North Carolina

Indicator 17:

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

Phase Three, Year Three

April 1, 2019

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction | EC Division

Table of Contents

Commonly Used Acronyms

CGR	Cohort Graduation Rate
CoT	Continuum of Transitions
DAC	Director's Advisory Council
ECD	Exceptional Children Division
ECATS	Every Child Accountability Tracking System
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
FAM-S	Facilitated Assessment of MTSS – School Level
IHE	Institutes of Higher Education
LEA	Local Education Agency (this term is inclusive of charter schools)
LEASA	Local Education Agency Self-Assessment
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Support
NCDPI	North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
NC SIP	North Carolina State Improvement Project
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
PDSA	Plan, Do, Study, Act
SCI	Standards, Curriculum, and Instruction
SDI	Specially Designed Instruction
SEA	State Education Agency
SEFEL	Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
SET	School-Wide Evaluation Tool
SIMR	State Identified Measurable Result
SIT	State Implementation Team
SPDG	State Personnel Development Grant
SSIP	State Systemic Improvement Plan
SWD	Students with Disabilities
TPOT	Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool

Summary of Phase Three, Year Three

Progress toward State Identified Measurable Result

The North Carolina State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) is the five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities. The baseline percentage was determined by using the ratio of youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) graduating with a regular high school diploma in 2013-14, or earlier, to all youths with IEPs entering ninth grade in 2009-10 for the first time. The cohort is "adjusted" by adding any students who transferred into the cohort and by subtracting any students who transferred out, emigrated to another county, or died during the years covered by the rate.

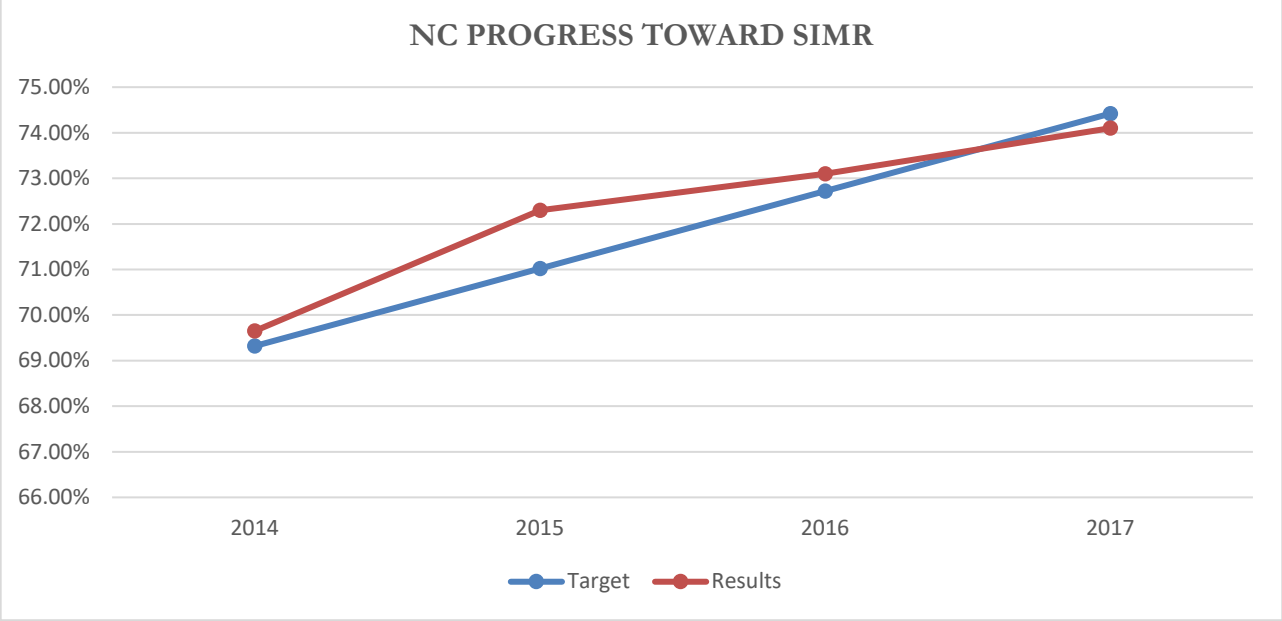
Table 1. *Progress toward SIMR Targets*

FFY	**2013**
Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate for Students with Disabilities	67.82%

Table 2. *FFY 2013 – FFY 2018 Targets and Results*

FFY	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Target	69.32%	71.02%	72.72%	74.42%	76.12%
Results	69.65%	72.3%	73.10%	74.10%	

Figure 1. *FFY 2013 – FFY 2018 Targets and Results*



Students with Disabilities and Non-Disabled Students

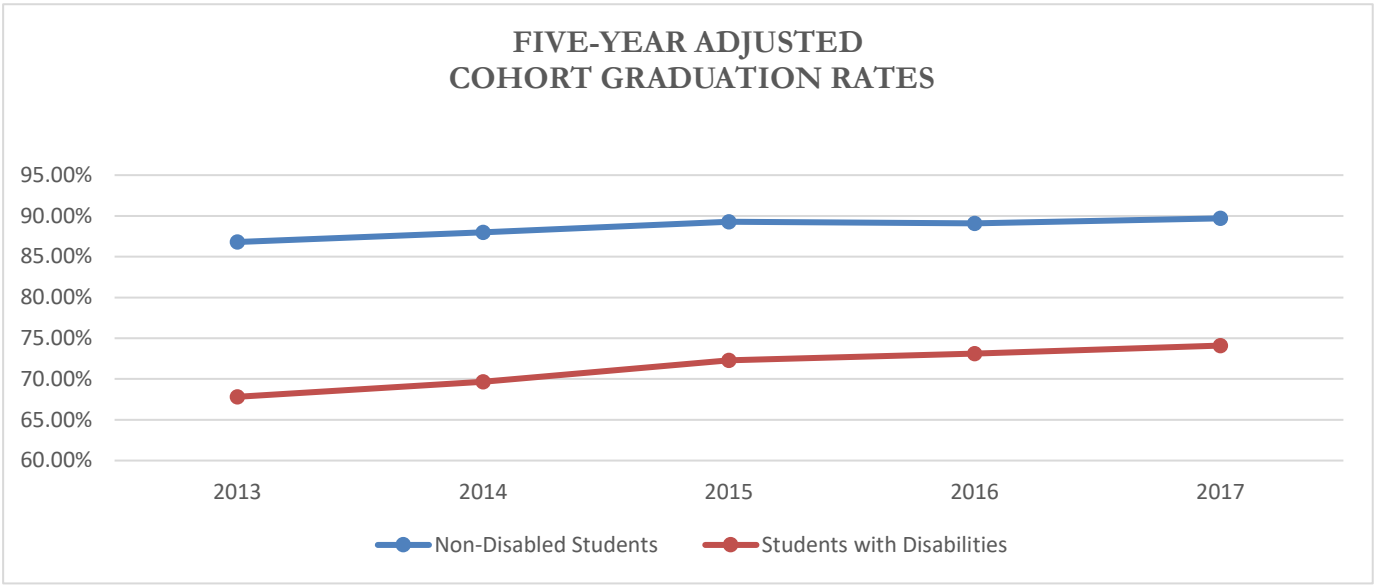
In Phase One, SIMR targets were determined from longitudinal trends and forecasting of graduation rates

for students with disabilities and all students. At the time, the SIMR targets were predicted to close graduation gaps between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. To assess progress related to the closing of this gap, Table 3 and Figure 2 display the five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates for students with disabilities and non-disabled students from FFY 2013 to FFY 2017.

Table 3. *Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates for Students with Disabilities and Non-Disabled Students*

FFY	**2013 (Baseline)**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Non-Disabled Students	86.80%	88.00%	89.30%	89.10%	89.7%
Students with Disabilities	67.82%	69.65%	72.30%	73.10%	74.1%
Difference	**18.98**	**18.35**	**17.00**	**16.00**	**15.6**

Figure 2. *Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates for Students with Disabilities and Non-Disabled Students*



From the baseline year of 2013 to the present, there has been modest narrowing of the five-year adjusted cohort graduation between students with disabilities and non-disabled students. From FFY 2013 through FFY 2015, students with disabilities and non-disabled students both showed annual increases, however, increases for students with disabilities were slightly larger. From FFY 2016 to FFY 2017, non-disabled students experienced a slight increase in five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates; students with disabilities experienced a larger increase, thereby continuing to close the gap. From the baseline year of FFY 2013 to FFY 2017, the gap between five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates for students with disabilities and non-disabled students has decreased by 3.38 percentage points or by 17.8%. More detail concerning the meaning and relative size of these changes is described in the "Progress toward Achieving Intended

Outcomes" section of this report.

Theory of Action and Logic Model – Year Three Notes

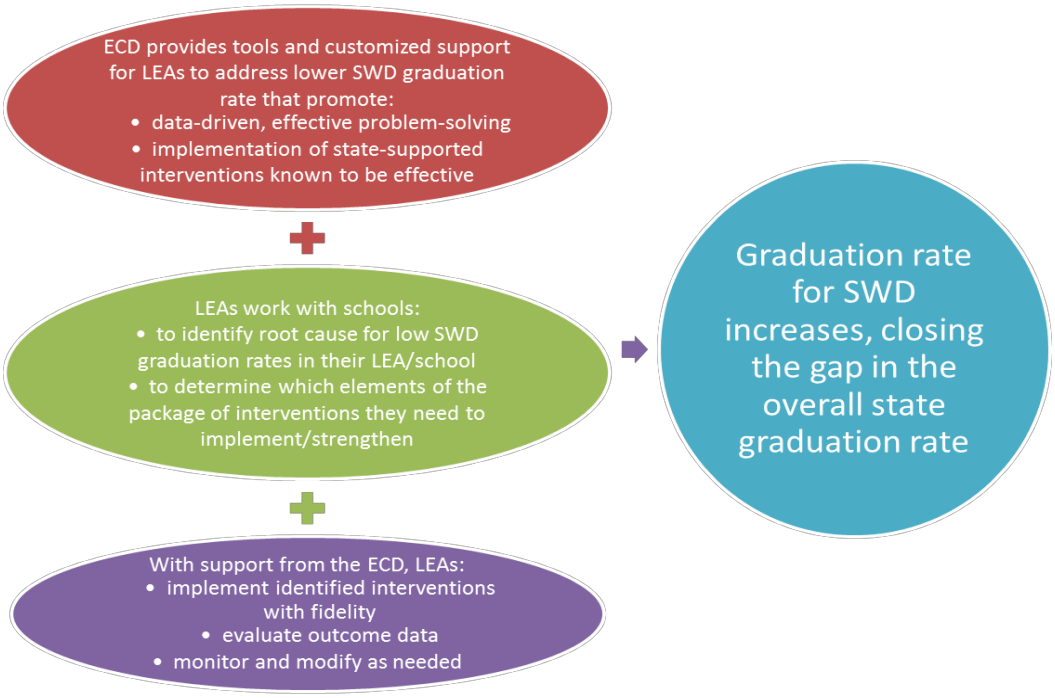
Conceptually, the theory of action has remained consistent and guides implementation, including communication and evaluation, of SSIP activities. The theory of action is based on conclusions from Phase One indicating that root cause analysis for an outcome as complex as graduation must occur at the local level (for an in-depth narrative explanation of the theory of action, please see the Phase Three, Year One report). To briefly summarize, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must be equipped with skills, tools, and resources to identify local root cause(s) associated with lower graduation rates for students with disabilities. Next, LEAs systematically select and communicate these interventions to the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), which must align infrastructure and provision of comprehensive professional development and technical assistance to support implementation in local contexts.

The primary process and tool driving the theory of action is the LEA Self-Assessment (LEASA) and Improvement Planning Process. During the current year, North Carolina has continued to integrate the LEASA and Improvement Planning Process into common practitioner and organizational practices and policies, at the Local Education Agency (LEA) and State Education Agency (SEA) levels. For example, submission of the LEASA has transitioned to an online platform based on feedback from local directors of Exceptional Children programs that the previous Excel format was not user-friendly. The SEA Exceptional Children (EC) Division's LEASA review process continues to be streamlined through the regional support team structure to ensure efficient use of EC Division staff time and expertise. Alignment of professional learning to LEASA data continues via systematic linking of LEA need to the NCDPI catalog of resources, gap analysis to inform creation of new professional learning, and development and implementation of a Professional Learning calendar.

Three years of data now exist from LEASA submissions, which provide evidence for how LEAs are identifying and communicating SWD graduation rate gap root cause, their general capacity for implementation, and how SSIP interventions are resulting in changes at the systems (that support educators), practices (that support students), and outcomes levels. These data serve as important indicators of the first two ovals (red and green) represented in the graphical depiction of the theory of action below (see Figure 3). The third oval (purple) is predominantly measured through data sources that are aligned to implementation of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), Social Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (SEFEL), and Continuum of Transition (CoT) activities. These represent predominant state supported evidence-based practices that LEAs select

and implement based on the LEASA and Improvement Planning process. These state-supported interventions are aligned to local root causes associated with academics, behavior, and transition, respectively.

Figure 3. *Graphical Depiction of the NC SSIP Theory of Action*



While the theory of action provides a series of broad "if-then" statements that lead to the SIMR, the NC SSIP Logic Model (Figure 4) provides more refined detail on how the NCDPI is implementing the SSIP and how those activities are linked to increased graduation rates for students with disabilities through a series of inputs, strategies, outputs, and outcomes. The NC SSIP Logic Model was adjusted in Year Three to reflect an evolving understanding and implementation of what was previously "Behavior Support." Due to our ongoing and expanding work on core instructional, curricular, and environmental social-emotional-behavioral supports for all students, including new initiatives and measurement tools, this band in the logic model was renamed "Social-Emotional-Behavioral Supports." In addition, new strategies, outputs, and outcomes were added to reflect NC's growth in this critical component of our SSIP. A fuller description of the added strategies and outputs is provided in the *Description of the State's SSIP implementation progress* section below.

Figure 4. *NC SSIP Logic Model*

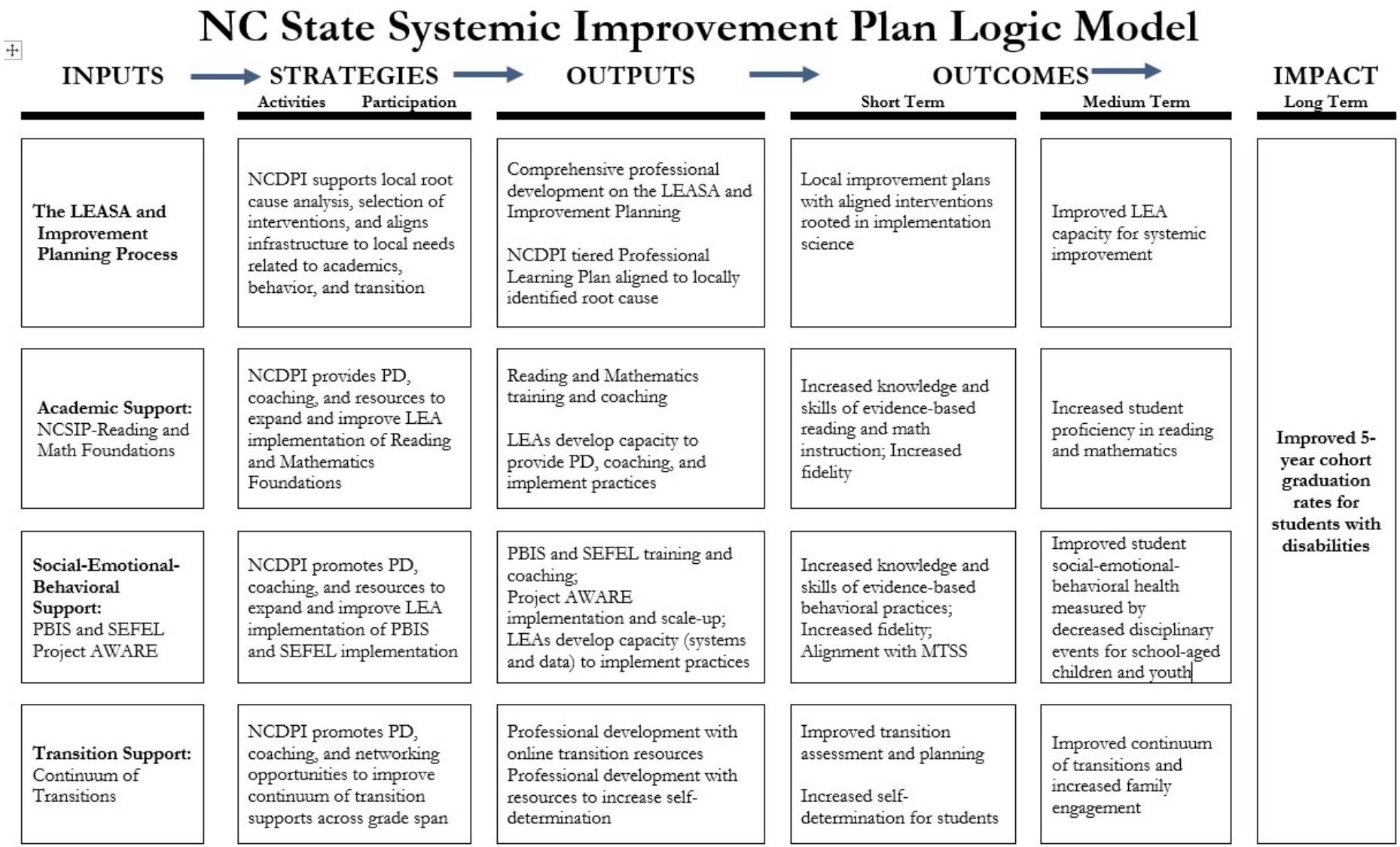


Table 4. *Goals, Evaluation Questions, and Evaluation Strategies*

Goals	Strategies / Activities	Outputs	Summative Evaluation Strategies	Summative Evaluation Questions
1. Increase capacity for problem solving and effective implementation	• LEA Self-Assessment and Improvement Planning • NCDPI Professional Learning Catalog	• Comprehensive professional development on the LEASA and Improvement Planning • NCDPI tiered Professional Learning Plan aligned to LEA root cause and implementation plans	• Policy changes to support LEASA and Improvement Planning • Increased LEASA ratings • Increased ratings on NCDPI reviews of submitted LEASAs	• To what extent are LEAs better able to engage in systematic problem identification and implementation using local data?

2. Increase student performance in reading and math	• Professional Development
	  ○ Math/Reading Foundations
	  ○ Coaching Practices
	  ○ Effective Leadership
		• Increased Math / Reading Content Knowledge
		• Increased fidelity observation scores in use of research-based instructional practices
			• Increased academic proficiency on End of Grade tests	• To what extent do students exhibit an increase in academic achievement because of shorter-term outcomes being achieved (e.g. better teacher content knowledge, increased fidelity)?

3. Decrease student social-emotional-behavioral issues, including absenteeism and suspensions	• PBIS
	  ○ Increase NC saturation / fidelity
	• SEFEL
	  ○ Increase saturation / fidelity to early childhood communities
	• NC Project AWARE. ACTIVATE
	• SHAPE System
	• Facilitated Assessment of MTSS-School Level (FAM-S)
	• Levels of Collaboration Survey
		• Increase in % of schools meeting PBIS implementation criteria
		• Increase in school-level PBIS fidelity ratings (SET)
		• Increase in % of schools meeting Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT)
		• Increase local capacity to detect/respond to student mental health and substance use needs
		• Implement universal prevention practices
		• Increase number of at-risk students receiving supplemental and intensive supports
		• Improve coordination of MH services with families and community agencies
			• Decreased suspensions
			• Increased attendance
			• Academic performance
			• School climate surveys
			• Drop out rates
			• Screening data
			• Reportable offenses
			• Youth Risk Behavior Survey
				• To what extent has the incidence of student suspensions decreased and attendance increased (across time)?
				• To what extent have adverse mental health episodes, suicide, attempted suicide, and substance use decreased over time (beginning September, 2018)?

Goals	Strategies / Activities	Outputs	Summative Evaluation Strategies	Summative Evaluation Questions
4. Improve continuum of transitions and student self-determination	• Develop Transition Toolkit • Transition network ○ Representatives from across NC	• Informed students/parents about next-level academic expectations • Community of practice sharing transition resources and strategies • Self-Determination Activities	• Increased Indicators 7, 11, 12, 13, 14 • Increase AIR Self-Determination scores • Increase in student / family engagement – Indicator 8	• To what extent have LEA Indicator 7, 11, 12, 13, 14 levels increased? • To what extent have levels of student / parent engagement, measured by Indicator 8, increased (across time)?

Coherent Improvement Strategies

The coherent improvement strategy at the foundation of the NC SSIP remains the LEA Self-Assessment (LEASA) and Improvement Planning process. All LEAs (including charter schools) are required to complete the comprehensive self-assessment annually and update their improvement plan based on a Plan, Do, Study, Act improvement (PDSA) cycle. Broadly, the LEASA and Improvement Planning process serves several key purposes yielding value to both LEAs and the State Education Agency (SEA).

Specific to LEAs, the LEASA and Improvement Planning process enhances an ability to:

- identify root cause(s) associated with the SIMR
- select aligned evidence-based practices that demonstrate a contextual fit
- engage in a deliberate process of active implementation (including PDSA improvement cycles)

At the SEA level, analysis of LEASA data enhances an ability to:

- align SEA infrastructure to local need
- develop and implement an aligned, tiered, regionally supported framework of professional development and technical assistance
- engage in annual gap analysis of professional learning catalog
- engage in systematic improvement cycles (Plan, Do, Study, Act)

Consequently, the intent of this coherent improvement strategy is to maximize the benefit of the implementation of the specific evidence-based practices identified in the logic model inputs, strategies, and outputs columns; these are described in detail in the 2018 Phase Three, Year Two report. Key implementation activities (including outputs) that have occurred since the 2018 report are included in the "*Intended outputs that have been accomplished as a result off the implementation activities*" section of this report.

Brief Overview of Evaluation Activities, Measures, and Outcomes

Year Three of evaluation activities has continued to focus on the review and summary analysis of data aligned with the logic model and summative evaluation questions represented by Figure 4 and Table 4 above. In partnership with the Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation (CEME) at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC), the primary evaluation methodology includes examining and understanding longitudinal trends in data, aligned with the evaluation questions. Examining longitudinal changes associated with SSIP implementation was deemed the strongest evaluation method because statewide implementation of the SSIP precluded the possibility of a comparison group-based design. For

evaluation of the SSIP, the focus has been on monitoring the change (improvement) ofoutputs and outcomes for LEAs across time, particularly focused on trends prior to and following implementation of SSIP activities.

When examining the analysis of longitudinal data, there are several key features to note that serve to elucidate the association between SSIP activities and changes to outputs and outcomes in the logic model:

- **Significance of change from baseline**: indicates whether there was a statistically significant change in scores prior to and after the state-wide implementation of SSIP activities (i.e., changes from 2014-15 to 2015-16, from 2014-15 to 2016-17, from 2016-17 to 2017-18 and from 2014-15 to 2017-18).
- **Significance of Cohort 1 indicator:** The Cohort 1 indicator included data from eight LEAs that began the LEASA and improvement process approximately 12 months prior to the rest of the state. The data were analyzed in a fashion to determine the difference between 2014-15 (end of baseline) and 2017-18 data for Cohort 1 sites and the rest of the state (i.e., to answer the question, "Did Cohort 1 sites experience a different impact from the 2014-15 to 2017-18 school years as associated with longer duration of SSIP implementation?"). Theoretically, changes in outputs and short-term outcomes that were the result of SSIP activities would be seen in Cohort 1 sites prior to non-Cohort 1 sites.
- **Priority Subgroup Analysis:** When possible, additional analyses will be conducted for outputs and outcomes for academics and behavior for only those LEAs who identified that area as a priority on their LEASA (a new component added to the LEASA during FFY 2016). These analyses will help determine whether prioritizing one of these intervention areas had differential impact on implementation of the associated NCDPI supported intervention.

Highlights of changes to implementation and improvement strategies

In addition to planned implementation activities NC experienced several changes during Phase Three, Year Three of the SSIP. Per the "Plans for Next Year" section of the Phase Three, Year Two report, as well as several unanticipated developments, implementation activities and changes were initiated as follows:

- Professional Learning Calendar was updated by each EC Division section
- LEASA submissions were reviewed and summarized to identify state and regional professional learning needs
- Professional Learning Plan was communicated to LEAs in Summer, 2018
- Initiation of transitioning professional learning catalog, registration, sign-in, and course

evaluation to one platform for use by all EC Division staff began Summer, 2018; subsequently, access to the software (Qualtrics) was interrupted, resulting in data loss and lack of confidence/fidelity to protocols by EC Division staff

- The SSIP Coordinator resigned, July, 2018, and the position remains vacant
- SSIP internal team meetings and meetings with stakeholders stopped, July, 2018
- The EC Division Director retired, September, 2018; the position was not filled until January, 2019
- First cohort of LEAs began the two-year SDI within an MTSS professional learning series in October, 2018
- Understanding of the *Behavior Supports* row in the Logic Model evolved and expanded to include evidence-based practices in school mental health and K-12 social-emotional learning
- Full transition to ECATS was delayed until Summer, 2019, due to complications with data migration
- Effort to develop a single, agency-wide tool for district improvement planning was re-configured to provide a resource for district leadership on the unique features/value added by major assessment tools
- The Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation (CEME) at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC) had an unexpected departure of staff assigned to the NC SSIP evaluation; a new faculty assignment for this evaluation was not made until late February, 2019

Details concerning each of these highlighted areas are included in the "*Intended outputs that have been accomplished as a result of the implementation activities*" section of this report.

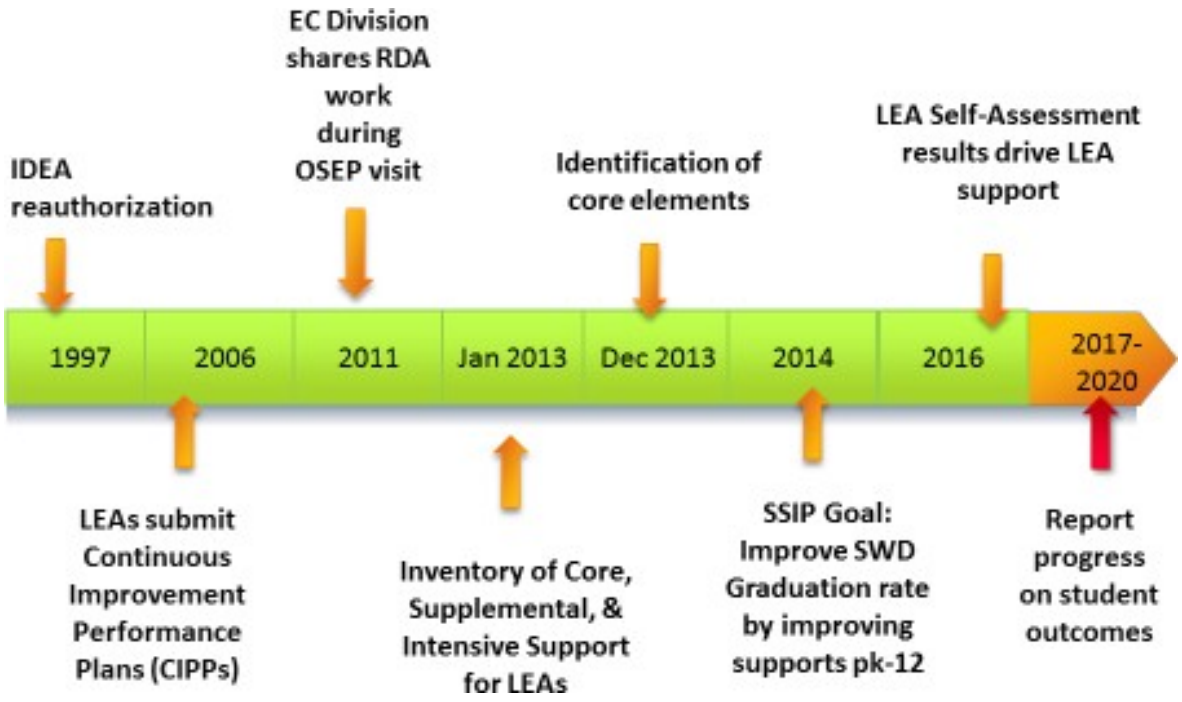
Progress in Implementing the SSIP

Description of the State's SSIP implementation progress

Description of the extent to which the State has carried out its planned activities with fidelity

The broad timeline for the SSIP implementation developed during Phase Two, which has been followed, is included in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5. *Evolution of NCDPI Results Driven Accountability and the NC SSIP*



Implementation activities since the last report have included:

- an online, more user-friendly submission of the LEA Self- Assessment (LEASA) update replacing the former Excel version
- continued support for districts in their completion of the LEASA and Improvement Planning process through:
  - training during quarterly regional meetings
  - a 2019 March Institute training and "drop in" coaching session
  - ongoing technical assistance
- adjusted LEASA submission and review dates:
  - In 2017-18, the LEASA updates were due on April 30, 2018 and 433 reviews were conducted by the May 21, 2018 review period deadline. 99.3% of submissions from LEAs (traditional and charter schools) were received (286 out of 288). Each submitted LEASA was reviewed by two NCDPI staff. The ECD's response to the LEASA analysis, including processes and tools for infrastructure alignment and development of a tiered system of professional learning and technical assistance, is described below. The April 30 due date was chosen to allow for timely development of the tiered NCDPI Professional Learning Plan. In turn, LEAs were able to schedule NCDPI-supported professional development for the 2018-19 school year. While this facilitated future planning, local Exceptional Children (EC) program leaders gave feedback that

the April 30 deadline was difficult to meet given end-of-year assessments and other reporting requirements and requested the date be moved to after the end of the school year.

- For the 2018-19, LEAs received the link for online submission of the LEASA update on February 28, 2019. In response to EC Directors' 2018 feedback, LEAs will have until June 28, 2019, to complete the submission. See Figure 6 below.
- an unsuccessful attempt to use a uniform platform for professional learning registration, sign-in, course evaluation, and completion certificate distribution
- launch of the Specially Designed Instruction within a Multi-tiered System of Supports (SDI within MTTS) professional learning series; eight Cohort A LEAs started the 2-year implementation on October 25, 2018
- provision of professional learning and technical assistance to LEAs according to the professional learning calendar and requests submitted through the online Professional Learning Request portal on the EC Division website.
- provision of SSIP aligned professional learning at NCDPI-sponsored conferences and institutes:
- 2018 Summer Institutes
- 2018 Conference on Exceptional Children
- 2019 March Administrators Institute
- drafting of a systems-level practice profile for specially designed instruction, in collaboration with the National Center for Systemic Improvement
- ongoing work to align multiple NCDPI district self-assessment tools
- funding and initial implementation of a 5-year school mental health improvement project (NC Project AWARE/ACTIVITE) from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, starting September 30, 2018

Intended outputs that have been accomplished as a result off the implementation activities

The intended outputs that have occurred since the NC SSIP Phase Three, Year Two report are described below. The outputs follow the logic model and are organized in terms of the LEASA and Improvement Planning process, Academics, Social-Emotional-Behavioral, and Transition. Notably, from an evaluation perspective, activities reported on in the Phase Three, Year Two report occurred prior to FFY 2017 outcomes described in this report. The activities described below will have occurred prior to FFY 2018 outcomes that will be described in the 2020 Phase Three, Year Four report.

Outputs related to the LEASA and Improvement Planning Process

Development of a replicable timeline for LEASA submission, review, NCDPI infrastructure alignment, and development of a tiered Professional Learning Plan

During FFY 2017 a systematic process for LEASA update submission, review, NCDPI infrastructure alignment, and development of a tiered Professional Learning Plan included: sending the LEASA to LEAs, delivering professional learning on the LEASA and Improvement Planning process (including frameworks of implementation science), communicating to LEAs within a systematic plan (e.g., key messages, dates, and formats), updating the professional learning catalog, NCDPI staff reviewing LEASA submissions, analyzing and visualizing LEASA data, regional data teams aligning professional learning needs to the Professional Learning Plan, identifying professional learning gaps, finalizing the Professional Learning Plan (e.g., confirming dates and locations of professional development), and communicating the plan in the form of a Professional Learning Calendar and Professional Learning Tool. As mentioned above, this process is being adjusted again for FFY 2018, as shown in the revised Gantt Chart below (Figure 6).

Figure 6. *LEASA Timeline*

MAJOR ACTIVITIES	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Oct	Nov	Dec
Send out link to online LEASA Update submission portal												
Provide ongoing regional technical assistance: data collection, analysis, systematic problem solving with PDSA improvement cycles, aligning priorities to evidence-based practice			March Institute: Presentation for New Directors / Charters and Drop-In Session									
Update professional learning catalog												
LEASAU Review					Share review template and receive feedback during regional data team meetings	Assign Reviewers to LEAs	Review LEASA Updates					
Systematically communicate external timeline for LEASA update review and publication of professional learning calendar					Share at Regional Meetings							
Regional Teams Identify Professional Learning Needs (based on analyzed/ summarized data) and Communicate to Sections								Regional Data Team Meetings				
Sections Schedule 2019-20 Professional Learning								Section Meeting: Determine Potential Sessions, Dates, and Locations	Schedule throughout month and finalize calendar by section meeting			
Professional Learning Calendar / Professional Learning Tool is completed / systematically communicated									Share at September, 2019, Regional Meetings			

Revision of the catalog of all professional learning activities offered by the NCDPI EC Division that is aligned to academics / behavior / transition and each critical component of the LEASA

To facilitate the alignment of the NCDPI Professional Learning Plan to the root causes and improvement strategies identified in the LEASAs, the ECD continues to build a "Professional Learning Catalog" through an ongoing inventory process. Each section of the ECD documents all professional learning that could currently be supported, along with critical features including the format (e.g., face-to-face, virtual, or blended), intended educator and student outcomes, core elements of the LEASA it supports, evaluation methodology, and presence of job-embedded follow up.

The catalog of ECD professional learning allows for:

- internal assessment of redundancy and gaps in professional learning
- internal assessment of evidence-based professional learning practices
- facilitating alignment of LEASA data to professional learning (e.g., allowing LEAs and reviewers an opportunity to make a direct link from root cause to professional learning supported by NCDPI)
- external communication of the ECDs professional learning

Broad analyses of the catalog allowed for a summarization of the ECD's capacity to provide professional learning and use of evidence-based practices related to evaluation, fidelity monitoring, and job-embedded follow-up. ECD definitions concerning professional development, technical assistance, universal support, tailored support, and customized support can be found in the Phase Three, Year One report. Notably, these data address current *capacity* to provide professional learning. A graphic summary of the current catalog and capacity to provide professional learning follows via these categories:

- the type of professional learning (professional development or technical assistance)
- the tier of support (universal, tailored or customized)
- alignment to each Core Element of the LEASA
- presence of pre-post evaluation
- presence of fidelity tools
- presence of job-embedded follow-up

Figure 7

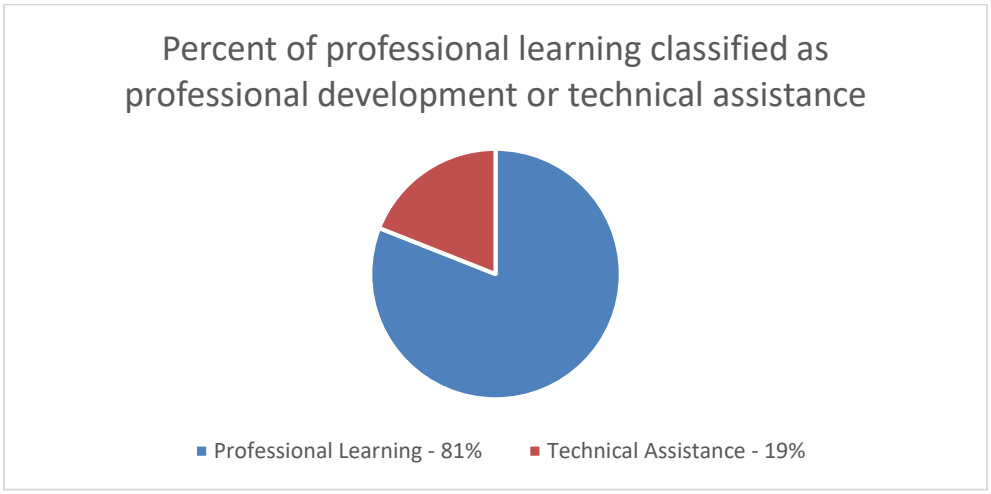


Figure 8

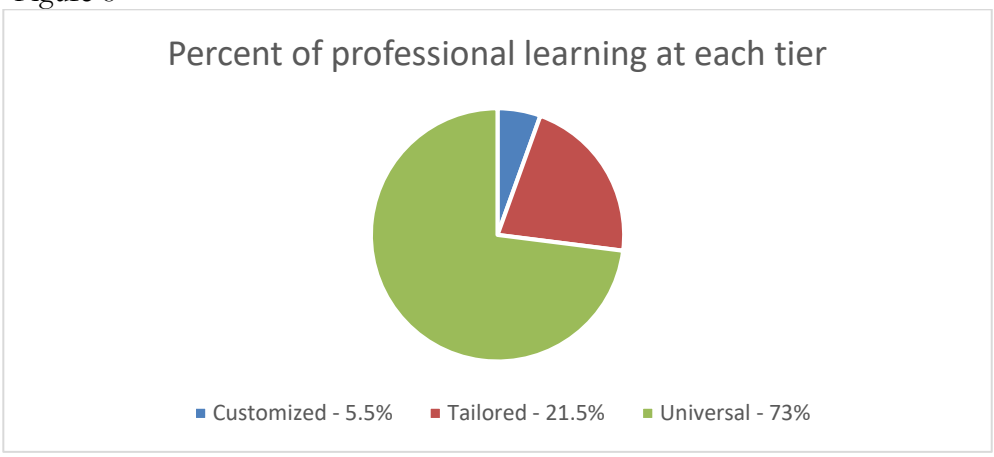


Figure 9

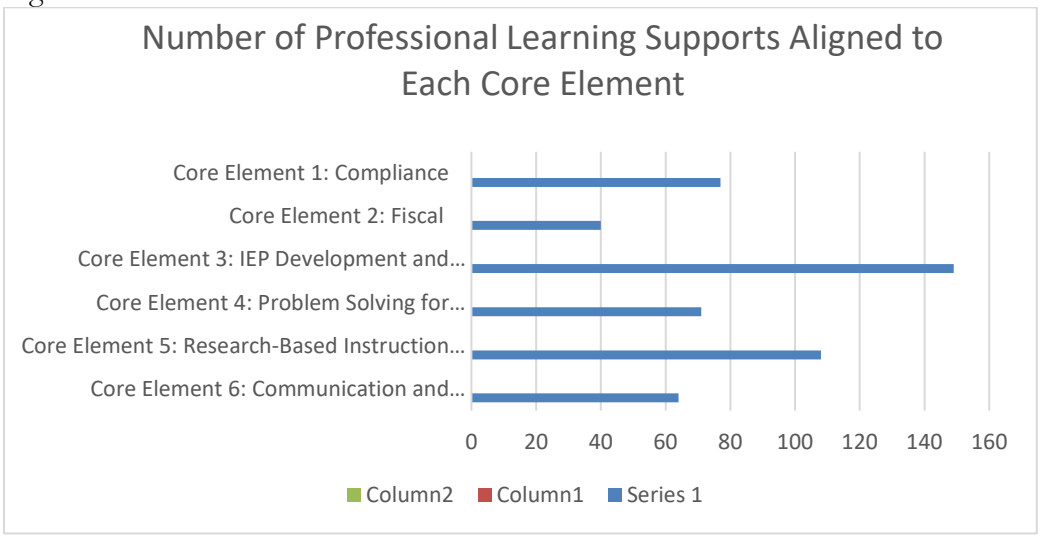


Figure 10

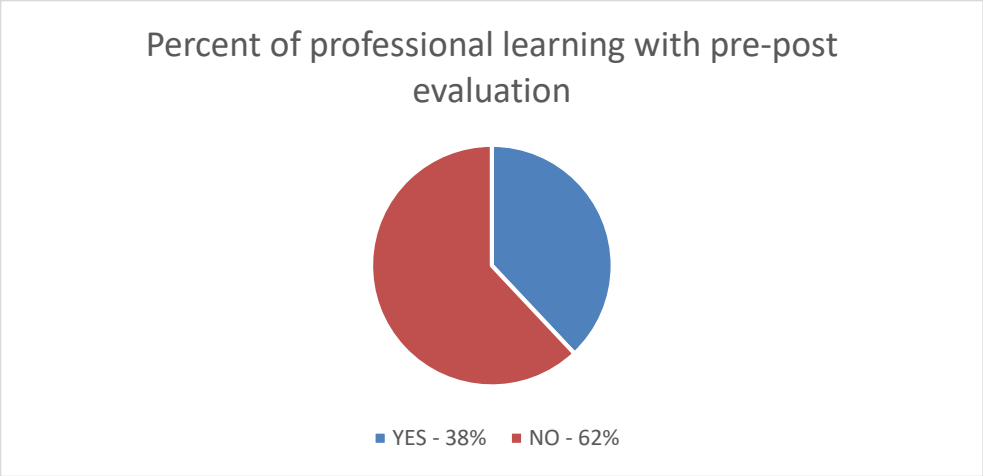


Figure 11

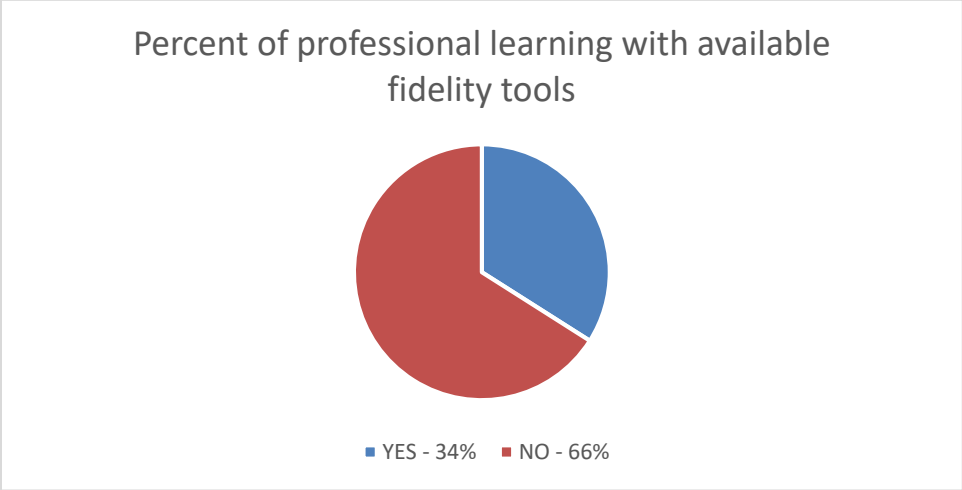
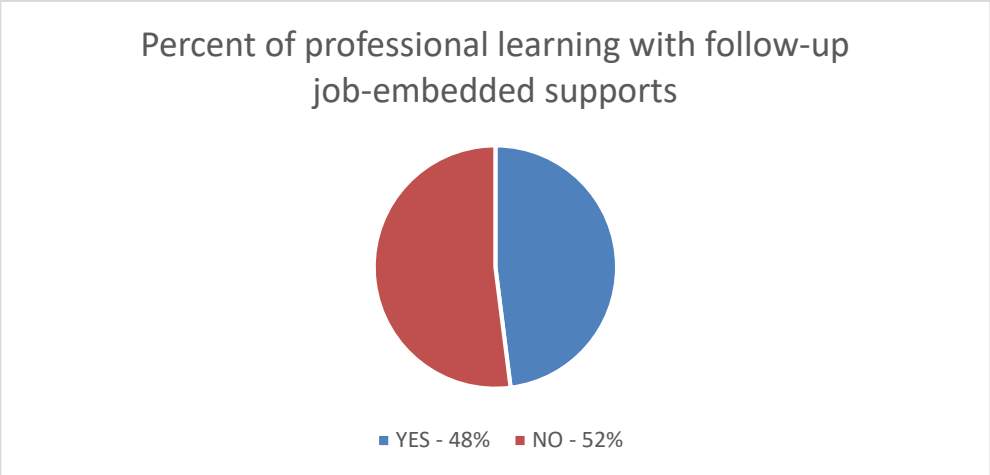


Figure 12



Notable differences between these analyses and the Phase Three, Year Two report include:

- A nine percent increase in the proportion of professional development
- A decrease in tailored professional learning and an increase in universal professional learning
- A much greater saturation of Core Element 3: IEP Development and Implementation across offered professional learning
- A shift in measuring impact of professional learning away from pre-/post-test evaluation and toward fidelity and follow-up job-embedded supports

Development and dissemination of a EC Division-sponsored Professional Learning

The ECD made initial revisions to the searchable professional learning calendar located on the ECD website in June, 2018, based on needs identified in the May, 2018, LEASA update reviews. After the resignation of the SSIP Coordinator in July, 2018, maintenance of the calendar declined and is not currently uniformly used by all ECD sections for communication of scheduled professional learning. Professional learning that has been schedule and/or requested since May, 2018, through the EC Division Professional Development Request Form is communicated to LEAs through regional EC Director monthly updates and topical listservs.

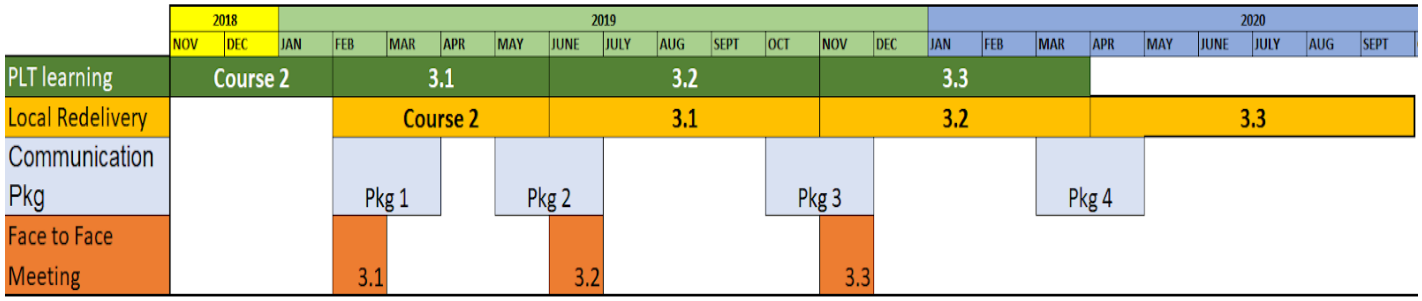
Creation of new professional learning identified in a systematic gap analysis

As indicated in the Phase Three, Year Two report, a common universal need expressed by LEAs centered on the delivery of Specially-Designed Instruction (SDI) within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). The inter-professional team coordinating the development and launch of this professional learning series includes members from the ECD, Integrated Academic and Behavior Supports, and Standards, Curriculum, and Instruction (SCI) divisions at the NCDPI. The team regularly reports to a leadership team of directors of each division. The implementation of this professional learning began with eight LEAs (seven districts and one charter school) in October, 2018.

School and district teams are being supported through regional teams that are largely comprised of NCDPI staff who serve the corresponding region, per this support map. These regional teams are supported by the state-level team forming cascading structures and feedback loops through regularly occurring regional face-to-face meetings. The delivery of the professional learning is flexible in nature, providing LEAs the resources to deliver through face-to-face, blended, or virtual means. In addition, structured "just-in-time" communication packages are provided to the LEA district implementation team to deliver to school-based administrators where teachers will be implementing the practices contained within the professional learning (e.g., information on analyzing school level Least Restrictive Environment data, the role of special education

in total school improvement, and developing schedules and routines that promote general and special education communication and collaboration). The two-year series will be disseminated according to the timeline in Figure 13. The cycle is such that the local professional learning team (PLT) participates in the online course (green band) then re-delivers to select schools/staff in the district/school (orange band). Communication packages are delivered in meetings with building administrators (gray band) as re-delivery of subsequent courses/modules rolls out to ensure district and school leadership understand and can/lead support staff learning and implementation of evidence-based practices.

Figure 13. *SDI within MTSS Two-year Series*



NCDPI has also partnered with the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) to operationally define Specially Designed Instruction. Bringing in multiple states who have expressed interest in similar work, it has evolved into the development of two Practice Profiles (at the "systems" and "practices" levels). Practice profiles are a tool developed by the State Implementation and Scaling of Evidence-Based Practices (SISEP) center to make innovations knowable, teachable, doable, and assessable. At this point in time, the systems level workgroup (the workgroup NCDPI participates in) has completed a draft its practice profile is planning a vetting process. Based on current timelines, these tools are planned to be completed by August 2019.

Finally, given the resource gap identified in LEASA update improvement plans and very strong/clear requests from the EC Directors' Advisory Council for ECD provision of professional learning and support for improvement of mental health prevention, promotion, early intervention, and referral services, the ECD has engaged with multiple NCDPI divisions and other state departments over the past year to enhance professional learning and technical assistance for scaling up school mental health within NCDPI's ongoing MTSS implementation. These new 2018-19 activities are described in the Social-Emotional-Behavioral section below.

Academics: The North Carolina State Improvement Project (NC SIP)

The comprehensive professional learning for reading and mathematics instruction offered through The North Carolina State Improvement Project (NC SIP) has continued to be the primary evidence-based practice to support districts that identify academics as the root cause impacting the SIMR. The implementation of this model has continued to include four major components since the Phase Three, Year Two report:

- Building capacity at the state level
- Working with districts to ensure they have the leadership and organizational capacity to implement and support district and building innovations
- Providing professional learning and coaching to teachers and administrators on effective instruction
- Working with Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) to align NC SIP courses in pre-service and administrator courses

In terms of building capacity at the state level, 12 NCDPI staff, 12 LEA-based regional coaches for literacy, and 12 LEA-based regional coaches for mathematics have continued to build skills related to a continuum of coaching to support transfer of training, including bug-in-ear "e-coaching". Consequently, face-to-face professional learning on theory and best practice modeling of coaching activities has been developed to extend the basic online coaching modules. Thus far, 75 participants who serve in coaching roles at the LEA level have engaged in the professional development, which has included ongoing "coaching of the coaches". These 75 individuals now serve critical roles within their district to ensure that participants of the Reading Research to Classroom Practice and Foundations of Mathematics courses are supported through job embedded follow- up that spans observations of models of best practice, individual coaching on specific evidence-based practices, and group coaching to overcome common problems of practice.

In congruence with the SSIP work, NC SIP has systematically supported implementation science frameworks in the Professional Learning Plan. Focusing on an audience of district-level administrators, the *All Leaders Understand, Support, and Collaborate to Provide Evidence-Based Instruction* has been provided to 131 individuals, focusing on the use of organizational, leadership, and competency drivers to support implementation of evidence-based practices for reading and mathematics. While this professional development is aligned to the academic work, it is also designed to support skills sets that enhance implementation of any evidence-based practice.

The project has also continued to build capacity to provide the five-day reading and mathematics professional development courses to LEAs targeting academics as a root cause. During the current year, 1388 LEA staff have attended Reading Research to Classroom Practice and 420 have attended Foundations of Mathematics. This capacity to support the courses has been enhanced through regional coaches described above and the 6 "Best Practice" and 18 "Demonstration" sites that have a responsibility to support the professional development regionally, offering seats to districts with identified need.

Finally, the integration of the reading and mathematics courses described above into the pre-service coursework at Institutes of Higher Education has expanded from four colleges and universities to eight. This is a particularly strategic step in building capacity for implementation of evidence-based practices across the state, as higher proportions of newly entering teachers will have baseline knowledge and skills for teaching students with persistent reading and mathematics problems. In addition, these IHEs are working intentionally to pair student teachers to individuals who have been through the reading and math courses to further promote the transfer of skills into the classroom setting. Currently, Fayetteville State University, Greensboro College, NC Agricultural and Technical State University, North Carolina State University, University of North Carolina Charlotte, University of North Carolina Pembroke, and Western Carolina are offering the courses or have staff working on the credentials to offer the course.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Tiered Behavior Supports within a Multi-Tiered System of Support

During the 2017-18 year, following the integration of PBIS and MTSS (described in the Phase Three, Year Two report), the Integrated Academic and Behavior Systems (IABS) division aligned tiered behavior support around data, systems, and practices. Within these domains, intentional alignment and communication with the field occurred through the development and implementation of integrated fidelity tools, professional development, coaching.

Concerning data, the Facilitated Assessment of MTSS- School (FAM-S) was extensively tested and validated in 2017-18 to measure the implementation of the six critical components of NC MTSS. Consequently, in the 2018-19 school year, this tool will replace multiple fidelity tools frequently used in the field (e.g., the School-wide Evaluation Tool, the Tiered Fidelity Inventory, and the Self-Assessment of MTSS) that measured duplicative or heavily overlapping constructs. In addition, the use of multiple fidelity tools often yielded separate teaming structures and/or implementation plans. The intent of the integration of tools was to better align fidelity assessment to the newly integrated framework, reliably measure the implementation activities of the various tools that are aligned to this framework, and facilitate cohesive teaming structures

and implementation plans. Of note to the SSIP evaluation, due to the statewide transition to the FAM-S, it is likely there will be a significant decrease in School-wide Evaluation Tool data for the 2018-19 school year. Thus, the longitudinal methodology for evaluating the impact of SSIP implementation on fidelity of implementation with SET data will have to be revisited. This will likely require obtaining new baseline data with the FAM-S.

In the area of practices, new online training modules, blended learning opportunities, and "train the trainer" professional development tools were created and implemented state-wide. A description of the content, alignment, and products of these professional learning was provided to LEAs to support local implementation planning during the 2017-18 school year. Additionally, as a result of secondary implementers describing a need for supplemental supports for students at risk for dropping out of school, the ECD and IABS have explored partnering with the University of Minnesota on the implementation of Check and Connect. While this is in the exploration stage, a professional learning plan for preparation and implementation, training mentors, and developing Check and Connect trainers in the state is being developed with participation of approximately 11 LEAs across the state.
In the area of systems, the ECD and IABS Team continued to provide ongoing coaching, as well as regularly scheduled regional networking meetings. To assist with the integration of this work and to help build district-level capacity, the regional meetings have become inclusive of any district-level personnel who lead district-wide tiered academic, behavior, social-emotional and/or attendance supports (as opposed to only MTSS coordinators).

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: EC Division Addressing Comprehensive Needs

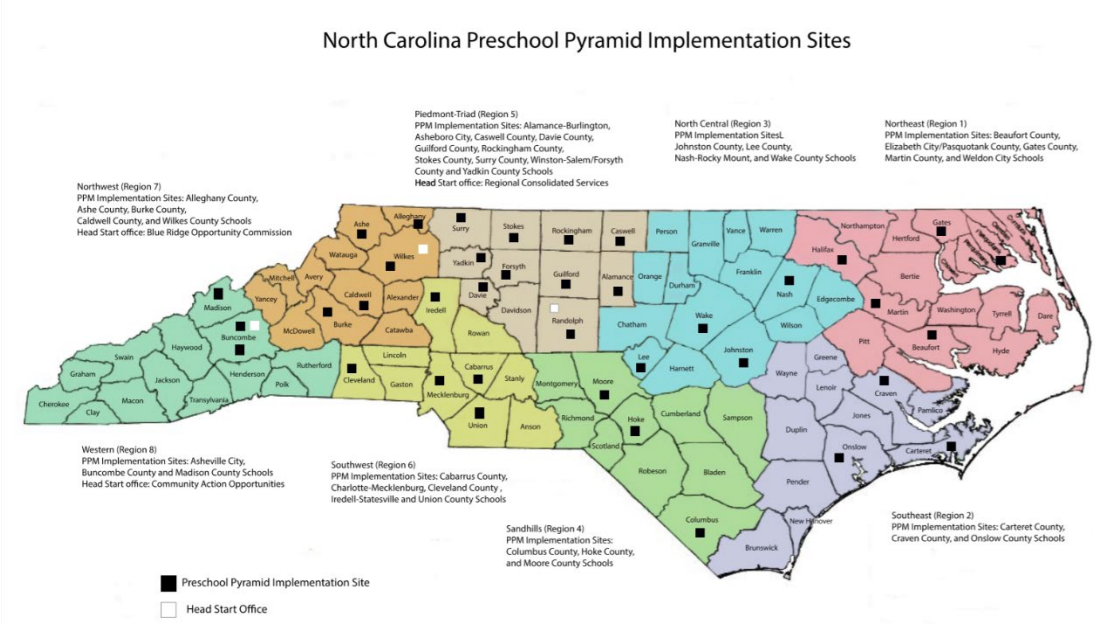
For the 2018-19 school year, the ECD, in collaboration with IABS, has been building tiered behavior supports that address the needs of all students with comprehensive needs in the area of social emotional and behavioral health. To address these needs, 24 pilot sites were identified to work collaboratively among departments in the district to identify a precise problem statement. This statement was developed from the discipline, attendance, academic data, and LEA School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) responses. These data provided the rationale for innovative work these districts need to implement to improve behavior and academic outcomes for students with disabilities. Innovative efforts have included: increased services from mental health providers, increased family access to services, district collaboration in problem solving, developing trauma informed-care schools, restorative practices, professional learning in Youth Mental Health First Aid, and school based mental health services for all students. Over the course of the 2018-19 school year, the pilot sites have monitored their progress on short

term goals by reporting quarterly attendance and suspension data along with the specially designed instruction addressing the behavioral need. Each district has also used the self-assessment process to analyze outcome data, manage implementation time line, and use necessary data to make adjustment for optimal student growth. Quarterly monitoring has already revealed gaps in core and supplemental behavior supports. Districts who are interested in being part of the second cohort will complete a readiness tool (still in draft). Based on the results from the readiness tool, ten additional districts will be added to the Comprehensive Needs Grant for the 2019-20 school year. As we work to build capacity within the state, the long-term plan is for all districts / LEA's to transition to the Comprehensive Behavior Support Grant by 2021.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Preschool Pyramid Model Project (NC Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning)

As of January 2019, there were 39 LEAs and 3 Head Start programs in the targeted Preschool Pyramid Project, at various stages of implementation (see Figure 14 below). Two districts previously in the project dropped out due to turn-over in administration while two new districts were added, in addition to three non-LEA administered Head Start programs during 2018-19. The NC Head Start State Collaboration Office Director supported the participation of these Head Start programs in the state's project. All three Head Start programs transition children into Kindergarten programs in approximately 9 school districts. These programs also have preschool children with disabilities who are served by the school district's special education programs. As new programs agree to enter the project, they ensure that they will identify a leadership team that will develop an implementation plan, evaluate that plan using a practice profile, implement a program assessment tool, and report data on the implementation process to the NC Office of Early Learning (NC OEL). As indicated in the implementation plan, designated program coaches provide support to classroom teachers to implement the practices with fidelity. Coaches receive a series of trainings and technical assistance from the NC Early Learning Network (a professional development system supported by IDEA 619 state set aside funds) on the coaching process and must reach fidelity in administering the teacher fidelity measure, the TPOT, prior to coaching teachers. Coaches and leadership teams utilize an on-line system to input data, which allows the NC OEL to capture data on the teacher's outcome, child outcomes, and progress in program implementation from leaders.

Figure 14. *Preschool Pyramid Implementation Sites as of January 2019*



The scaling of this work over time can be seen in Table 5 below based on the number of districts in the project. In the 2015-16 school year, there were 27 out of 115 traditional LEAs enrolled in the project (23%); in 2016-17, participation grew to 30% (34 out of 115 LEAs). In the 2017-18 school year, this amount grew to 39 out of 115 LEAs (34%). The two new districts included in the data reporting from 2017-18 were two of the largest districts in the state which significantly increased the number of potential teachers/classes involved in implementation.

Table 5. *Percent of Traditional LEAs in Preschool Pyramid Project*

Time Frame	**7/1/12-6/30/13**	**7/ 1/13-6/30/14**	**7/1/14-6/30/15**	**7/1/15 - 6/30/16**	**7/1/16-6/30/17**	**7/1/17 6/30/18**
Total Number	14	27	29	27	34	39
Percent	12%	23%	25%	23%	30%	34%

Another measure of scale-up that accounts for the number of classes in districts in the targeted Preschool Pyramid Project and the teachers who have reached fidelity in implementation can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. *Number of classes in LEAs in Preschool Pyramid Project and Teachers at Fidelity of Implementation*

	7/1/15 - 6/30/16	**7/1/16 - 6/30/17**	**7/1/17 - 6/30/18**
Total Number of classes in LEAs in the Preschool Pyramid Project	688	700	951
Total number of teachers who have reached fidelity on the TPOT	190	203	233

In the 2015-16 school year, there were 688 classes operated by LEAs in the targeted Preschool Pyramid Project with approximately 168 of the teachers at fidelity (28%). In 2016-2017, there were 700 classes operated by the project LEAs, with 203 of the teachers at fidelity (29%). The overall percentage of teachers implementing at fidelity fell to 25% in 2017-2018 due to the increase in the total number of classes. However, the difference in the number of teachers reaching fidelity from 2016 to 2017 demonstrated a 7% growth while the difference from 2017 to 2018 showed a 15% growth. When comparing the number of teachers implementing at fidelity in 2017-18 to the total number of classes in all public-school preschool programs (n=2,067 data from the Preschool 619 grant application including Title I, State Pre-K and LEA administered Head Start, and Exceptional Children funded) approximately 11% of all public school preschool classes have teachers implementing the Pyramid practices with fidelity.

Transition: Development of a Continuum of Transition Supports

Participants in the 2017-2018 Continuum of Transitions (CoT) pilot were surveyed this year to determine their interest and support needs for the selection of an activity for year two of the CoT project. All of the initial participants indicated a desire to continue an LEA-selected, self-advocacy activity at a specific level within their LEAs. A follow-up survey will be conducted at in June, 2019, to identify the specific activities and outcomes of these year two activities conducted and/or continued by the LEAs.

NCDPI offered a Person-Centered Thinking session to 2017-2018 CoT Pilot participants to provide information and to assist LEAs in developing their own strategies for supporting students in leading their IEP meetings. This session included strategies for gathering baseline data and developing a plan to improve student participation in and leading their IEP meetings. Each participating LEA will utilize their baseline data and will set a target for improvement for comparison in 2019-2020. Districts are encouraged to include this data in their LEASA documentation.

For the 2019-20 CoT cohort, new participants were selected based on their:

- recognition of the benefits/desire to begin transition activities prior to the required age 16
- current implementation of a strategy that supports beginning transition activities prior to age 16

- desire to have support in the development of additional strategies and data collection

Participants include five traditional and one charter LEAs of varying sizes. These LEAs will identify their target grade bands. Teachers of selected grade bands will receive training in the administration of the pre- and post-assessment, AIR Self-Determination Assessment, the implementation of the Bell Ringer activities, and in the submission process for the pre- and post-assessment data.

Stakeholder Involvement in SSIP Implementation

The SSIP External Team

External stakeholders serve on SSIP workgroups and attended quarterly external SSIP meetings that were held April 1-July 10, 2018. The purpose of the quarterly external meetings is to construct broad implementation frameworks, macro- planning (big picture / systems level decisions), share evaluation findings, pose specific decision points for formal analysis by the team, and provide general feedback on implementation. For example, in the July 10, 2018 meeting, external stakeholders considered the results of the Professional Learning Catalog summary, the LEASA review analysis, and the Professional Learning Plan and focused on the refinement of the process based on the data. Large-scale decisions are typically reserved for these external meetings and are made using a modified consensus process of decision making (i.e., can everyone live with and publicly support the decision). The external stakeholder team is diverse and includes members from across NCDPI, LEA leadership, parent representatives, IHE representatives, and technical assistance centers. The SSIP internal team met bi-monthly from April 1-July 10, 2018 with a general focus on details and management of the large-scale frameworks and decisions made by the external team.

The Exceptional Children Division

The SSIP team has created a Google Folder that houses the notes and decisions made for each SSIP meeting that is made available to NCDPI staff. Meeting materials through July 10, 2018, are available. In addition to meeting information, ECD staff participate in monthly division, section, and regional data team meetings where they provide feedback on SSIP activities (e.g., refinement of the online LEASA update platform) and conduct SSIP work (e.g., update professional learning catalog and calendar, review LEASA updates).

Partnering within the State Education Agency

Within the broader SEA, stakeholders are primarily involved with SSIP through the State Implementation

Team (SIT). The SIT is comprised of representation from across the agency, LEAs, and institutes of higher education (IHEs). Work groups on the SIT collaboratively remove barriers, define relationships between agency projects, align the work of the agency, create common language and practices for agency staff, and provide support for LEAs through development of agency-wide infrastructure. The SIT meetings have provided multiple opportunities for SEA staff to describe overlapping work associated with the SSIP and construct intentional alignment. Examples since the Phase Three, Year Two report active implementation of the SDI within an MTSS professional learning series and ongoing development of a resource to help district leaders align self-assessment/improvement planning and synthesize data sources across multiple domains (e.g., EC, MTSS, Title One, and School Improvement).

Partnering with LEAs

The implementation of the SSIP continues to be regularly shared with LEAs during regional and statewide meetings and through representatives on the Director's Advisory Council (DAC). DAC representatives are EC directors and coordinators who have been nominated and elected by their peers. The ECD has worked closely with DAC to ensure quarterly Regional Directors' and Coordinators' Meetings meet local and regional needs. As such, DAC representatives gather information about topics, including those that related to SSIP implementation, that LEA stakeholders find most salient and time sensitive. After gathering those data, DAC meets with ECD staff to construct an agenda for the subsequent meeting. This occurs through a structured process that results in statewide delivery of "just-in-time" communication, professional learning, and/or systematic opportunities to engage around a problem of practice. In addition to these agenda items that are delivered consistently across the state, regional data teams work with their respective DAC representatives to address agenda items specific to their region. Further, if DAC requests persist around a given topic, as was the case for school mental health this past year, those data are considered in the ECD's gap analysis and improvement of professional learning and technical support. This thematic analysis of DAC requests also resulted in revisions to the SSIP Logic Model in Phase Three, Year Three as described above.

Data on Implementation and Outcomes

How the state monitored and measured outputs to assess the effectiveness of the implementation plan

How evaluation measures align with the theory of action

Figures 3 and 4 above provide an over-arching depiction of the updated theory of action and logic model, respectively. The logic model displays the presumed associations between the strategies/activities, the resulting outputs and the short, intermediate and long-term outcomes. At this point in our implementation, the outputs and short- term outcomes in the logic model serve as the most relevant metrics to monitor for change. The intermediate outcomes serve as direct impact measures presumed to occur as the results of changes in the short-term outcomes. The basis of the theory of action is grounded in the ability of the SSIP to positively impact the intermediate outcomes that, ultimately, will increase the ability of students with disabilities to graduate within five years. The alignment of specific evaluation measures to the relevant outputs and outcomes is included in Figure 4. A detailed description of data sources for each measure is included below. As indicated in the logic model, many of the outputs and short-term outcomes are related to measures of implementation and/or fidelity that would be early indicators of successful implementation of the evidence-based practices. Medium and long-term measures are related to student outcomes that would be expected following sustained implementation.

Data sources for each key measure

State-Identified Measurable Result:

- **Five-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate for SWD:** is determined by using the ratio of youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) graduating with a regular high school diploma to all youths with IEPs entering ninth grade for the first time five years prior. The cohort is "adjusted" by adding any students who transferred into the cohort and by subtracting any students who transferred out, emigrated to another county, or died during the years covered by the rate.

Coherent Improvement Strategy: Problem Solving & Effective Implementation

- **LEASA Updates**: these data provide evidence of LEAs' ability to implement Core Elements of comprehensive special education services for students with disabilities. The data from the updates assist the ECD in determining which LEAs need specific types of supports, how much support they will need, and how support has resulted in change in their capacity over time.
- **LEASA Improvement Plans**: review data from the LEASA Improvement Plans Provide evidence of LEAs' ability to problem solve to target interventions aligned to local root cause. In addition, the review data elucidate the presence or absence of key components of successful implementation plans.

Academics: NCSIP Reading & Math Foundations

- **Fidelity Observations**: these LEA-level data provide evidence of teachers' (aggregated to the LEA level) adherence to the evidence-based Reading / Math instructional model selected by the LEA. Teachers who have taken the Foundations and instructional model course receive at least one fidelity observation by a trained observer who has attained inter-rater reliability. These fidelity checks are developed and validated by the developer / publisher of the evidence-based programs.
- **Student proficiency data:** include NC End-of-Grade tests.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: PBIS, SEFEL, and Project AWARE

- **School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET)**: this measure is designed to assess and evaluate features of school-wide behavioral supports including definition of expectations, teaching of behavioral expectations, system for responding to behavioral violations, etc. Schools are rated 0-100 on each of the components and averaged to yield an overall SET score.
- **Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool:** is a fidelity measure of teachers' use of SEFEL strategies
- **Discipline Data:** include a common metric for In-school (ISS), Out-of-School (OSS), and Long- Term Out-of-School suspension data.
- SHAPE System, Facilitated Assessment of MTSS-School Level, and Levels of Collaboration Survey: validated tools to assess the overall implementation of the Interconnected Systems Framework.
- **Behavioral and psychological indices of school engagement:** attendance, discipline, academic performance, school climate surveys, and drop out data
- **Risk status of students:** screening data, reportable offenses, and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Transitions: Support for a Continuum of Transitions

- **Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) SPP / APR Indicator data:** a number of indicators to monitor various outcomes.
    - **Indicator 7:** the percent of preschool children aged 3 to 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improvement in positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language / communication and early literacy), and the use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

- **Indicator 8**: measures the percentage of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.
- **Indicator 11**: measures the percentage of students being referred that receive timely (within 90 days) evaluations and placement for special education services.
- **Indicator 12**: measures the percentage of students referred by Part C / Early Childhood Intervention prior to age 3 who are found eligible for Part B / District Special Education Services and who have an IEP (Individualized Education Program) developed and implemented by their 3rd birthday.
- **Indicator 13**: measures the percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above that have an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition service needs.
- **Indicator 14:** measures the percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, and were:
    - enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school
    - enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school
    - enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school

Description of Baseline Data for Key Measures

As indicated in the Phase Three, Year One report, the extant performance data for each of the key measures (typically occurring prior to SSIP implementation) was reviewed as a basis for future comparisons. These data are summarized in that report, but are also included here for ease of access and comparison. Baseline levels for key outcome indicators are summarized below (please note, this report does not represent an exhaustive review of all the analyses conducted and reviewed by the SSIP team. This report reflects key measures, aligned to the logic model, that inform judgements about the current progress and success of SSIP implementation). Also of note, as new measurement tools have been implemented into the evaluation plan, new baselines have been established due to the lack of pre- existing data. These baseline data should be interpreted as occurring within the context of ongoing implementation.

State-Identified Measurable Result: Cohort Graduation Rate

- **Five-year Cohort Graduation Rates (CGR**): baseline data for five-year adjusted cohort graduation were summarized by demographic subgroups across the 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. Rates and trends were similar across years for different racial groups (e.g., Black Students 78.7, 81.1, 83.4; White Students 86.3, 87.7, 88.5). During the baseline period, over half of all schools with a SWD subgroup increased their five-year CGR, 8.3% remained the same, and 41.7% declined.

LEA Self-Assessment

- **Practice Profile Ratings:** these data were summarized across LEAs for total score, score per Core Element, and score across items related to systems, practices, and outcomes for 2015-16 and 2016-17. Ratings for the LEASA were first submitted in 2015-16.
- **LEA Self-Assessment Review Data:** the current review tool was first utilized during the 2016-17 school year. The review data describe the presence or absence of key implementation criteria within the improvement plan.

Academics: NCSIP Reading Research to Classroom Practice and Foundations of Math

- **Fidelity of Reading and Mathematics Instruction:** baseline data for fidelity of implementation of evidence-based reading and mathematics practices were summarized across the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. The average change of percent of teachers achieving minimum criteria on the fidelity assessment was examined. The examination revealed an overall increase across time. Math and reading fidelity percentages showed considerable variation across LEAs.
- **Academic Performance:** baseline data for academic performance were summarized across the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. Proficiency rates of key demographic subgroups were examined on EOGs. Across reading and mathematics content area assessments, similar trends and gaps were evident for each of the three years, with White students exhibiting the highest performance and SWD and LEP students exhibiting the lowest performance.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

- **School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET):** baseline data for fidelity of PBIS implementation as measured by the SET were summarized across the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years.

The distribution of scores was negatively skewed (indicating a high proportion of high scores), with nearly equal mean scores across baseline years.

- **Discipline Data:** baseline data for the overall rates of In-School Suspensions (ISS), Out of School Suspension (OSS), and Long-Term Out of School Suspension (LT OSS) were summarized across the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. Overall, ISS and OSS rates declined over the baseline period.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL)

- **SEFEL Fidelity (TPOT):** baseline data for the fidelity of SEFEL implementation as measured by the TPOT were summarized across the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. The median rates of teachers reaching TPOT fidelity increased from Fall to Spring each year, but declined from 2012-13 to 2013-14, with approximately similar values in 2013-14 to 2014-15. Broadly, however, LEAs were relatively successful in supporting their teachers attain TPOT fidelity during the baseline period.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Project AWARE/ACTIVATE

- As stated previously, during Phase Three, Year Three, the NCDPI SSIP Logic Model evolved based on our gap analysis of 2018 LEASA updates and feedback from local EC Directors regarding the need for enhanced supports for school mental health and mental health services for students with disabilities. In order to identify specific needs and evidence-based practices matching the state's context, we submitted a proposal for a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Project AWARE grant to work with three pilot LEAs over the course of five years. The grant proposal for NC Project AWARE/ACTIVATE was awarded in September, 2018. As such, baseline data from these LEAs will be used for comparison in subsequent years of SSIP data analysis, based on the logic that grant activities will serve as essential outputs impacting short- and mid-term outcomes associated with graduation for students with disabilities.

- To ensure effective collection and analysis, the Project AWARE Evaluators & Data Managers will develop a formalized plan (including any required training) for documenting performance measures, data source(s), dates for data collection, responsible staff, data management platform(s), and methodology for reporting and analysis. The Evaluators & Data Managers will develop a performance assessment plan to include a logic model detailing the tools used to

measure inputs, the implementation of the Interconnected Systems framework, the implementation of evidence-based practices within this framework, and the desired short, mid-, and long-term student outcomes. The performance assessment plan will be aligned to project goals and objectives and will utilize evaluation methodology with comparison groups (when possible) and rigorous longitudinal analysis. The performance assessment plan will also include both formative and summative assessment metrics for ongoing program evaluation and continual improvement within formal Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) improvement cycles. To foster the consistent application of improvement cycles, Evaluators & Data Managers will meet with the state-level implementation team quarterly to share reports and analysis for the primary purpose of engaging in rapid cycle problem solving and addressing state and local implementation barriers.

- Concerning the measurement strategy, the goals and objectives of the NC Project AWARE are aligned to several psychometrically sound fidelity and outcome metrics. Concerning fidelity, the SHAPE System, Facilitated Assessment of MTSS-School Level, and Levels of Collaboration Survey will provide validated tools to assess the overall implementation of the Interconnected Systems Framework. Moreover, as specific programs and practices are selected by LEAs to serve as universal and secondary supports to students, selection criteria will include the accessibility of validated fidelity tools that will be aligned to the performance assessment plan. In terms of student outcome measures, data sources will include behavioral and psychological indices of school engagement (attendance, discipline, academic performance, school climate surveys, and drop out), risk status of students (screening data, reportable offenses, and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey), and standardized determinations of improvement status such as a Reliable Change Index (RCI, Jacobsen & Truax, 1991) following intensive school and community-based interventions. Finally, a standardized approach to evaluating professional learning will be utilized following Guskey's (2000) five critical levels of evaluation. A formal evaluation plan (aligned with the SSIP evaluation plan) for the AWARE project is currently in development and will be reported Summer, 2019.

Transition Outcomes

- **Indicator 7:** baseline Child Outcome Summary Form (COSF) data were summarized across the 2012- 13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. The COSF data yield the percent of preschool children aged 3 to 5 with IEPs who demonstrated improvement in outcomes related to positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language /

communication and early literacy), and the use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs. Within each of these three outcomes are two different metrics and accompanying targets, outlined as follows:

1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in the Outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.
2. The percent of children who were functioning within age expectations in the Outcome by the time they exited the program.

For the 2012-13 school year, NC did not meet the established targets for both metrics for any Indicator 7 outcomes. New baselines were established for the 2013-14 school year. For the 2014-15 school year, NC met targets for both metrics within Outcome C. Across baseline years, considerable variability existed among LEA level measures.

- **Indicator 8:** baseline data summarized the counts of the Indicator 8 target attainment status for 2013- 14 and 2014-15. The target percentage for North Carolina in both years was 50.0% (at the SEA level during baseline, the mean rates were 46.0% in 2013-14 and 43.8% in 2014-15). In 2013-14, 31.6% of LEAs with available data attained a percentage of parents greater than the 50.0%, while 31.0% had a percentage greater than 50.0% in 2014-15.
- **Indicator 11:** baseline data were summarized for the percentage of students being referred that receive timely (within 90 days) evaluations and placement for special education services across the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. For the baseline school years, indicator 11 decreased slightly from 93.3% in 2012-13 to 92.5% in 2014-15. Across baseline years, considerable variability existed among LEA level measures.
- **Indicator 12:** baseline data were summarized for the percentage of students referred by Part C / Early Childhood Intervention prior to age 3 who were found eligible for Part B / District Special Education Services and who had an IEP (Individualized Education Program) developed and implemented by their 3rd birthday during the 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. During the baseline period, NC consistently failed to meet the 100% target, but, was consistently above 97%.
- **Indicator 13:** baseline data summarized the counts of the Indicator 13 target attainment status for 2013- 14 and 2014-15. The target percentage for North Carolina in both years was 100.0% (at the SEA level, the rates were 85.1% in 2013-14 and 88.4% in 2014-15. In 2013-14, 6.5% of LEAs with available data attained a percentage of youth aged 16 and above with an IEP that meets the secondary transition requirements target while 10.5% had a percentage greater than 100.0% in 2014-15.

- **Indicator 14:** baseline data summarized the counts of the Indicator 14 target attainment status (for Targets A, B, and C) for 2013-14 and 2014-15. The target percentages for North Carolina were >= 39.5% (target A), >= 62.5% (target B) and >= 73.5% (target C). At the NC SEA level, the rates were 30.0%, 54.0% and 69%, respectively, for targets A, B and C in 2013-14 and 31.9%, 61.1% and 72.7%, respectively, for targets A, B and C in 2014-15.

Data collection procedures and associated timelines

In Phase Three, Year Three, the data collection procedures and timelines have diverged from those described in the Phase Three, Year Two report due to a number of unforeseen and intractable factors. With the resignation of both the SSIP Coordinator and the State EC Director less than five months into this year's implementation (SSIP Coordinator has not yet been replaced and the EC Director position was not filled until January, 2019), coordination of data collection stalled. A number of databases / procedures are leveraged for the SSIP evaluation (described below); these data have been compiled and shared with the Center for Education Measurement and Evaluation at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte (UNC-C) for analysis. However, given the SSIP leadership gap described above and personnel changes at UNC-C, a new contract for SSIP evaluation was not executed until March, 2019. Given the ECD and UNC-C SSIP evaluation team are still in re-formation, some components of data analysis will be postponed until June-July, 2019, with public reporting planned for August, 2019.

The databases and data procedures utilized in the SSIP are described below:

- **Powerschool**: is the primary Student Information System (SIS). Several of the data points necessary for tracking and reporting on the implementation and impact of the SSIP project are collected from all NC LEAs through this system. As a result, data for a particular school year for all LEAs are provided in a standardized format in the following fall.
- **LEASA**: are submitted annually via Excel. Data are then aggregated for analysis purposes.
- **Common Education Data Analysis and Reporting System (CEDARS)** is an Oracle based data warehouse that provides standardized discipline data that can be accessed over the life of the project.
- **The NC SIP data base:** is a data based specific to the North Carolina State Improvement Project. The NC SIP fidelity data are collected through electronic forms submitted through the NC SIP data base over the course of the year. At any time, the data that can be exported from the database.
- **The Data Management System (DMS)**: is a database specific to PBIS which has specific

annual data collection and submission guidelines.

- **SEFEL Data:** were provided by the project lead in Excel format. Data are collected throughout the year and available as requested.
- **Indicator Data:** are collected by separate managers within NCDPI. Though these data are also presented in a standardized format, the timeliness of their collection and summarization vary.

Sampling procedures

No probabilistic sampling procedures are planned for the evaluation of SSIP. Data that are already being collected and readily available are being used, thus, available longitudinal data for all LEAs will be captured.

Planned data comparisons

The primary research design for the evaluation of the SSIP is longitudinal, meaning the primary comparisons to be made will involve LEA performance on various metrics across time (most notably, prior to and following SSIP implementation). Thus, the primary analyses will involve examining how much change occurs from the initial SSIP implementation year and subsequent years. Data are also organized by participating cohorts to facilitate comparisons of growth among LEAs from SSIP Cohort 1 and the rest of the state. In addition, comparisons of growth will be made between Cohort 1 and all other LEAs to determine if similar (or dissimilar) amounts of change are occurring in LEAs where shorter duration of SSIP participation have occurred. Predominantly, this cohort indicator allows analysis of the association between time of implementation and changes on various outputs and outcomes. Analyses will also occur across specific priorities contained within the LEASA Improvement Plan. Thus, this analysis will allow for determination of whether districts who focus SSIP implementation in a specific priority area see different changes over time with related outputs and outcomes. To note, the priorities were identified in the spring of 2018 and are indicative of implementation activities occurring during the current 2018-19 academic year (and thus, would not heavily influence FFY 2017 outcomes).

How data management and data analysis procedures allow for assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvement

The data management process has allowed for reliable access to data that are associated with various outputs and outcomes in the SSIP logic model. In addition, these data are collected and available at regular intervals that allow for longitudinal analysis over time. As alluded to in the Planned Data Comparison section, longitudinal analyses have been the primary method for determining whether the strategies of the SSIP are having an impact on short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. The use of several years of data

representing the time *before* SSIP installation has increased the statistical power (i.e., likelihood) of being able to detect statistically significant change in metrics

How the State has demonstrated progress and made modifications to the SSIP as necessary

How the state has reviewed key data that provide evidence regarding progress toward achieving intended improvement to infrastructure and the SIMR

For the current year, longitudinal analysis is expected to yield consistent trends in outputs (including fidelity data) and short-term outcomes as many LEAs transition into fuller implementation of their improvement plans and NCDPI re-starts and re-tools its SSIP infrastructure. Small effect sizes associated with outcomes are expected in this stage of implementation. Implementation science literature suggests three to five years are typically required to achieve intended outcomes, if active implementation frameworks are intentionally followed. Thus, based on the current stage /status of implementation, focus areas of the evaluation data for the application of improvement cycles remains predominantly focused on outputs and short-term outcomes.

Evidence of change to baseline data for key measures

The longitudinal analysis will be organized in relation to the SIMR, the LEA Self-Assessment and Improvement Process, and the domains of academics, behavior, and transition. As described previously, the longitudinal analysis indicates whether the change from baseline (from 2014-15 to 2015-16, from 2014- 15 to 2016-17, and from 2016-17 to 2017-18) was statistically significant and whether participation in Cohort 1 is associated with a different change from baseline as compared to the rest of the state (i.e., to answer the question "did Cohort 1 sites experience a different impact from the 2014-15 to 2015-16 school years as associated with longer duration of SSIP implementation?). Again this year, additional analysis will also be conducted to ascertain the association between LEAs who focused on a specific priority area and related outputs and outcomes (e.g., do districts who focused on behavior interventions see significant increases in PBIS implementation fidelity and significant decreases in disciplinary events?).

Graduation

What is the longitudinal trend in five-year cohort graduation for all students in North Carolina?

What is the longitudinal trend in five-year cohort graduation for students with disabilities in North Carolina?

These data have not yet been fully analyzed. Full analysis is planned for June-July, 2019 and will be publicly reported in August 2019.

LEA Self-Assessment

What is the longitudinal trend in the total scores obtained by LEAs on the LEASA?

What is the longitudinal trend in the core element scores obtained by LEAs on the LEASA?

What is the longitudinal trend in LEASA items related to systems, practices, and outcomes?

These data have not yet been fully analyzed. Full analysis is planned for June-July, 2019 and will be publicly reported in August 2019.

Academics: NC SIP Reading and Math Foundations

What is the longitudinal trend in the rate of teachers meeting fidelity criteria for model reading and mathematics instruction?

What is the longitudinal trend in students with disabilities' proficiency in reading and mathematics?

What is the longitudinal trend in students with disabilities' proficiency in reading and mathematics whose LEA indicated academics as a priority on the LEASA and Improvement Plan?

What is the longitudinal trend in the relationship between the rate of teachers meeting fidelity criteria and student performance?

These data have not yet been fully analyzed. Full analysis is planned for June-July, 2019 and will be publicly reported in August 2019.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Tiered Behavior Supports within a Multi-Tiered System of Support

These data have not yet been fully analyzed. Full analysis is planned for June-July, 2019 and will be publicly reported in August 2019.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Preschool Pyramid Model Project (NC Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning)

What is the trend in the distribution of teachers' fidelity for implementing the Preschool Pyramid Model in the targeted project?

The project began collecting this data through an on-line system in 2016-17 which increased the reliability of the data significantly. In addition, two sets of data were collected: one on teachers in the active coaching process (with pre-and-post scores) and the other on teachers who had reached fidelity on the TPOT the year before (with just one score). These two measures answered questions about the average amount of growth in teachers due to coaching, and if fidelity of implementation (a score of 80% with no noted issues) continued from the year before. Figure #X shows the distribution of initial and final TPOT percentage scores earned by teachers in district-wide implementation LEAs for the 2016-17 (n=67 teachers) through the 2017-18 (n=61 teachers) school year. The circle within each box represents the mean TPOT score (scaled as a percentage), the line across the boxes represents the median percentage. For both years, the median scores for the pre-TPOT (blue) were more than 20 points lower than the median scores for the post-TPOT (orange). Further, the pre-TPOT boxes (blue) were comparatively taller than the post-TPOT box. The difference in the size of the box plots shows the effects of coaching around the evidence-based teaching practices. When teachers begin the process of implementing these skills, they demonstrate much greater variance in the implementation of their skills (blue box plot). After coaching, the teachers were of uniformly higher quality, resulting in less TPOT score variance.

Figure 15. *Initial and Final TPOT Scores for 2016-17 and 2017-18*

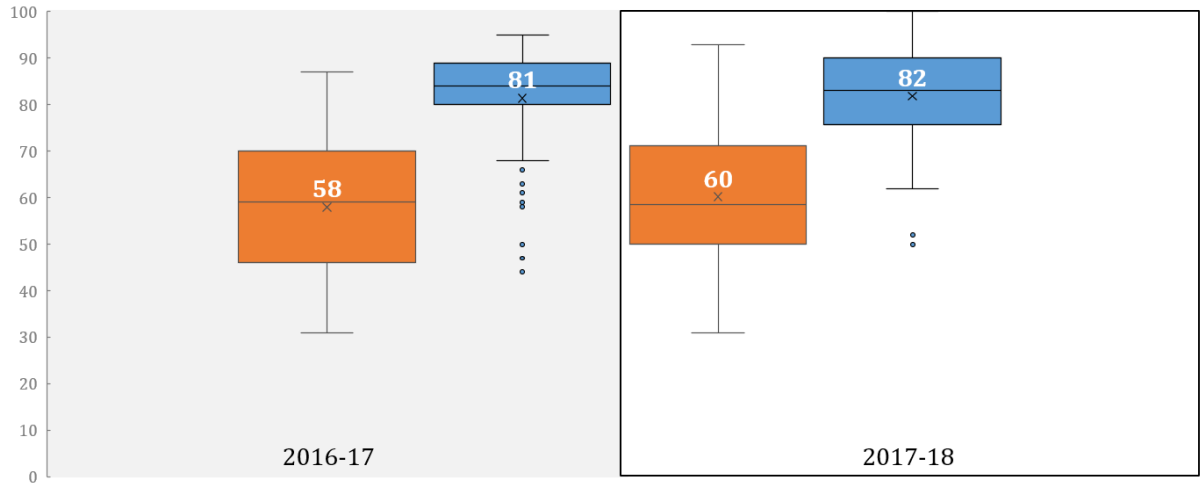
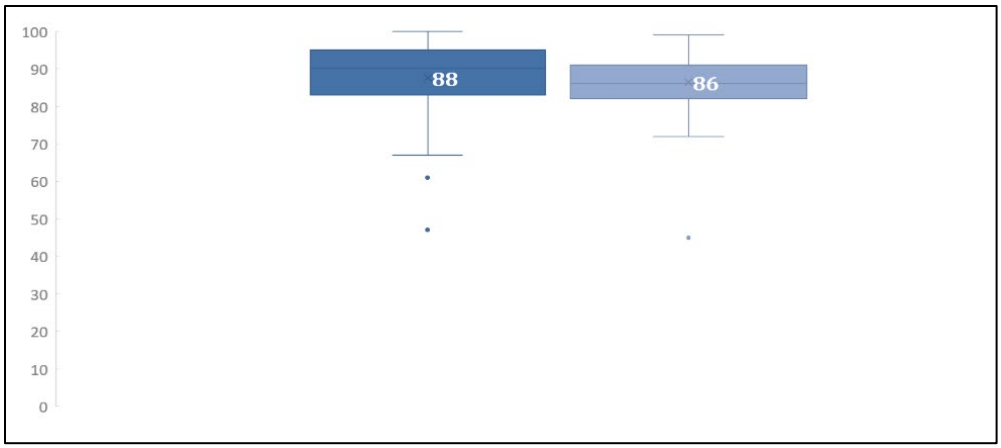


Figure 16 shows the distribution of the TPOT done on teachers who reached fidelity of implementation previously. The 2016-17 data set contained scores for 69 teachers, with an average score of 88. The 2017-18 data set contained scores for 61 teachers with an average score of 86. This data addresses leadership questions about "will these practices remain without active coaching?" To facilitate the maintenance of teacher implementation, programs are encouraged to let these teachers become leaders of professional

learning communities and become certified as a coach for the program, while existing coaching resources are focused on teacher who have not received coaching. This introduces the peer-to-peer coaching model into the program implementation.

Figure 16. *Maintenance TPOT Scores for 2016-17 and 2017-18*



Transition: A Continuum of Transitions

While the continuum of transitions tool and self-determination activities were implemented on a small scale to perform usability testing during the 2017-18 school year, transition data will be presented for trend analysis for activities that have occurred to date (including the secondary transition toolkit). However, it should be noted that the implementation of the continuum of transition supports is currently within the exploration / initial implementation stages.

What is the longitudinal trend in the percent of preschool children aged 3 to 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improvement in positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language / communication and early literacy), and the use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs?

What is the longitudinal trend in the percentage of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities?

What is the longitudinal trend in the percentage of students being referred that receive timely (within 90 days) evaluations and placement for special education services?

What is the longitudinal trend in the percentage of students referred by Part C / Early Childhood Intervention prior to age 3 who are found eligible for Part B / District Special Education Services and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their 3rd birthday?

What is the longitudinal trend in the Indicator 13 data?

What is the longitudinal trend in the Indicator 14 data?

These data have not yet been fully analyzed. Full analysis is planned for June-July, 2019 and will be publicly reported in August 2019.

How data supports changes that have been made to the implementation and improvement strategies?

The predominant data sources that have informed implementation and improvement strategies have been derived from the LEASA and Improvement Plans. The crux of the NC SSIP rests upon using these data as a fulcrum to leverage state and local resources to address root causes identified by LEAs through a systematic data analysis and problem-solving process. The 2018-19 Professional Learning Plan and calendar for the ECD was developed based on the data obtained from the submitted 2018 LEASA and reviews. In addition, substantial work has been done in the development and launch of the Specially-Designed Instruction within an MTSS professional learning series. The creation of this comprehensive professional learning was based on a systematic gap analysis when aligning LEA needs identified in the LEASA to the capacity of the ECD to provide professional learning.

That said, we are learning that as a point-in-time/annually-conducted measure, the LEASA provides critical but not current data for continuous improvement planning. Requests for professional development and technical assistance made through the ECD professional learning request portal, the EC Directors' Advisory Council, and evaluations of regional meetings, the March Administrators' Institute, and the annual Conference on Exceptional Children are also essential data. These sources, when combined with the LEASA review data, allow the ECD to be more agile and timely in our response to LEA needs and make needed adjustments to SSIP implementation. The evolution and scaling of the social-emotional-behavioral band in the logic model in 2018-19 is a prime example of this multi-source change model.

Further, given broader support and leadership at the SEA and LEA levels to encompass both general and special education in social-emotional-behavioral supports, it is expected that stronger core behavioral programming and prevention efforts will continue or enhance the positive trends currently. At an early age, the Social-Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL) data indicate that the ECD and LEAs can quickly develop capacity to train and support teachers to the point of reaching fidelity of implementation.

How data are informing next steps in SSIP implementation

The Plan, Do Study Act (PDSA) improvement cycle informs the continual improvement of the NC SSIP. Because the full data analysis schedule has been adjusted, next steps for SEA outputs/strategic support of

local SSIP implementation will be identified Summer, 2019. While next steps for external activity have not yet been identified for Phase Three, Year Four, the ECD recognizes several internal SSIP improvement opportunities based on our experience since July, 2018.

First, we know from implementation frameworks (NIRN, 2013) that the stall in our active implementation following the resignation of the SSIP coordinator necessitates reflection, re-tooling, and re-starting the state SSIP teaming structure. When teams are functioning well, changes in leadership should not significantly impact ongoing implementation of strategic activities and outputs. In the months ahead, we will need to carefully examine and rework our SSIP leadership and organizational drivers to ensure we have established a hospitable environment for project sustainability and adaptability. Partnering with external stakeholders in "critical friends" conversations to reform the SSIP team and reboot implementation will be essential to a strong project finish.

Second, we need to continue efforts to create one uniform registration, evaluation, fidelity monitoring, and tracking system for ECD-sponsored professional learning activities so we can track outputs and measure impact on outcomes. This effort was in the initial implementation stage when ECD and SSIP leadership gaps occurred last fall; without human resource to drive ECD staff training and fidelity with a new infrastructure and protocol, staff resorted to individual- and section-level problem solving for these activities. Given this was an identified need in FFY 2018, we can resume establishing the one-stop platform now/without waiting on data analysis. In addition, we can continue production and validation of a common evaluation tool to further elucidate what components of the professional learning plan are demonstrating the most positive impact across academic, social-emotional-behavioral supports, and transition. This analysis will further allow the ECD to align and prioritize infrastructure and professional learning based on those interventions that appear to have the greatest impact.

Third, several activities and outputs have been sustained in FY 2018 and work remains as we move toward their full implementation. While the transition to Every Child Accountability and Tracking System (ECATS) was delayed one year, we anticipate the data for LEAs to complete the LEASA—and for the ECD to study correlations between outputs and outcomes—will be readily available following in the ECATS launch in FY 2019. Notably, ECATs will house IEP and progress monitoring data that will allow LEAs to access and aggregate data to engage in the LEASA process. In addition, a single platform that houses a variety of outcome data that can be directly linked at the classroom level will provide enhanced ability to link specific NC SSIP activities to increases in fidelity and student outcomes.

How data support planned modifications to intended outcomes (including the SIMR) and rationale for how data support that the SSIP is on the right path

Because full evaluation data related to the outputs and outcomes (including the SIMR) of the logic model are not yet available, major modifications to implementation activities are not planned at this time. As the full data analysis is conducted, the FY 2019 Professional Learning Plan is developed, and the availability of data sources is enhanced through Qualtrics and ECATS, additional outputs may be identified and aligned to the plan. Longitudinal data trends show increases in graduation rates for students with disabilities; this lends support for achievement of the intended outcomes and lends credence and justification to continuing on the current path.

Stakeholders involvement in the SSIP evaluation

How stakeholders have been informed of the ongoing evaluation of SSIP How stakeholders have had a voice in the evaluation process

The ECD has not actively engaged stakeholders of the status of our SSIP evaluation since July, 2018. Prior to that time, progress toward outputs and outcomes contained within the logic model were shared at quarterly meetings. When the FY 2018 data and implications are shared, the external stakeholder group will have an opportunity to provide feedback on both the interpretation of the findings as well as engage in the process of determining next steps. In addition, a summary of this report, the major implications, and opportunities for feedback will be provided at the next stakeholder meeting.

LEAs will be informed of the evaluation activities during May, 2019, regional directors' and coordinators' meetings. To deter future implementation drift and continually reinforce and communicate the work toward the SIMR, outputs and outcomes related to the logic model will be shared throughout FY 2019.

Data Quality Issues

Data limitations that affected reports of progress in implementing the SSIP and achieving the SIMR due to quality of the evaluation data

Concerns or limitations related to the quality or quantity of the data used to report progress or results

While data access and quality will generally be enhanced through Qualtrics and ECATS next year, there are several metrics that may pose challenges to the longitudinal evaluation approach.

- First, in FY 2018, new standards for literacy and mathematics resulted in new assessments; the scaled scores and proficiency cut points will be based on new normative data and standard

setting, and thus, will not be directly comparable to prior years.

- As PBIS transitions to MTSS, school-wide fidelity tools will likely be converged. Rather than collect SET data, items from the SET and / or Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) have been incorporated into the Facilitated Assessment of MTSS (FAM-S). As such, longitudinal measurement of fidelity of tiered behavioral supports will need to be revised.

Implications for assessing progress or results

Given the issues above, the ECD in collaboration with the UNC-C Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation team will consider the most appropriate methods of gauging large-scale change over time as metrics evolve, and in some case, become incomparable.

Plan for improving data quality

As indicated previously ECATS (going online for FFY 2019) will have the capacity to seamlessly integrate data sources, including those that are aligned to both fidelity (e.g., dosage data) and outcome data (e.g., Office Disciplinary Reports, suspension data, attendance, child outcome summaries, teacher content knowledge, and progress monitoring data). That said, all these features will not be available during initial implementation. In addition, the authoritative data source for much of ECATs data will be PowerSchool. Currently, the SSIP evaluation metrics will be cross-walked with availability in ECATs to ensure seamless transition and access to data. In addition, a single platform will be used for professional learning registration, evaluation, fidelity monitoring, and tracking. This single platform will provide consistent access to output data for all components of the Professional Learning Plan.

Progress toward Achieving Intended Improvements

Assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvement

Infrastructure changes that support SSIP initiatives, including how system changes support achievement of the SIMR, sustainability, and scale-up

Development of the Professional Learning Plan each year, derived from data aggregated at regional and state levels that elucidate local root causes associated with the SIMR, is now an embedded practice. In addition, the professional learning is evolving in design and delivery with the intent to develop and sustain the LEAs' capacity to provide the training to its staff, measure the transfer of training with reliable fidelity measures, provide job-embedded follow up, and engage in critical evaluation activities. The ECD now organizes itself and allocates it resources based on documented LEA need, rather than scattered LEAs requests that may or may not be rooted in data. That said, we are learning that, while the LEASA data is

critical in developing the Professional Learning Plan and calendar, other data need to be considered. Evaluations and feedback from conferences, institutes, the Director's Advisory Council, topical stakeholder groups, and regional EC Director meetings must also be considered as ECD-sponsored professional learning is designed and delivered.

Second, during Phase Three, Years One and Two, ECD staff began collaborating not only in sections organized by focus of work, but also by the regions of the state they are serving. Over the course of Phase Three, Year Three, however, the collaborative nature of these regional teaming structures progressed beyond just the ECD to across the agency (and with other states). The many divisions represented on the Specially-Designed Instruction within an MTSS and Project AWARE implementation teams are two strong examples. Further, given the effective and sustained implementation of the regional EC support teams, the entire agency is transitioning to a regional support infrastructure. We anticipate this will significantly enhance NCDPI's alignment of our Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan and our SSIP, particularly as we provide targeted support schools and districts where students with disabilities are a low-performing subgroup. Thus, the agency-wide regional support teams will have broad and deep expertise to support integration of district/school improvement plans and equip local leadership to consider outcomes of students with disabilities when developing these plans.

Finally, the collaborative, cross-agency work has also impacted our organization of systems-levels needs assessments. By identifying overlap and potential gaps in these tools, "assessment fatigue" will be addressed through a resource explicating the unique features of each self-assessment. This will reduce redundancy and fragmentation and allow for comprehensive improvement planning at the district and school levels.

Evidence that SSIP's evidence-based practices are being carried out with fidelity and having the desired effects

In FY 2018, the submission and review processes occurred with a high level of procedural fidelity (e.g., the vast majority of the LEASAs are submitted on time, the majority contain all required components, the review process occurs within the indicated timeframe, and the Professional Learning Plan is developed and systematically communicated). Completion of data analysis during Summer, 2019, will reveal the extent to which high levels of fidelity have been achieved for evidence-based practices included in Reading and Math Foundations, school-wide PBIS practices, and SEFEL implementation.

Outcomes regarding progress toward short-term and long-term objectives that are necessary steps toward achieving the SIMR

Table 7. *Progress toward Key Outcomes*

Domain	Key Outcome Comparisons to Baseline
Graduation	• The SWD five-year CGR was higher in 2017-18 than it was in the three previous years • The gap between five-year cohort graduation rates for Students with Disabilities and Non-Disabled Students has decreased each year since baseline
LEASA and Improvement Planning Process	• TBD
Academics	• TBD
Behavior	• TBD
Transition	• TBD

Measurable improvement in the SIMR relation to targets

The 5-Year adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates for students with disabilities show a continued positive trend. In addition, from the baseline year of FFY 2013 to 2017, the gap between five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities and non-disabled students has decreased by 17.8%.

Plans for Next Year

Additional Activities to be implemented next year, with timelines

The ECD is planning to continue the review, analysis, and response to the LEASA data. These and additional activities that will be implemented next year include:

- April-June 2019: release online LEASA update protocol
- May 2019: Systematic DPI SSIP implementation review and realignment
- June-July 2019: Complete FY 2018 data analysis in collaboration with new team at UNC-C
- July 2019: solicit LEA EC Director feedback on online LEASA update protocol
- July 2019: Review 2019 LEASA submissions and summarize data
- July 2019: Standardize professional learning registration, evaluation, fidelity monitoring, and tracking practices in the ECD

- Summer 2019: Fully transition to ECATS
- August 2019: Aggregate state and regional professional learning needs
- August 2019: Finalize Professional Learning Plan/Calendar and Communicate to LEAs
- September 2019: Complete and publish resource for agency needs assessments
- October 2019: Begin second cohort of SDI within an MTSS professional learning

Planned evaluation activities including data collection, measures, and expected outcomes

The planned evaluation activities for FFY 2019 are largely consistent with the 2018 SSIP report. As the professional learning plan for FFY 2019 is developed, it will be aligned to data sources that may add outputs and short-term outcomes to the SSIP logic model. In addition, a review of the professional learning catalog for the alignment and / or development of fidelity tools may lead to the availability of additional metrics.

Anticipated Barriers and steps to address those barriers

The primary barriers for next year include:

- Delay in identifying an SSIP Coordinator – interviews for the position have been completed
- Limited awareness of ECD/DPI staff re: priority of SSIP implementation – significant time/resources will be allocated during FY 2019 to re-orienting leadership/staff and aligning ECD work (e.g., at Division, Section, and Regional Data team meetings; via fidelity monitoring of SSIP-related protocols)
- Unforeseen issues with the installation of the ECATS data system – negotiations with DPI and ECATS vendor to resolve implementation barriers
- Changing metrics described in the "Data Quality" section of this report —TBD

Supports and Technical Assistance

As the ECD has continued engagement with several technical assistance providers and partners:

- Exceptional Children Assistance Center (ECAC), to provide professional learning and improve collection of parent and student information;
- National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NTACT), as a resource for development of the continuum of transition supports;
- IDEA Data Center (IDC) for work related to success gaps;
- National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) for Graduation and Specially-Designed

instruction; and

- UNC Charlotte for evaluation planning, support, and statistical analysis

These partnerships are expected to continue and to provide the support needed by the ECD and SEA to effectively serve LEAs. As the evaluation of the project develops and other needs are identified, additional partnerships may be sought.