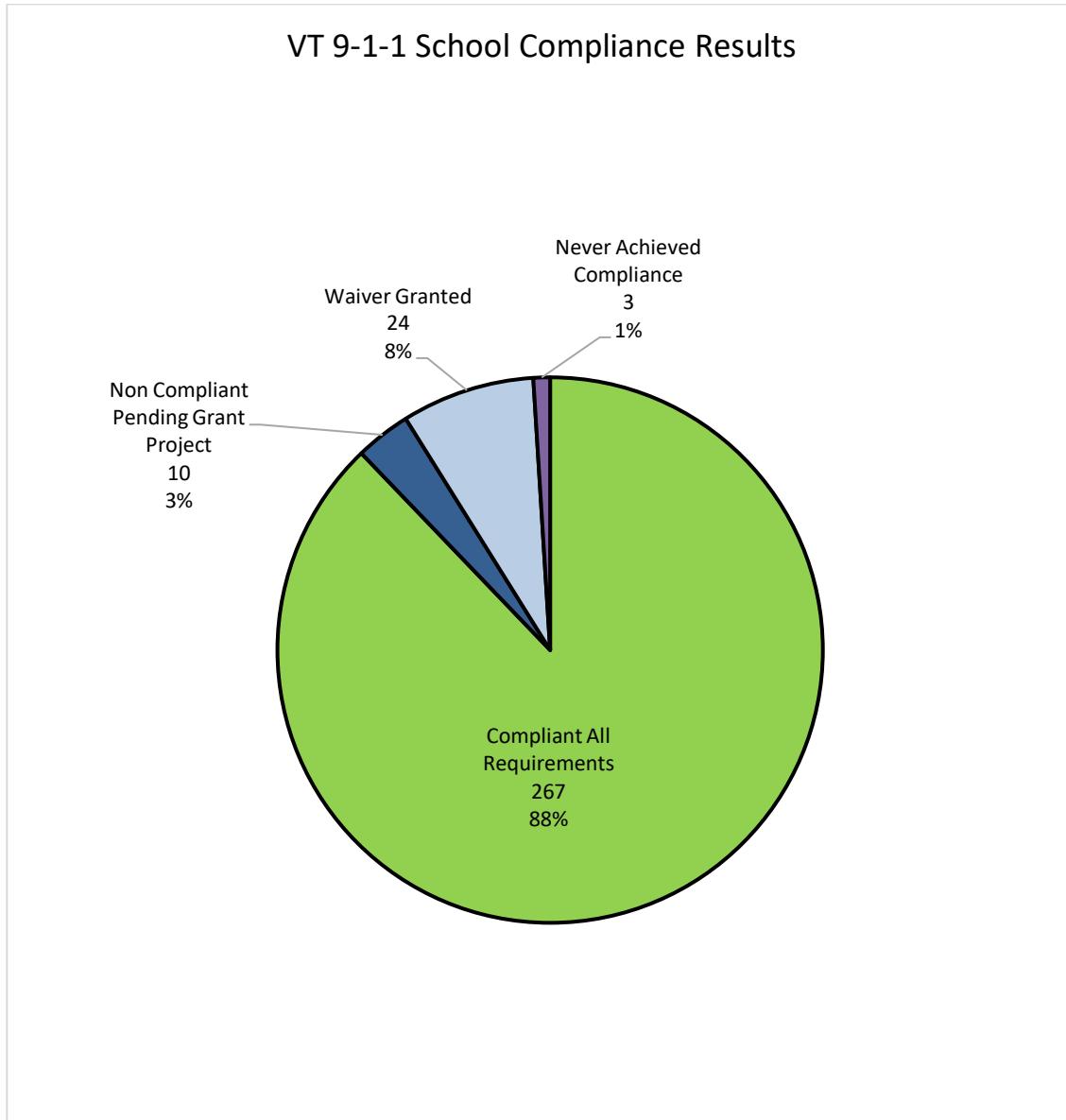
- 267 of Vermont’s 304 public schools (87.8%) are compliant with all requirements of the rule - including dispatchable location and direct dial capability.
- 37 of Vermont’s 304 public schools (12.2%) have not yet demonstrated compliance with the dispatchable location and/or direct dial requirements. Of these:
 - 10 schools have been awarded compliance grant funds and have work in progress to upgrade their ECS to meet the requirements.
 - 24 schools have an approved plan and waiver on file with the 911 Board, including appropriate interim steps to ensure end user awareness.
 - 3 schools have been asked to provide a written plan to achieve compliance along with a formal waiver request. The deadline for providing the written plan has been extended multiple times as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Note: All Vermont public schools have demonstrated the ability to provide 911 with the correct street address and town name for their facilities.

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Figure 1: Current Status of School ECS Compliance



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Progress Over Time: Figure 2 shows the change in schools demonstrating compliance since the Fall of 2016:

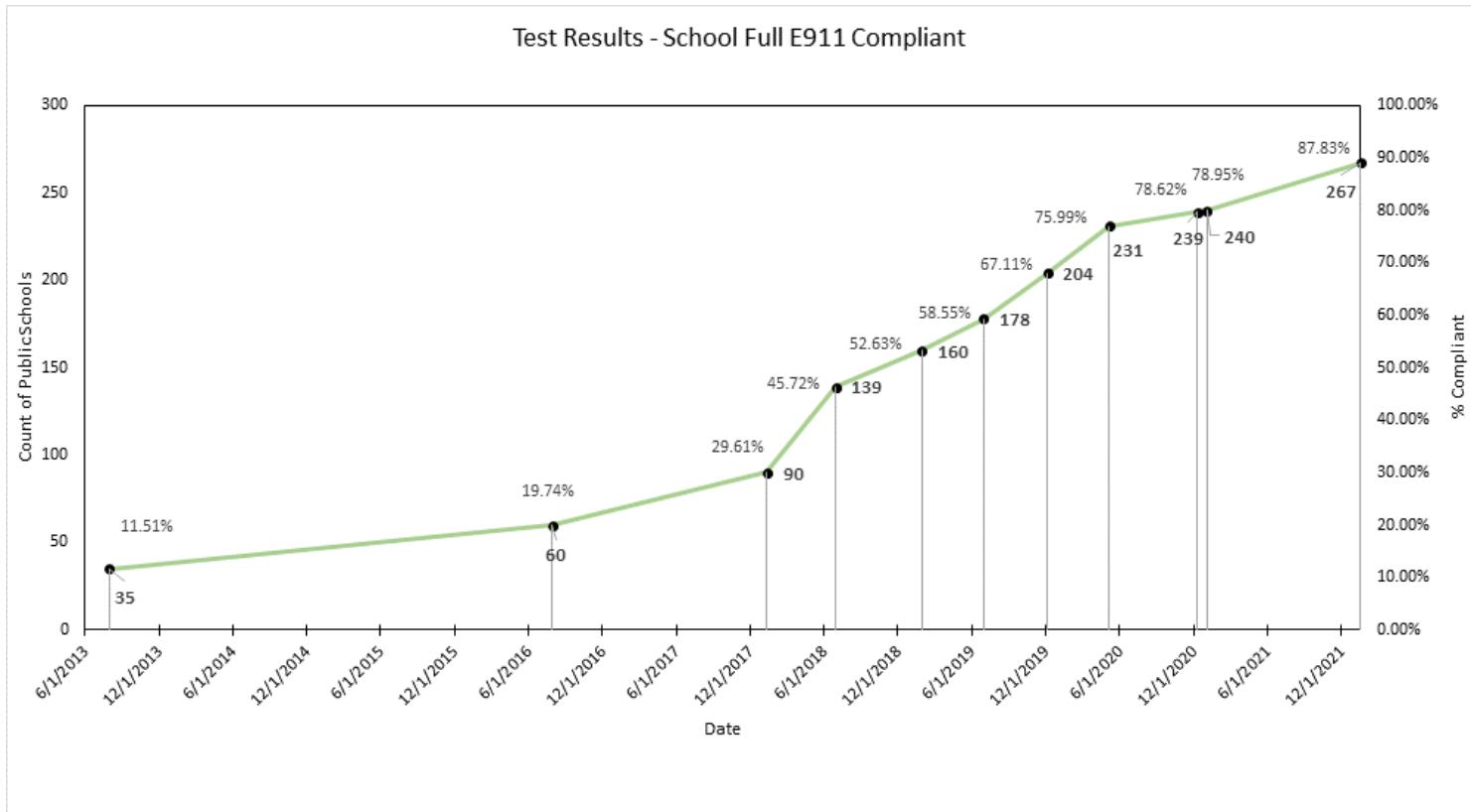


Figure 2: Progress Over Time

Moving Forward: Based on known “projects in progress” as a result of 911 Compliance Grant awards, the Enhanced 911 Board anticipates at least ten additional schools will become compliant with both the dispatchable location and direct dial requirements by the end of 2022. When this work is completed, 91% of Vermont publicschools will be compliant with the 911 requirements.

911 Compliance Grant Program: The 911 Compliance Grant Program has awarded over one million dollars in grant funds since its inception in 2016. Funding for the program ended on June 30, 2021.

END OF REPORT