Maryland
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

June 12, 2025

Dr. Derek L. Simmons
Superintendent
Caroline County Public Schools
204 Franklin Street
Denton, MD 21629

Dear Dr. Simmons:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Special Education (DSE) is required by the United States Department of Education (USDE), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to make determinations annually regarding the performance of each Local Infants and Toddlers Program (LITP) using one of the following four determination categories: "Meets Requirements," "Needs Assistance," "Needs Intervention," or "Needs Substantial Intervention" [34 CFR §§303.700 and 300.703]. The MSDE, DSE uses a results-based rubric for given indicators to evaluate each local Infants and Toddlers Program's performance in meeting the State's identified targets. For Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 determinations, the Caroline County Infants and Toddlers Program has achieved the determination status of **Needs Assistance - Year 1**.

Attached, please find supporting documents:

- FFY 2023 Determination Overview (identifies the Part C Indicators used to assign a local determination on page 1 – please note that fiscal and complaints/due process hearing data continue to be used);
- FFY 2023 Local Determination Scoring Criteria (provides a six-year graduated results-driven accountability plan used to make a local determination by year);
- FFY 2023 Annual Report Card on SPP/APR Part C Indicators (provides a three-year local data analysis and required actions); and
- DSE Differentiated Framework: Tiers of Supervision and Support (provides the framework used by the DSE to guide the level of monitoring and corresponding level of performance support provided to LITPs).

To implement a results-driven accountability system, we continue to focus on the three child outcome indicators. In 2020, a revised baseline was proposed to the USDE and new targets were established. Please see the attached Part C Child Outcomes Baselines and Targets for Local Determinations document. The DSE has developed one set of baselines and targets that are inclusive of both children who receive services from birth to three and children who receive services through an Extended Individualized Family Service Plan. The decision to examine child outcomes as one group independent of age was unanimously supported by LITP Directors and Preschool Coordinators through a stakeholder discussion held in 2014. Please note the attached revised baseline and targets for local determinations of Maryland's LITPs will not be included in Maryland's Annual Performance Report to OSEP. For federal reporting, OSEP requested that Maryland report child outcomes data for children birth to three years separately from child outcomes data for children older than three so that comparisons could be made with other states that are not serving children through an IFSP after age three.

The shift to a more balanced accountability approach does not relieve the DSE from ensuring compliance, correction of identified noncompliance, and the receipt of timely and accurate data. As a result of the accountability shift to an increased emphasis on results, an LITP's determination status may be impacted in the future.

To support Maryland's commitment to narrow the opportunity and achievement gaps for infants, toddlers, and young children with disabilities and their families, the implementation of the DSE Strategic Plan: Moving Maryland Forward provides a statewide differentiated framework for general supervision and performance support. Based upon comprehensive data analysis (including the SPP/APR local determination status), the Caroline County Infants and Toddlers Program has been assigned the **Universal** tier for the delivery of the DSE technical assistance model for results. Please see the DSE Differentiated Framework: Tiers of Supervision for more information.

LITPs are strongly encouraged to work closely with their Local Interagency Coordinating Council and Family Support Centers to perform an analysis of local data and infrastructure. The analysis should guide the development of strategies for data-informed decision-making, increased parent partnerships, strategic collaboration, and the use of evidence-based practices to improve the results for infants, toddlers, and young children with disabilities and their families. As we continue this shift in focus to results-driven accountability, the MSDE, DSE will provide State and local professional learning opportunities.

Thank you for your hard work and commitment to excellence and efficiency. The MSDE is committed to supporting the efforts of the Caroline County Infants and Toddlers Program to improve results for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children with disabilities and their families. If you have any questions or wish to request technical assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at 410-767-0238.

Sincerely,

Dr. Antoine L. Hickman
Assistant State Superintendent
Division of Special Education

Attachments

c: Dr. Carey M. Wright, State Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Tenette Smith, Chief Academic Officer, Office of Teaching and Learning
Ms. Erica McDonald, Supervisor of Special Education
Dr. Brian Morrison, Director, Accountability and Data
DSE Directors/Section Chiefs