North Carolina

Indicator 17:

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

Phase Three, Year Four

April 1, 2020

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

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Commonly Used Acronyms

CGR	Cohort Graduation Rate
CoT	Continuum of Transitions
DAC	Director's Advisory Council
DBI	Data-based Individualization
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
RRtCP	Reading Research to Classroom Practice
SCI	Standards, Curriculum, and Instruction
SDI	Specially Designed Instruction
SEA	State Education Agency
SEFEL	Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
SEL	Social Emotional 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.

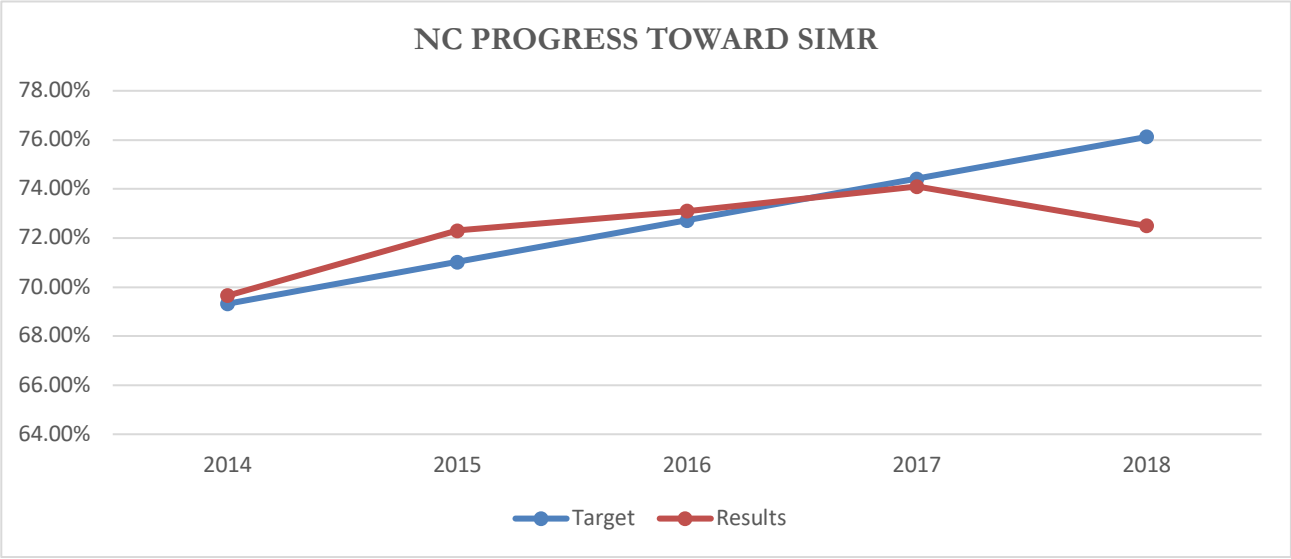
Table 1. *Baseline data used to set SIMR Targets*

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**	**2019**
Target	69.32%	71.02%	72.72%	74.42%	76.12%	76.12%
Results	69.65%	72.3%	73.10%	74.10%	72.50%	

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



Students with Disabilities and Non-Disabled Students

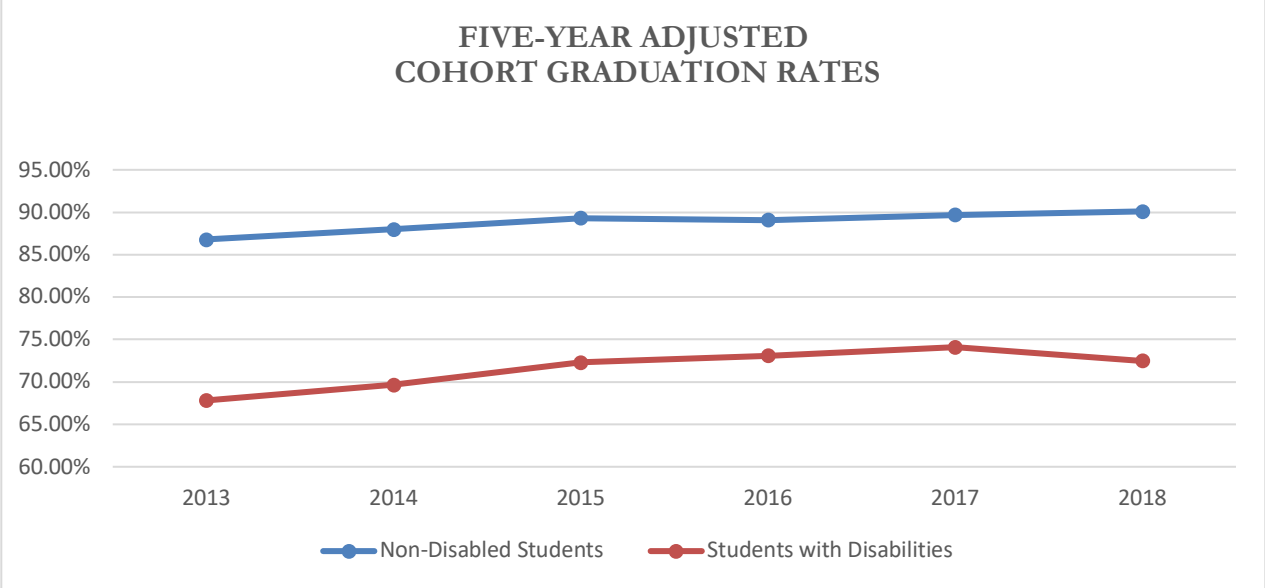
In Phase One, SIMR targets were determined from longitudinal trends and forecasting of graduation rates for students with disabilities and all students. At the time, the SIMR targets were predicted to close

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 2018.

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

FFY	**2013 (Baseline)**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Non-Disabled Students	86.80%	88.00%	89.30%	89.10%	89.7%	90.1%
Students with Disabilities	67.82%	69.65%	72.30%	73.10%	74.1%	72.5%
Difference	**18.98**	**18.35**	**17.00**	**16.00**	**15.6**	**17.6**

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 a slight 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 2017 to FFY 2018, non-disabled students experienced a slight increase in five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates; the rate for students with disabilities experienced the first decrease (by 1.6%) since our SSIP implementation began. The slippage is likely due to the following:

- an additional 2,589 students with disabilities (increase of 21.17%) were in this 5-yr adjusted cohort
- an additional 1,639 students with disabilities (increase of 19%) graduated with a standard high school diploma

- For this 5-year adjusted cohort, the calculation for 'adjusted' changed and included students who were student with disabilities at any time during their designated 5-year graduation cohort, *including those who had exited special education*
- The students in this 5-year adjusted cohort who exited special education were counted in the 5-year adjusted cohort's students with disabilities subgroup, which largely accounted for the additional 2,589 students
- The difference in the additional number of students in 5-year adjusted cohort and the number of those students that graduated within five years largely accounted for the slippage

While the change in the methodology for calculating the 5-yr adjusted cohort rate is likely not the only factor in the lower rate for SWD, it is worth noting that 69.8% of the 15,364 entering 9th graders with disabilities in 2015-16 graduated in 2018-19 or before, which represents an increase of nearly a percentage point. In other words, more students who stayed in special education to the end of their school career graduated with a diploma than in previous cohorts.

From the baseline year of FFY 2013 to FFY 2018, the gap between five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates for students with disabilities and non-disabled students has decreased by 1.38 percentage points or by 7.3%. 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 Four 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 be customized at the local level (for an in-depth narrative explanation of the theory of action, please see the Phase Three, Year One report). To summarize:

- If, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) identify local root cause(s) associated with lower graduation rates for students with disabilities
- Then,
    - LEAs can systematically select the skills, tools, programs, and resources needed to address their root cause(s) for lower graduation rates for students with disabilities, and
    - Request professional learning and technical assistance from the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and other stakeholders to build local capacity for improving

graduation rates for students with disabilities, and

- In response, NCDPI will align its infrastructure and build its own capacity to provide comprehensive support of local improvement plans.

The primary process and tool driving the theory of action is the LEA Self-Assessment (LEASA) and Improvement Planning Process. This year, NCDPI 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, based on feedback from local directors of Exceptional Children programs, the 2020 LEASA submission will allow LEAs to incorporate local improvement plans for Exceptional Children programs into larger LEA improvement plans (e.g., via NCStar, a web-based tool that guides a district or school team in charting its improvement and managing the continuous improvement process for educating all students; NCStar builds accountability as well as helps schools track their improvement plans), rather than requiring a separate improvement plan for Exceptional Children programs. 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 NCDPI support. For example, in Year 4, analysis of state and regional LEASA data resulted in a statewide capacity-building effort around standards-aligned Individual Education Programs (SAIEPs).

Four years of LEASA submission data provide evidence for how LEAs are identifying and communicating SWD graduation rate gap root cause, their general capacity for implementation of improvement efforts, 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), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Project AWARE/Social Emotional Learning (SEL), the Preschool Pyramid Model, 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.

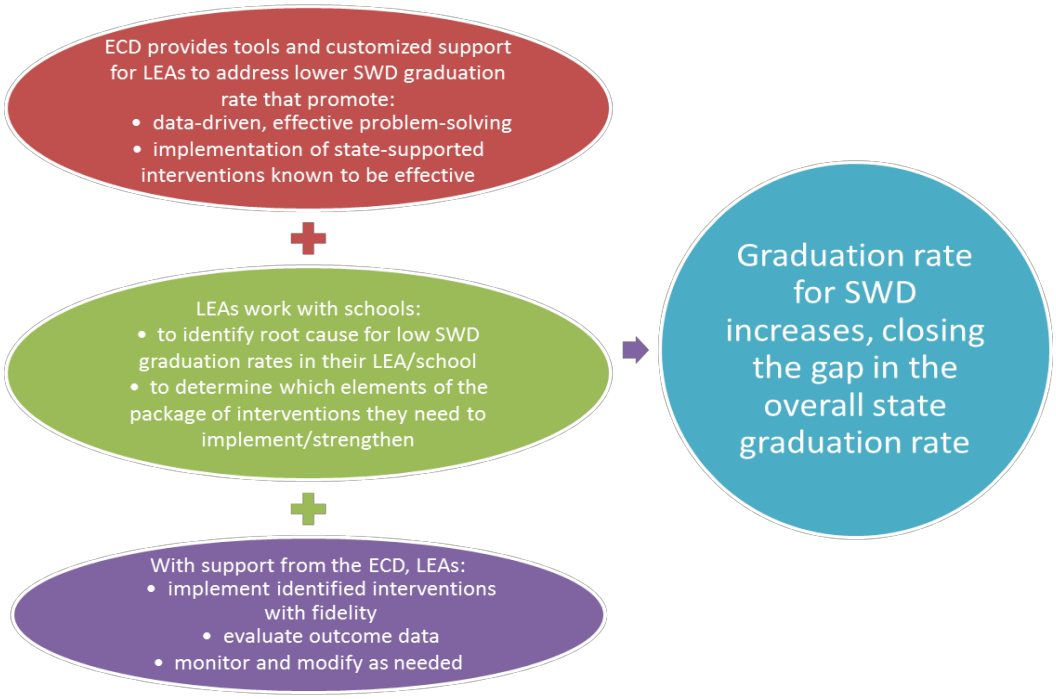


Figure 3. *Graphical Depiction of the NC SSIP Theory of Action*

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 last year to reflect an evolving understanding and implementation of what was previously "Behavior Support." Due to NC's expanding work on core instructional, curricular, and environmental social-emotional-behavioral supports for all students this band in the logic model was renamed "Social-Emotional-Behavioral Supports" in Year 3. In addition, new strategies, outputs, and outcomes, including participation in CASEL's Collaborating States Initiative, were added in Year 4 to reflect NC's growth in this critical component of our SSIP. Also in Year 4, NC began implementation of a data-based individualization pilot project in collaboration with the National Center for Intensive Intervention (NCII) to bolster our effectiveness in the Academic Support Band. 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*

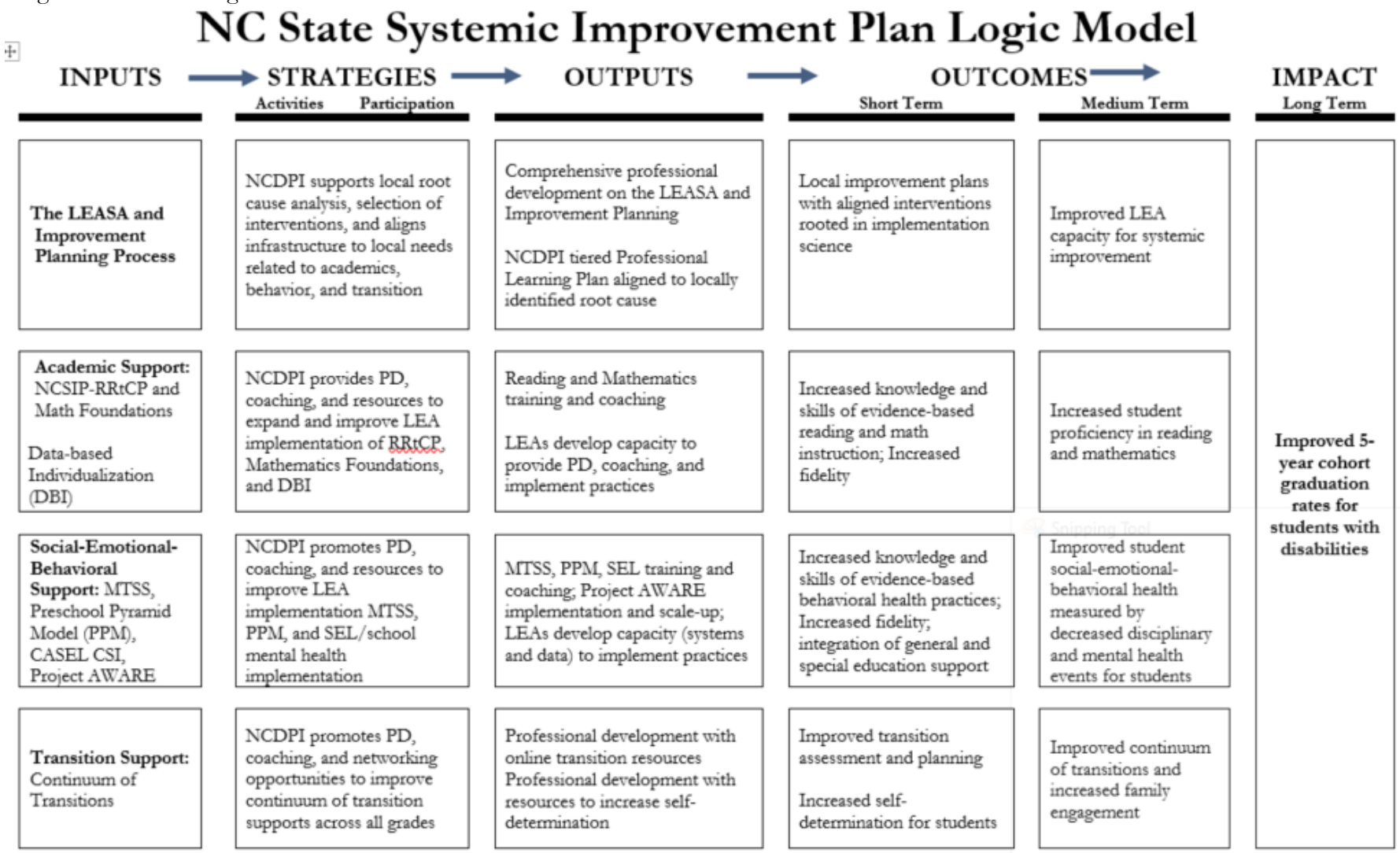


Table 4. *Goals, Evaluation Questions, and Evaluation Strategies*

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 • Regional Data Teams and EC Director meetings	• Comprehensive professional development on the LEASA and Improvement Planning • Every Child Accountability and Tracking System (ECATS)	• 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
	  ○ Data Based Individualization (DBI)
	  ○ 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	• Preschool Pyramid Model ○ Increase saturation / fidelity to early childhood communities • NC Project AWARE • CASEL Collaborating States Initiative • SHAPE System • Facilitated Assessment of MTSS-School Level (FAM-S) • Levels of Collaboration Survey	• Increase in % of schools meeting FAM-S implementation criteria • 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 school mental health prevention practices, including core SEL instruction • Increase number of at-risk students receiving supplemental and intensive supports	• 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
		• Improve coordination of MH services with families and community agencies		
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
- leverage analytic tools in the Every Child Accountability and Tracking System (ECATS) for problem solving
- 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 2019 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 4 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, from 2017-18 to 2018-19, and from 2014-15 to 2018-19).
- **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 2018-19 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 2018-19 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 4 of the SSIP. Per the "Plans for Next Year" section of the Phase Three, Year Three report, as well as several new opportunities, implementation activities were initiated as follows:

- DPI partnered with NCII and one pilot LEA to begin installation of data-based individualization, April, 2019 to present
- LEASA were submitted via new online platform by June 30, 2019
- SSIP Coordinator hired after a year-long vacancy in the position; active implementation reboot;

July, 2019

- LEASAs were reviewed and data analyzed to identify state and regional professional learning needs in July-August, 2019
- ECATS went live August, 2019
- LEASA state and regional data analysis results shared with EC Division, Directors Advisory Council, and EC Directors, September, 2019
- New external evaluation team at UNC Charlotte began 2018-2020 project evaluation, September, 2019
- October 2019: Began second cohort of SDI within an MTSS professional learning
- New SSIP internal and external stakeholder teams recruited, September-October, 2019
- SSIP internal team meetings and meetings with stakeholders resumed (after not meeting for over a year) November, 2019
- State-level school mental health/SEL resource mapping and priority identification, November, 2019
- SiMR data/analysis shared with EC Advisory Council and solicited input regarding 2019 target, December, 2019
- Statewide Standards-aligned IEP (SAIEP) capacity building effort initiated, December, 2019
- Terms of Reference for SSIP State Team, Regional Data Teams, and Regional EC Director meetings established, January, 2020
- Began design and development of LEA SWD Data Profiles, January, 2020
- Creation of crosswalk tool for key DPI-supported LEA assessments/improvement planning protocols
- Solicited EC Director feedback on LEA Self-Assessment and analyzed data, February, 2020
- SSIP State Team work groups (Data Literacy, Research-informed Practice, Stakeholder & Family Engagement, and Systems Coherence) organized around new National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) framework, February, 2020
- Modified LEASA tool and process for 2020 submission, March, 2020

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.

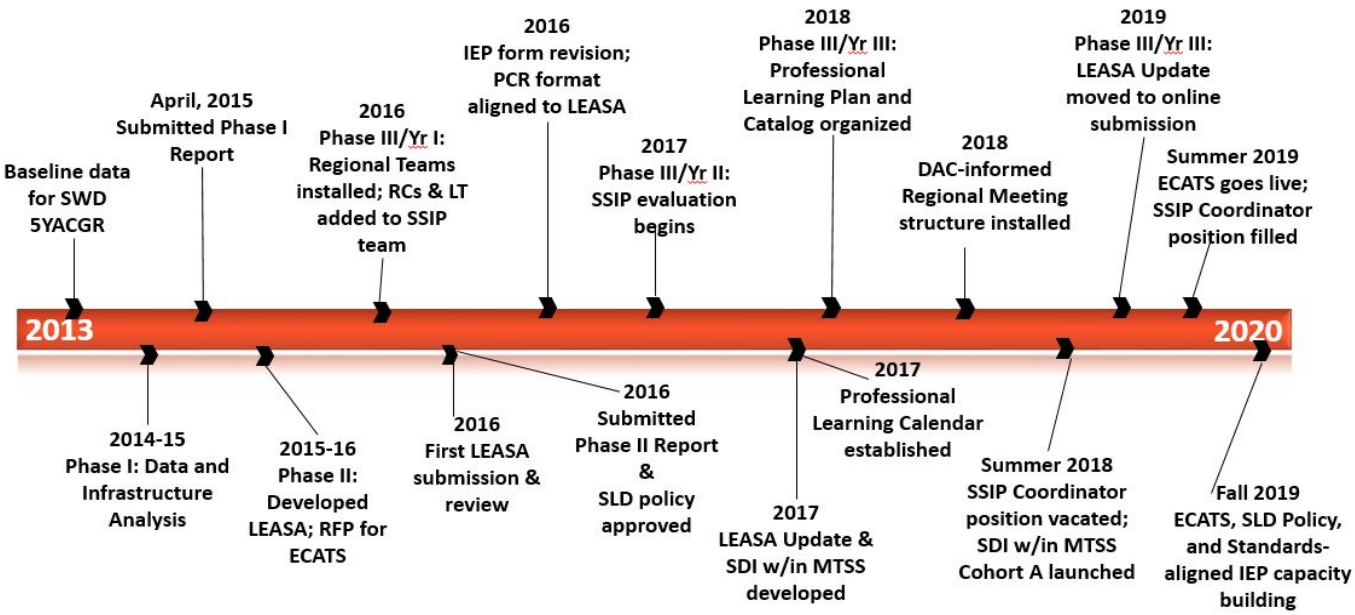
Progress in Implementing the SSIP

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:

- continued support for LEAs in their completion of the LEASA and Improvement Planning process through:
    - capacity-building and stakeholder engagement during quarterly regional EC Director meetings with a focus on:
        - ECATS implementation
        - IEP development and implementation, including reasonable calculation, standards-alignment, and measurement of student progress
        - Implementation of an instructional model for eligibility determination of

Specific Learning Disability (SLD; policy change eliminating use of discrepancy model effective July 1, 2020)

    - 2020 March EC Administrator Institute sessions on the above items and:
        - core SEL/school mental health prevention practices
        - Data profiles for 2020 LEASA submission
        - Dyslexia
    - ongoing technical assistance
- adjusted LEASA submission and review dates:
    - In 2019, the LEASA updates were due on June 30, 2019, and 598 reviews of the 299 were conducted by the August 1, 2019 review period deadline. 93% of submissions from LEAs (traditional and charter schools) were received (299 out of 322). Each submitted LEASA was reviewed by two NCDPI staff. The ECD's response to the LEASA analysis is described below. The June 30 due date was selected based on EC Director feedback that the previous May 30 deadline was difficult to meet due to end-of-year assessments and other reporting requirements. Given the summer submission, DPI review, data analysis timeline, the statewide response to the LEASA data analysis, and other massive simultaneous statewide implementations (e.g., ECATS and SLD policy), the DPI response to LEASA data shifted from a professional learning catalog approach (2018) to a more focused effort in 2019-20 which is described below.
- Initial implementation of a Data-based Individualization partnership between the National Center for Intensive Intervention, NCDPI, and Buncombe County Schools
- launch of Cohort B in the Specially Designed Instruction within a Multi-tiered System of Supports (SDI within MTTS) professional learning series; six Cohort B LEAs started the 2-year implementation in October, 2019
- provision of professional learning and technical assistance 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:
    - 2019 Summer Institutes
    - 2019 Conference on Exceptional Children
    - 2020 March Administrators Institute, per above
- ongoing work to align multiple NCDPI district self-assessment tools via the crosswalk tool

- Year 1 and 2 implementation of a 5-year school mental health improvement project (NC Project AWARE/ACTIVATE) from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

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 Three 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 Three report occurred prior to FFY 2018 outcomes described in this report. The activities described below will have occurred prior to FFY 2019 outcomes that will be described in the 2021 SSIP report.

Outputs related to the LEASA and Improvement Planning Process

Timeline for LEASA submission, review, and NCDPI infrastructure alignment

During FFY 2018, a systematic process for LEASA update submission, review, NCDPI infrastructure alignment, and development of capacity-building for LEAs was conducted as follows:

- deliver professional learning on the LEASA and Improvement Planning process (e.g., orientation to online platform, updated LEASA Guidance Manual, offering regional coaching sessions prior to submission)
- open LEASA online portal for submission
- communicate key messages, dates, and formats to LEAs with regular reminders
- LEASAs submitted (June 20, 2019) and missing submissions solicited
- review LEASA submissions
- analyze and visual LEASA data and review data for state, regional, and local problem-solving
- identify state, regional and local capacity/professional learning gaps
- identify bright spot LEAs
- regional data teams align professional learning needs to LEASA data

As mentioned above, this process is being adjusted again for FFY 2019, as shown in the revised Gantt Chart below (Figure 6).

Figure 6. *2020 LEASA Timeline*

MAJOR ACTIVITIES	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Oct	Nov	Dec
Systematically communicate external timeline for LEASA update review and response			Share at March Institute		Share at Regional Meetings		Share at Summer Institutes					
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		Feb EC Director Regional Meeting LEASA Survey	March Institute LEASA and Data Profile Orientations	Publish updated LEASA Guidance Manual; open online submission portal	Regional Coaching sessions	Regional Coaching sessions; Longitudinal APR data displays published	Open door coaching Sessions at EC Summer Institutes Meeting	LEASAs due August 14, 2020		LEASA Data Analysis shared at October EC Director webinar		
DPI EC Division Professional Learning Suite				Suite updates made by EC Division Sections	Updated suite/process shared at May Regional Meetings							
LEASAU Review						Share review template and receive feedback during regional data team meetings	Assign Reviewers to LEAs	Review LEASAs				
Regional Teams Identify Professional Learning Needs (based on analyzed/ summarized data) and develop plan								LEAs identify professional learning needs on LEASA	Regional Data Teams/ Sections propose 2020-21 regional training plan at Regional EC Director meetings	Regional training plans implemented	Annual EC Conference supports statewide professional learning needs	

Professional learning aligned to academics/behavior/transition and the LEASA

To facilitate the alignment of the NCDPI professional learning to the root causes and improvement strategies identified in the LEASAs, in 2019-20, the ECD selected a more focused approach than previous years' reliance on a Professional Learning Catalog. While we may plan to return to some updated version of a suite or catalog of professional learning options for improving outcomes for students with disabilities, several factors informed the Year 4 approach:

1. Two statewide capacity-building efforts—use of the ECATs IEP and Service Documentation modules, and building readiness for implementing the 2020 SLD policy changes—had already been identified by LEAs and DPI for 2019-20. Since the launch of ECATS in August, 2019, local user proficiency with the system has been hampered by the novel structure and multiple system glitches/repairs. Users continue to report IEP development in ECATS is taking longer and that trust in system integrity is low. Significant professional learning time and effort has thus been required to build capacity and efficiency with local ECATS implementation. Further, due to the integration with general education implementation of MTSS, the 2020 SLD policy implementation is complex and slow-going. To be able to meet the new policy requirements, general and special education leaders are needing to ensure together that their LEA has:
    - A system of high-quality core instruction and scientific research-based intervention for all students;
    - Multiple tiers of instruction, that vary in intensity, matched to student need;
    - A systematic process of problem-solving/data-based decision making; and
    - A comprehensive, balanced assessment system that includes: common formative assessments, interim/benchmark assessments, outcome assessments, universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments

    To be clear, these two capacity-building efforts are central to our efforts to improve graduation rate for students with disabilities; we do not see them as distractors or competitors to our SSIP implementation. That said, they are requiring a different allocation of local professional learning time/effort, and, as such, a different allocation of DPI professional learning resources than in previous years.
2. Professional learning is evolving. When we began the SSIP work in 2014 and built the logic model, our prevailing conceptualization of professional development (as we called it then) was onsite delivery of training for end-users on a particular evidence-based

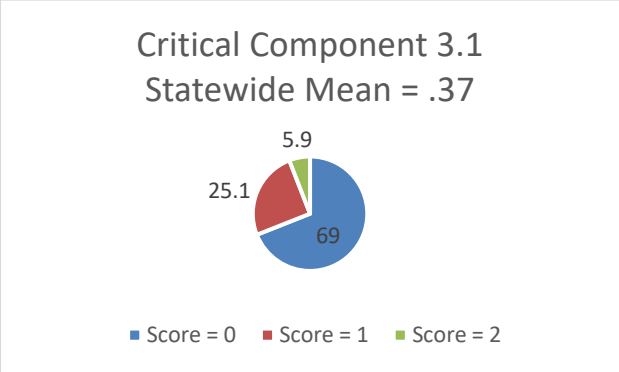
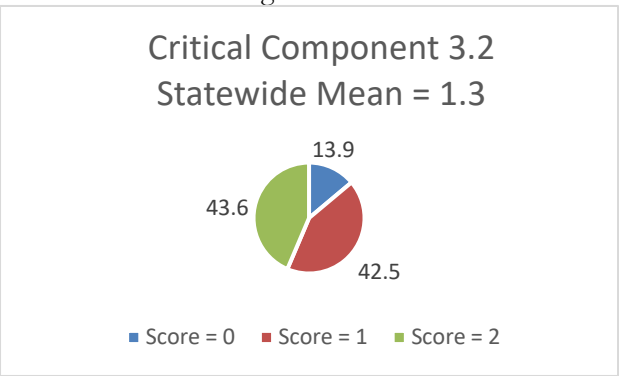
practice with the hope that local application would follow. Given what we now know about the necessity of job-embedded coaching for sustained practice change/improvement and the need for supportive local infrastructure and leadership, direct end-user training alone is no longer evidence-based or tenable. As such, the EC Division has been shifting to an equipping (vs. direct provision) model of professional learning which aims to develop a corp of regional and local trainers and coaches for a given area of improvement (e.g., improving math proficiency for SWD via NCSIP Foundations of Math implementation). Additionally, the use of online professional learning technology has facilitated the equipping approach by allowing DPI to create stable online content, training regional and local teams in both the content and implementation practices, and then supporting local, customized delivery of the content by these field-based teams.

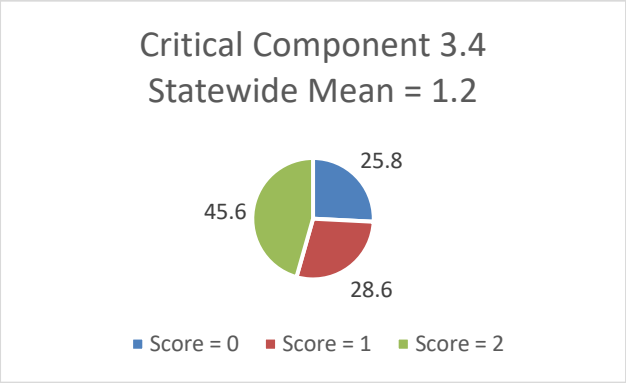
Combined, these Year 4 factors required something different that a professional learning catalog approach to selection of local capacity building efforts. To have spent EC Division resources developing and promoting a catalog last fall would have been a diversion from meeting higher priority needs. Our SSIP implementation cannot be merely dogged; it must also be agile and responsive to LEA needs in both process and product. That said, multiple SSIP-aligned professional learning offerings were sponsored by the EC Division in Year 4, increasingly in partnership with other DPI divisions and external stakeholders. They are described below.

New professional learning/capacity-building based on 2019 LEASA data analysis

Based on analysis of the 2019 LEASA data, EC Directors and EC Division staff were highly motivated to address the dissonance in our LEASA Core Element 3: IEP Development and Implementation Data this year. Namely, both statewide and regional data comparing Critical Components 3.1 to Critical Components 3.2 and 3.4 were concerning. The comparison is shown in Figure 7 below; LEAs rate themselves 0, 1, or, 2 for each critical component based on relevant SWD data.

Figure 7. *Statewide data for Core Element 3.1, 3.2, 3.3*

Critical Component
3.1 Data indicate that students with IEPs are making progress towards grade level standards in the general education curriculum. (0) Fewer than 50% of students with IEPs participating in state assessments met proficiency standards. (1) Between 50% and 79% of students with IEPs participating in state assessments met proficiency standards. (2) At least 80% of students with IEPs participating in state assessments met proficiency standards. 
3.2 Data indicate that students participating in the Standard Course of Study are making progress on IEP goals. (0) Fewer than 50% of students with IEPS who are participating in the College and Career Ready Curriculum met at least (1) Between 50% and 79% of students with IEPS who are participating in the College and Career Ready Curriculum met at least 80% of their IEP goals. 80% of their IEP goals. (2) At least 80% of students with IEPS who are participating in the College and Career Ready Curriculum met at least 80% of their IEP goals. 
3.4 Data indicate that students with disabilities are graduating. (0) Fewer than 50% of students with IEPs graduate within 5 years of entering high school. (1) Between 50% and 79% of students with IEPs graduate within 5 years of entering high school. (2) At least 80% of students with IEPs graduate within 5 years of entering high school.

Critical Component


The concern with these ratings is that the majority of SWD are meeting IEP goals and graduating but not meeting proficiency standards. As one local leader said in her LEASA analysis:

> *"Based on district proficiency for SWD in reading and math (well below) and more than 80% of students are making progress toward IEP goals, there is a disconnect in the effectiveness of how IEP goals are written. More instruction for teachers is needed to ensure data is being used to accelerate growth and close the achievement gap in order to move SWD toward proficiency standards."*

This has generated considerable reflection at the state and local level regarding:

- the potential lack of high expectations for SWD
- whether IEP goals are routinely aligned to state standards
- whether IEP goals are reasonably calculated to support gap-closing growth for SWD
- whether SWD progress is being monitored closely enough to ensure gap-closing growth
- whether the LEA Self-Assessment Core Element 3 should include a critical component related to SWD growth (vs. achievement alone)

In response, the EC Division began statewide capacity-building for standards-aligned IEP development in late Fall, 2019, via online resources, regional EC Director meetings, and the March EC Administrator Institute. (Multiple future capacity-building outlets are also planned for Phase 3/Year 5.) Not only is this focus on standards-aligned IEPs essential to our mandate to provide students with disabilities access to the general education curriculum, but it is also deeply connected to successful installation of the SLD policy change and our statewide implementation of MTSS. Standards-aligned IEP development, like an instructional model of SLD identification in an MTSS, necessitates collaboration between general and special education teachers and related service

providers.

Data-based Individualization

In addition to the standards-aligned IEP focus in Year 4, NCDPI began initial implementation of a formal data-based individualization (DBI) project in partnership with the National Center for Intensive Intervention (NCII) and Buncombe County Schools. DBI is a research-based process for individualizing and intensifying interventions through the systematic use of assessment data, validated interventions, and research-based adaptation strategies (NCII, 2019). NC's investigation of DBI in alignment with the SSIP implementation addresses the need for scaling and sustaining of improvement strategies at the practices/student level, as well as the systems level. We see DBI as the other side of the standards-aligned IEP coin, where DBI ensures the student not only has access to the general education curriculum but is also mastering grade-level standards. A summary of DBI project activities since April, 2019, follows:

April 2019: NCDPI State DBI Team designed a selection tool with specific criteria for Local Education Agencies to apply to partner with the state agency in the project. The team chose K-4 mathematics instruction as the focus for this work.

May 2019: One LEA in the Western Region of the state was selected and accepted the partnership opportunity.

July 2019: Kick-off meeting planned with Buncombe County.

(date ?): 2019 OSEP Leadership Conference presentation- State Strategies for Improving IEP's in Endrew Era.

8/28-8/30, 2019: NCII State Leadership Collaborative Summit

- Problem of Practice presentation: How to progress slowly while moving fast?
- Learning Management Systems to Support DBI and Sustainability- presentation highlighting the work in NC

9/23/2019: Overview of Data-Based Individualization presented to EC Division staff at monthly meeting

9/27/2019: Kick-off Meeting with Buncombe County

10/25/19- 12/12/19: Follow-up meetings and professional development provided to Buncombe County

11/20/2019: Pre-conference Institute: Data-Based Individualization presentation provided by NCII at the North Carolina Annual Conference for Exceptional Children (92 participants)

1/16/2020: Professional Development with Buncombe County- selected teachers, instructional coaches, central office content support staff (math), EC director. Introduction of DBI to teachers and selection of students.
2/13/2020: Professional Development session with Buncombe County- selected teachers, instructional coaches, central office content support staff (math), EC director. DBI process implementation plans developed.
NCII/DPI State Team: virtual meetings held monthly activities of team include:

- Book Study: Essential of Intensive Intervention- edited by Rebecca Zumeta Edmonds, Allison Gruner Gandhi, Louis Danielson- The Guilford Press, 2019
- Participation in 4 webinars provided by Sarah Powell (September 2019-May 2020)
- Review New Modules and/or Tools which provide additional resources to districts supported directly by state agency consultants

Finally, given the ongoing 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 social emotional learning and mental health prevention, promotion, early intervention, and referral services, the ECD has engaged with multiple NCDPI divisions and other state departments in Year 4 to enhance professional learning and technical assistance for scaling up school mental health within NCDPI's ongoing MTSS implementation. These new 2019-20 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 Three 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, 11 NCDPI staff, 26 LEA-based regional coaches for literacy and 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 (RRtCP) and Foundations of Mathematics (FOM) 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 71 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. In Year 4, 72 LEAs were NC SIP partner sites, representing over 400 course instructors. 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 (IHEs) has expanded from four colleges and universities to seven. Across these IHEs, a total of 18 courses now embed some aspect of RRtCP or FOM content provided to 282 pre-service teachers. 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, East Carolina University, Fayetteville State University, 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

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 and, in the 2018-19 school year, this tool replaced 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). Of note to the SSIP evaluation, due to the statewide transition to the FAM-S, 2019-20 data FAM-S will be used as a new baseline for one measure of implementation of social-emotional-behavioral supports for students with disabilities.

Also in Year 4, in response to a need for supplemental supports for students at risk for dropping out of school, the ECD and Integrated Academics and Behavior Systems (IABS) Division have partnered with the University of Minnesota on the implementation of Check and Connect. Initial implementation of developing 28 state trainers is underway; 11 LEAs are participating in the first cohort and, to date, 256 school mentors have completed training.

Finally, with NC's increasing (and evidence-driven) focus on mental health promotion and prevention, the IABS Division, in partnership with the ECD, is leading the scale-up of social emotional learning for students and staff across NC. NCDPI joined the CASEL Collaborating States Initiative (CSI) in Year 4 to promote/support adoption and implementation of evidence-based SEL programs and practices and to promote SEL integration with academic standards and other school based frameworks. NCDPI is also supporting implementation of Prek-12 SEL competencies within the Preschool Pyramid Model (PPM) described below. Further, NCDPI will develop and strengthen family partnerships through policies, systems and supports; and develop and strengthen SEL-related

community partnerships. A summary of Year 4 activities follows:

- development of a Core SEL Practices online professional learning course; 208 participants to date
- establishing state-level SEL working groups
- developing a shared, statewide vision of promoting equity through SEL
- assessing statewide needs and resources and aligning agency resources and policies
- mapping existing NC Standard Course of Study standards to CASEL core competencies
- developing communication and evaluation plans
- developing adult expertise on SEL through professional learning systems
    - create conditions to support SEL across the educator pipeline
    - strengthen adult social and emotional competence and leadership to advance SEL through collaboration with districts, communities and families

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: EC Division Addressing Comprehensive Needs

In Year 3, 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 in the 2018-2019 school year, 20 LEA's shifted their work from reactive to district-wide practices that focus on social-emotional behavioral health for all students. Stakeholders 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. In the 2019-2020 school year, 10 additional LEA's were selected out of 27 applicants. Those selections demonstrated readiness in Tiered Behavior Support, Teaming Structures, Fiscal responsibility in addressing the core behavioral needs. Over the past 2 school years, 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. NCDPI is building capacity by including readiness components in the traditional grant. Each district has also used the

self-assessment process to analyze outcome data, manage implementation timeline, and use necessary data to make an 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 third cohort will complete the comprehensive grant. There are readiness questions that address prior work such as District team-based decision making, Progress monitoring of data, Social Emotional Learning implementation, and tiered behavior supports. Based on the results from the responses, ten additional districts will be added to the Comprehensive Needs Grant for the 2020-21 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 the 2021-2022 school year.

In addition to these supports, North Carolina's Project ACTIVATE (Advancing Coordinated and Timely InterVentions, Awareness, Training, and Education), also locally known as NC Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education), is a collaboration between the NC Department of Public Instruction and the NC Department of Health and Human Services to develop a comprehensive plan of activities, services, and strategies for connecting youth and families to mental health services in three pilot LEAs.

Project ACTIVATE promotes innovative service delivery based on the recommendations of the NC School Mental Health Initiative for equitable access to high quality and well-coordinated mental health and substance abuse services including 1) continuum of supports and services, 2) strategies to foster sustainability, and 3) engagement of all stakeholders. The project addresses the three tiers of mental health (promotion, prevention, and intervention) through a continuum of education, universal screening, and appropriate services and supports for all students in response to varying levels of need. Recognizing the interrelatedness of academic outcomes and mental health/well-being of students Project ACTIVATE seeks to provide an embedded approach within an existing system (schools) versus fragmented and reactive approaches.

North Carolina was selected by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as one of the 24 US states/territories and the District of Columbia for a 5-year Project ACTIVATE funding cohort for FY 2018-2023. The Project ACTIVATE grant serves to build state and local education agencies' capacity to develop a comprehensive, coordinated and integrated program to advance wellness and resilience in educational settings for school-aged youth.

To determine whether Project ACTIVATE LEAs achieve each of the four program goals, LEAs are collecting key data throughout the life of the grant. Table 5 below presents the goals as listed in the NC Project ACTIVATE proposal, as well as the implementation and outcome questions that are associated with each goal. In the progress column, the county that is referenced is indicated in

parentheses after each statement: Rockingham [R], Beaufort [B], or Cleveland [C]. A full report of Project AWARE activity in Year 4 is also publicly available.

Table 5. *NC Project ACTIVATE Goals*

Goal	Implementation Questions	Outcome Questions	Progress
Increase the knowledge and effective practice of all school staff in recognizing and responding to student mental health needs.	1. What trainings were conducted? 2. What components of the training were delivered to fidelity? 3. How many trainings were conducted? 4. How many participants attended the training? 5. What coaching activities were conducted? 6. What was the frequency, duration, and quality of coaching activities? 7. How many participants engaged in job-embedded coaching activities?	1. What changes occurred in participant knowledge and skills due to the training? 2. What changes occurred in participant behaviors and dispositions due to job-embedded coaching?	**Training:** LEA mental health team trained (24 participants) (B) Teachers trained in Suicide Risk Protocol, Resiliency Room Protocol, MTSS for Social/ Emotional, Calming Corner Protocols, Say Something - Anonymous Reporting System (C) Workforce trained in Community Resiliency Model (CRM), Question Persuade Refer, and Youth Mental Health First Aid (C) Teams trained in Behavior Foundations Training, Non Violent Crisis Prevention Intervention, threat assessment, Trauma Informed Care Training, Youth Mental Health First Aid (R) **Coaching:** Developing CRM training guide and coaching curriculum (C) RCS Discipline Handbook provides information to teachers with process, interventions, and resources (R) Coaching supports for suicide and threat assessment (R) **Fidelity:** Tracking fidelity of use in Suicide Risk Protocol (C) Tracking fidelity of use in Threat Assessment Protocol and Safety / Intervention Plans (R)

Goal	Implementation Questions	Outcome Questions	Progress
Improve behavioral and psychological indices of school engagement and decrease school disciplinary events for preschool through 12th grade by implementing universal prevention activities within a Multi-Tiered System of Support.	1. What data sources were analyzed to engage in systematic problem solving of core behavioral / social-emotional / substance use programming? 2. What percent of students in selected schools were screened for behavior, social-emotional, or substance use issues? 3. What percent of students in selected schools received instruction related to social emotional competencies and/ or substance abuse? 4. What was the fidelity of implementation of universal social-emotional / substance use program / practices (frequency, duration, intensity, components, quality)? 5. Is there a significant difference between fidelity of implementation of universal social-emotional / substance use programs / practices for staff that have received coaching compared to staff that have not received coaching?	1. Are there changes in student behavior and/or social-emotional competencies? 2. Are there changes in psychological and behavioral indices of school engagement and disciplinary incidents? 3. How many districts, schools, and community agencies visited the district to observe a model of best practice?	**Screening tools:** 7 screening tools under consideration (B) Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS) selected (C) Rapid Assessment for Adolescent Preventive Services (RAAPS), but still seeking universal screening tool (R) **Learning standards and practices:** Review of code of conduct (B, C, R) Identify NC Guidance Essential Standards relevant for social-emotional and mental health (B) School counselors and PE address Health Education Standards, including mental health (C) School Crisis Plan (R) Creation of a Socio-Emotional Learning team to identify a curriculum (R) Healthful Living Standard Course of Study shared across LEA (R) Implemented School Wellness Committee (R) **Programs:** Zones of Regulation (B, C) Think Social (B) Second Steps (C, R) Strong Kids/Start (C) Connected and Respected (C) Leader in Me (C) EVERFI Soc. & Emo. Learning (C)

Goal	Implementation Questions	Outcome Questions	Progress
Reduce school dropout, rate of attempted suicide, and substance use by increasing the number of at-risk students receiving supplemental and intensive mental health and substance use supports within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports.	1. What percent of students were identified as requiring supplemental or intensive supports? 2. What proportion of students identified as requiring supplemental or intensive supports received them? 3. What was the fidelity of implementation of the selected supplemental social-emotional / substance use program / practices (frequency, duration, intensity, components, quality)? 4. Is there a significant difference between fidelity of implementation of supplemental social-emotional / substance use programs / practices for staff that have received coaching compared to staff that have not received coaching?	1. What percent of students demonstrated standardized improvement of mental health status after receiving supplemental or intensive services? 2. Are there changes to rates of school dropout, attempted suicide, and substance use?	**Data:** Baseline data collection for 2018-19 year underway (B) Schools use discipline and attendance data monthly (C, R) ECATS early warning system (C) Track SISP staff data (C, R) **Community partners, Outpatient Therapy:** One existing and potential others (B) Four existing (C, R) **Community Partners, Youth Mental Health Advisory Council or Local Collaborative:** One (C, R) **Community Partners, State Agencies:** Two (C)

Goal	Implementation Questions	Outcome Questions	Progress
Improve coordination and sustainability of mental health supports and services through increased family and community agency engagement.	1. What is the perceived quality of communication from NCDPI and NC DHHS as reported by project stakeholders? 2. What percent of selected schools have completed the SHAPE system? 3. What percent of selected schools have conducted systematic resource mapping? 4. What components of the LEA communication plan have been executed as planned? 5. What percent of school-based teams have representative community partners attending over 90% of meetings?	1. What are the levels of collaboration between the LEA and key identified stakeholder groups?	**Communication:** Contact with NCDPI and NCDHHS (B, C, R) Contact with DSS and Health Department (C) Contact with School Board (C, R) Media communication re: grant and services (C, R) Shared threat assessment model at conferences (R) Creation of trainings and referral forms for need of behavioral support (R) **Understanding of treatment process and protocols:** SHAPE Needs Assessment (B, C, R) Creation of Problem-Solving Teams (B, C, R) School-level MTSS teams (C) Protocols for Tier 2 and 3 interventions (C) **Community partners:** Outpatient therapy (B, C) State agencies (C) Student Health Centers (R) **Supports:** Creations of a new behavioral health department in the LEA (R)

In addition, the Project AWARE team partnered with the IABS Division in Year 4 as part of NC participation in the Southeast School Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Learning Community to conduct a large-scale state-level school mental health resource mapping. This work allowed DPI and other state agencies to identify redundancies and gaps in school mental health resources and make recommendations for strategic coordination of school social-emotional-behavioral health activities.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Preschool Pyramid Model Project

North Carolina (NC) began the exploration phase of implementing the Preschool Pyramid Model (PPM) in 2008 with a technical assistance and training grant from the Center for Social Emotional

Foundations of Early Learning. Recent developments in implementing the PPM follow.

Between 2016 and 2019, the NC Early Learning Network (ELN), a project providing a statewide system of professional development and technical assistance support, built an on-line data system to collect pre-and post- Teacher Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) scores, coaching log information, child outcome data by class, and district implementation data. In 2020, ELN began piloting a statewide Preschool Pyramid Expert Coach (PPEC) certification process to develop and identify high quality coaches across the state to support district sustainability and scale-up. In 2018, NC DPI OEL began a collaboration with the NC Head Start State Collaboration Office to expand this model of Pyramid implementation into Head Start programs not administered by school districts. That collaboration is now in its second full year.

Measuring the Effects on Child Outcome

An important part of evaluating any educational project is ensuring that children are benefiting in some way. Therefore, in addition to the process evaluation of the NC Preschool Pyramid Model (PPM, formerly NC SEFEL) initiative, this section will summarize data on child outcomes, in particular children's social-emotional competence, an important protective factor that can reduce the likelihood of individuals dropping out of high school later in life.

Nearly all of the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participating in the PPM initiative currently collect data on children's social-emotional competence using the Teaching Strategies Gold (TS Gold) assessment, which accompanies the Creative Curriculum. Although this measure is designed as a formative assessment tool for teachers, its strong psychometric profile (Lambert, 2017), along with data for a national norming sample and near ubiquitous use, provide an opportunity to use the tool to examine the degree to which use of the PPM is accomplishing its goal of improving children's social competence prior to kindergarten entrance.

In order to be included in the evaluation sample, classrooms must meet a number of requirements. First, like the national sample, all teachers providing data needed to have passed the inter-rater reliability TS Gold system training and test. Second, each teacher must complete all 11 modules of the *NC Foundations – Effective Teaching Practices for Social-Emotional Development* training. Finally, all reporting teachers are required to have met fidelity using PPM practices as measured using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) or be in the process of reaching fidelity while receiving practice-based coaching on PPM practices.

Before reporting the data, it is important to understand some key differences between the national norming sample for the TS Gold and the NC sample. First, the TS Gold normative sample included children attending center-based care in the United States. The NC sample is more restrictive, containing only classrooms in LEAs that include children with special needs. Second, the TS Gold sample excluded children with excessive absences and children who arrived late in the year, whereas the NC sample includes these children. In general, these sample differences would be associated with less progress on a scale of social-emotional functioning like the one examined here. However, as in years past, the opposite is the case. One explanation for this paradoxical finding is that the training and support the NC teachers receive as part of their participation in the PPM lead to changes in classroom practices, which in turn lead to children with improved social-emotional competence.

Program Collaborations

During the third year of PPM implementation, NC DPI decided to build its system within the public schools since they were connected through the state's finance department. Public schools also had fewer barriers to adapting training to address professional teaching and early childhood standards and implementing a scale-up process. The state child care program in NC developed a much different approach to supporting pyramid practices that better fits the culture of private enterprise. Cross-sector collaboration began with expansion into Head Start programs, with the support of the Head Start State Collaboration Office Director. This collaboration is uncovering necessary adaptations to the implementation process while also building strong partnerships between schools and Head Start programs.

NC DPI OEL also recognizes the need to align the PPM with the K-12 system where much is happening in the world of Social Emotional Learning (SEL). In 2016, North Carolina's State Board of Education adopted the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) as a framework for overall school improvement. NC DPI created the Integrated Academic and Behavior Supports (IABS) division to implement MTSS. Within the past 3 years, consultants from NC's Positive Behavior Incentive System (PBIS) were moved to the NC DPI IABS division to ensure the MTSS model could be inclusive of both academic and behavior. As the implementation of the K-12 NC MTSS process began to roll-out in cohort groups, school systems (LEAs) across the state asked, "How does preschool fit into the MTSS model?" Leaders of the NC PPM initiative wrote a white paper (a government report giving information or proposals on an issue) in 2017 on "What Should MTSS

Look Like in Preschool?" Since that time, leaders from the NC PPM initiative and the IABS division have met regularly to establish terms of reference and cross walk elements of the implementation process of each initiative to identify similarities and differences. Simply providing training and coaching on effective teacher practices to promote social-emotional learning and prevent challenging behaviors, and then using data to monitor child progress, does not meet all the critical components of a MTSS. The additional pieces of leadership support using implementation science, coaching teachers to fidelity, communication and collaboration between leadership and teachers, and program evaluation to inform program improvement were built into the NC PPM initiative. Continued work centers on exploring MTSS's definition of "universal screening for behavior" outside of identifying and responding to challenging behaviors. Terms such as "standard treatment protocol" are familiar to the K-12 MTSS sector but what does that mean for the PPM? What effective teacher practices and processes are already in place in the PPM that meet the MTSS definition of a "standard treatment protocol"? ELN, with consultation from DPI IABS division, developed a standard treatment protocol for preschool social emotional and behavior support that is embedded in pyramid effective teacher practices.

More recently, NC has several school districts that are successfully implementing the PPM and interested in providing Kindergarten teachers similar training on effective pyramid teaching practices. As a result, NC, in consultation with the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations is exploring expanding pyramid practices into Kindergarten.

The connection to mental health initiatives within the Department is also critical so that teachers and caregivers are aware of, and gain access to, mental health supports for preschool children. NC DPI received a multi-million SAMSHA grant to pilot mental health consultation in the public schools. Three districts participate, and all three are already implementing the PPM initiative. Preschool leaders in these districts are strongly encouraged to join the efforts in their districts, since the project is intended for PreK to 12th grade. Recently, funds for training mental health consultants on early childhood evidence-based practices were included in the NC Preschool Development Grant (awarded December 2019). In the next year, school districts and Children's Developmental Services Agencies (serving Infants and Toddlers) across the state will become certified in these therapy programs. Lastly, NC DPI applied to be included in the CASEL Consortium of States Initiative which is a technical assistance grant to support a state's scale up of social and emotional learning for schools. CASEL stands for The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

(CASEL). This initiative brings together leaders focusing on social and emotional learning from DPI OEL, EC Division, Integrated Academic and Behavior Support Division, and NC Healthy Schools Division to organize and leverage resources across the state that support social and emotional learning. Collectively, goals are that:

- children and families gain access to necessary supports and services,
- teachers are trained in evidence-based practices to support SEL learning in the classroom, and
- teachers can identify red flag indicators for potential mental health concerns.

If successful, children will no longer be removed for behavioral concerns resulting in fewer absences, increased engagement in school, and better outcomes in school and the workforce.

Transition: Development of a Continuum of Transition Supports

The EC Division offered a Person-Centered Thinking session to 2017-2018 Continuum of Transitions 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. There were three LEAs to participate in this two-day training. Of the participating LEAs, one LEA opted to develop and implement a plan to increase the number of students participating in and leading their IEP meetings.

The participating LEA surveyed their 5th grade EC Teachers to determine the number of students on their roster, the number of students who were invited to their previous IEP, and the number of students who participated in their previous IEP.

Table 6. *Student participation in IEP meetings in pilot LEA*

# 5th grade teachers	**# students on roster**	**# students invited to previous IEP**	**# students participated in previous IEP**
38	237	27	12

The LEA developed PLC training for their 5th grade teachers specific to: Students Participating in and Leading their IEP. These students will be tracked to determine if the number invited to and participating in their IEP increases. The goal of the LEA is to continue to expand PLC training by adding a grade level each year. The upcoming 2020-2021 SY will include 6th grade teachers in the training and data collection.

The 2019-20 Continuum of Transitions cohort consists of three LEAs who met the following readiness criteria by demonstrating:

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

Participants of this cohort include two traditional and one charter LEAs of varying sizes. The traditional LEAs identified their target grade bands and received 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.

Table 7. *CoT 2019-20 Cohort Progress*

LEA	Bell Ringers training	Implementation date	Survey Completed
Western	September 2019	2nd 9 weeks Middle School (7 teachers trained)	Awaiting data entry
Northeast	January 2020	3rd 9 weeks Middle and High School (15 teachers trained)	Awaiting data entry
North Central	Awaiting training date	Possibly 4th 9 weeks	pending

The participants of the 2019-2020 Cohort have expressed a desire to participate in the Person-Centered Thinking training and to proceed with a strategy to improve students leading their IEP in the 2020-2021 SY.

Identifying participants for the 2019-2020 cohort was a bit more challenging than the initial cohort. All interested participants wanted to delay training and implementation due to the uncertainly of how the rollout of ECATS might impact their teachers.

Stakeholder Involvement in SSIP Implementation

The SSIP External Team

While active implementation of the NC SSIP was ongoing from July 10, 2018, through July, 15, 2019, the state-level SSIP team did not meeting due to a vacancy in the SSIP Coordinator role and staffing shortages in EC Division leadership. During that time, engagement with SSIP external stakeholders was also limited. Since July 15, 2019, recruitment of both external and internal team members has resulted in a diverse and strong collection of voices representing families, advocacy groups, educators, IHEs, local general and special education leaders, multiple divisions at DPI. Recruitment was based on selection criteria developed by ECD

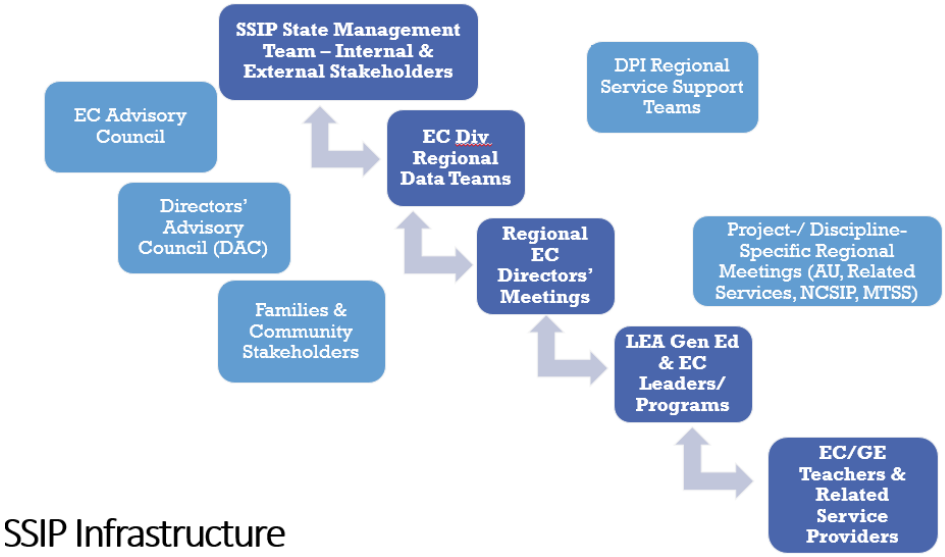
leadership, ensuring roles and expertise were represented per the roster linked above. Previous (before July 10, 2018) external stakeholders were recruited back based on these roles as well, and, given new roles were added, new people were also recruited. Potential team members received an email invitation and follow-up clarification was provided via phone call as needed.

The external stakeholder team, which also includes all internal DPI members, began monthly meetings in November, 2019, and has quickly engaged in orientation/development of broad implementation frameworks, macro- planning (big picture/systems level decisions), data evaluation, decisions, and provision general feedback on implementation. Large-scale decisions are 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 SSIP internal team has also been meeting monthly, in addition to the external stakeholders meetings, since November, 2019, with a general focus on details and management of the large-scale frameworks and decisions made by the external team. Recent activities for both teams include:

- development of terms of reference for the SSIP State Management Team, Regional Data Teams, and Regional EC Director meetings
- organization of four SSIP work groups (Data Literacy, Research-informed Practice, Stakeholder & Family Engagement, and Systems Coherence) round the new NCSI Conceptual Framework
- LEA Self-Assessment data analysis and action planning, including decision to create LEA data profiles to support 2020 LEASA submission and build local capacity re: standards-aligned IEPs
- guidance on setting of new 1-year APR targets
- establishing explicit connections between SSIP and other EC Division/DPI efforts (e.g., crosswalk tool aligning SSIP and SPP/APR with DPI's ESSA plan, NC STAR, MTSS FAM-S, and DPI's Comprehensive Needs Assessment; SLD policy readiness; data-based individualization; ECATS)

Figure 8 below illustrates the revised SSIP cascading teaming structure that supports implementation of the SSIP logic model.

Figure 8. *SSIP Cascading Teaming Structure*



The Exceptional Children Division

The SSIP team houses the notes, resources, and decisions made for each SSIP meeting in a shared folder which is made available to NCDPI staff. 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., changes to LEASA for 2020) and conduct SSIP work (e.g., LEASA reviews, LEASA data analysis).

Partnering within the State Education Agency

Within the broader SEA, stakeholders are primarily involved with SSIP through the internal stakeholder team. Examples since the Phase Three, Year Three report include active implementation of the SDI within an MTSS professional learning series, the agency assessments crosswalk tool, multiple social-emotional-behavioral health efforts, and standards-aligned IEP capacity-building.

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 ECATS, SLD, and standards-aligned IEPs this past year, those data are considered in the ECD's gap analysis and improvement of professional learning and technical support.

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. As mentioned above, for the 5-year cohort graduating in 2018-19, the calculation for 'adjusted' changed and included students who were student with disabilities at any time during their designated 5-year graduation cohort, including, for the first time, those who had exited special education.

Coherent Improvement Strategy: Problem Solving & Effective Implementation

- **LEASA Annual 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 local root cause for lower graduation rate for SWD and select coherent, evidence-based improvement strategies. In addition, the review data elucidate the presence or absence of key components of successful implementation.

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: FAM-S, PPM, and Project AWARE

- **NC FAM-S:** measures school-level implementation of NC MTSS. The purpose of administration and its resulting data is to help school and district-level personnel identify and prioritize implementation steps. The instrument contains 41 items in 6 domains (Leadership, Building Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation, Communication and Collaboration, Data-based Problem-solving, Three-tiered Instruction/Intervention Model, and Data-Evaluation).

The revised instrument, released in 2019, provides the field with an integrated tool which assesses the breadth and depth of academic, behavior and social-emotional supports. Items related to the social-emotional-behavioral domain include definition of expectations, teaching of behavioral expectations, system for responding to behavioral violations, etc.

- **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. This tool has been replaced by the FAM-S and DPI will establish new baseline data in Year 5.
- **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 was gathered in Year 4 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 data collection and analysis, the Project AWARE Evaluators & Data Managers have developed an evaluation 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 have also developed a performance assessment plan detailing the tools used to measure inputs, the implementation of evidence-based practices, and the desired short, mid-, and long-term student outcomes. The performance assessment plan is aligned to project goals and objectives. 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 overall. 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. The formal evaluation plan (aligned with the SSIP evaluation plan) for the AWARE project is currently undergoing revision based on lessons learned in Year 4 (first year of grant).

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 Four, the data collection procedures and timelines returned to match those described in the Phase Three, Year One report. NCDPI adopted PowerSchool as the primary Student Information System (SIS) several years ago. A number of databases/procedures were leveraged for the SSIP evaluation. Once compiled, necessary data were shared with the Center for Education Measurement and Evaluation at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte for analysis.

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 now submitted annually via Qualtrics. Data are then aggregated for analysis purposes.
- **Common Education Data Analysis and Reporting System (CEDARS)** is an Oracle based data warehouse that provides standardized academic and discipline data that can be accessed over the life of the project.
- **The NC SIP data base:** is a data base 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.
- **SEFEL Data:** were provided by the project lead. 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.

How data management/analysis procedures support assessment of progress

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

Review of key data regarding progress toward achieving intended improvement

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 full 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

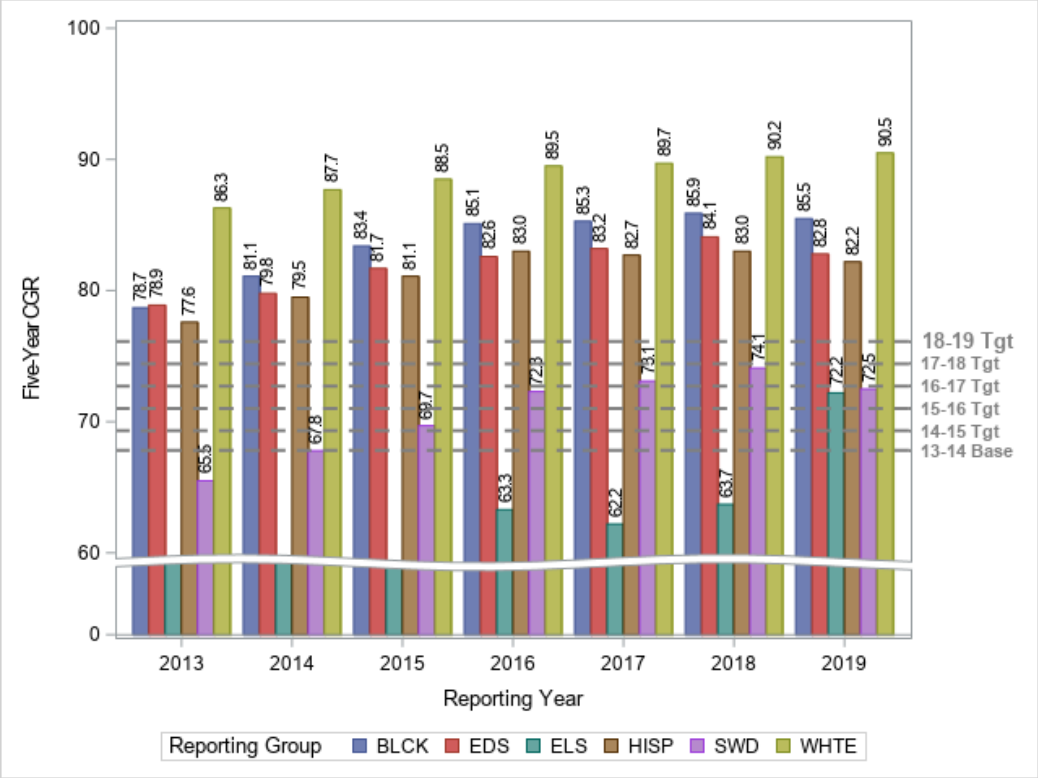
The longitudinal analysis will be organized in relation to the SIMR and the LEA Self-Assessment and Improvement Process. As described previously, the longitudinal analysis indicates whether the change from baseline (from 2014-15 to 2015-16, from 2014- 15 to 2016-17, from 2016-17 to 2017-18, and from 2017-18-2018-19) 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?).

Graduation

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

The North Carolina 5-year Cohort Graduation Rates (CGR) were summarized for the time spanning the 2012-13 through 2018-19 school years by demographic subgroups. The rates, by year and subgroup, are displayed below in Figure 1. The dashed, grey lines represent the 2013-14 baseline 5-year CGR value and the 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 NCSSIP established targets. As we can see, based on the most recent 2018-19 data, except for the Students with Disabilities (SWD) and the English Learners (ELS), other displayed subgroups exceeded the 2018-19 target.

Figure 9. *NC 5-Year CGR Rates by subgroup. (note gray dashed lines represent targets set)*



What is the longitudinal trend in 5YACGR for <u>students with</u> <u>disabilities</u> in North Carolina?

In addition to the analysis above, Table 8 provides a summary of the change in CGR rates from 2017-18 to 2018-19 for SWD. If the 2018-19 CGR was less than the 2017-18 CGR by more than the "No Change" caliper (currently .1*SDchange in percentage points; roughly a small effect size as defined by Cohen's d), then the change was labelled a decrease. If the 2018-19 CGR rate was greater than 2017-18 by more than the caliper, the change was labelled an increase. Any change falling within the caliper was denoted "No Change." Again, we attribute the prevalence of LEAs seeing a decrease to the change in the 5YACGR business rules.

Table 8. *Change in CGR rates from 2017-18 to 2018-19 for SWD*

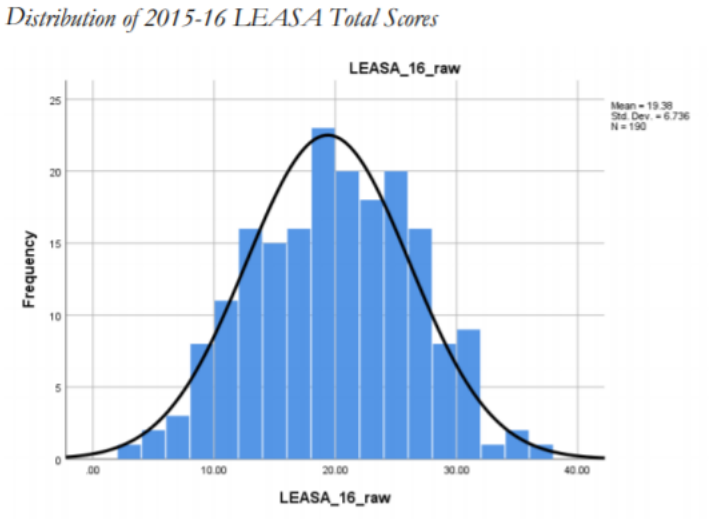
ALL LEAs					
CGR Rate Change					
Decrease		No Change		Increase	
n	%	n	%	n	%
62	52.54	18	15.25	38	32.2

LEA Self-Assessment

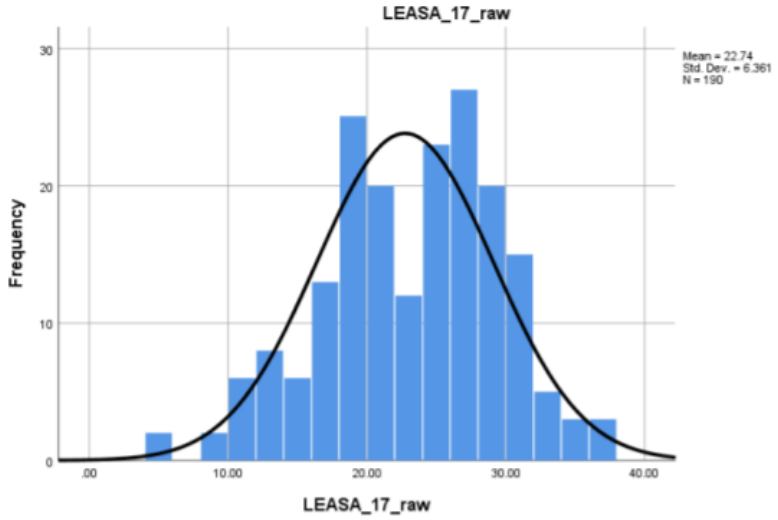
What is the longitudinal trend in the total scores obtained by LEAs on the LEASA?

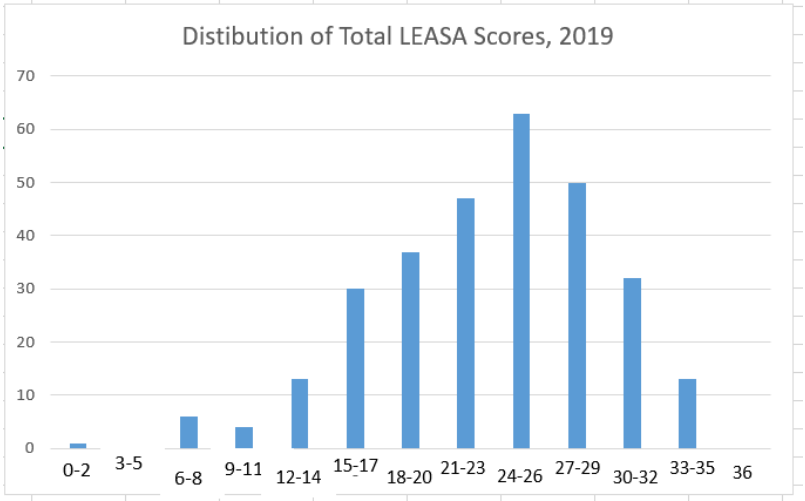
Figures 10 below shows the distributions of total scores of LEASA ratings for LEAs from 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2018-19 respectively (analysis not conducted for 2017-18). The distributions are relatively normal and show an increase in mean total score from 2015-16 (M=19.38, SD=6.74) to 2018-19 (M=24.2, SD=6.25). This means that LEAs rated themselves higher across critical components that reflect capacity to deliver comprehensive special education services that promote graduation for students with disabilities. In addition, it yields some indication that LEAs are increasing their general capacity to problem solve and implement evidence-based based practices.

Figure 10. *Distribution of total LEASA scores for 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2018-19*



Distribution of 2016-17 LEASA Total Scores

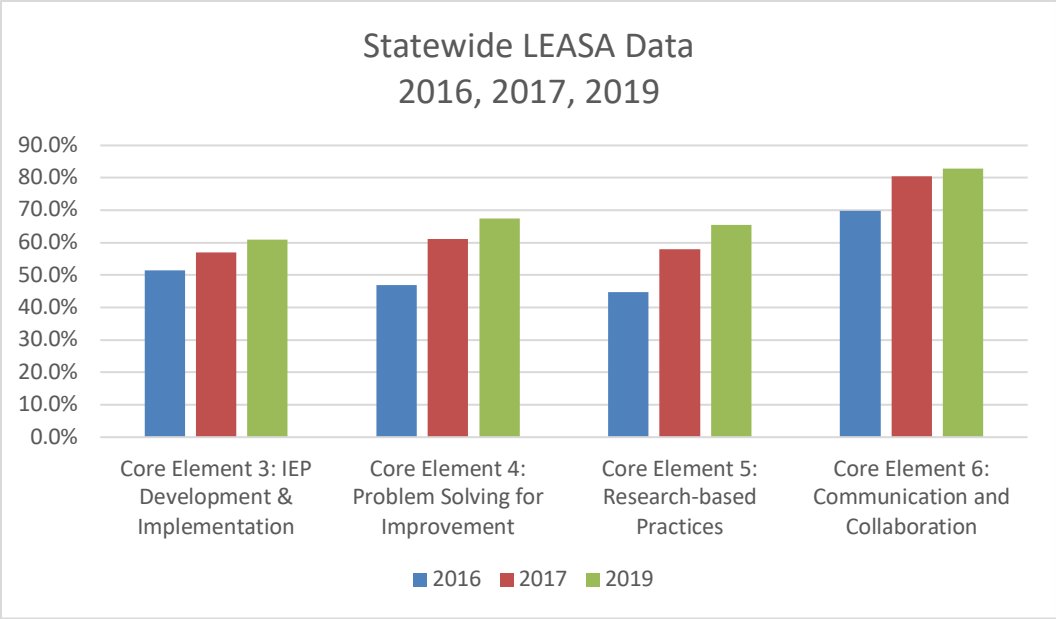




What is the status of the core element scores obtained by LEAs on the LEASA?

Descriptive statistics were obtained state-wide for the Core Elements included in the practice profile of the LEASA. Figure BB below shows the mean percentage of total points obtained by LEAs in Core Elements 3-6 of the LEASA. To answer the question above, generally, LEAs had higher mean self-ratings in each core element in 2017 as compared to 2016, and in 2019 compared to 2017 (this analysis was not conducted in 2018). The largest gains were seen in core elements 4 (increase of 20.4%) and 5 increase of 20.7%), which represented the domains with the lowest mean self-ratings in 2016. Notably, the lowest individual item mean (and the only one that fell below a 1, indicating meeting a developmental variation of implementation) is Core Element 3 (3.1 for SWD meeting academic proficiency), which would be one of the last to experience change relative to the NC SSIP logic model.

Figure 11. *Statewide Practice Profile Data 2016 – 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?

The fidelity data historically used for this analysis was not deemed reliable this year, largely due to a lack of local personnel time to both collect and enter the data into the NC SIP reporting site. Based on feedback from the field, new fidelity monitoring process/measures will be implemented in Year 5.

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

Table 9 below shows the trend in reading and math achievement for all SWD in grades 4, 8, and HS. Not all SWD receive instruction from NC SIP-trained teachers, so these data are not a specific reflection of the impact of NC SIP activities. That said, as statewide saturation of NC SIP-trained personnel increases, we anticipate these data improving. Overall, in the course of NC's SSIP implementation, reading proficiency remained relatively flat across these grades and, until 2017, math proficiency was also even across grades. The slippage for performance in math in 2018 is due to the implementation of new math assessments in 2018-19. The assessments are more rigorous and based on changes to/more rigorous content and achievement standards.

Table 9. *Longitudinal SWD achievement data*

FFY	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		Total Change
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	
4th	16.46%	19.24%	15.62%	20.38%	14.69%	19.68%	15.91%	19.72%	15.75%	3.74%	R: -.71%% M: -15.5%
8th	10.64%	7.39%	10.29%	7.37%	10.16%	7.56%	10.21%	7.41%	10.86%	1.83%	R: +.22% M: -5.56%
HS	13.53%	10.99%	13.07%	10.95%	13.38%	10.81%	11.99%	11.60%	12.57%	0.71%	R: -.96% M: -10.28%

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

As mentioned above, NC has transitioned to the FAM-S as the measure of MTSS implementation at the school level, replacing prior metrics of PBIS implementation. The SSIP team is setting new baselines for FAM-S items specific to implementation of behavior supports in 2020 and will report these in the Year 5 report in 2021.

Social-Emotional-Behavioral: Preschool Pyramid Model Project

What is the trend in fidelity for implementing the Preschool Pyramid Model in the targeted project?

In 2018-2019, teachers from 104 classrooms reported TS Gold data on approximately 1,560 children. Children in PPM classrooms made greater progress over the course of the preschool year on the social-emotional scale (mean Δ score = 14.35) than their counterparts in the national sample (mean Δ score = 10.75). Comparing the NC sample to the population via a two-tailed z-test suggests that the NC sample made significantly greater progress ($p < .0001$).

Measuring the Effects of Coaching

Coaches in PPM implementation counties report beginning and end-of-year TPOT scores for teachers they are coaching. Figure 12 shows the reported data for 57 teachers. The scores depicted in the blue box represent those collected prior to coaching in the 2018-2019 school year while those in the orange box represent those collected following coaching at the end of the year. The line in each box marks the median score in each distribution while the x designates the mean. The boundaries of each box mark the top and bottom of the middle 50% of the distributions. That is, 50% of all scores at each time period lie somewhere

within each box. The whiskers denote the distance between the lowest and highest scores outside of that 50% range. Finally, the individual dots represent individual outliers significantly above or below the median.

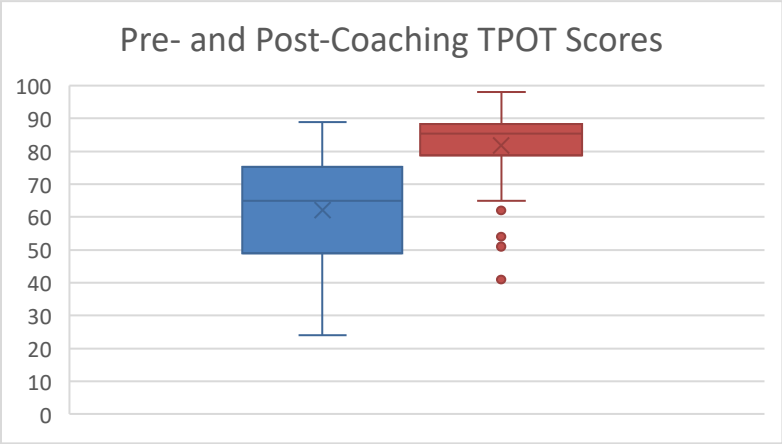


Figure 12. *Pre- and Post TPOT Scores*

The median score for the pre-coaching TPOT (in blue) is 65, while the median score for the post-coaching TPOT (in orange) is 85, showing significant growth for teachers receiving coaching over the course of the year. Additionally, as expected, the box and whiskers for the initial TPOT scores cover a much greater distance than the post-coaching scores. This suggests that teachers receiving coaching became more similar to one another with regard to their implementation of PPM practices (i.e., exhibited more uniform, high quality practices).

For teachers who have already achieved fidelity on the Preschool Pyramid Model as measured by the TPOT, a yearly maintenance TPOT is also conducted around November or December. This TPOT allows practitioners to avoid slippage and falling out of fidelity with the program. Teachers receiving TPOT scores in during a maintenance observation receive some follow-up coaching and may work with the coach to create an action plan, if needed. Figure 2 shows the TPOT scores for the 65 teachers who received maintenance observations. The median score, 91, for these teachers is higher than for newer teachers still receiving coaching, indicating that past coaching to move them to fidelity has resulted in maintenance of that fidelity over the following years. Also, as with the post-coaching teachers, a narrower range of scores is noticeable, suggesting that these teachers are more uniform in practice with regard to PPM practices.

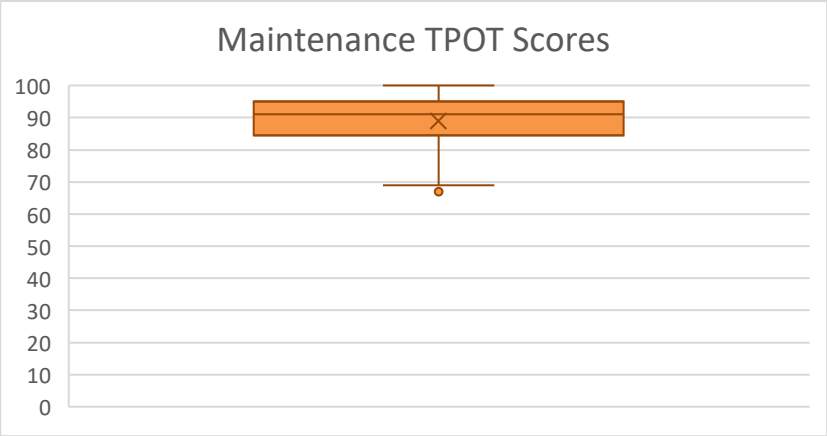


Figure 13. *Box and whisker plot for teachers at maintenance*

Implementation Progress

NC PPM Sites with Practice-Based Coaches

Currently there are 37 school districts in North Carolina operating 1,044 preschool classrooms and implementing the PPM. Implementation includes establishing leadership implementation teams, trainers, and practice-based coaches within their school districts. In 2018-2019, there were over 340 classrooms meeting or working toward fidelity of instructional practices, as measured using the TPOT.

Support for NC PPM Practice Based Coaches

Since training for coaches began, 773 participants have attended all of the NC Coaching training events. Three hundred thirty attended Mindful Coaching training , 296 attended TPOT training, and 147 attended Practice-Based Coaching using the TPOT training. Three hundred eighty coaches also attended regional coaches' meetings held in the fall and spring of each year. In 2018-2019, ELN designed and developed quarterly coaching webinars to help coaches further develop their skills and effectiveness.

Coaches Using the Statewide Online Coaching & Implementation System

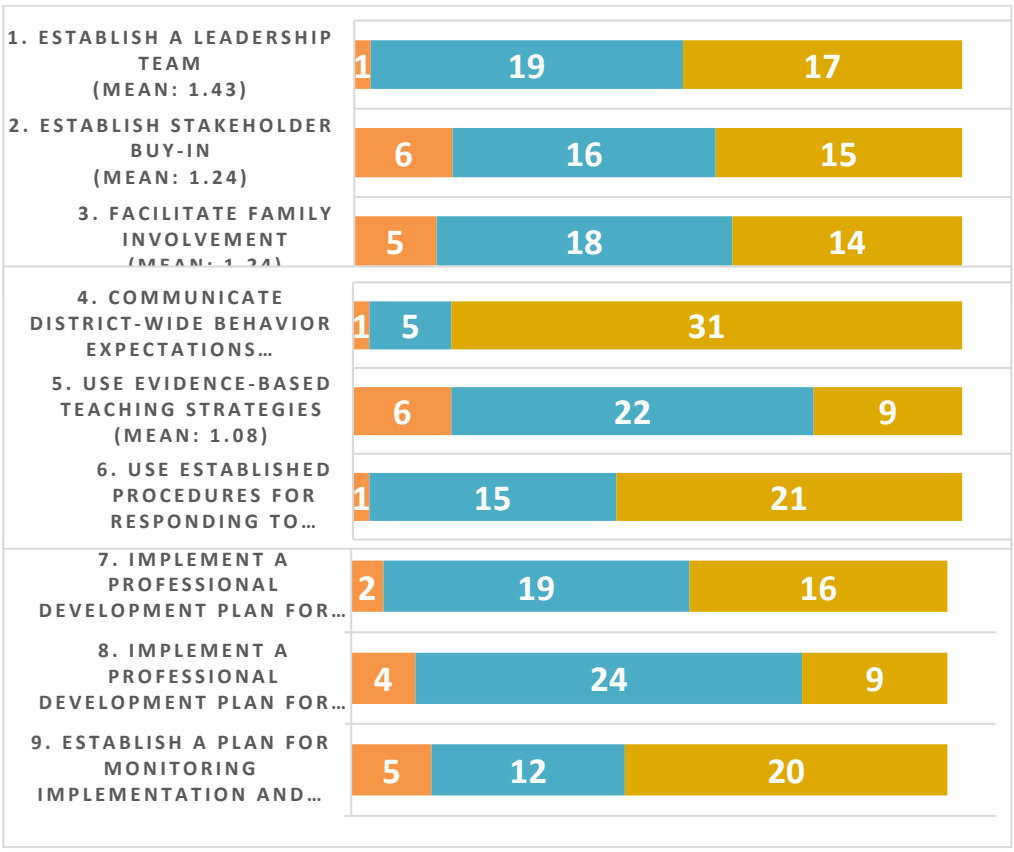
As mentioned previously, ELN built the PPM online system to collect and analyze reliable coaching and implementation data. During 2018-2019, 214 coaches entered coaching and/or other implementation data into the online system.

Measuring Implementation Progress for Districts

In order for LEAs to effectively implement the PPM in classrooms, they must have support and systems in place at the district level to facilitate the adoption and use of the PPM practices. Leadership Implementation Teams from participating districts complete a Yearly Program Review (YPR), which includes data on the LEA's progress on key implementation steps, or indicators, which are described in the PPM practice profile and included in the district's PPM implementation plan. YPR data are entered and

tracked in the online system. During the 2018-2019 school year, 37 LEAs completed Yearly Program Reviews. Figure 14 shows the results of their ratings.

Figure 14. *Program Implementation Data 2018-2019*



Optimally, existing districts would make progress on all indicators each year. However, for a number of reasons (e.g., staff turnover, reallocation of LEA resources), this does not necessarily occur. This year, mean scores on six of the nine indicators improved when compared to last year's mean scores. Two indicators decreased. One indicator remained essentially unchanged. Table 10 shows the movement of means from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019. Normally, we would use caution in interpreting these changes from year to year due to the addition and subtraction of participating LEAs. However, between these two years, participating districts remained largely stable, allowing for the comparison.

Table 10. *Year-over-year key implementation step change*

Key Implementation Step	Year-over-year Mean Change
1	.17
2	-.23
3	-.20
4	.07
5	.05
6	.10
7	.12
8	.01
9	.09

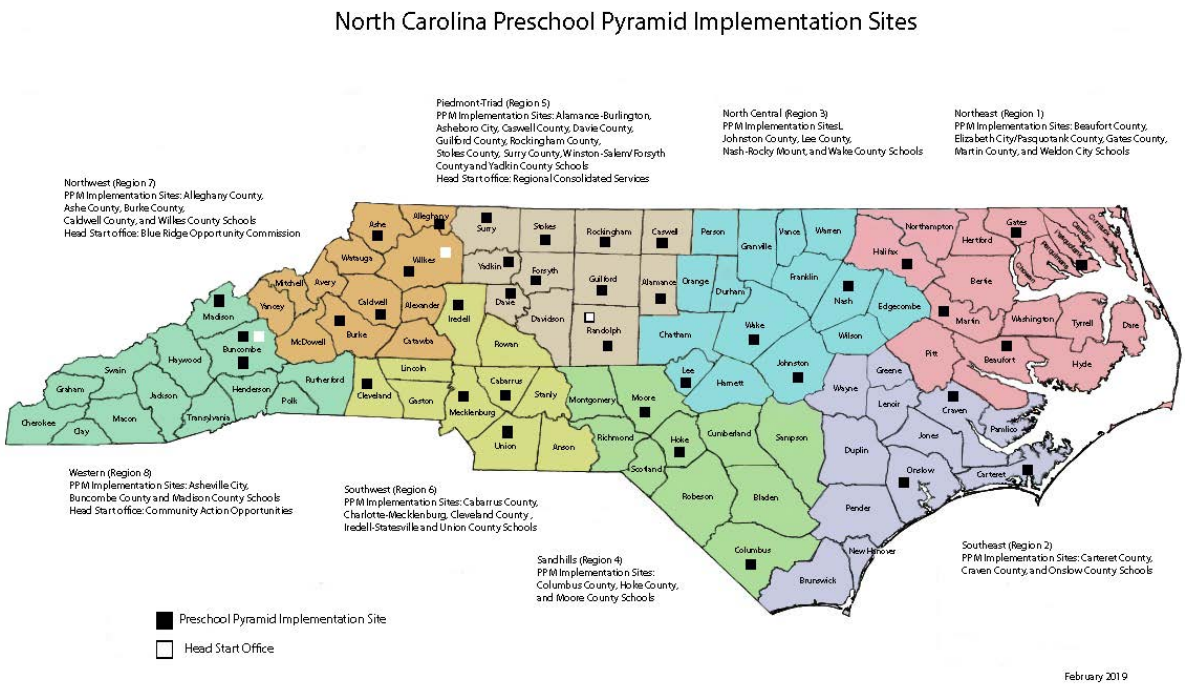
In general, these results suggest that districts are taking positive steps toward their implementation of the PPM. The child outcomes and coaching efficacy both speak to the positive results of these implementation efforts. The negative movement on key steps two and three suggests a need for more technical assistance around establishing stakeholder buy-in and improving family involvement.

PPM Project Growth

An important goal of the PPM initiative is to increase the number of classrooms implementing PPM practices over time. This occurs in two ways: (1) by increasing the number of LEAs participating in the project and (2) by increasing the number of classrooms within each LEA that participate in the project. The former requires greater resources at the state level while the latter requires increasing resource allocation at the district level. Figure 15 shows the map outlining participating PPM sites in February, 2019.

There are 38 LEAs participating in the project and 3 Head Start offices. This represents the addition of four LEAs (Caswell, Buncombe, Ashe, and Randolph) over the previous year. The addition of the Head Start offices also represents an opportunity to leverage existing resources to continue growth, allowing partnering LEAs to train new cohorts at Head Start sites using Federal dollars to fund the expansion along this vector.

Figure 15. *PPM Implementation Sites*



In addition to tracking the number and location of LEAs participating in the project, ELN also provides data showing the total number of classrooms at fidelity as measured by the PPM fidelity tool, the TPOT. Table 11 shows the growth of the project using classroom-level metrics. The number of teachers at fidelity across the project has grown each year, with growth accelerating significantly in 2017-2018 and maintaining that level in 2018-2019. As of the end of 2018-2019, the number of teachers at fidelity (268) had increased significantly from the first tracked cohort (190). This level of growth has remained consistent in spite of factors such as staff turnover and competing district priorities, which often serve to undermine progress on state-level initiatives.

Table 11.*Growth of teachers/classrooms at fidelity*

Growth of classroom level metrics over time	**2015-16**	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**
Total number of classes in LEAs in the Preschool Pyramid Project	688	700	951	1044
Total number of teachers who have reached fidelity on the TPOT	190	203	233	268

Growth of classroom level metrics over time	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Percent of classrooms with teachers who have reached fidelity on the TPOT	28%	29%	25%	26%
Cumulative percent growth of teachers at fidelity over time	-	7%	23%	41%

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 trend in the percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improvement?

Indicator 7 measures 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. Within each of these outcomes are two different metrics and accompanying targets, outlined as follows:

Outcome A (Positive social-emotional skills)

1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, 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 Outcome A by the time they exited the program.

Outcome B (Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills)

1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome B, 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 Outcome B by the time they exited the program.

Outcome C (Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs)

1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome C, 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 Outcome C by the time they exited the program.

Figure 16 below depicts the percentage for Outcome A, metrics 1 and 2 for the 2012-13 through 2018-19 school years. With respect to Outcome A, NC met the established target for metric 1 and metric 2 during the 2018-19 school year.

Figure 16. *Indicator 7 Positive Social Emotional Skills (Outcome A) Rates for 2012-13 through 2018-19 school years*

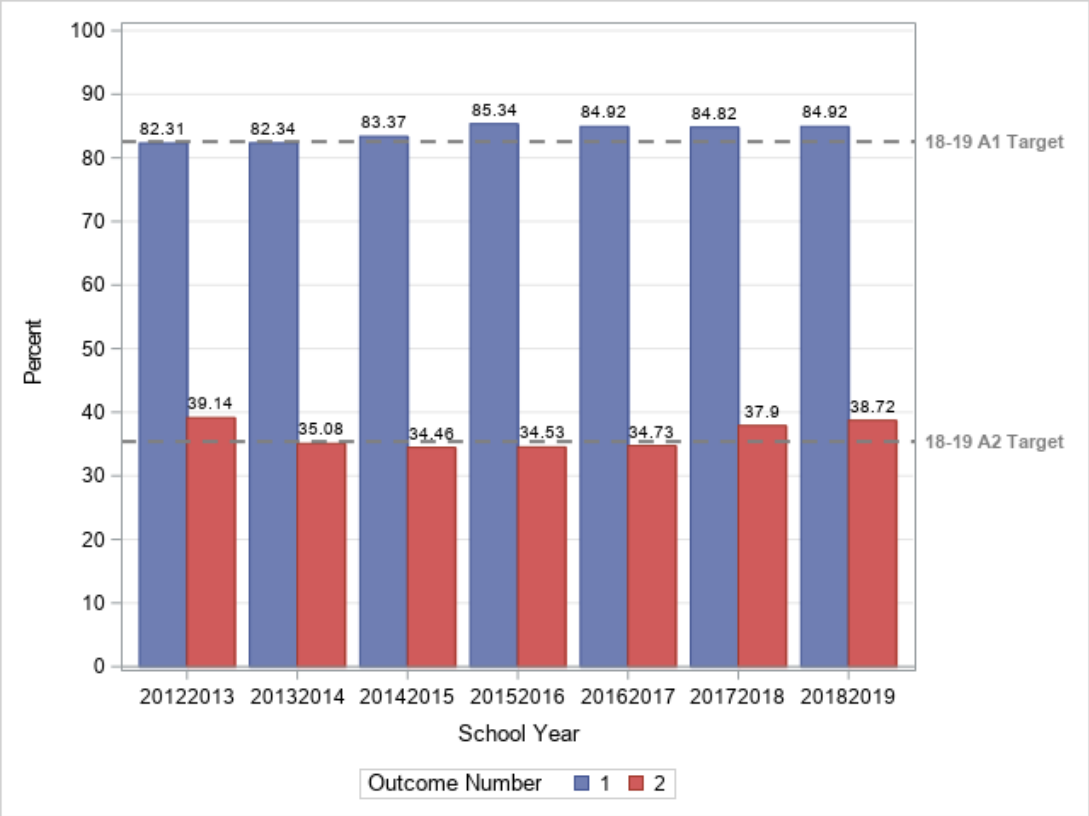


Figure 17 below depicts the percentage for Outcome B, metrics 1 and 2 for the 2012-13 through 2018-19 school years. Again, we see that NC met the established target for metric 1 and metric 2 during the 2018-19 school year for Outcome B.

Figure 17. *Indicator 7 Acquisition / Use of Knowledge/Skills (Outcome B) Rates for 2012-13 through 2018-19*

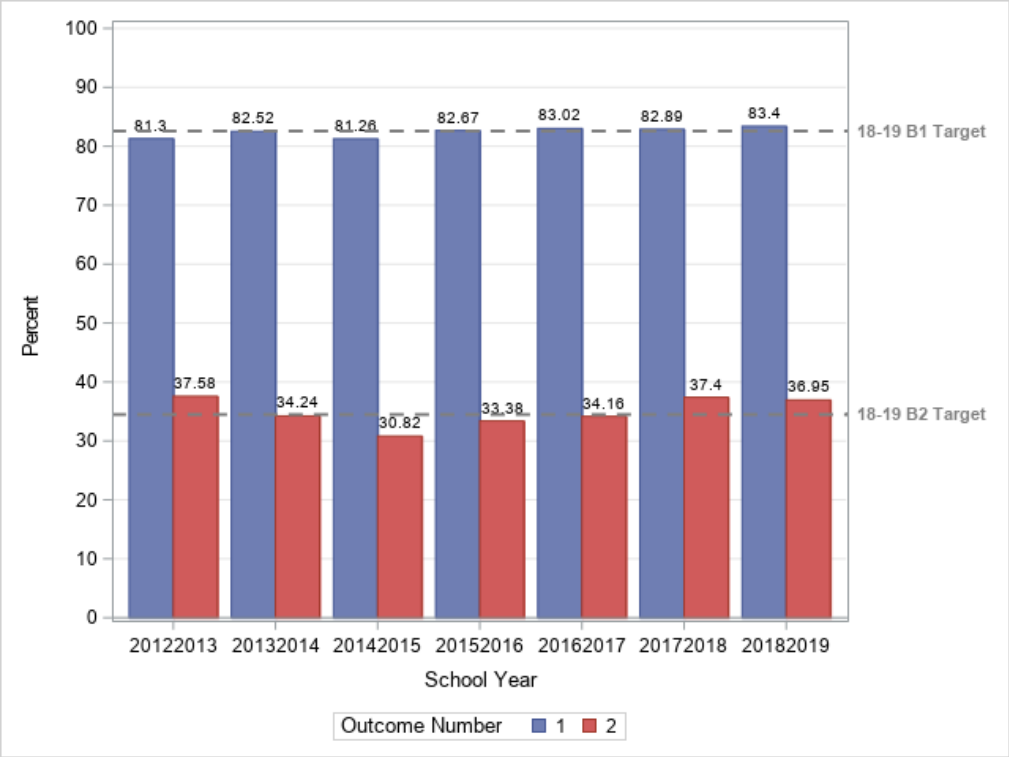
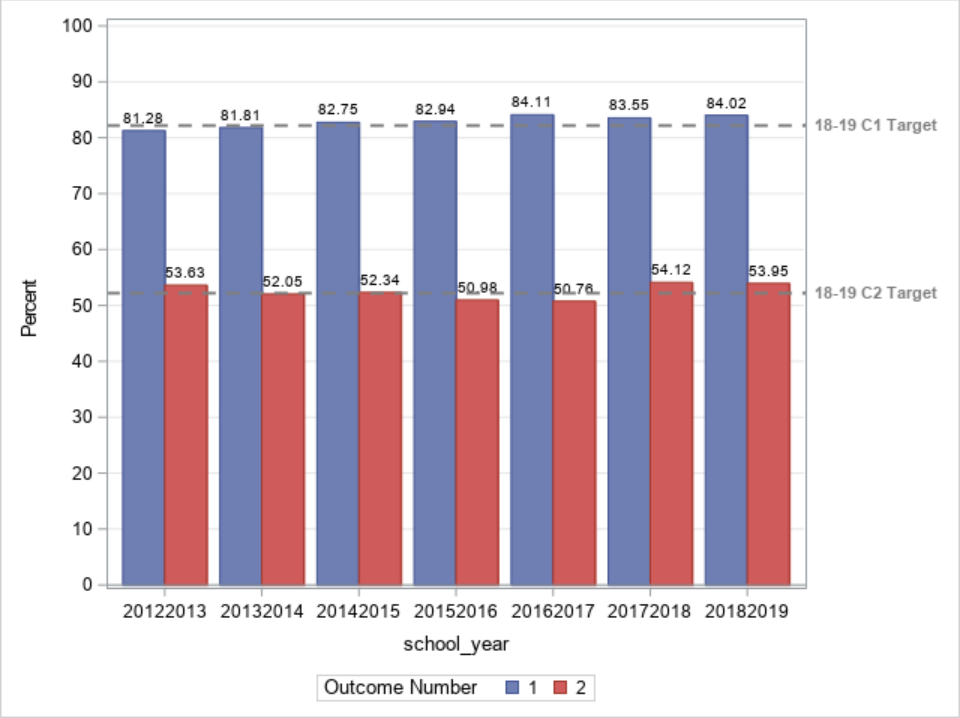


Figure 18 below depicts the percentage for Outcome C, metrics 1 and 2 for the 2012-13 through 2018-19 school years. NC met the established targets for outcome C, metric 1 and metric 2 during the 2018-19 school year.

Figure 18. *NC SEA Indicator 7 Appropriate Behaviors (Outcome C) Rates for 2012-13 through 2018-19*



Understanding the critical role of early prevention and intervention, the Indicator 7 data reveal students are making progress toward social emotional, early academic, and behavioral outcomes.

What is the trend in the percentage of parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement?
Table 12 below displays the counts, by school year of the Indicator 8 target attainment status. In all years, the target percentage for North Carolina was 50.0% (at the SEA level, the mean rates were 46.0%, 43.8%, 46.0%, 43.4%, 44.2%, and 44.0% respectively, for 2013-14 through 2018-19). As displayed in the Table 2, in 2013-14, 31.6% of LEAs with available data attained a percentage of parents greater than the 50.0% target while 31.0% of LEAs had a percentage greater than 50.0% in 2014-15, 32.5% in 2015-16, 34.1% in 2016-17, and 14.3% in 2017-18. For 2018-19, data could not be disaggregated by LEA, thus, there is not an available count of target attainment status by LEA for the most recent year. To answer the question above, based on 2013-14 through 2017-18, there was a relatively stable state mean rate. The number of LEAs meeting the target percentage of 50% prior to and following SSIP implementation between 2013-16 remained in the 31-34% range; however, this rate dropped in 2017-18. Given the lack of 2018-19 data, it cannot be concluded whether this indicator supports the facilitation of parent involvement as a critical component of the continuum of transitions work. Inconsistency in the reporting of small count schools across year (i.e., where Target Attainment Status was listed as <5) masks the true rate of target attainment. While the drop in the rate of target attainment in 2017-18 would suggest this indicator does not support the facilitation of parental involvement as a critical component of the continuum of transitions work, additional years of evidence are needed to more accurately monitor this trend.

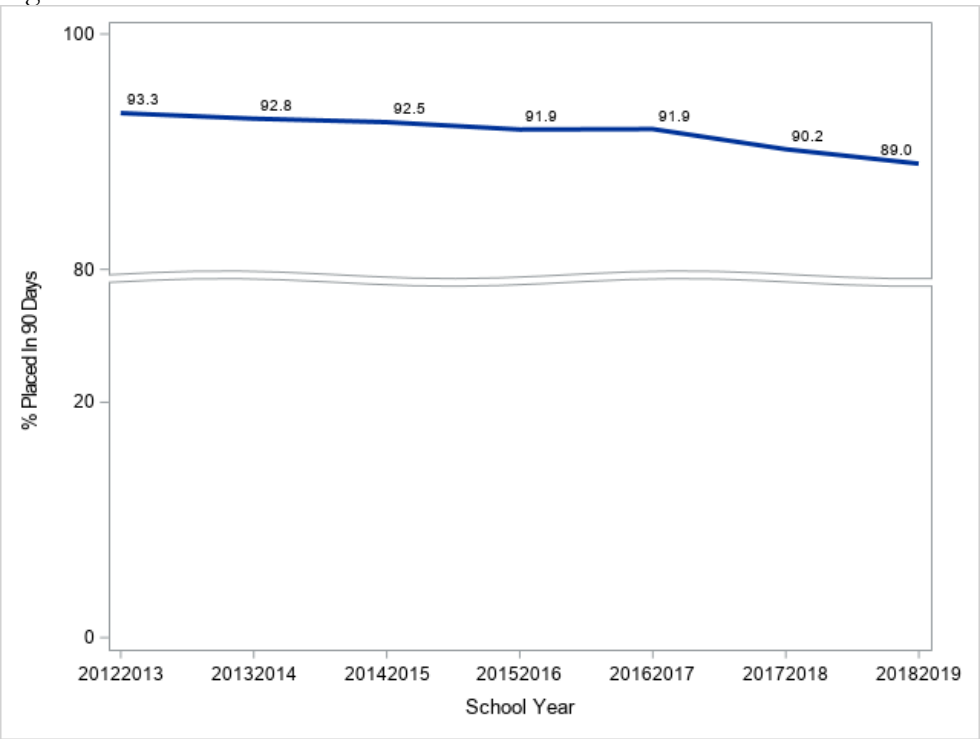
Table 12. *Count and percent of LEAs by Indicator 8 target attainment status*

School Year	Target Attainment Status										Total
	<5		Not Applicable		NDA		No		Yes		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N
20132014	7	18.4	.	.	.	.	19	50.0	12	31.6	38
20142015	6	14.3	1	2.4	.	.	22	52.4	13	31.0	42
20152016	6	15.0	.	.	.	.	21	52.5	13	32.5	40
20162017	.	.	.	.	.	.	27	65.9	14	34.1	41
20172018	5	11.9	.	.	.	.	31	73.8	6	14.3	42
20182019	.	.	.	.	96	100.0	.	.	.	.	96
Total	24	8.0	1	0.3	96	32.1	120	40.1	58	19.4	299

Trend for %age of referred students who receive evaluations and placement within 90 days?

Figure 19 below displays the state-level Indicator 11 rates for the 2012-13 through 2018-19 school years. Children not counted in the numerator may have (a) transferred in / out of the LEA, dropped out, or died within 90 days of referral, (b) transferred into LEA after 90-day timeline expired, (c) parents failed to produce the child for evaluation (d) had no referral of EC Services evaluation or (e) the determination was made beyond 90 days.

Figure 19. *Indicator 11 Rate From 2012-13 to 2018-19*



Part C referrals prior to age 3→ eligible for Part B→ have IEP implemented by 3rd birthday?

Table 13 below shows the descriptive statistics across each school year (2012-13 to 2018-19). The median values of 100, coupled with the large negative skew values confirm that little variability among rates exist, making predictive modeling difficult. To answer the question above, the LEA rates have been consistent across the school years.

Table 13. *Descriptive statistics on LEA rates of IEPs in place by child's 3rd birthday*

school_year	N	Mean	Median	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness
20122013	112	97.76	100.00	7.43	50.00	100.00	-4.16
20132014	115	97.81	100.00	7.34	50.00	100.00	-4.23
20142015	114	98.92	100.00	3.69	80.00	100.00	-3.92
20152016	113	98.42	100.00	5.31	66.67	100.00	-4.31
20162017	112	96.84	100.00	13.99	0.00	100.00	-6.20
20172018	113	95.75	100.00	13.89	0.00	100.00	-4.85
20182019	115	95.43	100.00	13.38	0.00	100.00	-4.74

What is the longitudinal trend in the Indicator 13 data?

Indicator 13 data represent 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.

Table 14 below displays the counts, by school year of the Indicator 13 target attainment status. In all years, the target percentage for North Carolina was 100.0% (at the SEA level, the rates were 85.1%, 88.4%, 88.1%, 85.2%, 85.5%, and 81.0% for 2013-14 through 2018-19, respectively). As demonstrated, 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 6.1% of LEAs had a percentage equal to 100.0% in 2014-15. Over 30% attained the same measure in 2015-16, but only 13.6% did the same in 2016-17. In 2017-18, the percentage dropped again to 7.5%, but increased in 2018-19 to 18.5%. To answer the question above, these indictor data showed a gradual increase through 2015-16, though a drop in 2016-17. It will be important that professional learning on the use of the transition work (and the associated evidence-based practices) is targeted to those LEAs not meeting targets.

Table 14. *Count and percent of LEAs by Indicator 13 target attainment status*

School Year	Target Attainment Status						Total
	<5		No		Yes		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N
20132014	12	38.7	17	54.8	2	6.5	31
20142015	21	63.6	10	30.3	2	6.1	33
20152016	8	27.6	12	41.4	9	31.0	29
20162017	1	2.3	37	84.1	6	13.6	44
20172018	.	.	37	92.5	3	7.5	40
20182019	.	.	22	81.5	5	18.5	27
Total	42	20.6	135	66.2	27	13.2	204

What is the longitudinal trend in the Indicator 14 data?

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.

Table 15 below displays the counts, by school year of the Indicator 14 target attainment status. The targets A, B and C are:

- Target A: enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school
- Target B: enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school
- Target C: enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school

The target percentages for North Carolina from 2013-14 to 2016-17 were >= 39.5% (target A), >= 62.5% (target B) and >= 73.5% (target C). And the target percentages for North Carolina in 2017-18 were >= 39.75% (target A), >= 62.75% (target B) and >= 73.75% (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; 31.8%, 61.1% and 72.7%, respectively, for targets A, B and C in 2014-15; 38.4%, 71.7% and 78.0%, respectively, for targets A, B and C in 2015-16; 27.3%, 62.5%, and 78.1%, respectively, for targets A, B and C in 2016-17; and 27.0%, 62.8%, and 77.7%, respectively, for targets A, B and C in 2017-18. For those LEAs with valid data, we can see that across targets there was an increase in the percentage of LEAs meeting targets from 2013-14 to through

2015-16 for targets A, but a drop in 2016-17 and 2017-18. For targets B and C, across targets there was an increase in the percentage of LEAs meeting targets from 2013-14 to through 2016-17, but a drop in 2017-18.

Table 15. *Count and percent of LEAs by Indicator 14 target attainment status*

Target/School Year		Target Attainment Status								Total
		<5		No Response		No		Yes		
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N
A	20132014	8	21.1	11	28.9	15	39.5	4	10.5	38
	20142015	8	26.7	.	.	15	50.0	7	23.3	30
	20152016	10	37.0	.	.	8	29.6	9	33.3	27
	20162017	1	3.8	.	.	23	88.5	2	7.7	26
	20172018	1	3.1	.	.	29	90.6	2	6.3	32
B	20132014	8	21.1	11	28.9	12	31.6	7	18.4	38
	20142015	8	26.7	.	.	10	33.3	12	40.0	30
	20152016	10	35.7	.	.	2	7.1	16	57.1	28
	20162017	1	3.7	.	.	9	33.3	17	63.0	27
	20172018	1	3.1	.	.	25	78.1	6	18.8	32
C	20132014	8	21.6	11	29.7	13	35.1	5	13.5	37
	20142015	8	27.6	.	.	9	31.0	12	41.4	29
	20152016	10	38.5	.	.	5	19.2	11	42.3	26
	20162017	1	3.8	.	.	5	19.2	20	76.9	26
	20172018	1	3.1	.	.	20	62.5	11	34.4	32
Total		84	18.3	33	7.2	200	43.7	141	30.8	458

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. In Year 4, LEASA data-driven changes to our improvement strategies were focused on:

- Building state and local capacity to develop and implement standards-aligned IEPs
- Building readiness for changes to our state policy on identification of Specific Learning Disabilities

- Supporting local ECATS users in use of new/in-process special education data system

The scale of these efforts displaced the need and resources for refinement of a Professional Learning Plan and calendar for the ECD this year. 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 previous years of LEASA data 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 comprehensive 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 adjustments to SSIP implementation. The evolution and scaling of the social-emotional-behavioral band in the logic model in 2018-19, and the addition of Project AWARE implementation and evaluation in 2019-20, are prime examples 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, core SEL and behavioral programming and prevention efforts were significantly scaled up in Year 4. NCDPI joined the CASEL Collaborating States Initiative (CSI) in Year 4 to promote/support adoption and implementation of evidence-based SEL programs and practices and to promote SEL integration with academic standards and other school based frameworks. NCDPI is also supporting implementation of Prek-12 SEL competencies within the Preschool Pyramid Model (PPM) described below. Further, NCDPI will develop and strengthen family partnerships through policies, systems and supports; and develop and strengthen SEL-related community partnerships. A summary of Year 4 activities follows:

- development of a Core SEL Practices online professional learning course; 208 participants to date
- establishing state-level SEL working groups
- developing a shared, statewide vision of promoting equity through SEL
- assessing statewide needs and resources and aligning agency resources and policies
- mapping existing NC Standard Course of Study standards to CASEL core competencies
- developing communication and evaluation plans

- developing adult expertise on SEL through professional learning systems
    - create conditions to support SEL across the educator pipeline
    - strengthen adult social and emotional competence and leadership to advance SEL through collaboration with districts, communities and families

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. In reviewing the Year 4 report, the full SSIP stakeholder group identified several potential next steps for Phase Three, Year Five:

Improve use of fidelity data to scale-up job-embedded follow-up and coaching – stakeholders observed the SEA and LEAs are collecting a variety of fidelity data (e.g., NC SIP, TPOT, DBI, SHAPE, FAM-S, LEASA, and other evidence-based practices/programs that include fidelity tools), but there is a lack of information about how these data are being analyzed and leveraged at the system and practice levels. A clearer link to fidelity data as part of both state and local continuous improvement cycles is needed. At the same time, stakeholders also acknowledged that both collecting fidelity data and responding to it through job-embedded follow-up and coaching are extremely labor intensive and most LEAs do not have the personnel to address this issue. As such, the SSIP team may consider providing guidance DPI and LEAs re: prioritizing the collection and use of fidelity data for a few, very strategic and evidence-based practices.

Make dissemination of the SSIP report and activities more public – stakeholders requested DPI demonstrate how the SSIP annual report is disseminated and to include the information in this report. This is addressed at the end of this report.

Conduct analyses disaggregated by students on the Extended Content Standards (ECS) - stakeholders requested DPI run comparative analyses for students with significant cognitive disabilities on the ECS to determine if there are significant disparities in growth and achievement. The SSIP team will consider this as it reviews all Year 5 recommendations.

Provide overview or list of all EC Division capacity-building efforts not included in Logic Model – stakeholders were interested in seeing the range of professional learning, coaching, and technical assistance efforts the ECD offers, in addition to the measured coherent improvement strategies identified in the SSIP Logic Model. This will be addressed as the SSIP team considers the future of the professional learning catalog/plan.

In addition, the ECD recognizes several internal SSIP improvement opportunities based on our experience

since July, 2019. First, we are very grateful and energized by our new state SSIP teaming structure. In Year 5, we will need to carefully nurture our SSIP leadership and organizational drivers to ensure we have established a hospitable environment for ongoing project sustainability and adaptability. Partnering with external stakeholders to strengthen our SSIP implementation is a top priority for Year 5. As part of this, stakeholders have requested they be included in professional learning and capacity-building opportunities at the state and local level (e.g., include parents in local professional learning on standards-aligned IEP development and implementation.) Further, SSIP orientation will be embedded in onboarding of new EC Division hires and as part of the ongoing New Directors' Leadership Institute cohort capacity-building.

Second, we need to re-evaluate and revision coordination of EC Division professional learning. In previous years, we prioritized creation of a division-wide professional learning calendar and one uniform registration, evaluation, fidelity monitoring, and tracking system for ECD-sponsored professional learning. This effort was in the initial implementation stage when ECD and SSIP leadership gaps occurred in Year 3 and was not sustained. Then, based on more pressing work in Year 4 (e.g., ECATS, SLD, standards-aligned IEPs, etc.), the professional learning calendar and one-stop professional learning tracking platform was not taken up as a priority. In Year 5, SSIP leadership will need to determine if a professional learning calendar and tracking platform is a priority and, if so, create a plan to align agency infrastructure and resources to making it happen.

Third, as data is amassed in the Every Child Accountability and Tracking System (ECATS), we anticipate LEAs will have more immediate access to more relevant data informing completion of the LEASA. Notably, ECATs will house IEP and progress monitoring data that will allow LEAs to access and aggregate data to engage in the LEASA process. A fully functional and data-rich ECATS will also enable the ECD to study correlations between outputs and outcomes. 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. As such, SSIP leadership will need to identify which SSIP questions (in bold throughout this report) can be addressed with ECATS data and what new questions ECATS allow us to consider. Related to this, and given the data-informed changes to the LEA Self-assessment in Year 4, the SSIP team will also need to establish mechanisms for formal integration of special education program improvement plans with general education improvement planning.

Finally, based on the significant slippage in math proficiency for SWD across grade-levels in our Year 4, enhancements to our infrastructure and array for evidence-based practices in mathematics instruction and progress monitoring for SWD, especially in elementary school, will likely need to be considered in Year 5.

While it is true, new, more rigorous math assessments were introduced in 2018-19 (based on changes to/more rigorous content and achievement standards) and negatively impacted career and college ready achievement for all students, NC may need to re-evaluate what high expectations for SWD in math performance look like.

Data supporting modifications to intended outcomes/that SSIP is on right path

Because active implementation of the NC SSIP was recharging in Year 5, major modifications to implementation activities are not planned at this time. We anticipate the slippage in our progress toward the SIMR (due to a change in how the 5YACGR is calculated) will be temporary; we are not satisfied with the decrease in the 5YACGR, but we are also not discouraged. Longitudinal data trends still show slight increase 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. That said, given our LEASA analysis in Year 4, SSIP leadership will need to consider if a graduation-focused SIMR is resulting in the full array of desired outcomes for SWD (e.g., meeting proficiency standards, especially in mathematics) and if changes are need. Also, as the availability of data sources is enhanced through ECATS, additional outputs may be identified and aligned to the plan.

Stakeholders involvement in the SSIP evaluation

How stakeholders have engaged in ongoing SSIP evaluation

As mentioned above, stakeholder involvement in the NC SSIP since Fall, 2019, has been refreshing and active. In terms of project evaluation, stakeholders have been informed about data collection and analysis at twice-monthly meetings in which the UNC Charlotte project evaluator also participates. SSIP stakeholders reviewed a draft of this report and provided input/feedback which was incorporated in the final report, particularly in determining next steps in Year 5. LEAs will be informed of the evaluation activities during May, 2020, regional directors' and coordinators' meetings.

A significant example of how stakeholders have had a voice in the evaluation process involves to changes that will be made to the LEA Self-assessment—one of NC SSIP's primary evaluation metrics—for the 2020 submission. Based on input from EC Directors (collected via survey) regarding the time/effort required to complete the LEASA, how it duplicates other required district-level improvement plans, and the timeline for submission, the SSIP team determined the 2020 LEASA edition will:

- Be supported by DPI-provided LEA SWD Data profiles
- Not include Core Elements 1 and 2

- Allow for flexibility in the Improvement plan in that:
    - LEASA improvement plan template is not required
    - Stand-alone EC improvement plan is not required
    - Evidence of EC program improvement embedded in other district improvement plan (e.g., NC STAR) must be provided if not using stand-alone EC plan
- Be submitted no later than August 14, 2020

Data Quality Issues

Data limitations affecting progress in implementing SSIP and achieving SIMR

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 ECATS next year, there are several metrics that may pose challenges to the longitudinal evaluation approach.

- The change in business rule for calculating the 5YACGR impacted Year 4 progress on the SIMR
- in FY 2018, new standards for literacy and mathematics resulted in new assessments; the scaled scores and proficiency cut points are based on new normative data and standard setting, and thus, will not be directly comparable to prior years.
- Facilitated Assessment of MTSS (FAM-S) installation requires revision of our longitudinal measurement of fidelity of tiered behavioral supports

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 will increasingly 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 are yet functional. In addition, stability in SSIP personnel both at DPI and with the external evaluator at UNC Charlotte should support more streamlined and coordinated data quality, collection, storage, and analysis.

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

Year 4 progress toward achieving improvement and retooling infrastructure to support implementation has been remarkable, given just six months of active implementation. This progress is largely due to strong stakeholder participation, including increasingly strong partnerships with local EC directors, and highly effective ECD leadership. ECD responsiveness to LEA needs this year has been agile, swift, and targeted. Examples of progress toward intended improvement include the rapid development and deployment of resources for capacity building around standards-aligned IEPs (described above) and the immediate and sustained support the ECD provided as LEAs struggled with initial ECATS implementation. While ECATS functionality itself has been a work in progress, the rollout exposed several opportunities for local capacity building around the IEP process (e.g., the re-evaluation process and 90-day timeline); ECD staff have carefully tracked and responded to these areas of improvement with on-time professional learning in a variety of outlets (e.g., memos, webinars, weekly ECATS updates, conferences, and regional meetings.) Another Year 4 example is the development and provision of individualized LEA EC data profiles in preparation for the 2020 LEASA submission. To achieve short and medium range outcomes related to improved LEA capacity for systemic improvement, the SSIP team determined SWD achievement data (disaggregated by disability category) and longitudinal displays of APR indicator data would be provided to each LEA. Rather than assuming LEAs have capacity to build these profiles on their own, providing the data to them allows LEAs to focus on data analysis and problem solving. We anticipate with these data profiles in hand, LEAs will be able to conduct more sophisticated and focused improvement plans based on their LEASA findings.

In terms of infrastructure changes to support SSIP initiatives, 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 for capacity building, 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 are also valuable as ECD-sponsored professional learning, technical assistance, and resources are development and delivered. With this expanded array of feedback cycles, DPI's infrastructure is evolving to match a growing understanding that capacity-building requires more than the provision of professional learning (which was the prevailing thought in SSIP

Phase I and II). In addition to high-quality professional learning, the ECD's capacity-building has expanded to include coaching, creation and dissemination of web-based resources, and fidelity monitoring.

Second, refinements to infrastructure in various SSIP-related teams were made this year as part of the SSIP team's development of terms of reference for the SSIP State Team, regional data teams, and EC Director Regional meetings. For example, prior to establishing these terms, the four regional data teams were operating somewhat autonomously, which resulted in considerable variability in scope and purpose of those meetings. Now with a clearly defined purpose (shown below), regional data team processes and outputs are more coherent and uniform while still adapting to regional and local needs.

PURPOSE: Regional Data Teams

- Analyze regional- and LEA-level root cause of low SWD graduation rate
- Implement and/or support universal SSIP outputs (e.g., SDI within MTSS, NC SIP, PK Pyramid Project)
- Provide tailored and customized data-based support and problem-solving to LEAs
- Provide forum for cross-sectional communication and collaboration
- Analyze/problem-solve gaps in EC Division services/resources
- Plan logistics/implement regional EC Director meetings

Finally, DPI collaborations and integration of SSIP efforts across many divisions are also signs of an evolving infrastructure. The multiple divisions engaged in the Specially-Designed Instruction within an MTSS, SEL, and Project AWARE implementation teams are a few strong examples. 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. In addition, this collaborative, cross-agency work has impacted our organization of systems-levels needs assessments. By identifying alignment in these assessments with the crosswalk tool (described above), "assessment fatigue" is being addressed by explicating the unique features of each self-assessment. Hopefully, this will reduce redundancy and fragmentation and allow for comprehensive improvement planning at the district and school levels.

Evidence that SSIP's EBPs are being carried out with fidelity and are effective

In FY 2018, the LEASA 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 DPI focused capacity-building efforts based on the LEASA data). Levels of fidelity that have been achieved for evidence-based practices included in

RRtCP, Math Foundations, and SEFEL implementation are described above.

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

Table 16. *Progress toward Key Outcomes*

Domain	Key Outcome Comparisons to Baseline
Graduation	• The SWD five-year CGR was lower in 2018-19 than it was in the two previous years • 69.8% of the 15,364 entering 9th graders with disabilities in 2015-16 graduated in 2018-19 or before, which represents an increase of nearly a percentage point • The overall all gap between five-year CGR for students with disabilities and non-disabled students has decreased by 1.38 percentage points or by 7.3%
LEASA and Improvement Planning Process	• LEAs had higher mean self-ratings in each core element in 2017 as compared to 2016**,** and in 2019 compared to 2017; the largest gains were seen in core elements 4 (increase of 20.4%) and 5 increase of 20.7%)
Academics	Change from 2014-1018 for 4th graders: Reading: -.71% ; Math: -15.5% Change from 2014-1018 for 8th graders: Reading: +.22% ; Math: -10.28%
Social Emotional Behavioral	• PPM - Cumulative percent growth of teachers at fidelity over time = 41%
Transition	• Indicator 7 – met targets for Outcomes A and B, both metrics 1 and 2 • Indicator 8 – inconclusive due to lack of data • Indicator 11 – decrease of 4.3% from baseline to current • Indicator 12 – stable across all SSIP years • Indicator 13 – increase of 12% from baseline to current • Indicator 14 – Target A, decrease of 4.5% from baseline to current; Target B increase of .8% from baseline to current; Target C, increase of 20.9% from baseline to current

Measurable improvement in the SIMR relation to targets

The SWD five-year CGR was lower in 2018-19 than it was in the two previous years; the rate missed the target by 3.7%. That said, 69.8% of the 15,364 entering 9th graders with disabilities in 2015-16 graduated in 2018-19 or before, which represents an increase of nearly a percentage point. Further, the overall all gap

between five-year CGR for students with disabilities and non-disabled students has decreased by 1.38 percentage points or by 7.3%

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 identified by stakeholders that will be implemented next year include:

- April-June 2020: open online LEASA submission portal
- May 2020: SSIP team sets priorities for FY 2019/Year 5
- May-August 2020: provide coaching and TA for LEAs on completion of LEASA
- July, 2020: open access to SDI within MTSS to all LEAs
- August-September, 2020: Complete LEASA reviews and analyze data
- Fall, 2020: Aggregate state and regional professional learning needs and plan 2020-2021 capacity-building efforts

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

The planned evaluation activities will remain consistent with evaluation activities described in this report. We will set baseline data for FAM-S measurement and will begin to incorporate Project AWARE evaluation data as it becomes available. The SSIP team will also consider alignment of SiMR targets with Indicator 1 targets and NC ESSA targets for graduation. The SSIP team may add a qualitative inquiry in Year 5 to enhance the quantitative analysis described here, particularly in LEAs with very high and very low graduation and achievement outcomes, so as to better discern at the administrative and instructional practice level what to replicate and what to avoid.

Anticipated Barriers and steps to address those barriers

The primary barriers for next year include:

- Staffing changes/shortages at SEA and LEA interrupting continuity of SSIP implementation
    - Steps to address – strengthen recruitment and retention efforts across all levels
- Interruption of instruction for SWD due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes)
    - Steps to address – work with DPI leadership and LEAs to support local systems to

recuperate lost instructional time; develop and disseminate best practices for virtual delivery of specially designed instruction and related services; work with communities and families to support SWD during school closures

- Unforeseen issues with ongoing implementation of the ECATS data system
    - Steps to address – continue to partner with ECATS vendor and LEAs to resolve implementation barriers

Supports and Technical Assistance

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;
- National Center for Intensive Intervention (NCII) for data-based individualization;
- Southeast Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (SEMHTTC) for Project AWARE;
- AnLar for Project AWARE for evaluation planning, support, and statistical analysis; 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. Immediate support is needed in scaling up and equipping LEAs to provide IEP services in a virtual/online environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Anticipated future technical assistance will be needed to adjust our 2020-21 SSIP evaluation in light of school closures/lost instructional time and how this interruption will impact our data. We may also discover that, in carefully considering priorities in this time of crisis, the areas we have targeted for improvement in our six tears of SSIP implementation (e.g., graduation rate for SWD) are not where we need to focus efforts in a pandemic/post-pandemic era.

Dissemination of the Phase 3/Year 4 Report

This report will be posted on the NCDPI EC Division Annual Performance Report **webpage** on or before

June 1, 2020, along with the current SEA and LEA APR reports. In addition, SSIP stakeholders will receive a copy of the report via email following our April 1, 2020, submission for sharing with their constituents. The report, along with the FY 2018 APR report will be shared with DPI leadership and the NC State Board of Education.

508 Compliance Report

All errors, warnings, and tips were remedied, and no accessibility issues were found per screenshot belo