FFY 2019 Indicator B-17/C-11 Annual Performance Report (APR) Optional Template

Section A: Data Analysis

What is the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR). (Please limit your response to 785 characters).

North Carolina will increase the 5-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (5YCGR) for students with disabilities (SWD), such that the gap is reduced between graduation rates for all students and students with disabilities.

Has the SiMR changed since the last SSIP submission?

No

If "Yes", provide an explanation for the change(s), including the role of stakeholders in decision-making. (Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space).

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Progress toward the SiMR

Please provide the data for the specific FFY listed below (expressed as actual number and percentages).

Baseline Data: 5YCGR for SWD w

Has the SiMR target changed since the last SSIP submission? No

FFY 2018 Target: 76.12% **FFY 2019 Target**: 77.82%

FFY 2018 Data: 72.50% **FFY 2019 Data:** 73.10%

Was the State's FFY 2019 Target Met? No

Did slippage[1] occur? No

If applicable, describe the reasons for slippage. (Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space).

[1] The definition of slippage: *A worsening from the previous data AND a failure to meet the target.* The worsening also needs to meet certain thresholds to be considered slippage:

1. For a "large" percentage (10% or above), it is considered slippage if the worsening is more than 1.0 percentage point. For example:
   a. It is not slippage if the FFY 2019 data for Indicator X are 32% and the FFY 2018 data were 32.9%.
   b. It is slippage if the FFY 2019 data for Indicator X are 32% and the FFY 2018 data were 33.1%.
2. For a "small" percentage (less than 10%), it is considered slippage if the worsening is more than 0.1 percentage point. For example:
   a. It is not slippage if the FFY 2019 data for Indicator Y are 5.1% and the FFY 2018 data were 5%.
   b. It is slippage if the FFY 2019 data for Indicator Y are 5.1% and the FFY 2018 data were 4.9%.

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Optional: Has the State collected additional data *(i.e., benchmark, CQI, survey)* that demonstrates progress toward the SiMR? Yes

If "Yes", describe any additional data collected by the State to assess progress toward the SiMR.
(Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space).

SPP/APR indicators – longitudinal analysis of 1, 2, 3c, 4a & b, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, & 14 reveal relatively flat performance in Indicators 1, 2, and 3c, except for 2018-19 math proficiency for SWD where there was slippage due to new, more rigorous assessments.

LEA Self-Assessment (LEASA): A modified version of the LEASA was administered in Year 5. Analyses of LEASA data were conducted to inform North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) support to LEAs. State-level LEASA analysis revealed relative strengths in LEA collaboration with families and the SEA, and relative need for growth with implementing evidence-based instruction/practices for SWD. The majority of LEA improvement plans (88%) are focused on academics for SWD and aligned with data on need to improve implementation of EBPs.

NC 2019-2020 Preschool Pyramid Model (PPM) - 36 LEAs participate, 2 LEAs are in readiness phase, and 3 Head Start offices serve 11 counties. The continued inclusion of 3 Head Start offices represents an opportunity to leverage Federal dollars and expand the program beyond LEA classrooms. With children learning remotely at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, none of these classrooms were able to be evaluated for fidelity. In 2019-2020, 365 classrooms implemented, a 7% increase in the number of classrooms participating. Although the number of participating LEAs contracted, the ongoing technical assistance provided to remaining LEAs allowed them to expand the project beyond its scope by a significant amount. View the NC Preschool Pyramid Model 2019-20 Annual report at: http://bit.ly/NCELN2020Rpt

NC Project AWARE - Year 2 Annual Report can be viewed at http://bit.ly/NCAWARE2020 ; this is a key

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Did the State identify any data quality concerns, unrelated to COVID-19, that affected progress toward the SiMR during the reporting period? No

If "Yes", describe any data quality issues specific to the SiMR data and include actions taken to address data quality concerns. (Please limit your response to 3000 characters without space).

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Did the State identify any data quality concerns directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the reporting period? Yes

If data for this reporting period were impacted specifically by COVID-19, the State must include in the narrative for the indicator: (1) the impact on data completeness, validity and reliability for the indicator; (2) an explanation of how COVID-19 specifically impacted the State's ability to collect the data for the indicator; and (3) any steps the State took to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the data collection. (Please limit your response to 3000 characters without space).

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted LEA Self-Assessment data collection, analysis, and reporting. LEAs were/are overwhelmed with foundational hierarchy-of-need priorities including:
- providing meals normally provided by the schools to students
- supplying laptops/tablets for student use at home
- arranging internet access for students who didn't have already
- providing time for teachers/service providers to develop remote instruction skills/learning plans and provide remote instruction and evaluations, when possible; and
- researching regulations regarding privacy when providing remote educational services

As such, our first SSIP-related mitigation strategy was to move due date for LEA Self-Assessment submission from June 30 to October 31. Next, we worked with LEA stakeholders to streamline LEASA by removing items for which LEAs would not have data and/or were deemed less relevant to a special-education-during-pandemic context. Also simplified the optional improvement plan template and allowed LEAs to submit their overall district improvement plan in lieu of the special education-specific plan.
COVID also negatively affected data collection for Indicators 7, 11, 12, and 13 (metrics for our Continuum of Transitions strand in the logic model). In addition, states were given waivers that exempted them from administering statewide assessments for the 2019-20 school year, so no data was collected/ reported for Indicators 3b-c (metrics for our Academics strand).
To mitigate COVID-19 impact on data collection and reporting, NCDPI took following steps:
-Provided frequent virtual opportunities for TA and professional development to assist LEAs with mitigating COVID impact on children/students, families, staff, and provision of education and services.
-Created flexibility for accruing required work hours in Occupational Course of Study
-Developed a repository of resources for LEAs use
-Held Weekly Office Hour meetings for Local Education Agencies (LEAs)
-Conducted COVID-19 Impact Focus Groups (See full report at: http://bit.ly/NC_SWD_COVID)
Preschool Pyramid Model (PPM) Child Outcomes: This year, there were questions about the validity of the reported data that might prevent this report from answering this question by comparing the 2019-2020 numbers to the national average. Specifically, many of the data points were collected before a full year had expired while other data were not collected in the classroom but rather via Zoom or using parent report. Only 7 LEAs reported data at all--a fraction of the number reported in previous years. Moreover, these data clusters are almost certainly non-random, which means that using them to generalize to the population of PPM counties would be suspect. Finally, because of the different data collection methods (e.g., early collection, Zoom, parent report), it would be necessary to cluster LEAs by method, but with so few counties reporting, there were categories that included only one county. Thus, conclusions could not be drawn about broad effects of the project or even the data collection method because these effects would be conflated with effects unique to the district in question.

Section B: Phase III Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

Is the State's theory of action new or revised since the previous submission? No

If "Yes", please provide a description of the changes and updates to the theory of action
(Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space).

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Did the State implement any <u>new</u> (previously or newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategies during the reporting period? Yes

If "Yes", describe each <u>new</u> (previously or newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategy and the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved. (Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space).

Data analyses by LEASA reviewers - EC Div. staff studied LEA data (3 years of APR data, LEA report cards, disproportionality data, discipline data, and Racial Equity report Card data) prior to conducting LEASA reviews this year. This gave reviewers a deeper knowledge of the LEA and they were better equipped to engage in follow-up coaching conversations as a result.

Review of Remote Instruction Plans (RIP) - each LEA was required to submit an RIP in 2019-20 and one of the items was specific to meeting the needs of SWD. We included this in our LEASA reviews to detect any LEAs that had particularly strong plans for SWD support during remote instruction so we can amplify those practices across the state and track those LEAs over time.

Professional Learning (PL) Library - https://www.smore.com/st83m; was developed to support local awareness/access to EC Div-sponsored PL; the courses are organized by alignment to the LEASA Core Elements to allow local EC leaders to select course that best match needs identified in their improvement plans

Special Education Remote Instruction Practice Guide (website) - was developed to support local EC practitioners in providing SDI/Related services in remote contexts. A wide range of topics (e.g., High-Leverage Practices in remote instruction, progress monitoring, significant disabilities, SEL, academics, accessibility for SWD with sensory impairments, etc.) are addressed and the resource is updated at least monthly. https://sites.google.com/view/covidspedconsiderations/home-supplemental-optional Separate resources were developed for local EC administrators re: policy, funding, and reporting updates related to COVID/remote instruction.

Provide a summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy that the State continued to implement in the reporting period, including the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved. (Please limit your response to 3000 characters without space).

LEA Self-Assessment (LEASA) & Review cycle - LEASA was modified/ flexibility added to improvement plan to decrease burden on LEAs; review tool aligned to LEASA changes and new items support finer analysis; feedback sessions with individual LEAs conducted to summarize reviews and refine DPI support; LEASA submission and review rates were at all time high and local plans are increasingly focused on student outcomes.

EC Regional Data Teams (RDT) - ECD staff are assigned to 1 of these 4 teams, which are primary implementing unit of SSIP; RDTs analyze regional- and LEA-level root cause of low SWD graduation rate; implement/support universal SSIP outputs; provide tailored and customized data-based support, problem-solving, and coaching; provide forum for LEAs to collaborate through regional EC Director meetings and new director cohorts

Regional Support Teams - DPI's regional support structure organizes services to schools and districts through regional model. Regional Case Managers (RCM) lead support, facilitate/ participate in design, implementation, and evaluation of school improvement practices with partnership focus on districts designated as low performing.

SSIP Work groups - Data Literacy, Stakeholder & Family Engagement, Research-informed Practices, and Systems Coherence groups produce deliverables in alignment with SSIP priorities identified by stakeholders. External stakeholders, including parents of students with disabilities, are key participants in work groups. Examples of Year 5 work group outputs include: resource map of all ECD professional learning and PL Library, parent survey; HLPs for Remote Learning, and analyses of LEASA and review data.

Every Child Accountability and Tracking System (ECATS) - data system in 2nd year of operation and enhancements continue; MTSS module and early warning system now live; accessed by over 219,000 unique users and has captured over 335,000 IEP meetings, 129,000 eligibility meetings, and 4700 manifestation determination meetings; online professional learning series supporting use of ECATS for meaningful IEP processes launched this year.

NC State Improvement Project (NCSIP) - addresses achievement gaps for SWD through OSEP State Personnel Development Grants; developed evidence-based courses and coaching addressing literacy and math instruction for NC educators and partnered with IHEs to embed course content in teacher prep programs.

State Behavior Funding - special budget provision for services for students with significant behavioral and emotional needs; competitive grant is add-on funding for direct service staff salaries. Completion of SHAPE Quality Assessment is required component of application. 136 LEAs currently receive these funds.

NC SEL Implementation Team - key outcomes in FY 2019: vision statement and goals developed with stakeholder input, regional support structure implemented, SEL & Equity partnership established with 41 LEAs, and project evaluation plan adopted.

Facilitated Assessment of MTSS-School Level (FAM-S) - Schools from 36% (down from 68% in FFY 2018) of traditional LEAs and 3.5% (down from 11% in FFY 2018) of charter schools completed; ratings increased at least 10% across components

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Provide a description of how the State evaluated outcomes for each improvement strategy and how the evaluation data supports the decision to continue implementing the strategy. (Please limit your response to 3000 characters without space):

LEA Self-Assessment (LEASA) and Review cycle - 98% of LEASAs were submitted and 97% of reviews were completed--these are among highest return rates since we started LEASA in 2016. With revisions to review tool, we were able to get a more detailed view of local improvement plan foci and coherence, conduct charter and traditional LEA comparisons, conduct state and regional comparisons, and operationalize our Theory of Action with direct matching of LEA-identified needs to current ECD professional learning offerings. LEASA process will be reviewed as part of our revised data and infrastructure analysis.
Regional Data Teams (RDT) - Despite being forced to conduct all RDT business remotely, ECD engagement in RDT meetings and extra-meeting activities remains high, as evidenced by LEA data analyses conducted prior to the LEASA reviews, high completion rate of LEASA reviews, participation on follow-up conversations with local EC leaders, and broad participation in feedback loops between SSIP leadership and RDT members. RDTs are primary implementing unit for SSIP and, while we may need to analyze HR allocation based on size and need differences across regions, RDTs will continue to serve this central role as we prepare for next SSIP cycle.
SSIP Work groups - Based on number of resources and deliverables developed by SSIP work groups (see previous item) which have been well-received/applied in LEAs, these groups will continue and expand in year ahead. Have added ECD staff to work groups to support revision of our data and infrastructure analysis and to increase communication and buy-in re: SSIP activities.
ECATS - User satisfaction with ECATS has grown to 94% and utilization of the required IEP module is robust. System repairs are conducted in a timely manner and feedback cycles from field to DPI and back support system maintenance/currency with policy and practice changes.
NC State Improvement Project (NCSIP) - project has external evaluator, annual report; performance over last 5 years led to development of new grant proposal
State Behavior Funding - outcomes are reviewed by NCDPI Behavior Support to determine if assessment has been completed; LEAs analyze SHAPE indicators to develop a Precise Problem Statement and determine improvement strategies. Data indicate policies and programs in school mental health are improving through MTSS, staffing, financing and data systems. Due to COVID many LEAs have not been able to implement action items and partner agencies have been unable to provide school-based services.
NC SEL Implementation Team - Outcomes assessed through implementation plan tracking tool. Given uptake with SEL professional learning, SEL and equity project, integration of SEL supports required in State Board's new School Mental Health policy, and increased need for SEL support for students and staff due to COVID, State SEL team work will continue to scale up in FY 2020.
Facilitated Assessment of MTSS-School Level (FAM-S) - MTSS implementation is improving for reporting LEAs. Further, given the ready infrastructure MTSS provides for our new SLD policy, we anticipate a return to pre-COVID utilization.

Provide a summary of the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period. (Please limit your response to 3000 characters without space)**:**

LEA Self-Assessment (LEASA) and Review cycle - We will include analysis of the current LEASA process and tools as part of our upcoming data and infrastructure analysis to set new APR targets and SiMR (if changed). The LEASA was developed 6 years ago and much has changed in both evidence-based practices for SDI and related services, and the context in which these are provided in NC, including the evolution of ECATS which houses data not available 6 years ago. If used in future reporting periods, the LEASA process at least needs to be brought current with said research and context changes.

Regional Data Teams (RDT) - RDTs will be partnering with LEAs to support: implementation of EBPs aligned to local improvement plans, assessing and addressing potential learning losses for SWD as a result of the pandemic, setting FFY 2020-2025 APR targets, including SiMR selection, and continuing to build capacity with data analysis/problem solving for improvement using ECATS and other state data systems.

SSIP Work groups - We plan to invite additional EC Div staff to participate in SSIP work groups to support APR target setting and revision of our data and infrastructure analysis and to increase communication and buy-in re: SSIP activities. Work groups will be completing various aspects of the data and infrastructure analysis, working to engage external stakeholders, and communicate EC Div SSIP activities with other divisions within DPI. Anticipated outcomes include a revised SEA data and infrastructure analysis and new APR targets for FFY 2020-2025, including an updated or new SiMR.

ECATS - Next steps include: increasing SEA and LEA capacity to maximize reporting features, enhancing progress monitoring in the IEP module, and determining what system data may be used to reduce local reporting burden.

NC Project AWARE - see annual report at http://bit.ly/NCAWARE2020
CASEL Collaborating States Initiative - in the year ahead, we will work to increase internal NCDPI alignment/ investment in 3 Signature Practices; search for an external project evaluator, enhance the SEL website, explore SEL micro credential for LEA staff, and develop new courses for SEL & Trauma and School Mental Health Policy-aligned content

State Behavior Funding - The action plan will be updated for the 2021-2022 school year and will be reflected in the next PRC 29 grant application.
Facilitated Assessment of MTSS-School Level (FAM-S) - per the NC MTSS Strategic Plan (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1T9SRgieiecturHibLyA94OJ6EKfofD2s/view), implementation of FAM-S will continue to support PK-12 MTSS across the state. DPI MTSS experts will support local leaders in building infrastructure and capacity for collaborative problem-solving and we anticipate a district-level (FAM-D) to be released in FY 2020.

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Did the State implement any <u>new</u> (previously or newly identified) evidence-based practices?

Yes

If "Yes", describe the selection process for the <u>new</u> (previously or newly identified) evidence-based practices. (Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space):

ARISE NC (Addressing and Reducing Inequities in Special Education) - targeted, intensive series of professional development aligned to NCSBOE equity goals and designed specifically for districts with significant disproportionality in the area of identification. Districts were invited to participate for one of two reasons: A) LEA designated as having significant disproportionality; or B) LEA on a Warning List for identification for at least 3 consecutive years and has potential to have significant disproportionality in future. Districts electing to participate were assigned a coach for individual mentoring/coaching sessions. Purpose is to improve district capacity to address and/or reduce significant disproportionality. LEA teams of district- and school-level administrators attend series of virtual workshops.
https://sites.google.com/uncc.edu/arise-project/home

High-Leverage Practices (HLPs) for Remote Instruction - The ECD translated CEC's 22 HLPs for remote instruction, relying on the 5 Elements of Fidelity developed by the National Center for Intensive Intervention, to support the delivery of specially designed instruction and related services in virtual settings. The end result is a set of fact sheets for each HLP which provide observable features of quality services delivered virtually; they can be viewed at: http://bit.ly/NC_RemoteHLPs These are free/available to any visitor to the site.

Secondary Transition & Occupational Course of Study (OCS) Work Hours Tip of the Week 2020-2021 - weekly resources provided for transition planning and implementing OCS work hours during remote instruction.

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Provide a summary of the <u>continued</u> evidence-based practices and how the evidence-based practices are intended to impact the SiMR. (Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space):

Foundations of Math and Reading Research to Classroom Practice (RRtCP) - Both courses provide educators and administrators with foundational knowledge needed to support students with persistent challenges in mathematics, dyscalculia, reading, and dyslexia. Course utilizes evidence-based strategies along with a comprehensive assessment system to guide instructional planning and delivery.

Data Based Individualization (DBI) - This scale-up of DBI (a research-based process for individualizing and intensifying interventions through the systematic use of assessment data, validated interventions, and research-based adaptation strategies) is being implemented at target schools in 1 LEA to increase educators' awareness of intensive intervention.

All Leaders - supports district and building leadership teams use Implementation Science for coordinating academic initiatives, including building readiness, implementation stages, implementation teams, and implementation drivers. Participants gain skills to develop, implement, and evaluate district and school plans that support the improvement of core content instruction and achievement of students with disabilities.

Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) within an MTSS - This three-part EBP course provides LEA leaders and staff resources to establish common language and beliefs concerning specially designed instruction within a Multi-Tier System of Support, define the role of specially designed instruction in overall school improvement, provide adaptive and technical leadership that removes barriers to general and special education

Describe the data collected to evaluate and monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change. (Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space)***:***

Math Foundations and RRtCP - Fidelity observation scores indicate a high level of implementation; participation and continuation scores from Developmental Reviews (DR) indicate a high level of commitment to improvement and a need for coaching. 87% of teachers implemented mathematics programs with fidelity, 56% of participants achieved a passing score on the post-assessment for RRtCP and FoM, and 46% of participating LEAs were above state proficiency rate for students in reading and math.

Data Based Individualization (DBI) - Student pre-assessment data was collected and teacher fidelity was monitored within LEA using DBI tools provided on NCII website/resources; student post-assessment data was not collected due to Covid19 (collection date was scheduled for May 2020).

All Leaders - Developmental review scores indicate districts are developing and improving measurable data driven goals within implementation plans for LEAs to strengthen implementation fidelity of designated initiatives as indicated on NCSIP district plan; engaged 52 attendees for face to face sessions (3 regional sessions and 1 local session), 11 attendees Canvas Overview Session, 19 attendees in NCSU Administrator Seminar Session.

Specially Designed Instruction within an MTSS - Follow-up meetings for Cohort A and B were planned but had to be cancelled due to COVID. COVID also affected the completion rate of both courses, but prompted the need to have the content transitioned to self-paced courses and available to all educators. Through

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Describe the components (professional development activities, policies/procedures revisions, and/or practices, etc.) implemented during the reporting period to support the knowledge and use of selected evidence-based practices. (Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space):

School Mental Health Policy - SHLT-003 was adopted by the NC State Board of Education to ensure LEAs are equipping staff to meet the increasing SEL/mental health needs of students as a result of the pandemic. These supports are critical for SWD who are at increased greater risk for SEL/mental health needs due to isolation, learning loss, access issues to remote instruction as a result of disability, etc.

SLD Policy - NCDPI developed SLD policy in 2016 that restricted use of severe discrepancy for determining eligibility which includes criteria for a process based on a child's response to scientific, research-based intervention. ECD heard from stakeholders about specific language in the policy that was ripe for misinterpretation (e.g., language concerning threshold for 'research-based" intervention, our definition of specific learning disability, and inclusion of language surrounding performance comparisons among culturally and linguistically similar peers).

Autism Policy - following multiple rounds of stakeholder input, NCDPI adopted a revised policy for autism definition and identification (Fall 2019) based on current evidence and taxonomy.

Online Professional Learning (PL) offerings - a large portion of our universal PL offerings were transferred to online platforms to continue access amid pandemic restrictions to gatherings and social distancing.

Communication practices - met weekly with EC Directors Advisory Council from March-July, 2020, to communicate COVID-related policy and funding updates; established a weekly newsletter for LEAs to compile/organize multiple EC updates; conducted parent focus groups and an SWD youth survey.

Section C: Stakeholder Engagement

Describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts. (Please limit your response to 3000 characters without space):

SSIP Stakeholders - includes following roles: Student with disability, Parents of SWD, Equity Specialist, Evidence-based instructional practices, Behavior/social-emotional learning, Transition, School engagement /attendance, Check and Connect, Multi-tier System of Support, Parent/family engagement, Data analysis, Program Evaluation, Implementation Science, Leveraging data systems (ECATS), Specially-designed instruction, Standards, Curriculum, Instruction, Extended Content Standards, Low-incidence disability, IDEA law and policy, Fiscal management, Charter schools, Pre-school Pyramid Model, Part C SSIP, Federal programs/School Improvement, EC teacher recruitment and retention, Professional learning adult learning theory, Coaching. All areas of expertise are currently filled except SWD role. Group meets monthly to analyze data, provide feedback on work group deliverables, suggest next steps, and bring concerns/questions.

Directors' Advisory Council (DAC) - represents EC directors/coordinators by region; gather, communicate, and advocate for concerns, questions, and areas needing additional support or professional development; collaborates to plan Regional Director Meetings.

Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children - advises NC State Board of Education (SBE) on unmet needs of SWD and in development/implementation of policies related to coordination of services for SWD. Advises SBE on developing evaluations, reporting data, and developing corrective action plans to address findings in federal monitoring. 25 members - 20 appointees and 5 ex-officio; appointed for 4 -year terms by Governor, President Pro Tem of Senate, Speaker of House, and SBE. Appointees represent SWD as parents, teachers, higher education, public and private schools, business/vocational community, and charter schools. Majority of representatives are persons with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities

Adaptive Curriculum Stakeholders group - stakeholders including Institutes of higher education, EC Directors, program specialists, building principals, teachers, parents and NCDPI personnel address barriers for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Through problem-solving analysis, subdivided into work groups to address areas of focus including: Professional Development, Preparation, Leveraging Human Capital, Curriculum, and Community Resources. Work groups provide recommendations to address barriers for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Topical focus groups, town halls, and surveys - conducted based on need for shared data analysis, problem-solving, and strategic planning for new EC Division activities (e.g., development and adoption of 2019 ASD Policy, 2020 SLD policy and School Mental Health policy; COVID impact)

Parent Liaison - employed by EC Division and also a parent of a student with a disability; collaborates with community partners; develops/posts a parent newsletter twice monthly; shares announcements from partner agencies; hosted Family Engagement 5-part webinar series to build local capacity for engaging families, specifically through parent liaison positions and special education advisory councils.

Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities?

Yes

If "Yes", describe how the State addressed the concerns expressed by stakeholders.
(Please limit your response to 1600 characters without space)*:*

SLD Policy - In response to stakeholders concerns about misinterpretation (e.g., language concerning threshold for 'research-based" intervention, our definition of specific learning disability, and inclusion of language surrounding performance comparisons among culturally and linguistically similar peers), the policy was amended. ECD released a comprehensive virtual course to support knowledge, skills, and abilities for evidence-based practice for SWSLD.
ASD Policy - In response to stakeholders concerns about some policy wording being overly restrictive and that professional competencies were not well-enough defined, the policy was amended and adopted.
From COVID focus groups we heard these concerns:
Parents - juggling own jobs and supporting SWD in remote learning; challenging for families with multiple children; concerns about lack of inclusion and access to remote instruction; parents need training to be de facto EC teacher/RSP; concerns about achievement/growing gaps; has been a "lost year"; others with good experiences with schools/teachers; EC teams going above and beyond what is expected; Group 4 (Spanish): language barrier on top of all other challenges; concerns over shortage of bilingual EC staff/students not getting needed services
LEAs - some districts had to use disproportionate funding for infrastructure to support remote SDI/RS; unaccounted for SWD/families; teacher heros/resilient students; concerns re: connectivity and family capacity to use tech; parent involvement challenges; challenge of EC staffing and capacity to deliver services; concerns re: compliance; scheduling difficulties with contract providers; dropout and achievement concerns; improved collaboration across stakeholders; meeting basic needs of students and families
See COVID section above for DPI response to these concerns.

If applicable, describe the action(s) that the State implemented to address any FFY 2018 SPP/APR required OSEP response. (Please limit your response to 3000 characters without space):

none

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