MD
Part B

FFY2014 State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report

Introduction to the State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Attachments

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In order to ensure consistent data across indicators, provide the number of districts in this field and the data will be loaded into the applicable indicator data tables.

25

This data will be prepopulated in indicators B3A, B4A, B4B, B9, and B10.

General Supervision System:

The systems that are in place to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met, e.g., monitoring, dispute resolution, etc.

Overview

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Special Education Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) has the responsibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to have a comprehensive system of general supervision that monitors the implementation of the IDEA, State laws, and applicable federal and State regulations. The mission of the DSE/EIS is to provide leadership, support, and accountability for results to Local School Systems (LSSs), and Public Agencies (PAs), and stakeholders through the provision of a seamless, comprehensive system of coordinated services to infants, toddlers, young children, and youth with disabilities, birth through age 21, and their families.

The DSE/EIS organizational structure is based upon principles of collaboration and shared responsibility. The Division is organized by five branches: Policy and Accountability; Programmatic Support and Technical Assistance; Family Support and Dispute Resolution; Interagency Collaboration; and Resource Management. The Division matrix organizational design integrates knowledge and skills for improvement of compliance and results, and ensures consistent communication within the DSE/EIS, throughout the Department, and with external stakeholders and partners. The core functions of the DSE/EIS are leadership, accountability for results, technical assistance and program support, and fiscal and resource management. **Please see Attachment A which provides a graphic description of the Division's cross matrix leadership.**

Through the implementation of cross matrix leadership, the Division is committed to the following essential principles in order to improve results and functional outcomes for all children and youth with disabilities and their families:

- **Transparency:** Maintaining an open door to stakeholders and to regularly keep our stakeholders informed through formal and informal feedback loops, including quarterly birth through twenty-one special education and early intervention leadership meetings, the Annual Leadership Conference/Professional Learning Institute, meetings of the Assistant State Superintendent's Advisory Council, and regularly scheduled convening of advisory groups, including the State Interagency Coordinating Council, Special Education State Advisory Committee, and the Early Childhood Advocacy Coalition.

- **Collaboration:** Continually engaging stakeholders through participatory processes that promote innovation, the sharing of best practices, and dissemination of research and evidence-based models. We are also committed to strengthening partnerships and planning with other MSDE Divisions and external stakeholder groups.
- **Equity, Excellence, Efficiency**: Serving stakeholders in a timely and effective manner, ensuring the availability of 'real-time' data for effective decision-making, and accelerating dissemination of models of best practices quickly and effectively throughout the State.
- **Accountability:** Improving results for all children and youth with disabilities served in LSSs/PAs. The DSE/EIS has developed a tiered system of analysis, monitoring, and support to identify LSSs/PAs in need of differentiated support and technical assistance. An LSS/PA is assigned to a tier based upon performance on SPP/APR compliance and results indicators, correction of noncompliance, analysis of data, fiscal management, and findings identified through monitoring. These principles are used to provide differentiated technical assistance that focuses on building capacity to improve results and directs State resources to those LSSs/LITPs/PAs that are the lowest performing. At the same time, LSSs/PAs that are achieving success are recognized and provided with the support needed to publish and disseminate successful best practices.

Differentiated Framework

With the emphasis on results driven accountability, the DSE/EIS has increased its focus on the requirements related to results indicators. Each LSS/PA serving children and youth with disabilities is unique, and their needs for general supervision and engagement from the DSE/EIS vary greatly depending upon numerous factors. Results Driven Accountability (RDA) allows the DSE/EIS staff to monitor and provide technical assistance and support to programs in a more effective, efficient, and systematic manner.

The MSDE, DSE/EIS comprehensive system of general supervision, BIrth - 21, encompassed in the *Differentiated Framework*. **Please see Attachment B for a graphic representation of the** *Differentiated Framework*. The *Differentiated Framework* includes two parallel mult-tier systems of support (MTSS). The MTSS on the left represents four tiers of general supervision: "Universal," "Targeted," "Focused," and "Intensive." The inverted MTSS to the right represents the corresponding tiers of engagement. The processes embedded in the *Differentiated Framework* include: Data collection; Data verification; Identification of LSS/PA performance status; LSS/PA improvement; Reporting; and Enforcements. Within these processes are the essential components of Maryland's comprehensive system of general supervision:

1) Effective policies and procedures;

2) State Performance Plan (SPP) goals and targets;

3) Monitoring for Continuous Improvement and Results (MCIR);

4) Fiscal management;

5) Dispute resolution; and

6) Targeted technical assistance and support.

The DSE/EIS has aligned its general supervisory responsibilities with engagement for program support and technical assistance to provide a MTSS for monitoring and technical assistance to address the needs of each LSS/PA. The *Differentiated Framework* illustrates the shared responsibility and shared accountability to improve results for children and youth with disabilities. The Division is committed to maintaining compliance and providing supports to improve the quality of special education services. An LSS/PA is assigned to a tier of general supervision and oversight based upon performance on federal compliance and results indicators, correction of noncompliance, analysis of data, fiscal management, and monitoring findings. The

corresponding support an LSS/PA can expect to receive is differentiated and based on that agency's assigned tier and a comprehensive analysis of the public agency's needs.

The Differentiated Framework involves directing the Division's attention to local school systems in need of more comprehensive engagement, technical assistance, and support in order to enable those local school systems to meet indicator targets, improve results, narrow the achievement gap, correct identified noncompliance, and maintain compliance. This represents the foundation of a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to integrate a continuum of resources, strategies, structures and practices.

A majority of the LSSs/PAs are currently in the **Universal Tier of General Supervision**. This represents LSSs/PAs that have met identified performance and compliance criteria, resulting in a determination status of "Meets Requirements" or is in the first year of "Needs Assistance." The LSSs/PAs assigned to the Universal Tier of General Supervision have no findings of noncompliance or have corrected all findings of noncompliance within one year and have maintained compliance.

Each LSS/PA is monitored annually through a desk audit and cross-divisional data analysis of SPP Indicators, local priorities, and fiscal data. Additionally, a cyclical general supervision monitoring of select LSS/PAs includes, at a minimum, student record reviews for IDEA requirements, a review of policy, procedures, and practices, and sub-recipient fiscal monitoring. Each LSS/PA develops and self-monitors an internal work plan including Local Priority Flexibility to address locally identified needs.

In the **Universal Tier of Engagement**, the focus is on professional development/learning and support to address statewide needs based on overall State trend data, (e.g., performance on SPP Indicators, child outcomes, and student achievement). This includes general information related to special education policies, procedures and practices, as well as the general work of the MSDE. Examples of statewide technical assistance include State and regional professional development, online tools, resources through Maryland Learning Links, and Technical Assistance Bulletins.

An LSS/PA receiving a determination status of "Needs Assistance" for two or more consecutive years or "Needs Intervention" is assigned to the **Targeted Tier of General Supervision**. An LSS/PA in this tier may have an active Corrective Action Plan(s) (CAPs) for identified noncompliance, and/or although noncompliance may be corrected within one year, compliance is not sustained.

Targeted monitoring occurs semi-annually and includes customized data analysis with real-time local and State data. Activities may include, but are not limited to: student record reviews using selected sections of the student record review document, a review of policies, procedures, and practices, a review of the LSS/PA's system of general supervision, interview questions, and/or case studies. State and local joint cross-departmental and cross-divisional teams are formed to address identified needs. The LSS/PA develops a local Improvement Plan which is submitted to and approved by the DSE/EIS.

The corresponding **Targeted Tier of Engagement** focuses on professional learning and support (training, coaching, and technical assistance) to address the needs of the LSS/PA on specific topics identified through general supervision. It is a responsive and proactive approach to prevent the LSS/PA from needing substantial support. The LSS/PA leadership is required to engage with the Division to review State and local data and information in order to implement an Improvement Plan that is approved by the DSE/EIS to build capacity to effectively address the identified needs. Evaluation and periodic feedback are critical elements of Targeted Engagement. A Targeted Assistance and Support Committee (TASC) team, consisting of jointly identified local and state cross-Divisional members, provides performance-based and responsive support.

Continuing up the Differentiated Tiers, an LSS/PA with a determination status of "Needs Substantial Intervention" is assigned to the **Focused Tier of General Supervision**. In this tier, an LSS/PA continues to have findings of noncompliance, have active CAPs for two or more years, and demonstrate little progress despite general and targeted technical assistance. Focused general supervision is comprised of enhanced and differentiated monitoring and in-depth data analysis. This tier of general supervison oversight also

requires the participation of the State Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent for Learning, and the DSE/EIS Assistant State Superintendent work closely with the local School Superintendent to develop a cross-departmental, cross-divisional State and local implementation team. The MSDE provides increased oversight activities to assess progress and may direct federal funds, impose special conditions, and/or require more frequent submission of data. The PA leadership is required to participate in a quarterly joint State and local Focused Intervention and Accountability Team (FIAT) to review progress. Maryland's focused monitoring as seen in the *Differentiated Framework* occurs quarterly and may include, but is not limited to: student record reviews using selected sections of the student record review document, a review of the LSS's/PA's real time data, a review of policies, procedures, and practices, a review of the LSS's system of general supervision, interview questions, classroom observations, and case studies.

At this level, the goal of the **Focused Tier of Engagement** is to direct substantial support to address the continuous lack of improvement of the LSS/PA through significant systems change. As described above, a joint multi-faceted State and local FIAT meet quarterly to develop, implement, and review progress in affecting systems change in policy, program, instructional practices, and professional learning at multiple systems levels. Principles of effective systems change, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability are foundational elements of the technical assistance. Frequent feedback and general supervision is maintained throughout the extent of the technical assistance.

At the highest tier, the **Intensive Tier of General Supervision**, an LSS/PA fails to progress and correct previously identified noncompliance despite receiving technical assistance and support. The failure to comply has affected the core requirements, such as the delivery of services to students with disabilities or to provide effective general supervision and oversight. The LSS/PA enters into a formal agreement with the MSDE to guide improvement and may have additional sanctions. The LSS/PA informs the MSDE of its unwillingness to comply with core requirements.

The **Intensive Tier of Engagement** focuses on providing support based on a Formal Agreement that is developed to guide improvement and correction with onsite supervision. The MSDE may direct, recover or withhold State or federal funds.

Data Collection

The first step is the collection and review of quantitative and qualitative data used for making data-informed decisions about program management and improvement. Data is derived from a variety of sources and the data collection process is continuous. First, the MSDE Data System incorporates information from a variety of other MSDE offices. The DSE/EIS collaborates with staff members from the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability (DCAA) and the Division of Student, Family and School Support (DSFSS) to collect, disaggregate, analyze, report, and/or develop new data collections, as determined appropriate, to ensure data on students with disabilities required in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the IDEA are accurate, valid, and reliable. Data on students with disabilities is located in different data collection sets. The access to newly collected disaggregate data on students with disabilities has allowed for the cross-referencing of data reports between different data sets. Relational links using the Unique Student ID numbers allows cross-referencing between all data sets.

Special Services Information System (SSIS) 618 Data Collection

The Special Services Information System (SSIS) functions as a centralized data submission system for the IDEA Part B Section 618 data. Personnel data are collected annually in Excel spreadsheets. Section 618 data are submitted via a secure server file transfer of data from LSSs and PAs, who are to monitor and verify their data collection systems at the local level. Most public agency special education data collection elements are collected as a part of the daily information management for all students.

The following processes and procedures are in place to ensure reliability of the data system:

- The SSIS secure server is available 24 hours a day for file submissions. The secure server is backed up nightly and replicated off-site. Files posted are reviewed and edited daily.
- Files are loaded into the database which resides on a secure network and is backed up nightly using the Storage Area Network (SAN) Disk.
- Part B Data Managers and other MSDE staff are available to provide support when needed.

The SSIS Manual provides detailed information for LSSs/PAs to build mechanisms within their systems for data accuracy.

The DSE/EIS runs edit reports of the files for the local school systems and public agencies to correct and resubmit their files to the DSE/EIS. To ensure validity, the DSE/EIS Special Services Information System manual provides data standardization for definitions and provides system edits similar to those suggested system edits provided by the IDEA Data Center (IDC). Validity of the data and consistency with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) data instructions is ensured throughout the data collection process by a number of practices and safeguards including edits built into the data collection system, such as data definition edits (what values are put in what fields), out-of-range edits, cross-field or relationship edits, and checks to ensure that all local school systems and public agencies submit data.

- The DSE/EIS regularly revises the SSIS Manual according to State and/or federal regulations. The Manual is distributed at Data Manager Meetings, placed on the DSE/EIS website, and is also sent to each local school system/public agency electronically.
- The DSE/EIS produces the Census Publication and Related Tables from the data system which contains multiple tables and is posted on the MSDE website. An additional internal report produced is the 5% Analysis Report which highlights any local school system/public agency with 5% or more population increases or decreases.
- The MSDE uses the EMAPS reports to flag large changes in the data. Data are disaggregated to determine which local school system/public agency is involved. When disaggregated data are suspect, the DSE/EIS contacts the local director of special education. Directors of special education and the DSE/EIS staff work together to validate the data. The LSSs/PAs provide the DSE/EIS the reasons for large changes in data and that information is analyzed at the MSDE and provided to EMAPS.

The LSSs/PAs using the Maryland Statewide Online IEP system transmit data nightly to the SSIS. Five LSSs use vendor-supported IEP systems to aggregate data for electronic file transfers quarterly to an MSDE secure server for web-based data submission of the annual child count, census data, and exit data. Personnel data continue to be collected annually in Excel spreadsheets. Quarterly, DSE/EIS collects child count, exit count, and Indicators 11, 12, and 13 data from local school systems/public agencies.

Accuracy of the data is dependent upon the accuracy of the submitted school level data. Questions and discrepancies in the data are verified by the DSE/EIS staff with the respective LSS/PA. The LSS/PA SSIS Data Manager corrects errors and resubmits the entire data file to DSE/EIS to ensure that corrections are made in both the database and the error file. The mdssis.org system allows two methods of data submission:

- Data submitted as one large file and then corrected and resubmitted; or
- Data submitted as a large file and error records are held in a suspense file until the local school system/public agency corrects the errors online. Once corrected records are accepted LSS/PA can extract the corrected file and repopulate the LSS/PA system with the corrected records.

IDEA Requirements

The DSE/EIS conducts a comprehensive student file review to ensure LSSs/PAs are correctly implementing the regulatory requirements of the IDEA and COMAR. The LSSs/PAs are selected for review on a cyclical basis using a representative sample based on student enrollment that includes large, medium and small districts. Every Maryland LSS/PA will be reviewed at least once during the six year cycle.

Effective Policies, Procedures, and Practices

Maryland has policies and procedures aligned with the IDEA, 34 CFR §300. Maryland State law and Maryland's Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) supports State implementation of the IDEA. Each LSS and PA is responsible for developing policies, procedures and practices for effective implementation in accordance with federal and State requirements to ensure the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The DSE/EIS has embedded the review of LSS/PA policies, procedures, and practices within existing components of general supervision.

Significant Disproportionality

States must collect and examine data to determine whether significant disproportionality based on race or ethnicity is occurring in the State and districts with respect to the identification of children as children with disabilities, including specific disability categories; the placement of children in particular educational settings; and the incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions, including student suspensions and expulsions.

Significant disproportionality is based on an analysis of numerical information. It is defined in Maryland as a weighted risk ratio greater than 2.0 for the same race or ethnicity with regard to a disability category, type of disciplinary action, or particular educational setting. Maryland uses 618 data collected for SPP Indicators 4B, 5, 9, and 10 to determine significant disproportionality. An LSS identified as having significant disproportionality must reserve 15% of its IDEA Part B Section 611 and Section 619 pass through funds to provide Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS); review and, if appropriate, revise district PPPs; and publicly report on the revisions of district policies, procedures and practices. Additionally, districts identified as having significant disproportionality are restricted from reducing Maintenance of Effort (MOE) by using the 50% reduction rule.

State Performance Plan

The State Performance Plan (SPP) is the State's plan to improve the 17 results and compliance indicators established by the OSEP. This plan contains a description of the State's efforts to implement the requirements of Part B of the IDEA, including how it will improve performance on indicators. As part of the SPP, each indicator has a target set by OSEP or the State. All targets set by the State are approved by the Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC). The State Performance Plan is located on the MSDE website at marylandpublicschools.org on the "Also of Interest" page.

Monitoring for Continuous Improvement and Results (MCIR)

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has revised its monitoring priorities to ensure a balance between compliance and results by placing a greater emphasis on accountability and technical assistance (TA) activities that focus on improving the MSDE capacity to develop, strengthen, and support improvement at local levels. In response to OSEP's shift in monitoring priorities, the MSDE, DSE/EIS has revised its monitoring procedures and now places greater emphasis on requirements related to improving educational results for children and youth with disabilities. In addition, the MSDE, DSE/EIS uses the *Differentiated Framework*, thus enabling the MSDE, DSE/EIS to work collaboratively with LSSs/PAs to focus on areas in need of improvement.

This is accomplished through the Maryland's Monitoring for Continuous Improvement and Results (MCIR) process. General supervision is accountable for enforcing the requirements and for ensuring continuous improvement. The primary focus of the MCIR process is to improve educational results and functional outcomes for all children and youth with disabilities and their families and ensuring that the MSDE meets the program requirements within IDEA.

The MCIR process verifies data, documents compliance with both the IDEA and the COMAR regulatory

requirements, and provides technical assistance for the timely correction of identified findings of noncompliance. Findings of noncompliance concerning the records of individual students with disabilities always result in verification of correction using a two prong process. First (Prong 1), the records in which the noncompliance was first identified are reviewed to determine if correction has occurred, or, the requirement was completed (for timeline violations), unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction or the parent has withdrawn consent. Then (Prong 2), a subsequent review of a sample of records of other similarly situated students is conducted by the DSE/EIS to verify correct implementation of the regulatory requirements. If both reviews result in 100% compliance, then correction has been achieved and the corrective action is closed.

Comprehensive monitoring occurs at least every 6 years in each LSS/PA. The purpose of comprehensive monitoring is to ensure the LSSs/PAs:

- Are compliant with State and federal regulations;
- Have a system of general supervision in place to monitor student progress and make data informed decisions; and
- Are focused on improving outcomes for students with disabilities.

While some monitoring activities are universal for all, other monitoring activities are customized to examine areas of need. These areas are identified through a variety of sources such as but not limited to:

- Indicator data verification;
- Other data reviews;
- Grant reviews;
- Fiscal data;
- Medicaid monitoring;
- Family support data;
- State complaints; and
- Advocacy organization concerns.

While compliance continues to be important, the OSEP has shifted to an RDA focus with respect to results monitoring for children, and youth with disabilities. In response, the DSE/EIS has developed monitoring activities geared towards these efforts to ensure improved results. Monitoring may be conducted either off-site as a desk audit or on-site depending on the nature of the monitoring activities. The method selected is dependent upon the activity and the information that is or is not accessible online and the practicality involved in acquiring the necessary documents needed for the review.

Desk Audit

A desk audit refers to a review of data, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), or other sources of information used in monitoring conducted by DSE/EIS staff at the MSDE. It may be the single method used to complete a review or may be used in combination with an on-site visit. After the completion of the desk audit, the DSE/EIS staff may request further documentation or data to clarify potential findings of noncompliance or verify correction of noncompliance.

On-Site Monitoring

On-site monitoring refers to a review of data, IEPs, or other sources of information used in monitoring conducted by DSE/EIS staff within the LSS/PA. On-site monitoring is specifically used to carry out those activities that are not practical to complete through a desk audit by the DSE/EIS staff. Examples of on-site monitoring may include but is not limited to a review of student records for Medicaid monitoring, provision of related services, disciplinary removal, etc.

Case Study Reviews

The MSDE staff conducts case study reviews of an individual child's/student's total educational record. This allows the reviewer to gauge/conclude whether the child/student is being provided educational programming aligned with their IEP, which is evidenced by continued growth and progress towards goals and outcomes.

Classroom Visits

In conducting visits to local schools and classrooms, the MSDE staff is able to determine if students' IEPs are being implemented in a manner that allows the child to benefit from being educated in the LRE. It is also an opportunity to assess whether specialized instruction is being executed with fidelity.

Interviews

Interviews are conducted with general and special education teachers, and school administrators. This measures consistency and understanding of practices across the school system. Additionally, MSDE staff is able to ascertain the knowledge of school based staff pertaining to the content and implementation of student IEPs and the responsibilities of staff.

Directed Onsite Visits

The MSDE, DSE/EIS reserves the right to conduct a directed onsite visit at any time based on multiple sources of data indicating potential concerns, evidence of repeated concerns, or a pattern of concerns over time. These concerns may come from examining data reported to the MSDE as part of the accountability system and other sources of information, such as interactions and conversations with parents, advocates, and/or district personnel. The purpose of the directed onsite visit is to monitor compliance and identify areas of need. The scope of each directed onsite visit is based on presenting concerns including relevant regulatory requirements. This is determined on a case-by-case basis and may include a targeted review of any of the following: SPP/APR Indicators; SSIS 618 data; fiscal management; IDEA requirements; or implementation of any other State and federal regulatory requirements. Based on identified needs, ongoing technical assistance is provided to support improvement efforts.

Fiscal Management

It is the primary responsibility of the Resource Management and Monitoring Branch to ensure effective procurement, use, and oversight of Division resources. This branch also provides for the effective, fiscal subrecipient monitoring of all recipients of the IDEA grant funds throughout Maryland, including the LSSs, PAs, and Institutions of Higher Education (IHE). Through grants management staff, the Branch also ensures fiscal accountability in accordance with federal and State regulations for federal and State funds administered by the Maryland State Department of Education for the benefit of children with disabilities, ages birth through 21. The Branch assists LSSs, PAs, and other subrecipients through the application, reporting, and fiscal management of those funds. Technical assistance relative to fiscal matters, is also provided to all LSS, PAs, and grant subrecipient agencies, as well as monitors subrecipient compliance with State and federal grant regulations, including the IDEA, Code of Federal Regulations, Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Office of Management and Budget Circulars, Maryland Education Articles, and the COMAR. The Branch additionally provides data and information to the Division leadership in support of programmatic interventions and to facilitate funding determinations and resource allocations. The Branch is additionally responsible to manage major Special Education State Aid grants and to act as the Fiscal Agent for the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund.

Dispute Resolution

The IDEA provides parents certain rights and procedural safeguards. These safeguards include formal dispute resolution requirements, such as mediation, formal complaints, resolution sessions, and due process hearings. The Family Support and Dispute Resolution Branch collects and analyzes data on an ongoing basis using the parent contact and dispute resolution database to ensure effective implementation

of the dispute resolution system.

Improvement and Correction

Through the State Performance Plan (SPP) and the State's Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) within the SPP, along with data from the examination of the LSS/PA performance; ongoing state activities are used for program improvement and progress measurement. The DSE/EIS also aligns improvement activities with existing Department initiatives, such as the Department's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver, Maryland's Race to the Top grant, Maryland's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, LSS Master Plan, and school improvement activities with SPP improvement activities, and correction of any identified noncompliance, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02.

Enforcement

There is a direct relationship between determination status and enforcement. After assigning each LSS/PA a determination status, the DSE/EIS applies appropriate enforcement actions. The DSE/EIS mandates activities and actions that are designed to ensure that LSSs/PAs meet the requirements of IDEA.

Each LSS/PA is assigned to one of four tiers of general supervision, "Universal," "Targeted," "Focused," or "Intensive" based upon performance on the IDEA SPP/APR compliance and results indicators, correction of noncompliance, analysis of data, fiscal management, and monitoring findings. This comprehensive information is used to provide differentiated engagement that focuses on building capacity to improve results and direct State resources to those LSS/PAs that are the lowest performing. At the same time, LSS/PAs that are achieving success are recognized and provided with the support needed to publish and disseminate their successful best practices.

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Technical Assistance System:

The mechanisms that the State has in place to ensure the timely delivery of high quality, evidenced based technical assistance and support to LEAs.

Technical assistance activities, designed to address the needs of each individual LSS/PA, are based on data that are collected. Evidence that the data on the processes and results component is part of a State's or an LEA's system of general supervision and includes the following:

- Data are collected as required under the IDEA and by the U.S. Secretary of Education.
- Data are routinely collected throughout the year.
- The LEAs submit data in a timely and accurate manner.
- Data are available from multiple sources and used to examine performance of the LSSs/PAs.

Through the Division's strategic plan, *Moving Maryland Forward*, the DSE/EIS focuses on building the capacity of local school systems, public agencies, and institutions of higher education, to narrow the performance gap and enable all students with disabilities to exit education career and college ready. The Division works collaboratively with other Divisions within the MSDE to improve performance on statewide accountability measures and achievement of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. Differentiated program support and technical assistance is provided based on State and local needs related to implementing a high quality, seamless, evidence-based early childhood intervention and special education system of services, birth through 21. The Division facilitates data informed systematic planning, implementation, and evaluation of evidenced-based professional development to enhance the quality of instructional practices including assessment, instruction, interventions, accommodations, modifications, and family engagement. **Please refer to Attachment B, *Differentiated Framework*, *Tiers of Engagement*.**

Team, Analyze, Plan, Implement, Track (TAP-IT)

The TAP-IT process is the universal delivery system for improved results through the DSE/EIS *Differentiated Framework: Tiers of Engagement.* TAP IT ensures purposeful resource allocation and collaborative effort in support of research-based actions that narrow the achievement gap for students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. The TAP-IT process follows the annual cycle for Local Priority Flexibility (LPF) Grants while looking beyond the grant parameters to ensure a more comprehensive effort in narrowing the achievement gap. Through TAP-IT the DSE/EIS will partner with LSSs around five levers for change (based on State Education Agency (SEA) Levers for Change in Local Education Agencies and Schools, Redding, 2013):

- **Opportunity** by braiding of resources to support innovative practices;
- **Incentives** through Statewide recognition of student progress and gap reduction;
- **Systemic Capacity** by providing Statewide data systems that include the Longitudinal Accountability Decision Support System (LADSS) and Maryland Online IEP (MOIEP);
- **Local Capacity** building through expert consultation, establishment of Communities of Practice (CoP), training, coaching and opportunities for diagnostic site reviews;
- **Intervention** through the DSE/EIS Differentiated Framework - Tiers of Engagement that include universal support for internal decision making processes based on implementation science, and dissemination of proven practices with demonstrated results.

The TAP IT process begins with the formation of an implementation team comprised of LSS and DSE/EIS representatives who operate in a clearly defined partnership. The team collects all current, relevant data sources (*for example: LSS data warehouse, State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Review (SPP/APR), Maryland Report Card, Maryland Online Individual Education Plan (MOIEP), and Title I Focus Schools Identification*) that are used to determine specialized educational services. The data for targeted areas for school improvement—mobility, attendance, discipline/suspension, and academics (*qualitative and qualitative*) is then organized and together the data are used to support thoughtful study and research based actions which are identified, monitored, and evaluated through the SEA/LSS TAP-IT Process. **Please refer to Attachment C for a graphic representation of TAP-IT.**

Team: The LSS leadership selects team members who are decision makers (programmatic, fiscal, organizational, human capital, and general educator(s) as appropriate) and will represent the LSS in partnership with the SEA, DSE/EIS team (data, fiscal and programmatic SEA liaisons, and general educator(s) as appropriate). Collaborative team sessions are scheduled face-to-face and/or through technology applications to establish team function, roles and operating norms. There is attention to building the capacity of the team in implementation science. A partnership is jointly formed by the LSS/DSE/EIS team to guide the work that includes the outcomes, design, and assessment.

Analyze: The team studies the processes currently in place to analyze data at the SEA, LSS and school level. The team reviews the available data that include formative, summative, longitudinal summary reports and early warning alert systems that may be in place. The purpose of each data source is reviewed and the strength and limitations are identified. The team describes/defines the sources and processes to analyze data at SEA, LSS, and school levels and identifies opportunities for programmatic support and/or technical assistance. The team analyzes the data using an agreed upon protocol (*a suggestion for data informed discussions is posted on Maryland Learning Links:* http://marylandlearninglinks.org/data/ck/sites/121/files/REL_2013001.pdf) and reports their finding.

Plan: The team reviews the effectiveness of existing processes and interventions to narrow the gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. The team shares current research and research based practices for narrowing the achievement gap. Allocation of resources is reviewed to determine their effectiveness in narrowing the gap. Using evidence based questioning strategies such as Teams Intervening Early to Reach all Students (TIERS): Asking the Right Questions at http://www.hdc.lsuhsc.edu/tiers/modules/Module/TIERS%20Data%20Use%20Steps%201-8%20output/story.html, and implementation science tools that include the Hexagon Tool where information is gathered and organized providing the team with a complete picture of the targeted interventions and their use in the LSS. http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources/hexagon-tool-exploring-context Plans are created and resources are aligned to narrow the achievement gap based on the data analysis. Plans use SMART goals that are *Strategic, Measurable, Attainable, Results based and Time bound* - and includes ideas for sharing success and replication. http://www.hr.virginia.edu/uploads/documents/media/Writing_SMART_Goals.pdf

Implement: The plan is implemented with the supports and resources identified from the LSS and DSE/EIS partners. Monitoring of progress, identification and removal of barriers to change, and diagnostic site reviews are conducted.

Track: Team members meet quarterly face-to-face and/or through technology applications. They receive updates from those assigned to monitor each data set, financial reports are discussed and the team modifies the work as needed (e.g., based on fidelity of intervention implementation, student performance, etc.). An annual review and report of the work is completed by the team through the SMART Process. Success is shared, and the work is scaled up as appropriate.

Attachments

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File Name	Uploaded By	Uploaded Date	Remove
attach b differentiated framework (1).pdf	Marcella E. Franczkowski		Remove
attach c tap-it.docx	Marcella E. Franczkowski		Remove

Professional Development System:

The mechanisms the State has in place to ensure that service providers have the skills to effectively provide services that improve results for students with disabilities.

The Maryland State Department of Education's "Stages of Professional Development for All Teachers Teaching Students with Disabilities" is a roadmap that teachers can use throughout their careers, ideally beginning in the final year of a teacher-preparation program and moving all the way through to retirement. There are other matrices available to guide teacher professional development, but "Stages" is unique. It's specifically geared to help teachers improve the performance of their students with disabilities in both the general and special education environments.

While "Stages" can be a great self-assessment tool, it's especially useful during the mentoring process. It helps mentors and mentees identify the mentee's particular areas of strength and areas of need. In addition, it provides clear stepping stones to guide the mentee's professional development on an ongoing, career-long basis. The online version of "Stages", accessible through the Professional Development Online Tracker (PDot), includes links to professional development courses, videos, curricula, webinars, books and other materials that can be invaluable during (and after) mentoring. **See Attachment D for a graphic representation of the professional development cycle** that is at the heart of "Stages" and at the heart of every teacher's professional growth.

Attachments

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attach d professional development cycle.docx	Marcella E. Franczkowski		Remove

Stakeholder Involvement: apply this to all Part B results indicators

The mechanism for soliciting broad stakeholder input on targets in the SPP, including revisions to targets.

Stakeholder Involvement for the FFY 2014 SPP/APR

Stakeholders recommended, based on gudiance from general education and the data analysis conducted by the MSDE to: (1) forgo the establishment of baseline and targets for Indicator 3 A given the guidance the MSDE received from the US Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education ,Title 1, that waived the requirement for the MSDE to submit AMO's for SY 2014-2015 and 2015-2016; (2) establish baseline and targets for Indicator 3 B and 3 C as a result of the MSDE change in assement methodology by implementing the PARRC during the 2014-2015 school year; and (3) revise the baseline and targets for Indicator 14 due to a change in metholodgy. Given the high levels of performance achieved for Indicator 3B the current baseline and targets will be retained.

Stakeholders recommended that the revised metholodgy for Indicator 14 be applied to the FFY 2013 data inorder to determine progress or slippabe. As a result of these revisions, MSDE has attached a revised copy of the FFY 2013 State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report to reflect these changes. The MSDE did not make any other revisions to the Part B baselines or targets, during the 2014 annual performance review period.

The MSDE held Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC) meetings on January 20, 2015, March 17, 2015, May 19, 2015, June 18, 2015, August 10, 2015, September 22, 2015, October 19, 2015, November 16, 2015, December 14, 2015, January 11, 2016, and April 19, 2016. The stakeholder meetings were held to solicit input into the development of the FFY 2014 APR, to diiscuss and analyze prior and current data for each of the Part B indicators, analyze strategies and activities implemented to determine progress, and to make recommendations to improve compliance and student outcomes, specifically, as it relates to narrowing the gap, relative to school readiness, school achievement, and readiness for adlutl life after school.
The most recent SESAC meeting held on April 19, 2016 focused on the review and discussion for Indicator 3C, and projected targets trom FFY 2014 through FFY 2018. The SESAC approved the current baseline data and proposed targets for Indicator
3C, following ongoing discussions and analysis regarding the change in methodology with the implementation of the PARCC statewide assessment.

At the SESAC meetings thoughtful discussions were held regarding the current and trend data and to provide input regarding the implementation of state-wide and local strategies and activities. In addtion, the MSDE held meetings with local directors of special education to review local performance aganist the State's targets, and to solicit input regarding the four key State level strategies. The four State level strategies focused on; stategic collaboration, family partnerships, evidence-based practices, and data-informed decisions that are designed to support local school districts to improve results for children and youth with disabilities by narrowing the achievement gap. The FFY 2013 SPP will be revised and posted on MSDE's website.

Prior Stakeholder Invovement

The MSDE identified staff from across the five branches within the DSE/EIS to form internal Division teams that corresponded to the Part B Indicators. Each team gathered, analyzed, interpreted data, and reviewed available information about potential issues related to policies, procedures, and practices that may influence or explain the data across the cluster areas identified by the OSEP. The DSE/EIS obtained broad stakeholder input on revisions to the SPP and development of the APR, including information on progress or slippage for each indicator. Stakeholder input was sought and received regarding draft information and data relative to finalizing the FFY 2013 SPP targets from the following stakeholder groups:

- Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC);
- State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC);
- Local Directors of Special Education
- Local Directors of Infants and Toddlers Programs; and
- Local Preschool Coordinators.

On October 16, 2014 at an open meeting of the SESAC, information and preliminary data was provided and discusssed regariding the new SPP/APR cycle (FFY 2013 - 2018), the GRADS360 online reporting, the status of the SSIP work groups, OSEP'S FFY 2012 Part B State determination, and the DSE/EIS's local school system determinations process for March 2015.

On November 13, 2014, local directors of special education, local preschool coordinators, other strategic partners, such as the Parents' Place of Maryland, local assistant superintendent's of instruction received an overview of the DSE/EIS Strategic Plan, *Moving Maryland Forward*, that aligns the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C and Part B SPP indicator targets to four (4) Action Imperatives: Early Childhood, Professional Learning, Access, Equity and Progress , and Secondary Transition.

On Novemnber 18, 2014, at an open meeting of the SESAC, information was shared with the members of the SESAC regarding the alignment of the graduation data with the graduation rate targets under Title I of the ESEA. The graduation targets are derived from page 81 of the Maryland State Deaprtment of Education ESEA Flexibility Waiver, revised March 26, 2014. At that same meeting the SESAC also provided input on the following Indicators:

- Indicator 1 Graduation
- Indicator 2 Dropout;
- Indicator 4A Suspension and Expulsion;
- Indicator 4B Suspension and Expulsion by Race/Ethnicity and Disability;
- Indicator 5 Least Restrictive Environment (LRE);
- Indicator 9 Disproportionality (Identification/ Race/Ethnicity);
- Indicator 10 Disproportionality (Identification/ Race/Ethnicity/Disability Category);
- Indicator 11 Initial Evaluation; and
- Indicator 13 Secondary Transition.

On January 8, 2015, at an open public meeting of the SICC, broad stakeholder input was gathered relative to the following preschool indicators:

- Indicator 6 Preschool LRE;
- Indicator 7 Preschool Outcomes;
- Indicator 8 Preschool Parent Involvement; and
- Indicator 12 Transition from Part C to Part B Preschool.

On January 20, 2015, at an open meeting of the SESAC, the SESAC provided input relative to the following indicators:

- Indicator 3 Assessment;
  Indicator 6 Preschool LRE;
- Indicator 7 Preschool Outcomes;
- Indicator 8 Preschool and School-Age Parent Involvement;
- Indicator 12 Transition from Part C to Part B Preschool;
- Inidcator 14 Post-School Outcomes;
- Indicator 15 Resolution Session; and
- Indicator 16 Mediation.

During a teleconference on January 28, 2015, with Maryland's Birth through 21 leaders, including local directors of Infants and Toddlers Programs, local preschool coordinators, and local directors of special education, the MSDE, Assistant State Superintendent for the DSE/EIS provided preliminary results for the IDEA Part C and Part B FFY 2013 APR.

Attachments

File Name	Uploaded By	Uploaded Date
No APR attachments found.		

Reporting to the Public:

How and where the State reported to the public on the FFY 2013 performance of each LEA located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days following the State's submission of its FFY 2013 APR, as required by 34 CFR §300.602(b)(1)(i)(A); and a description of where, on its Web site, a complete copy of the State's SPP, including any revision if the State has revised the SPP that it submitted with its FFY 2013 APR in 2015, is available.

The DSE/EIS has developed the State's Birth through 21 SPP/APR website in collaboration with our strategic partners at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE). The DSE/EIS made FFY 2013 local determinations in March 2015. A complete copy of Maryland's SPP is available on the Maryland's Birth through 21 SPP/APR website. This website may be accessed from the home page of the MSDE website at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org. The public may also access Maryland's Birth through 21 SPP/APR website at http://mdideareport.org. The website includes State and local performance and compliance data on all applicable indicators. It also includes tools for comparing local performance in relationship to other LSS/PA and the State targets. The public may see progress and slippage through a combination of tables and graphs populated on the website. This site also includes the OSEP's annual State determination, and the DSE/EIS's annual local school system determinations.

The DSE/EIS reports to the public on the State's progress and/or slippage in meeting the SPP measurable and rigorous targets, and the performance of each LSS/PA on the targets in the SPP on the MSDE website within 120 days of the submission to the OSEP. At that time the MSDE also disseminated this information to each LSS/PA in the State, to members of the SESAC, to each local school system's Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committees (SECACs), and made it available to various media, consistent with the MSDE policy for dissemination of other written material. Upon receipt of the State's FFY 2013 federal Part B determination status, the DSE/EIS sent a copy of the FFY 2013 APR to local superintendents of schools, local directors of special education in each LSS/PA, the SESAC members, and the Parents' Place of Maryland, Inc.

Attachments

File Name	Uploaded By	Uploaded Date
No APR attachments found.		

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 1: Graduation

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2011

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≥			83.24%	80.00%	85.50%	85.50%	85.50%	90.00%	81.50%	59.19%
Data		76.80%	75.61%	72.85%	67.23%	70.05%	73.33%	56.57%	57.41%	60.03%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥	61.43%	63.67%	65.91%	68.14%	70.38%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

☑ Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Although, the MSDE did not make revisions to the baseline or targets for this indicator, the SESAC meetings have a standing agenda item that includes review of the federal indicators and a discussion of the SPP/APR cycle. The data provided for Indicator 1 of the SPP/APR is taken from the Maryland Report Card, Maryland's official ESEA data reporting source for the Maryland State Department of Education that aligns with Maryland's Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR). The Maryland Report Card may be accessed at http://mdreportcard.org/. The graduation rate targets are the same as the annual graduation rate targets under Title I of the ESEA. Meetings were held with our State Special Education Advisory Council (SESAC) on the following dates: January 20, 2015, March 17, 2015, May 19, 2015, June 18, 2015, August 10, 2015, September 22, 2015, October 19, 2015, November 16, 2015, December 14, 2015, and January 11, 2016.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has approved this process.

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2013-14 Cohorts for Regulatory Adjusted-Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C151; Data group 696)	12/2/2015	Number of youth with IEPs graduating with a regular diploma	3,850	
SY 2013-14 Cohorts for Regulatory Adjusted-Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C151; Data group 696)	12/2/2015	Number of youth with IEPs eligible to graduate	6,068	null

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2013-14 Regulatory Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C150; Data group 695)	12/2/2015	2012-13 Regulatory four-year adjusted-cohort graduation rate table	63.45%	Calculate

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of youth with IEPs in the current year's adjusted cohort graduating with a regular diploma	Number of youth with IEPs in the current year's adjusted cohort eligible to graduate	FFY 2013 Data	FFY 2014 Target	FFY 2014 Data
3,850	6,068	60.03%	61.43%	63.45%

Graduation Conditions Field

Provide the four-year graduation cohort rate. The four-year graduation rate follows a cohort, or a group of students, who begin as first-time 9th graders in a particular school year and who graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years or less. An extended-year graduation rate follows the same cohort of students for an additional year or years. The cohort is "adjusted" by adding any students transferring into the cohort and by subtracting any students who transfer out, emigrate to another country, or die during the years covered by the rate.

Under 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(iv), a "regular high school diploma" means the standard high school diploma awarded to students in a State that is fully aligned with the State's academic content standards and does not include a GED credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award. The term "regular high school diploma" also includes a "higher diploma" that is awarded to students who complete requirements above and beyond what is required for a regular diploma.

Actual Target Data for FFY 2014: 63.45% (3,850/6,068) x100 **Target Met**

The same data was reported to the U. S. Department of Education under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Using the required 2013-2014 Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate 3,850 youth with IEPs out of a possible 6,068 graduated with a regular diploma. This is a 4 year adjusted cohort graduation rate of 63.45%. This compares to a 4 year adjusted cohort graduation rate of 88.75% for regular education students. This data reflects a 25.30 percentage point gap between the graduation rate of non-disabled peers and youth with disabilities who received services in accordance with an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Four Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

The four year adjusted cohort rate is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class. From the beginning of the 9th grade, students who are entering that grade for the first time form a cohort that is subsequently “adjusted” by adding any student who transfers into the cohort later during the 9 th grade year and the next three years and subtracting out any students who transfer out, emigrate to another county, or die during that same period. This definition is defined in federal regulation 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(i)-(iv). The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate also strictly adheres to section 111(b)(2)(C)(vi) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which defines graduation rate as the “percentage of students who graduate from secondary school with a regular diploma in the standard number of years.”

Under 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(iv), 200.19(b)(1)(i)-(iv). The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate also strictly adheres to section 111(b)(2)(C)(vi) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which defines graduation rate as the “percentage of students who graduate from secondary school with a regular diploma in the standard number of years.

The data provided is from the Maryland Report Card, Maryland’s official ESEA data reporting source for the Maryland State Department of Education that aligns with Maryland’s Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR). The Maryland Report Card may be accessed at http://mdreportcard.org/. The graduation rate targets are the same as the annual graduation rate targets under Title I of the ESEA.

Leaver Rate = The graduation rate Maryland previously reported is called the “Leaver Rate.” The Leaver Rate is defined as the percentage of students who received a Maryland High School Diploma during the reported

school year. The Leaver Rate is an estimated cohort rate. It is calculated by dividing the number of high school graduates by the sum of the dropouts for grades 9 through 12, respectively, in consecutive years, plus the number of high school graduates.

Graduation Conditions

Maryland offers one diploma known as the Maryland High School Diploma. The requirements for a Maryland High School Diploma are applicable to all students, including youth with IEPs. To be awarded a diploma, a student, including a youth with an IEP, shall be enrolled in a Maryland public school and have earned a minimum of 21 credits that include the following:

Subject Area	**Specific Credit Requirement**
English	4 credits
Math	3 credits
	ü 1 in Algebra/Data Analysis
	ü1 in Geometry
	ü1 additional Mathematics credit
Science	3 credits
	ü 1 in Biology
	ü 2 that must include laboratory experience in any or all of the following areas: earth science, life science, physical science
Social Studies	3 credits
	ü US History
	üWorld History
	üLocal, State, and National Government
Fine Arts	1 credit
Physical Education	½ credit
Health	½ credit
Technology Education	1 credit
Other	2 credits of foreign language **or** 2 credits of American Sign Language **or**
	2 credits of advanced technology education **and**
	3 credits in electives
	OR
	4 credits by successfully completing a State-approved career & technology program **and**
	1 credit in an elective

Students must also meet attendance, service-learning, and any local school system requirements

In addition, all students, including youth with IEPs, must complete the following High School Assessments requirements:

Algebra/Data Analysis, English 10, and Biology

Students who entered grade 9 in the fall of 2005 and later (COMAR 13A.03.02.09) must obtain either a passing score on Algebra/Data Analysis, English 10, and Biology or obtain an overall combined score of 1208 or 1602 (see below). Students who meet specific criteria may use the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation to meet the passing requirement. For more information about the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation, please see questions 20 and 21 (pages 10-11) in the High School Graduation Requirements Questions and Answers at http://hsaexam.org/img/HS_Grad_Q_A.pdf.

Government

Students who entered 9th grade in the 2012-13 school year are not required to pass the Government High School Assessment for graduation, but may use it if they pursue a combined score to satisfy the graduation requirements. Students have two options. Students may achieve either a combined score of:

- 1602 for English, Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, **and** Government; or
- 1208 for English, Algebra/Data Analysis, and

Students entering 9th grade in the 2013-2014 school year and beyond must either pass the Government High School Assessment or include the Government High School Assessment score to meet a combined score of 1602.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 2: Drop Out

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2011

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≤			3.81%	3.54%	3.54%	3.54%	3.27%	3.27%	3.27%	4.95%
Data		5.65%	4.98%	5.78%	3.11%	4.41%	4.46%	5.41%	5.87%	4.95%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≤	4.47%	3.99%	3.51%	3.03%	2.55%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

☐ Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of youth with IEPs who exited special education due to dropping out	Total number of high school students with IEPs	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
1,431	30,931	4.95%	4.47%	4.63%

☑ **Use a different calculation methodology**

☐ Change numerator description in data table

☐ Change denominator description in data table

Please explain the methodology used to calculate the numbers entered above.

Maryland is using Option 2. The calulation is an annual event dropout rate=the number of IEP dropouts from grades 9-12/ the number of IEP students in grades 9-12. The data and measurement for Option 2 is the same data source and measurement that Maryland used to report in its FFY 2013 APR, submitted February 1, 2015. The instructions for Option 2 state that Maryland is to, "use the annual event school dropout rate for students leaving a school in a single year determined in accordance with the National Center for Education Statistic's Common Core of Data." This data is from SY 2013-2014 as the data for this indicator are "lagged" data. These data show that there has been a decrease in the number of students dropping out in SY 2013-2014 (1431 students) from SY 2012-2013 (1540 students).

The Annual Dropout Rate is the percentage of students dropping out of school in grades 9 through 12 in a single year. The number and percentage of students who leave school for any reason, except death, before graduation or completion of a Maryland approved educational program and who are not known to enroll in another school or state-approved program during the current school year. The year is defined as July through June and includes students dropping out over the summer and students dropping out of evening high school and other alternative programs. Using the MSDE 2013-2014 school year Annual Dropout Rate data, the DSE/EIS reports an Annual Dropout Rate of **4.56%, (1,431/30,931 X 100).** This data is from the Maryland Report Card, the official reporting source for Maryland Public Schools. The Maryland Report Card can be found at http://mdreportcard.org.

Note: Students who re-enter school during the same year in which they dropped out of school are not counted as dropouts.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 3A: Districts Meeting AYP/AMO for Disability Subgroup

Explanation of why this indicator is not applicable

No longer required due to passage of ESSA.

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on Statewide assessments:

A. Percent of the districts with a disability subgroup that meets the State's minimum "n" size that meet the State's AYP/AMO targets for the disability subgroup.
B. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

This indicator is not applicable.

Indicator 3B: Participation for Students with IEPs

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on Statewide assessments:

A. **Percent of the districts with a disability subgroup that meets the State's minimum "n" size that meet the State's AYP/AMO targets for the disability subgroup.**
B. **Participation rate for children with IEPs.**
C. **Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievement standards.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Historical Data

	Group Name	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Reading	A Overall	2005	Target ≥			95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
			Data		100%	98.90%	98.70%	99.18%	99.23%	99.10%	99.17%	99.10%	98.74%
Math	A Overall	2005	Target ≥			95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
			Data		100%	98.80%	98.70%	99.03%	99.17%	99.10%	99.05%	98.86%	98.53%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

	FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Reading	A ≥ Overall	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Math	A ≥ Overall	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

☑ Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Indicator B3B: Student Participation in Statewide Assessments:

During the FFY 2014-2015 school year, stakeholders were involved in the review of data resulting from the MSDE implementation of a new State-wide assessment, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), as the general assessment for the first time in the spring of 2015.

Maryland students' participation on statewide assessments in English Language Art and Mathematics continues to be high. The target is 95% participation. In the 2014-2015 school year, Maryland saw a participation rate of 97.84% in Reading and 97.82% in Mathematics.

The MSDE, as a result of this change in methodology and the high level of performance for participation has determined to retain its 2005 data as the baseline in addition, to retaining the same targets established in FFY 2014 through FFY 2018 as reported in the FFY 2013 State Performance Plan (SPP).

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment

Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data

Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A Overall	53,266	52,116	98.74%	95.00%	97.84%

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment

Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A Overall	53,455	52,292	98.53%	95.00%	97.82%

Public Reporting Information

Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.

The Maryland Report Card at http://mdreportcard.org reports performance data by State, county, and school. The Maryland School Improvement website at www.mdk12.org also reports performance data by county and school. The MSDE implements necessary limits on the data reported on both websites in accordance with FERPA guidelines. The changes to the websites were designed to maximize the information provided to the public while also protecting the privacy of small identifiable groups of students.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 3C: Proficiency for Students with IEPs

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on Statewide assessments:

A. **Percent of the districts with a disability subgroup that meets the State's minimum "n" size that meet the State's AYP/AMO targets for the disability subgroup.**
B. **Participation rate for children with IEPs.**
C. **Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievement standards.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Historical Data

	Group Name	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Reading	A Grade 3	2005	Target ≥			61.82%	62.27%	72.73%	73.73%	78.18%	83.64%	94.55%	72.80%
			Data		57.50%	62.50%	63.33%	68.65%	66.72%	67.95%	69.34%	61.60%	55.83%
	B Grade 4	2005	Target ≥			72.05%	76.90%	80.75%	80.75%	84.60%	88.45%	96.15%	72.80%
			Data		58.50%	67.30%	72.23%	69.39%	68.12%	71.51%	71.47%	66.90%	61.28%
	C Grade 5	2005	Target ≥			66.59%	71.36%	76.14%	76.14%	80.91%	85.68%	95.23%	72.80%
			Data		48.90%	52.97%	67.51%	73.29%	71.12%	70.30%	72.27%	65.40%	65.15%
	D Grade 6	2005	Target ≥			68.50%	73.00%	77.50%	77.50%	82.00%	86.50%	95.50%	72.80%
			Data		36.90%	47.15%	51.24%	57.10%	61.41%	59.39%	57.82%	51.80%	49.97%
	E Grade 7	2005	Target ≥			66.75%	71.50%	76.25%	76.25%	81.00%	85.75%	95.25%	72.80%
			Data		36.30%	36.88%	49.48%	52.72%	52.84%	57.28%	51.96%	54.00%	42.51%
	F Grade 8	2005	Target ≥			63.73%	68.91%	74.09%	74.09%	79.27%	84.45%	94.82%	72.80%
			Data		30.80%	35.22%	38.81%	50.35%	53.90%	55.13%	52.24%	44.60%	38.52%
	G HS	2005	Target ≥			52.17%	59.00%	65.83%	65.83%	72.67%	79.50%	93.17%	72.80%
			Data		21.10%	36.45%	45.91%	48.16%	46.69%	49.77%	51.56%	49.40%	46.39%
Math	A Grade 3	2005	Target ≥			66.53%	71.31%	76.09%	76.09%	80.87%	85.65%	95.22%	67.40%
			Data		53.00%	54.97%	60.27%	58.13%	63.44%	62.70%	63.37%	52.13%	44.11%
	B Grade 4	2005	Target ≥			66.33%	71.14%	75.95%	75.95%	80.76%	85.57%	95.19%	67.40%
			Data		54.90%	62.63%	66.85%	66.90%	68.63%	67.00%	66.09%	60.99%	48.98%
	C Grade 5	2005	Target ≥			58.89%	64.76%	70.64%	70.64%	76.51%	82.38%	94.13%	67.40%
			Data		41.90%	51.59%	52.52%	53.35%	57.95%	57.60%	61.01%	48.05%	36.81%
	D Grade 6	2005	Target ≥			51.84%	58.72%	65.60%	65.60%	72.48%	79.36%	93.12%	67.40%
			Data		30.90%	40.46%	44.51%	46.39%	50.78%	54.10%	54.13%	42.96%	32.35%
	E Grade 7	2005	Target ≥			49.81%	56.98%	64.15%	64.15%	71.32%	78.49%	92.83%	67.40%
			Data		26.60%	30.58%	35.23%	43.12%	45.59%	48.70%	49.68%	38.48%	28.41%
	F Grade 8	2005	Target ≥			48.45%	55.82%	63.18%	63.18%	70.55%	77.91%	92.64%	67.40%
			Data		23.30%	27.22%	29.51%	35.13%	34.89%	34.90%	37.96%	29.22%	23.52%
	G HS	2005	Target ≥			38.60%	38.60%	56.11%	56.12%	64.89%	73.67%	91.22%	67.40%
			Data		31.00%	37.33%	49.95%	47.46%	45.69%	48.60%	48.33%	48.16%	46.25%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

	FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Reading	**A ≥** Grade 3	15.34%	16.60%	18.60%	21.33%	23.39%
	B ≥ Grade 4	14.37%	19.10%	21.10%	23.83%	25.89%
	C ≥ Grade 5	11.87%	21.60%	23.60%	26.33%	28.39%
	D ≥ Grade 6	11.40%	24.10%	26.10%	28.83%	30.89%
	E ≥ Grade 7	13.40%	26.60%	28.60%	31.33%	33.39%
	F ≥ Grade 8	12.25%	29.10%	31.10%	33.83%	35.89%
	G ≥ HS	50.50%	50.51%	50.52%	50.53%	50.54%
Math	**A ≥** Grade 3	16.11%	16.20%	16.50%	18.58%	20.71%
	B ≥ Grade 4	12.26%	14.40%	16.15%	18.23%	20.36%
	C ≥ Grade 5	10.79%	17.10%	18.85%	20.93%	23.06%
	D ≥ Grade 6	11.17%	18.80%	20.55%	22.63%	24.76%
	E ≥ Grade 7	12.29%	20.50%	22.25%	24.33%	26.46%
	F ≥ Grade 8	11.51%	22.20%	23.95%	26.03%	28.16%
	G ≥ HS	56.06%	56.07%	56.08%	56.09%	56.10%

Key:

Explanation of Changes

Stakeholders were engaged with the MSDE staff in the 2014-2015 transitional school year for Maryland, that provided them with an opportunity to comment on the revised targets. The initial PARCC scores set a new baseline and revised targets from 2014-2018 for students taking the general assessment, PARCC. The MSDE informed stakeholders and the public that students taking the alternate assessment continued to demonstrate their content mastery through the portfolio-based Alternate Maryland School Assessments in reading and mathematics, students in grade 3-8 and the majority of high school students took the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) as the general assessment for the first time in the Spring of 2015. A small number of high school students participated in the Maryland High School Assessment (HSA) or modified High School Assessments (mod-HSA) if they took and did not pass that assessment in the 2013-2014 school year. Moving forward, all high school students will take the PARCC as the general assessment in English Language Arts/Literacy and in Mathematics.

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

☐ Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment

Group Name	Children with IEPs who received a valid	Number of Children with IEPs Proficient	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data

	score and a proficiency was assigned				
A Grade 3	7,778	1,193	55.83%	15.34%	15.34%
B Grade 4	7,885	1,133	61.28%	14.37%	14.37%
C Grade 5	7,970	946	65.15%	11.87%	11.87%
D Grade 6	7,629	870	49.97%	11.40%	11.40%
E Grade 7	7,404	992	42.51%	13.40%	13.40%
F Grade 8	7,062	865	38.52%	12.25%	12.25%
G HS	4,560	2,303	46.39%	50.50%	50.50%

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment

Group Name	Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	Number of Children with IEPs Proficient	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A Grade 3	7,779	1,253	44.11%	16.11%	16.11%
B Grade 4	7,904	969	48.98%	12.26%	12.26%
C Grade 5	7,964	859	36.81%	10.79%	10.79%
D Grade 6	7,604	849	32.35%	11.17%	11.17%
E Grade 7	7,395	909	28.41%	12.29%	12.29%
F Grade 8	7,038	810	23.52%	11.51%	11.51%
G HS	4,506	2,526	46.25%	56.06%	56.06%

Public Reporting Information

Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.

The Maryland Report Card at http://mdreportcard.org reports performance data by State, county, and school. The Maryland School Improvement website at www.mdk12.org also reports performance data by county and school. The MSDE implements necessary limits on the data reported on both websites in accordance with FERPA guidelines. The changes to the websites were designed to maximize the information provided to the public while also protecting the privacy of small identifiable groups of students.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 4A: Suspension/Expulsion

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Rates of suspension and expulsion:

A. **Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and**
B. **Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≤			20.83%	16.67%	16.67%	12.50%	8.30%	8.30%	4.10%	16.00%
Data		33.00%	20.83%	12.50%	12.50%	16.70%	16.70%	16.70%	16.00%	16.00%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≤	12.00%	12.00%	8.00%	8.00%	4.00%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Please indicate the type of denominator provided

Number of districts in the State

Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size

Number of districts that have a significant discrepancy	Number of districts in the State	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
4	25	16.00%	12.00%	16.00%

Choose one of the following comparison methodologies to determine whether significant discrepancies are occurring (34 CFR §300.170(a)):

Compare the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs among LEAs in the State

The rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs in each LEA compared to the rates for nondisabled children in the same LEA

State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology

The MSDE's definition of Significant discrepancy is having a Comparative Discrepancy Ratio of 2.0 or greater

when comparing the rate of suspension of students with disabilities for greater than ten days to the rate of suspension of nondisabled students for greater than ten days. Calculation for the Comparative Discrepancy Ratio is the local school system suspension/expulsion rate for children with disabilities divided by the local school system suspension/expulsion rate for children without disabilities. The Comparative Discrepancy Ratio is modeled after a Risk Ratio which is the ratio between two rates of outcomes. If the ratio is greater than 2.0, the local school system is considered to be significantly discrepant. In addition to meeting the Comparative Discrepancy Ratio of 2.0 or above, a local school system (LSS) must meet the criteria for the minimum “n” size. The minimum “n” size for all LSSs is 30 students with disabilities suspended or expelled for greater than 10 school days in a school year.

MSDE's analysis of the 618 data demonstrated that four (4) LSSs were identified as having a significant discrepancy, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than ten days in a school year for children with IEPs. In addition, eight (8) of the 25 LSSs were excluded because they did not meet the State-established minimum “n” size requirement of 30 students with disabilities suspended greater than 10 days.

The MSDE using a discipline review document, conducted a revview of the policies, procedures, and practices, and made on-site visits to the four (4) LSSs relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards to ensure compliance with the IDEA, as required by 34 CFR §300.170(b). The MSDE did not identify noncompliance through this review.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

FFY 2013 Identification of Noncompliance

Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2014 using 2013-2014 data)

Description of review

Description of review

The DSE/EIS staff utilizing using a discipline review document reviewed the four (4) local school systems (LSSs) written policies and procedures relating to the discipline of students with disabilities, development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, to ensure that the policies and procedures comply with the IDEA regulations. In addition, the DSE/EIS staff reviewed the practices of the four (4) LSSs by conducting an on-site visit to review student records and disciplinary removal data to ensure the regulatory requirements were implemented correctly. Through the review of policies, procedures, and practices, noncompliance was not identified.

In addition, DES/EIS staff conducted a subsequent review of a random selection of student records from another data period to ensure policies and procedures were being followed. The student records reviewed were compliant with requirements. Results of the DSE/EIS’s review indicate that each of the four (4) LSSs have compliant policies, procedures, and practices related to suspensions and expulsions, development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and the application of procedural safeguards to ensure that comply with requirements. Therefore, no changes to policies, procedures, and practices were required.

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

The State DID identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b). If YES, select one of the following:

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

Indicator 4B: Suspension/Expulsion

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Compliance indicator: Rates of suspension and expulsion:

A. **Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and**
B. **Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2009

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data						4.10%	4.10%	0%	0%	0%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Please indicate the type of denominator provided

Number of districts in the State

Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size

Number of districts that have a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity	Number of those districts that have policies, procedures, or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements	Number of districts in the State	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
3	0	25	0%	0%	0%

All races and ethnicities were included in the review

State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology

The Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) utilized a *Rate Ratio* to compare the district-level suspension/expulsion rates for children with disabilities from each racial/ethnic group to the suspension/expulsion rate for all children without disabilities in that same district. The Rate Ratio is an acceptable method for determining significant discrepancy and is explained in detail on pages 70-71 of the Data Accountability Center document entitled *Measuring Significant Discrepancy: an Indicator B4 Technical Assistance Guide,* dated March 16, 2012. If the *Rate Ratio* is greater than 2.0, the local school system is considered to be significantly discrepant. Calculation for the Rate Ratio is the local school

system (LSS) suspension/expulsion rate for children with disabilities divided by the local school system suspension expulsion rate for children without disabilities.

In addition to meeting the *Rate Ratio* of 2.0 or above, the local school systems must meet the criteria for the minimum ‘’n” size. The minimum “n” size for all LSSs is 30 students with disabilities in a particular race/ethnic group suspended or expelled for greater than 10 school days in a school year. Significant discrepancy calculations were made for local school systems that had at least 30 children with disabilities in a particular race/ethnic group suspended for greater than ten days.

MSDE's analysis of the data demonstrated that three (3) LSSs were identified as having a significant discrepancy, in a particular race/ethnic group suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days in a school year. Fourteen (14) LSSs of the 25 LSSs were excluded because they did not meet the State-established minimum "n" size requiredment of 30 students.

The MSDE following the use of the discipline review document to review the policies, proceudres, and practices of the three (3) LSSs, conducted an onsite visit to review the policies, procedures, and preactices of th the three (3) LSSs relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards to ensre compliance with the IDEA, as required by 34 CFR §300.170(b) for the three (3) LSSs identified with significant discrepancies. The MSDE did not identify noncompliance through this review.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

FFY 2013 Identification of Noncompliance

Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2014 using 2013-2014 data)

Description of review

The MSDE conducted a revew of each of the local school systems (LSSs) identified with a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspension policies, procedures related to the discipline of students with disabilities, development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards. Staff from the MSDE and LSS staff utilized the discipline review document to conduct a review of policies, prodedures and practices and to ensure compliance with federal and State regulations. Additionally, the MSDE staff conducted an on-site visit to review individual student records and disciplinary data to ensure practices were implemented consistentlly with regulatory requirements. The MSDE staff also conducted a subsequent review of a random selection of student records from another data period to ensure that the implementation of policies and procedures, and practices were cocnsistent with Federal and State regulatory requirements, as required by 34 CFR §300.170(b). The MSDE did not identify noncompliance through this review.

- The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)
- The State DID identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b).

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

Indicator 5: Education Environments (children 6-21)

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served:

A. **Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day;**
B. **Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day; and**
C. **In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
A	2005	Target ≥			60.11%	60.61%	61.11%	61.61%	62.11%	62.61%	63.11%	68.40%
		Data		59.90%	61.64%	62.35%	63.00%	64.80%	66.14%	67.12%	67.97%	68.40%
B	2005	Target ≤			16.61%	16.36%	16.11%	15.86%	15.61%	15.36%	15.11%	13.26%
		Data		16.86%	16.21%	15.82%	15.10%	14.55%	14.04%	13.66%	13.34%	13.26%
C	2005	Target ≤			7.24%	6.20%	6.92%	6.67%	6.42%	6.32%	6.22%	6.69%
		Data		7.89%	7.90%	7.80%	7.59%	7.33%	7.12%	7.01%	6.94%	6.97%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	68.90%	69.40%	69.90%	70.40%	70.90%
Target B ≤	12.76%	12.26%	11.76%	11.26%	10.76%
Target C ≤	6.44%	6.19%	5.94%	5.69%	5.44%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	6/4/2015	Total number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21	91,031	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	A. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day	62,682	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec	7/2/2015	B. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day	11,944	null

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
C002; Data group 74)				
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	c1. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in separate schools	5,957	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	c2. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in residential facilities	119	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	c3. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in homebound/hospital placements	200	null

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

	Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served	Total number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day	62,682	91,031	68.40%	68.90%	68.86%
B. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day	11,944	91,031	13.26%	12.76%	13.12%
C. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements [c1+c2+c3]	6,276	91,031	6.97%	6.44%	6.89%

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 6: Preschool Environments

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs attending a:

A. **Regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program; and**
B. **Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
A	2011	Target ≥									64.10%	64.10%
		Data								63.60%	56.20%	56.64%
B	2011	Target ≤									19.10%	18.90%
		Data								19.60%	20.00%	19.43%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	64.30%	64.50%	64.70%	64.90%	65.10%
Target B ≤	18.70%	18.50%	18.30%	18.10%	17.90%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5	13,105	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	a1. Number of children attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program	7,756	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	b1. Number of children attending separate special education class	2,241	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	b2. Number of children attending separate school	248	null

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	b3. Number of children attending residential facility	n	null

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

	Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 attending	Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A. A regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program	7,756	13,105	56.64%	64.30%	59.18%
B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility	2,489	13,105	19.43%	18.70%	18.99%

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

A. **Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);**
B. **Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and**
C. **Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
A1	2008	Target ≥						65.30%	66.30%	66.80%	68.30%	67.30%
		Data					64.30%	64.40%	68.90%	69.20%	67.30%	65.23%
A2	2008	Target ≥						70.50%	71.50%	72.00%	73.50%	66.40%
		Data					68.50%	64.90%	67.50%	69.53%	66.40%	65.39%
B1	2008	Target ≥						65.60%	66.60%	67.10%	68.60%	66.00%
		Data					64.60%	65.30%	69.50%	70.40%	66.00%	63.67%
B2	2008	Target ≥						56.30%	57.30%	58.20%	59.30%	55.70%
		Data					55.30%	52.70%	55.20%	60.38%	55.70%	54.49%
C1	2008	Target ≥						59.70%	61.70%	62.20%	63.70%	61.50%
		Data					58.70%	60.60%	63.90%	65.52%	61.50%	60.86%
C2	2008	Target ≥						63.20%	64.20%	64.70%	66.20%	64.10%
		Data					66.20%	62.10%	63.60%	67.00%	64.10%	63.42%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target A1 ≥	68.70%	68.90%	68.90%	68.90%	68.90%
Target A2 ≥	67.80%	68.00%	68.00%	68.00%	68.60%
Target B1 ≥	67.40%	67.60%	67.60%	67.60%	67.60%
Target B2 ≥	57.10%	57.20%	57.20%	57.20%	57.20%
Target C1 ≥	62.90%	63.10%	63.10%	63.10%	63.10%
Target C2 ≥	65.50%	65.70%	65.70%	65.70%	66.30%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs assessed	0.00

Outcome A: Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)

	Number of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	1065.00
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	684.00
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	735.00
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	2448.00
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	1640.00

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)	3183.00	4932.00	65.23%	68.70%	64.54%
A2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)	4088.00	6572.00	65.39%	67.80%	62.20%

Explanation of A2 Slippage

A2: The State target was not met. Slippage is possbiy impacted upon due in part to the current methodology, the Work Sampling System (WSS), while rendering valid data has not been able to capture incremental progress for children with multiple and complex needs, as well as for children whose development is atypical in one or more areas in a manner to support programmatic development. Additionally, the implementation of a new statewide measure for kindergarten readiness and a revision to the State's Early Learning Standards resulted in MSDE providing clarificaton to clear up the confusion on the part of kindergarten teachers over the standards by which all children's progress should be measured; these individuals collect a great portion of the Exit data for preschool children with disabilities.

The MSDE anticipates that with a new methodology, the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process, scheduled for implementation beginning July 1, 2015, data collected for all Indicators, should be more representative of actual performance, specifically for those preschoolers wtih complex needs at all progress levels. The use of a single tool has proven overtime, even with considerable professional development and focus on fidelity, to not yield the depth of information that would effectively inform instruction, particularly for preschoolsers with more complex support needs.

-

Outcome B: Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication)

	Number of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	997.00
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	1153.00
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	1125.00
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	2451.00
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	837.00

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
B1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome B, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)	3576.00	5726.00	63.67%	67.40%	62.45%
B2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome B by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)	3288.00	6563.00	54.49%	57.10%	50.10%

Explanation of B1 Slippage

B1: The State target was not met. The percentage of children falling into the “no progress” level (just under 16%) is of great concern and was a major contributing factor for the State target not being met. Although the Work Sampling System (WSS) yields valid and reliable data, the ability of the WSS, to capture and reflect incremental progress for children with multiple and complex needs, as well as for children whose development is atypical in one or more areas contributed to the State’s decision to move forward with implementing a new methodology, the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process, beginning July 1, 2015.

Explanation of B2 Slippage

B2: The State target was not met. Performance on this Indicator in terms of narrowing the performance gap with typically developing children is greatly impacted by a lack of demonstrated progress over time as measured by Indicator B1. As with Indicators A1 and A2, a high percentage of children have consistently fallen into Progress Level A over the period of time that the State has been collecting data. The State anticipates that with a new methodology, the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process, scheduled for implementation beginning July 1, 2015, data collected for all Indicators, should be senstive to capture actual performance at all progress levels., especially for those children with complex needs.

Outcome C: Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs

	Number of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	1060.00
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	867.00
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	613.00
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	2417.00
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	1606.00

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
C1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome C, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)	3030.00	4957.00	60.86%	62.90%	61.13%
C2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome C by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)	4023.00	6563.00	63.42%	65.50%	61.30%

Explanation of C2 Slippage

C2: The State target was not met. Indicator C1 showed improvement over the previous reporting period in terms of children who substantially increased their rate of growth; however, this improvement was not reflected in a narrowing of the performance gap with typically developing peers as reported for C2. The total number of children included in reporting on this indicator for FFY 14 is significantly higher than for FFY 13 (4019 versus 6563, an increase of 2544), with a concurrent increase in the children with more complex learning needs requiring greater supports and higher intensities of services. The increase in the number of preschool children with more complex learning needs would, in spite of demonstrated significant growth over time, result in a wider performance gap with established age expectations for all children.

Was sampling used? No

Did you use the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF)? No

Provide the criteria for defining "comparable to same-aged peers" and list the instruments and procedures used to gather data for this indicator.

Methodology/Age-Anchoring

The Work Sampling System (WSS) is an age-anchored early childhood assessment that provides a picture of a child's development in relation to typically developing peers. For the Early Childhood Accountability System (ECAS) established as Maryland's data collection system for the 3 broad child outcomes, individual WSS indicators in all domains at each age level (3,4,5) were linked electronically through the web-based system with one or more of the child outcomes.

The MSDE Part C and Part B Preschool staff worked jointly with consultants from JHU/CTE to establish a framework for reporting child progress. Using the Intervention Efficacy Index (Bagnato and Neisworth) and the Proportional Change Index (Wolery), sample child Entry and Exit data were tested and analyzed to determine how each approach affected reporting on the OSEP levels of progress. MSDE and the JHU/CTE consultants reached agreement that with the use of one statewide assessment, the WSS, an approach based on a modified Proportional Change Index would yield child outcomes progress data that was both reasonable and accurate for the preschool population.

The MSDE staff and consultants developed formulas* for each reporting category using the sum of WSS indicator values divided by the number of indicators for an outcome at Entry and Exit. In addition, for OSEP reporting categories "b" and "c", the percentage of change from Entry to Exit proved to be essential for distinguishing between these two levels of progress.

Considerations and Overarching Formulas

· **WSS indicators are assigned numerical values: Proficient = 3, In Process = 2, Needs Development = 1**

· **2.5 was determined as the "cut-off" score for reporting a child's performance as comparable to typically developing peers**

WSSav = sum of indicator values for an outcome

number of indicators

% change = Exit WSSav – Entry WSSav

Entry WSSav

Formulas for each reporting category are as follows:

% of children who did not improve functioning

In this category, MSDE is reporting children whose average WSS score for Exit is equal to or less than the average WSS score for Entry and who were not captured in categories "d" or "e":

NOT captured by categories D or E

AND Exit WSSav £ Entry WSSav Exit

b) % of children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers

This category includes children whose average WSS score for Exit is greater than the average score at Entry, and where the percent of change is less than 30%:

NOT captured by categories D or E **AND** Exit WSSav > Entry WSSav

AND % change < 30%

c) % of children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers, but did not reach it

This category is reporting children whose average WSS score for Exit is greater than the average score for Entry, and the percent of change is equal to or greater than 30%:

NOT captured by categories D or E

AND Exit WSSav > Entry WSSav

AND % change ³ 30%

d) % of children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers

This category includes children whose average WSS score for Exit is equal to or greater than 2.5, and whose average score for Entry is less than 2.5:

Exit WSSav ³ 2.5

AND Entry WSSav < 2.5

e) % of children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers

This category includes children whose average WSS score is equal to or greater than 2.5, and whose average score for Entry is equal to or greater than 2.5:

Exit WSSav ³2.5

AND Entry WSSav ³ 2.5

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 8: Parent involvement

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent 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.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

Do you use a separate data collection methodology for preschool children? Yes

Will you be providing the data for preschool children separately? Yes

Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Preschool	2005	Target ≥			27.00%	29.00%	35.00%	37.00%	38.00%	36.00%	40.00%	
		Data		32.00%	45.00%	68.00%	69.00%	43.00%	49.00%	42.00%	47.00%	
School Age	2005	Target ≥			32.00%	34.00%	30.00%	32.00%	34.00%	39.00%	38.00%	
		Data		27.00%	43.70%	56.00%	57.00%	37.00%	40.00%	42.00%	40.00%	

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Preschool Target ≥	47.00%	48.00%	48.00%	49.00%	49.00%
School-age Target ≥	39.00%	40.00%	40.00%	41.00%	41.00%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

	Number of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities	Total number of respondent parents of children with disabilities	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
Preschool	778.00	1655.00		47.00%	47.01%
School-age	3190.00	8179.00		39.00%	39.00%

Describe how the State has ensured that any response data are valid and reliable, including how the data represent the demographics of the State.

As in prior years, the 2013-14 survey consists of items obtained from the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) item bank. Both surveys include 25 core questions, followed by several demographic questions and an open-ended comment section. The value of Indicator 8 is calculated through a Rasch analysis using Winsteps software and the anchors suggested by NCSEAM. The Rasch analysis condenses all of a respondent's responses to the 25 core survey items into a single measure. This measure represents the extent to which a respondent agrees with the survey items overall; a person with a high number is expressing more agreement with items on the scale than an individual with a lower number.
After assigning this single number to each respondent, the analysis uses a cut score to determine whether or not each respondent believes that his/her child's school is facilitating parent involvement. With the help of an expert panel, NCSEAM determined that the appropriate cut score is 600. Therefore, if a respondent's Rasch measure is equal to or above 600, he/she is considered to believe that their school is facilitating parent involvement.

The value reported for Indicator 8 is the percentage of respondents that meet this criterion. The value of Indicator 8 is reported with a 95% confidence interval; one can be 95% sure that the true value of the indicator lies within this given confidence interval.

Overall, the number (102,702) and percentage (11.85%) of students with disabilities, ages three (3) through 21 years of age receiving special education, by race and ethnicity reported in the October 25, 2013 child count identified their race and ethnicity as 39,837 (38.8%) White (a 0.7 percentage point decrease from FFY 2012) , 43,233 (42.1%) Black/African American (a 0.1 percentge point decrease), and 12,806 (12.5%) Hispanic (a 0.7 percentage point increase). Respondents to the two surveys represented a total of 9,834 respondents. A total of 4,820 (49%) were identified as White, 2,618 (26%) as Black/African American, 926 (9%) as Hispanic, and 703 (7%) as Multiracial. There was a decrease in the number of Black/African American respondents to the survey over FFY 2012 response rate (28% in FFY 2012 vs. 26% in FFY 2013). The respondents were substantially representative of the population. The overall responswe rate was 9.57%, which represents 9,834 responses/102,702. **Please refer to Attachment F Respondents By Race/Ethnicity**.

Was sampling used? No

Was a collection tool used? No

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 9: Disproportionate Representations

Monitoring Priority: Disproportionate Representations

Compliance indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Please indicate the type of denominator provided

- (•) Number of districts in the State
- ( ) Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size

Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services	Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification	Number of districts in the State	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
12	0	25	0%	0%	0%

☑ **All races and ethnicities were included in the review**

Define "disproportionate representation" and describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation

The MSDE's definition of Disproportionate representation is described as having students in a particular racial/ethnic group (i. e., American Indian or Alaskan native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, White, Hispanic, or Two or More Races) being at a considerably greater risk of being identified for special education and related services than all other racial/ethnic groups enrolled either in the local school system (LSS) or in the State. The MSDE identifies disproportionate representation using a weighted risk ratio calculated according to the instructions provided in the IDEA publication, "Special Education: A Technical Assistance Guide." A weighted risk ratio of 2.0 or greater is considered disproportionate. In addition to meeting the 2.0 or greater weighted risk ratio, the LSS must meet the criteria for the minimum "n" size. The MSDE utilizes a minimum "n" size of 30 students with disabilities in a racial or ethnic category for all local school systems.

MSDE's analysis of the data demonstrated that twelve (12) LSSs were identified as having disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services. Based on the "n" size requirement, a total of seven (7) LSSs were excluded from the calculation because they did not meet the "n" size for any racial/ethnic group.

The MSDE using a examination document, reviewed the policies, procedures, and practices of the twelve (12) LSSs impacted, followed by an onsite visit to review the procedures and practices, including student records to ensure compliance with the IDEA, as required by 34 CFR §§300.111, 300.201, and 301.311 for the twelve (12) LSSs. The MSDE did

not identify noncompliance through this review.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representations in Specific Disability Categories

Monitoring Priority: Disproportionate Representations

Compliance indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Please indicate the type of denominator provided

Number of districts in the State

Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size

Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories	Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification	Number of districts in the State	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
12	0	25	0%	0%	0%

All races and ethnicities were included in the review

Define "disproportionate representation" and describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation

The MSDE defines Disproportionate representation as having students in a particular racial/ethnic group (i. e., American Indian or Alaskan native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, White, Hispanic, or Two or More Races) being at a considerably greater risk of being identified for special education and related services than all other racial/ethnic groups enrolled either in the local school system or in the State. Maryland identifies disproportionate representation using a weighted risk ratio calculated according to the instructions provided in the IDEA publication, "Special Education: A Technical Assistance Guide." A weighted risk ratio of 2.0 or greater is considered disproportionate. In addition to meeting the 2.0 or greater weighted risk ratio, the local school system (LSS) must meet the criteria for the minimum "n" size. The MSDE utilizes a minimum "n" size of 30 students with disabilities in a racial or ethnic category for all local school systems.

MSDE's analysis of the data demonstrated that twelve (12) LSSs were identified as having disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories. In addition, based on the "n" size requirement, a total of twelve (12) LSSs were excluded from the calculation because they did not meet the "n" size for any racial/ethnic groups in a specific disability category.

The MSDE using a examination document, reviewed the policies, procedures, and practices of the twelve (12) LSSs impacted, followed by an onsite visit to review the procedures and practices, including student records to ensure compliance with the IDEA, as required by 34 CFR §§300.111, 300.201, and 301.311 for the twelve (12) LSSs. The MSDE did not identify noncompliance through this review.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
0	0	0	0

Indicator 11: Child Find

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Child Find

Compliance indicator: Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data		77.00%	83.00%	89.02%	92.00%	95.46%	97.71%	97.79%	97.37%	98.46%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

(a) Number of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received	(b) Number of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline)	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
19,009	18,656	98.46%	100%	98.14%

Number of children included in (a), but not included in (b) [a-b]	353

Account for children included in (a) but not included in (b). Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed and any reasons for the delays.

Local school systems and public agencies reported a total of **353 students** as having **"unacceptable reasons for delay,"**which were broken down as follows:

71 students - paperwork error;

10 students - inconclusive testing results;

24 students - child not available (not parent failure)/child refusal);

49 students - staffing issues; and

199 students - other reason(s).

In order to more closely analyze the root causes for delay, the DSE/EIS collects data on the number of days beyond 60 days in which there were acceptable reasons for delay and unacceptable reasons for delay (**353**). The range of days for all unacceptable reasons are as follows:

209 (59.25%) - **1 day to 15 days**

109 (30.77%) - **16 to 45 days**

35 (9.98%) - **beyond 45 days**

This information is used by the MSDE monitoring staff to assist public agencies in analyzing data and in providing for technical assistance. The MSDE data management and program staff worked closely with local school systems' staff to ensure the integrity of the data reported in FFY 2014.

Indicate the evaluation timeline used

- The State used the 60 day timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted.
- The State established a timeline within which the evaluation must be conducted.

What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?

- State monitoring
- State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.

The MSDE uses an electronic data extract from Maryland's SSIS data system which is an online data collection and monitoring tool that captures student and service information.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
18	18	0	0

FFY 2013 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected

Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements

In FFY 2013, Maryland identified 18 findings of noncomplaince. All were corrected within one year. To verify the correction of FFY 2013 noncompliance, an updated random sample of student records, from a data set subsequent to the issuances of the finding of noncompliance was reviewed to determine if those records were compliant. Through this review process the MSDE verified that each LSS identified as noncompliant in FFY 2013 was correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements. This was based on a review of updated data subsequently collected through a State data system and that each LSS had corrected each individual case of noncompliance consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02.

Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected

The MSDE reviewed the records of each individual students for which evaluations were not completed within timelines to ensure that the evaluation was completed, unless the student was no longer within the jursidiction of the LSS. An updated random sample of student records, from a subsequent data set were then reviewed to determine if those

records were also compliant. Through this review process the MSDE verified that each individual case of identified noncompliance was corrected consistent with the regulatory requirements and OSEP Memo 09-02. This activity is completed as either a desk audit or an onsite review.

Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Compliance indicator: Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data		83.40%	95.00%	95.42%	97.28%	99.73%	99.17%	99.89%	99.31%	99.47%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

a. Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.	1,837
b. Number of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to third birthday.	300
c. Number of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.	1,509
d. Number for whom parent refusals to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied.	13
e. Number of children who were referred to Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.	0

	Numerator (c)	Denominator (a-b-d-e)	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3 who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays. [c/(a-b-d-e)]x100	1,509	1,524	99.47%	100%	99.02%

Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for eligibility determination that are not included in b, c, d, e	15

Account for children included in (a), but not included in b, c, d, or e. Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed, and the reasons for the delays.

The MSDE verfied that local school systems and public agencies reported a total of 15 out of 1,837, students, or 0.82%, whose eligibility determination or IEP development did not occur by the third birthday. Unacceptable reasons for delay included: *"Paperwork Error " (1); "Staffing issue" (1); "Other*

unspecified reason" (7) and "Eligibility not determined due to withdrawal of consent, moved from district, child unavailable as a result of chronic condition or illness (6).

The range of days beyond the third birthday for eligibility determination or development and implementation of the IEP for all reasons cluster around 16 to 35 days.

What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?

- State monitoring
- State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.

Indicator 12 data was collected through the Special Services Information System (SSIS) data reporting system or an Excel data collection form. Five (5) local school systems who use a vendaor-based IEP submit an Excel data collection form quarterly during the FFY 2013 reporting period (July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014). Nineteen local school systems and two (2) public agencies report child level data for FFY 2013 reporting period (July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014) through the SSIS data system. The State verified the use of the new methodology by conducting a parallel data comparison between the Excel data collection forms and the SSIS reports for each quarter of the FFY 2013 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014).

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
11	11	0	0

FFY 2013 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected

Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements

The MSDE uses a two prong approach to verify correction, using updated data subsequent to the issuance of the finding, a random selection of records were reviewed to determine if the specific regulatory requirement(s) was correctly implemented. Consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02, verification procedures must demonstrate the local school system or pubic agency is properly implementing the regulatory requirement(s) at 100% during Prong 1 and 2 activities to close the corrective action and to have achieved correction.

Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected

In FFY 2013, MSDE identified 11 finding of noncompliance. The 11 finding was were corrected within one year. To verify the correction of FFY 2013 noncompliance, the MSDE reviewed each individual case of noncompliance and ensured that the evaluation was conducted although beyond the 60 day timeline. This activity was completed as either a desk audit or an onsite review. An updated random sample of student records, from a subsequent data set was then reviewed to determine if those records were compliant. Through this review process the MSDE verified that each LSS identified as noncompliant in FFY 2013 was correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements consistent with OSEP

Memo 09-02.

Indicator 13: Secondary Transition

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Compliance indicator: Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with 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 services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2009

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data			93.90%	95.20%		86.10%	95.27%	97.50%	98.70%	99.96%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of youth aged 16 and above with IEPs that contain each of the required components for secondary transition	Number of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
19,834	19,901	99.96%	100%	99.66%

What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?

- **State monitoring**
- **State database that includes data for the entire reporting year**

Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.

The MSDE requires local school systems and public agencies to submit Indicator data on a quarterly and annual basis on an Excel spreadsheet to the DSE/EIS. The MSDE implemented Quarterly Data Collection for all local school systems and public agencies as of November 1, 2009. For local school systems that utilize the Maryland Online IEP (MOIEP) System most of the required quarterly data uploads nightly to SSIS from the MOIEP. Those local school systems only have to report quarterly the Indicator data that is currently being collected on Excel spreadsheets: Indicators 11, 12, and/or 13. Local school systems that utilize vendor-based IEP systems report quarterly data via file submission and Excel spreadsheets. The quarterly data are uploaded to the Maryland Scorecard where local school systems and the DSE/EIS staff can track the progress of Indicator data. The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC)

Indicator 3 checklist was used as the framework in the development of the data reporting form.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
27	27	0	0

FFY 2013 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected

Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements

The DSE/EIS verified that each Local School System (LSS) or Public Agency (PA) with noncompliance identified in FFY 2013 is implementing the regulatory compliance. First, correction is verified in the records of the students where noncompliance was identified. Second, using updated data, subsequent to the issuance of the finding, within a specific time period, records were reviewed to determine if those records are compliant. If the results yield 100%, correction is verfied, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. Correction was made and verified within one year of the date the LSS/PA was first identified, in writing of the findings of noncompliance.

During the period of correction the State monitored the progress of the LSS/PA. MSDE consultants visited the LSS/PA to determine if technical assistance was required, if policies and procures a were being revised (if necessary), and participated in the review of records with the LSS/PA to determine progress.

Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected

The DSE/EIS reviewed the IEPs and records for each of individual child with findings of noncompliance in the LSS/PA where the findings of noncompliance were made, the DSE/EIS verified that the records of the students where the noncompliance was first identified were corrected, although late, unless the child was no longer within the local school system or pubic agency, or the parent had withdrawn consent. Consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02.

Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Results indicator: Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

A. **Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.**
B. **Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.**
C. **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.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
A	2013	Target ≥							50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	23.00%
		Data						49.40%	29.36%	24.94%	23.10%	26.78%
B	2013	Target ≥							73.00%	73.00%	73.00%	49.00%
		Data						72.61%	50.17%	57.79%	56.73%	50.95%
C	2013	Target ≥							82.00%	82.00%	82.00%	55.00%
		Data						81.42%	62.73%	85.99%	85.36%	55.07%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	23.00%	24.00%	25.00%	26.00%	27.00%
Target B ≥	49.00%	50.00%	51.00%	52.00%	53.00%
Target C ≥	55.08%	56.00%	57.00%	58.00%	59.00%

Key:

Explanation of Changes

The MSDE identified discrepancies in the FFY 2013 baseline and target data for this indicator due to noncompliance associated with the implementation of the Memorandums of Understanding and the reporting of an unduplicated account as required by the Measurement Table, regarding the number of youth with disabilities no longer in secondary school and had an IEP in effect at the time they left school (leavers) and were 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. .

The MSDE gathers census data from various sources for this indicator. An administrative record exchange was used for data collection. This exchange provides data on the number of youth with disabilities no longer in secondary school and had an IEP in effect at the time they left school (leavers) and were 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.

On the local level, the DSE/EIS instituted within the past year, a Local Informed Data TA Process aimed to empower local transition coordinators to utilize their outcome data as a means to evaluate and improve their in-school transition practices. Aside from receiving secondary transition data, the DSE/EIS presented backmapping reports to local transition coordinators so that outcomes could be traced back to specific programs, schools, and areas of the state. This change in methodology resulted in consistent and accurate

reporting of the FFY 2013 and FFY 2014 data.

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

The MSDE, through the analysis of the FFY 2014 data, identified several discrepancies (i.e. for those enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed).

The MSDE convened a meeting with the stakeholder group, the SESAC, to review the identifed discrepancies and to solicit input regarding an appropriate solution. The SESAC upon reviewing the data and discussion of the issues, concurred with MSDE's recommendation to revise the FFY13 data by re-setting the FFY 2013 baseline and re-establishing targets for FFY 2013 through FFY 2018, as indicated in the charts above.

As required MSDE, revised the FFY 2013 SPP for this indicator and attached it to the introduction section of the FFY 2014 APR.

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	6971.00
1. Number of respondent youth who enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school	1666.00
2. Number of respondent youth who competitively employed within one year of leaving high school	1762.00
3. Number of respondent youth enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed)	0.00
4. Number of respondent youth who are in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed).	498.00

	Number of respondent youth	Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A. Enrolled in higher education (1)	1666.00	6971.00	26.78%	23.00%	23.90%
B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (1 +2)	3428.00	6971.00	50.95%	49.00%	49.18%
C. Enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment (1+2+3+4)	3926.00	6971.00	55.07%	55.08%	56.32%

Was sampling used? No

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Results indicator: Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3(B))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005		2006			2007			2008		
Target		-		64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	
Data		64.00%		72.00%			65.00%			79.00%		

FFY	2009			2010			2011			2012				
Target	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	
Data	70.20%			64.29%			70.48%			64.37%				

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014			2015			2016			2017			2018		
Target	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	75.00%	64.00%	-	75.00%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/5/2015	3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements	43	null
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/5/2015	3.1 Number of resolution sessions	71	null

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements	3.1 Number of resolution sessions	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
43	71	58.11%	64.00% - 75.00%	60.56%

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Explanation for Not Meeting the Target

While MSDE did not meet its target of 64% in this reporting period, it none-the-less experienced a 2.45% increase over last year's reporting. Maryland continues to attribute the challenge of meeting the resolution sessions target to the changing perceptions regarding Due Process in Maryland. For the last several years, Maryland's parent advocacy community has lobbied the State legislature for a shift in the burden of proof requirements in the State.

As the result of this continuing advocacy focus on this aspect of Due Process, we believe that there may be a lack of understanding regarding the purpose and role of resolution sessions and what parents can expect from their local school systems in this process. This, in turn, leads to the possibility of higher expectations from the resolution process and the possibility of more difficult communications between the parties.

MSDE is continuing to respond to this issue by focusing upon parent support and parent education. We continue to be committed to providing high quality parent support through the use of MSDE Family Support Specialists, who respond to parent requests for assistance through telephone calls, email, and written correspondence. The Family Support Specialists serve as both educators and school system liaisons in order to ensure that parents have both the information and access to school system based resources for support.

MSDE also continues to strengthen the training and support provided to its Statewide Family Support Providers; including how to facilitate meaningful communication between families and school system personnel. MSDE believes that these efforts will positively impact the successful outcome of resolution sessions for families and the school system.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 16: Mediation

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Results indicator: Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3(B))

Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005		2006			2007			2008		
Target		-		75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	
Data		73.00%		68.00%			73.00%			77.00%		

FFY	2009			2010			2011			2012				
Target	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	
Data	74.30%			77.70%			76.65%			76.10%				

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline Blue – Data Update

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014			2015			2016			2017			2018		
Target	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	85.00%	75.00%	-	85.00%

Key:

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/5/2015	2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints	51	null
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/5/2015	2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints	54	null
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/5/2015	2.1 Mediations held	129	null

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints	2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints	2.1 Mediations held	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
51	54	129	70.15%	75.00% - 85.00%	81.40%

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

State

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

Results indicator: The State's SPP/APR includes a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that meets the requirements set forth for this indicator.

Reported Data

Baseline Data: 2013

FFY	2013	2014
Target ≥		35.00%
Data	35.00%	35.00%

Key: Gray – Data Prior to Baseline Yellow – Baseline
Blue – Data Update

FFY 2015 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥	35.00%	38.00%	41.00%	44.00%

Key:

Description of Measure

The MSDE will support efforts to increase the number of children with disabilities scoring Proficient or above and target an average increase of three percentage points from the baseline average score percentage after the first two years of implementation. The chart below illustrates this rate of improvement to be ambitious and achievable. This target will raise the average percentage of children with disabilities scoring Proficient or above on Maryland's Statewide assessment of mathematics by nine (9) percentage points in five years. Baseline data for FFY 2013 (2013-2014 school year) is student performance as measured using scores on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). Please note that beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, students will take the applicable Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment, based on Maryland's College and Career-Ready Standards aligned with the Common Core. This new assessment will require future standard setting and establishment of targets and at least two years of assessment data before the MSDE is able to predict trends. The baseline and targets established in the SSIP will require future revision.

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the introduction.

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Overview

MARYLAND

Part B State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase II

Introduction

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (Division) in consultation with internal and external stakeholders identified the State Identified Measurable Result (**SiMR**) as increasing the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in six Local School Systems (LSSs).

Figure 1: Maryland School Age; Theory of Action

Maryland's **Theory of Action** for SSIP-Part B is: **If** the Maryland State Department of Education and its partners provide high quality professional learning and support to Local School System Implementation Teams (LSS-IT) in the areas of Systems Coaching, Implementation Science, and TAP-IT (Team, Analyze, Plan, Implement and Track) **then** local school systems will have the capacity to provide ongoing support to schools to implement evidence-based practices with fidelity including Tier 1 evidence-based mathematics

instruction that incorporates the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), a model of a Multi-Tiered System of Support, and culturally responsive instructional and behavioral supports. Implementation of these evidence-based practices will increase mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3, 4, and 5 in six local school systems as measured by state assessment.

The statewide assessment results for years prior to instituting the Partnership Assessment for Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment showed a pattern of decreasing math proficiency as students grow older. A pattern that can also be noted in the 2015 PARCC Assessment results reported in Table 1.

Table 1: PARCC Performance Results

PARCC Performance Results

	% Met/Exceeded Standards Statewide (Proficiency Levels 4,5)			
	Grade 3	**Grade 4**	**Grade 5**	**Total Gr 3,4,5**
All Students	36%	31%	30%	32%
Special Education	11%	6%	5%	7%

The targets projected in Phase 1 were based on the data from the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) which is no longer used. Based on the baseline PARCC Assessment data, new projected targets are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Projected Targets

Projected Targets

Federal Fiscal Year	**Phase 1 Projected Targets** Average % Students with Disabilities **at or above Proficiency** in Grades 3, 4, and 5 BASED ON **2014 MARYLAND SCHOOL ASSESSMENT**	**State PARCC baseline and Targets** Average % of Students with Disabilities who **Met or Exceeded Expectations** in Grades 3, 4, and 5 BASED ON **2015 PARCC ASSESSMENT**	**SSIP LSSs PARCC Baseline and Targets** Average % of Students with Disabilities who **Met or Exceeded Expectations** in Grades 3, 4, and 5 BASED ON **2015 PARCC ASSESSMENT**
2013 (Baseline)	**35%**		
2014	35%		
2015	35%	**7% new baseline**	**5% new baseline**
2016		8%	6%
2017		9%	8%
2018		10%	10%

Data Analysis

A description of how the State identified and analyzed key data, including data from SPP/APR indicators, 618 data collections, and other available data as applicable, to: (1) select the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities, and (2) identify root causes contributing to low performance. The description must include information about how the data were disaggregated by multiple variables (e.g., LEA, region, race/ethnicity, gender, disability category, placement, etc.). As part of its data analysis, the State should also consider compliance data and whether those data present potential barriers to improvement. In addition, if the State identifies any concerns about the quality of the data, the description must include how the State will address these concerns. Finally, if additional data are needed, the description should include the methods and timelines to collect and analyze the additional data.

Overview

A. Description of the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) in consultation with internal and external stakeholders identified the SIMR as increasing the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades (3) – (5) in six (6) Local School Systems (LSSs). The MSDE SIMR is aligned with Indicator 3C: proficiency of students with disabilities on the English/language arts and math Statewide assessments in grades 3 – 8 and high school. Specifically the Maryland SIMR is to increase proficiency of students with disabilities on the mathematics Statewide assessments in grades three (3) – five (5).

B. Baseline and Targets

FFY	Average Percentage of Students with Disabilities At or Above Proficient at Grades 3, 4, and 5 in the Six (6) Selected LSSs
2013 (Baseline)	35%
2014	35%
2015	35%
2016	38%
2017	41%
2018	44%

C. Description of State Program

The State of Maryland has 24 LSSs from 23 counties and Baltimore City. The MSDE generally divides its LSSs into six regions. The **Baltimore Metropolitan Region** has six (6) LSSs: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Harford County, and Howard County. It also has the SEED School of Maryland, a publicly-funded, residential boarding school that is identified as an LSS for accountability under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The Baltimore Metropolitan Region is the largest of the six (6) State regions. The **National Capital Region** consists of Montgomery County and Prince George's County and is the second-largest region in the State. The **Western Maryland Region** has four (4) LSSs: Allegany County, Frederick County, Garrett County, and Washington County. The **Upper Shore Region** has five (5) LSSs and includes Caroline County, Cecil County, Kent County, Queen Anne's County, and Talbot County. The **Lower Shore Region** has four (4) LSSs and includes Dorchester County, Somerset County, Wicomico County, and Worcester County. Finally, the **Southern Maryland Region** is home to three (3) LSSs – Calvert County, Charles County, and St. Mary's County.

As of Fall 2013, those 24 LSSs served 866,169 PreK–12 students (see http://www.mdreportcard.org). Of this student population, 102,882 (11.9%) were children and youth with disabilities, ages three (3) through 21, receiving special education and related services in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State law. Of the 102,882 children and youth with disabilities, 90,652 (88%) were school age children and youth, ages six (6) through 21 years old.

D. Process Used for Developing Phase I of the SSIP

The data and infrastructure analysis began internally with a review of a broad base of information related to student outcomes from reports and data requests. Next, stakeholders reviewed the data and participated in an iterative process over time with facilitated brainstorming activities to generate recommendations. Identification of the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) focused on the development of three components – what result area, where or which subpopulation group, and which LSSs would be involved. With the proposed SIMR, internal and external stakeholders identified root causes, coherent strategies, and developed a Theory of Action. While most of the face-to-face Phase I activities with stakeholders were

completed by January 2015, they continued to be involved through email communications and met for a final Phase I review of activities and a draft of the SSIP on March 17, 2015.

E. Overview of Stakeholder Involvement

In the Spring of 2014 MSDE leadership met with LSS special education directors and their teams from all 24 jurisdictions to review identification and placement patterns for students with disabilities and disproportionate gaps in student performance. These were followed by a series of meetings in the Fall of 2014 and Winter of 2015 with Maryland stakeholders, representing a broad range of organizations instrumental in advocating for children with disabilities, providing professional learning opportunities and technical assistance to families and educators, and delivering special education services. In addition to LSS Directors, representatives included other state organizations such as Maryland's Protection and Advocacy agency (Maryland Disability Law Center), and the Parent Training and Information agency (Parents' Place of Maryland) as well as other state agencies (e.g., MD Department of Disabilities), Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs), the Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC), and State educational organizations for general and specialized teachers. Special attention was given to ensure that representatives of Maryland family groups were involved. In addition to external stakeholders, key staff from various MSDE Divisions reviewed data summaries and engaged in infrastructure analysis. These 26 external stakeholders had areas of expertise that included district and school administration, parent partnerships, delivery of multi-tiered instruction and interventions, data analysis, policy planning, early intervention, early childhood services, behavior interventions, mathematics instruction, teacher preparation, and inclusive practices for students who need the most comprehensive supports. Stakeholders were involved in Phase I through face-to-face meetings, reviews of data, summaries of input in meetings, and email. See Infrastructure Analysis, Section 2F for a list of the representatives engaged in all parts of the Phase I SSIP Development.

1. Data Analysis

A. How Key Data were Identified and Analyzed (1(a))

In order to conduct a comprehensive review of quantitative and qualitative data, MSDE considered student performance data (disaggregated by jurisdiction, placement, race, disability category, and students receiving Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs) as well as other factors such as attendance, suspension, graduation, dropout rates, and post-school outcomes. Qualitative data included information gathered from the State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) and the priorities emerging through the state partnership with the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Center. Other qualitative data included the input from stakeholders based on their experience as parents, advocates, professional developers, or service providers. These "real world" experiences lent a story to the numbers, and led groups to provide direction to the State in next data analysis steps and allowed the State to create consensus around the SIMR.

Quantitative Data Analysis – Data Sources.

Data were examined for the 2013-2014 school year, and where relevant, longitudinal data over time were examined. Sources of data included the following:

- **Maryland's Public Website for State Performance Plan Results -** The Maryland Public Website for State Performance Plan Results is a web-based application that serves as the public reporting site for the IDEA Part C and Part B SPP/APR data. Individuals may examine data for each SPP indicator over time by State aggregate as well as disaggregated by the State's 24 LSSs.
- **Maryland Report Card -** The Maryland Report Card is the State's website that provides detailed information relative to the performance of the State, the LSSs, and individuals schools. The Maryland Report Card also highlights information on School Progress, Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs), demographics, enrollment, and attendance.
- **Maryland 2013-2014 Student Publications -** There are several publications on this website that provide data about students in Maryland school systems. Documents used in the data analyses included:
  - Maryland Public School Enrollment - The MSDE annually publishes enrollment data of all students. These data are also disaggregated by grade, gender, and race for elementary and secondary enrollment.
  - Maryland Special Education/Early Intervention Services Census Data - The document includes information collected annually on children with disabilities who reside in the State. To collect these data, Maryland uses the Special Services Information System (SSIS) database to compile information. The MSDE uses the SSIS database as a source of information to meet planning, monitoring, and accounting responsibilities; a recording and reporting tool for decisions made by LSSs; and as an instrument for federal reporting.
  - Maryland Public School Suspension and Expulsions - The MSDE annually publishes several documents related to the number of incidents of in-school and out-of school suspensions of students, including students with disabilities. Data from the *Maryland Public School Suspensions by School and Major Offense Category In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions* were the primary sources used in the data analyses. The data are disaggregated by gender and race.
- **Internal Data Reports**
  - Special Education Child Count from the DSE/EIS;
  - Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) from the Office of School Effectiveness, School & Community Nutrition

Programs Branch; and
- English Learners from the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability, Office of Instructional and Teacher Effectiveness, English Language Learners Program.

Qualitative Data Analysis – Data Sources.

As quantitative data were gathered, other data sources provided qualitative input. These included:

The DSE/EIS Complaint Database - The number and type of state complaints are monitored and tracked in the DSE/EIS Compliant Database. These data are compiled and used by the DSE/EIS to identify areas of needed assistance and support and to ensure identified noncompliance is corrected as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification, consistent with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Memorandum 09-02.

SPDG Reports - There are three (3) LSSs participating in Maryland's State Personnel Development Grant, each with two schools. The project focuses on addressing the knowledge and skill development needs of general and specialized educators working with students whose disabilities are mild or moderate. Quantitative and qualitative data on LSS, school and classroom use of implementation science strategies were reviewed in relationship to student performance on formative assessments of mathematics.

SWIFT School Data Snapshots - There are four (4) LSSs each with four (4) schools receiving technical assistance from MSDE and SWIFT Center staff. They use an implementation science approach to assess school practices and review student data to select priorities for improvement. School teams generate Data Snapshots that include data from the SWIFT-FIT, a research based tool administered by trained assessors, and the SWIFT-FIA, a progress-monitoring tool, both measuring implementation of the SWIFT Core Features. It also includes data on the capacity of the school to install new practices through a "Drivers" assessment, as well as evidence of behavioral and academic student outcomes.

Stakeholder Focus Groups - Several Stakeholder groups were convened in Phase I to review data, request additional information, and make recommendations to the MSDE. These meetings also provided opportunities to identify barriers and facilitators of improvement in student performance, as well as strategies and issues for further discussion. This discussion contributed to the root cause analysis to inform the development of coherent and evidence-based strategies to address the areas of focus. Meetings occurred in the Spring and Fall of 2014 and the Winter of 2015.

Literature Review - As the SIMR was identified, the MSDE core development team embarked on a literature review of evidence-based practices related to the emerging SIMR as well as best practices discussed in the field.

Questions Guiding the Analysis

The MSDE, DSE/EIS and stakeholders examined trend and disaggregated data to identify problem areas, identify a measurable result, and the population who would be affected. Some sample questions that guided these examinations and discussions included:

§ *To what extent are students with disabilities in Maryland performing proficiently or advanced on the Maryland State Assessment, and where are the greatest gaps when compared with nondisabled peers?*

§ *Is there disproportionate suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities, and is there a discrepancy by race/ethnicity?*

§ *Is poverty (measured by FARMS) influencing identification or placement of students with disabilities?*

§ *To what extent do students with disabilities have access to general education instruction alongside their non-disabled peers, and is there any relationship between placement, performance, and any other factor?*

§ *Are students with disabilities graduating or dropping out at rates comparable to their non-disabled peers?*

§ *Is there a relationship between attendance/absences (more than 20 days) and disability category, grade, or race?*

§ *Is there disproportionate performance by gender or race across LSSs and grades in reading and math performance?*

§ *Is there disproportionate identification of students with disabilities or placement of students with disabilities by race/ethnicity?*

§ *Does the absence of 20 or more days affect the academic proficiency for students with disabilities? And if so, how?*

§ *What policies or practices are in place that may be affecting academic performance, suspension, placement, attendance, and disproportionality by race?*

B. Trend Analysis and Disaggregation of Data (1(b))

Broad Data Analysis Results

The information below represents the broad-based analysis that preceded and contributed to the identification of the SIMR. It includes both quantitative and qualitative information in the context of current priorities and initiatives in place in Maryland.

Enrollment: The total enrollment of students has remained relatively stable over the last 10 years, with the percentage of students with disabilities (ages 3 – 21) slightly declining from 13% of the total school age population in 2003 to 11.9% of the student population in 2013-2014 school year.

Gender: While male students are 51% to 49% females in the general student population; 68% of the students with disabilities are male compared to 32% of females.

Attendance/Absences: Overall, student attendance has remained high over time for students with and without disabilities, at approximately 93-94% for students receiving special education services in elementary and middle school and 94-96% for same age students in the general population. In high school, overall attendance slightly declined to 88 – 89% over the last 10 years for students with disabilities and 92-93% for regular education students. Variation is seen however when looking at chronic absenteeism, defined in Maryland as absent 20 or more days. While the rate of absences increases as students move into middle and high school, special education students have a higher rate of chronic absences as seen in the table below.

	Percent of students absent ≥ 20 days					
	Elementary		Middle		High	
School Year	Regular Education	Special Education	Regular Education	Special Education	Regular Education	Special Education
2014	5.5%	11.6%	7.6%	16.8%	15.6%	28.0%

Graduation: More Maryland students are receiving their high school diplomas at higher rates than ever before. As the graduation rate has hit record levels, the dropout rate has declined. The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate reached 86.39% in 2014 -- more than 4 percentage points better than the 81.97% rate registered in 2010. The graduation rate jumped more than 1 percentage point over 2013, from 84.97%. Among students receiving special services, the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate rose in two of three categories. The graduation rate for special education students, for example, improved more than 3 percentage points in one year, from 60.03% to 63.45%.

Dropout Rate: The overall dropout rates have fallen to new lows and are decreasing for both special education and regular education students. However students with disabilities drop out of school at a rate almost twice as high as non-disabled students. The 4-year adjusted cohort of students sorted by grade level similarly shows that classes of students decrease their dropout rate over time, but overall students with disabilities are dropping out at approximately twice the rate (15.82%) when compared to the general population (7.58%).

Disability Identification: The total number of school age students with disabilities, age 6 – 21, is 90,652, or 10.47% of the total student population. Identification rates vary from 7.38% in rural Calvert County to 15% in Baltimore City, with wide variability among the 24 jurisdictions. These variances do not appear to be influenced by size or location within the state. The largest disability population is **Specific Learning Disabilities** (34.6%) followed by students who have **Other Health Impairments** (18.44% who may be students with Attention Deficit Disorder, or other disabilities that affect learning) and **Speech/Language Impairments** (15.21%) and then students with **Autism** (10.25%) and **Emotional Disabilities** (7.31%). The remaining 15% of the population of special education are students who have **Intellectual Disabilities** (5.76%), **Multiple Disabilities** (4.59%), with less than 1% each for students who are Deaf or have Hearing Impairments, Vision Impairments, Orthopedic Impairments, Deaf-Blindness, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Developmental Delay.

Poverty: There is not a clear pattern of association between poverty and disability identification. Districts with high rates of poverty as measured by students who receive Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs), do not necessarily have high rates of students

with disabilities identified and, conversely, students with low poverty rates may have higher proportions of students with disabilities compared to others and the state average. However, within the group of students who receive FARMs, there is a slightly higher than average proportion of students who have disabilities, across all jurisdictions.

Race/Ethnicity: The majority of students in Maryland identify as White (41%) or African American/Black (35%). Hispanic students make up almost an additional 14% of the student population. African American students are identified as having a disability at a rate higher than their presence in the student population (43% versus 35%); White students are slightly underrepresented in receiving special education services (38.5% versus 41%). The fewest non-white students are in rural Allegany and Garrett Counties in Western Maryland; the largest non-white populations are in Baltimore City and Prince George's County, a Washington DC suburb.

Race	All Students	**Students w/Disabilities, 6-21**
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.3%	0.3%
Asian	6.1%	2.7%
African American/Black	34.9%	43.2%
White	40.9%	38.5%
Hispanic	13.6%	12.1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%
Two or More Races	4.1%	3.2%

Placement: Students with disabilities are being placed in general education classes at a higher and higher rate over time, with more time spent learning the general education curriculum alongside their nondisabled peers. Ten years ago, 55.38% of students with disabilities participated in general education settings for 80% or more of the day; this has increased to 69%. The variation across jurisdictions, however, is large, ranging from 54% in the second largest school system to 92% in one of the smallest school systems. The 5 largest school systems with 75,000 to 150,000 students rank in the bottom third for including students with disabilities in general education instruction. These districts also have a number of special schools (public and nonpublic) as well as private schools for nondisabled students. The LSSs that have historically competed for and won discretionary funds to promote inclusive practices hold the highest rates for placing students in general education and maintain that rate over time.

Performance in Math/Reading: The trend in progress in Reading and Math achievement for students with disabilities has mirrored that of their nondisabled peers in increasing over time, but at a lower rate. The exception is in the last two years: as teachers prepared to teach to the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, students across the state performed lower on the state assessment that was not aligned with these standards in both areas across most grades. The gap in proficiency between special education and general education students grows as student's age; in Math, 39.9% of students with disabilities score proficient or advanced in 3rd grade as compared to their nondisabled peers (78.1%). This 38 percentage point gap increases to a difference of 46.6 points in 8th grade. While nondisabled students maintain a relatively constant level of proficiency as a group, the percent of students with disabilities achieving proficient/advanced scores decreases after grade five.

Percent of Students Proficient and Advanced and GAP in MATH (2013-2014)						
	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Regular Ed Students	78.1	85.0	78.0	73.0	68.2	63.7
Special Ed Students	39.9	45.6	33.2	26.8	22.4	17.1
GAP	38.2	39.4	44.8	46.2	45.8	46.6

In Reading, the overall rating of proficient and advanced performance of students with disabilities is higher across all grades

than in math. The gap in proficiency and advanced performance is also smaller until 6th grade.

Percent of Students Proficient and Advanced and GAP in READING (2013-2014)						
	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Regular Ed Students	80.0	89.8	92.3	87.9	84.1	82.1
Special Ed Students	52.5	58.8	63.3	46.0	37.9	33.2
GAP	27.5	31.0	29.0	41.9	46.2	48.9

Behavior Outcomes: Students with disabilities make up 25% of the suspensions and expulsions in Maryland school systems but only 10.5% of the total population. The offenses resulting in behavioral consequences are proportionate to regular education students for offense category; they are slightly lower for dangerous substances, and slightly higher for threats/attacks. Suspensions of students with disabilities are showing a decreasing trend over time. The largest numbers of students are from the largest jurisdictions (Prince George's: 1,803; Baltimore City: 1, 464; and Baltimore County: 1,285). It is interesting to note that the largest school system, Montgomery County only had 674 suspensions.

Practices and Priorities in SWIFT Partner Schools: Twelve of the 16 partner schools have completed data snapshots, and 3 of the LSSs have developed district data snapshots that identify common priorities and others that can be leveraged through the SWIFT work. All schools are identifying high quality Tier 1 instruction that promotes student engagement as a critical priority to be strengthened in order to successfully include ALL students. Most of them have also identified advance tier behavior intervention, math instruction/intervention, and parent engagement as areas for growth.

Statewide Strengths in Educating Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities in Maryland are being included in general education at greater rates each year. Student performance for students with and without disabilities has shown an increasing trend over time, except for the last years as schools transition to the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards. Students with disabilities are entering post-secondary programs at higher rates than in the past, and students with disabilities are being suspended at lower rates. New discipline regulations promise to reduce suspensions even farther.

State Concerns and Opportunities for Improving Results for Students with Disabilities

While students with disabilities are being included at higher rates each year, there remains a large discrepancy across jurisdictions. The largest school systems in the state (Baltimore City, Prince George's County, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, and Montgomery County) remain the most segregated systems, along with the smaller and more rural Charles and Calvert counties. Two of these LSSs (Baltimore City and Prince George's County) have a largely African American population, which greatly skews the state data for disproportionate separate placements.

While there is a gap across grades in Reading and Math performance for students with disabilities, the lower performance and larger achievement gap across all grades for math and increases dramatically in middle school. It is notable that the SPDG work focuses on improving math instruction and student proficiency. In addition, emerging priorities for improvement in the SWIFT Center partner schools and districts include math instruction and intervention.

Disaggregation of Data

An initial review of the data led to the selection of key areas to disaggregate the data for certain areas by grade, race/ethnicity, and disability categories. Based on the broad analysis and considering the current initiatives that could be leveraged after much discussion and data examinations (see Section 1(F), stakeholders recommended a focus on math achievement and gap reduction. Stakeholders recommended a focus on math performance in elementary years as the initial target, and discussed the impact of improvement in early skills as developing the foundation for improved performance in the middle school years. Specific disaggregated data included the following sources:

ü *State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR) Compliance and Results Data,* disaggregated over time and by LSS;

ü *Maryland School Assessment* Data for Reading and Mathematics disaggregated over time, by grade, by race, and by jurisdiction;

ü *Maryland School Assessment* Data for Reading and Mathematics disaggregated over time, by grade, by children with disabilities, and by nondisabled;

ü *Disability Identification Data,* disaggregated by race, poverty (FARMS), and LSS;

ü *Graduation Data* of youth with disabilities by disability, gender and race;

ü *Attendance Data,* disaggregated by disability, race, gender, grade and LSS;

ü *Suspension Data*, disaggregated over time, by race, and by jurisdiction; and

ü *Placement Data,* disaggregated by race, disability, poverty, and LSS.

Data Results

Data were disaggregated by various factors to look at math performance in grades 3, 4, and 5, to determine trends or patterns of influence. Further data disaggregation will be conducted within targeted jurisdictions related to the SIMR in Phase II.

Placement: Of students in grades 3, 4 and 5, more students score proficient and advanced who are included in general education instruction for 80% or more of the day.

	Students with disabilities rece	
MATH	**general education ≥80% of the school day**	**general education 40 to 79% of the sc**
Basic	42.8%	
Proficient	57.0%	
Advanced	0.2%	
TOTAL	100.0%	

Students who are least likely to participate in general education settings are students with multiple disabilities and students with intellectual disabilities.

Attendance: Students who are absent for 20 or more days have consistently lower math achievement in elementary school than students who are absent less than 20 days.

	Math Performance and Absences	
	Less Than 20 Days	**20 or More Days**
	Percent	**Percent**
Gr 3 Proficient	49.63%	34.00%
Gr 4 Proficient	60.67%	44.92%
Gr 5 Proficient	45.26%	31.68%

Poverty: Students who receive Free or Reduced Meals (FARMs) do not appear to have a greater risk for lower achievement rates. In fact, the percent of students who receive special education services are performing slightly lower than students who receive special education services as well as FARMs.

MATH	**FARMs+Spec.Ed.**	**All Spec Ed**	**All Students**

Basic	55.8%	60.6%	19.7%
Proficient	43.7%	33.7%	54.3%
Advanced	0.6%	5.6%	26.0%

Disability: Students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Other Health Impairments are among the most frequently identified yet are among the lowest in scoring proficient or advanced in Math in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades in Maryland. Students with intellectual disabilities consistently demonstrate the lowest proficiency across all three grades.

MATH:	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Hearing Impaired	21.9%	78.1%	0.0%
Visual Impairment	26.8%	73.2%	0.0%
Speech or Language Impairment	31.3%	68.6%	0.1%
Autism	45.3%	54.2%	0.5%
Traumatic Brain Injury	42.3%	53.8%	3.8%
Orthopedic Impairment	46.3%	53.7%	0.0%
Emotional Disability	47.2%	50.3%	2.5%
Specific Learning Disability	50.3%	49.3%	0.4%
Deaf	48.1%	48.1%	3.7%
Other Health Impaired	54.0%	45.3%	0.7%
Multiple Disabilities	56.1%	43.4%	0.5%
Intellectual Disability	88.1%	10.2%	1.7%

Race/Ethnicity: Student proficiency in math in elementary school is quite variable across different racial/ethnic groups. Highest proficiency rates are noted for students with disabilities who are Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Asian, and White. African American and Native American students and Hispanic students demonstrate lower math proficiency.

2013-2014 Special Education Students Proficient in Math

Race/Ethnicity	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	100.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Asian	62.4%	70.5%	70.0%
White	61.9%	72.1%	51.0%
Two or More Race	50.9%	67.2%	54.8%
Hispanic	37.0%	56.8%	35.2%
Black or African American	36.6%	46.1%	29.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	33.3%	62.5%	55.6%

Priorities, Variability, and Concerns in LSSs: Looking at achievement data or gap data alone is not sufficient to identify

needs within local jurisdictions. For example while Worcester County has the highest level of general and special education math performance and among the lowest gaps in math proficiency in 3rd and 4th grades their ranking slips in 5th grade. Washington County ranks 13 out of 24 jurisdictions in math proficiency for general education 3rd grade students but has the biggest gap between special and general education performance. The jurisdictions that have the lowest performance and biggest gaps across elementary grades are Baltimore City, and Prince George's, Dorchester, Charles, Caroline, Kent, Talbot, and Cecil counties. Most of these counties are in the eastern shore or southern region of Maryland.

Future data analyses: In looking at data on students with disabilities across the State, patterns emerged which bear further scrutiny as implementation strategies are designed in Phase II. For example, students who are African American are over-identified as having an intellectual or emotional disability as compared to the student population or the disability population, and are under-identified as having autism compared to other races. A higher proportion of students with intellectual disabilities live in poverty across all races. Students who are African American are included in general education placements less than students of other races/ethnicities, and are placed in special education classrooms for most of the school day at rates far greater than their proportion of the total population or their presence in the disability population. These need to be further examined in relation to the SIMR as well as the design of coherent strategies to address the SIMR.

Relationship of Data to SIMR Selection

The analysis of data was developed and presented to stakeholders in multiple meetings. As can be noted in the Data Analysis, Stakeholder Participation, Section 1F below, stakeholders identified a number of initial areas on which to focus. Post-secondary outcomes are improving, and Maryland has had improved graduation rates and decreasing dropout rates. Literacy instruction has been a focus of MSDE guidance and there are more literacy tools and resources available to schools than math. This led the MSDE and stakeholders to focus on math performance of elementary school students with disabilities with the expectation that improved performance in elementary school would pave the path to improved performance in middle schools and beyond. Stakeholders recommended targeting grades 3 through 5.

C. Data Quality (1(c))

The State has adopted a data-informed decision-making approach to programmatic improvement and places great importance on the ability of the LSSs to provide timely and accurate data. The DSE/EIS collaborates with the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability (DCAA) in accessing, verifying, and validating data.

Data Strengths

Maryland's use of a Unique Student Identifier (USID) enables the MSDE to disaggregate data based on demographics, attendance, disciplinary removals, achievement, gender, race/ethnicity, children with disabilities, etc. The MSDE, DSE/EIS also has a strong history of accurate data based upon its Special Services Information System (SSIS) that is analyzed against the MSDE, DCAA data. This is also demonstrated by the high levels of data accuracy and timeliness as noted in the MSDE Letters of Determination by the OSEP.

Data Security

The Maryland Online Individualized Education Program (MOIEP) was designed to collect data for Section 618 and State Performance Plan data reporting as the result of IEP team decisions. As a data tool, the LSSs using the MOIEP, transmit data nightly to Maryland's SSIS. The SSIS resides on a secure network and is backed up nightly using Storage Area Network (SAN) Disk and replicated off-site. The Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability maintains the Education Data Warehouse and is responsible for the collection of data from LSSs and other entities; and ensures the validation, definition, and maintenance of multi-year data in accordance with Department and Division policies and procedures for data quality and accessibility.

Strategies to Foster Timely and Accurate Data

The MSDE, DSE/EIS has in place a number of policies and mechanisms intended to foster and ensure that data collected and submitted to various databases are both timely and accurate. These include the following:

***Maryland Online Individualized Education Program (MOIEP) Database Structure*.** The MOIEP database was built with a mechanism to detect data entry errors in order to improve the accuracy of data entry. For example, when inaccurate dates are entered into the system, a message appears during data entry to indicate that there is a problem with the data. The Database also has an audit feature that ensures that all required information is entered into the system before an IEP can be made "closed."

SSIS Data. The Special Services Information System (SSIS) functions as a centralized data submission system for the IDEA Part B Section 618 data. Section 618 data are submitted via a secure server file transfer from LSSs that are to monitor and verify their data collection systems at the local level. Most public agency special education data collection elements are collected as a part of the daily information management for all students.

Local Determinations. In order to emphasize the importance of timely submission of high quality data, the State has incorporated this requirement into its local determination criteria. The LSSs are required to submit all data, including programmatic and fiscal reports, in a timely and accurate manner.

Monitoring for Continuous Improvement and Results (MCIR) Record Reviews. As part of the State's birth through 21 MCIR process, monitoring staff from the DSE/EIS examine student records for the presence of documentation that supports reasons for missing timelines. The State's goal is to ensure that documentation in each student record is consistent with data entry and meets the regulatory requirements.

Improvement Plans/Corrective Action Plans. The DSE/EIS requires the LSSs submit data to the SSIS Database in a timely and accurate manner and assigns Improvement Plans and/or Corrective Action Plans when local programs fail to do so.

Local Application for Federal Funds Assurances. The DSE/EIS includes language in the Local Application for Federal Funds (LAFF) that LSSs will provide data for all children with disabilities receiving special education and related services in the manner and timeframe specified.

Professional Learning and Technical Assistance. The DSE/EIS, in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University (JHU), Center for Technology in Education (CTE) conduct hands-on Statewide professional learning opportunities for LSSs when there are major changes to the Maryland Online IEP. The DSE/EIS conducts regional meetings of LSS data managers twice a year to review amendments to the SSIS database, manual, and/or reporting timelines to help ensure competence with data entry and database report capabilities.

Data Quality Concerns

There were no concerns relative to data quality activities. The DSE/EIS continually collaborates with the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability in accessing, verifying, and validating data. Also, as discussed earlier, the MOIEP is built with a mechanism to detect data entry errors in order to improve the accuracy of data entry.

Data Use

The MSDE believes that the data used in the analysis is of high quality, accurate, and easily used to inform decision-making. At this time the available baseline data is from the Maryland State Assessment (MSA) of student performance. A limitation on the use of these data is connected the State adoption of a new assessment aligned with the Common Core beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Students will take the applicable Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment, based on Maryland's College and Career-Ready Standards aligned with the Common Core. This new assessment requires future standard setting and establishment of targets and at least two years of assessment data before the MSDE is able to predict trends. The baseline and targets established in the SSIP will require future revision.

D. Compliance Data Considerations (1(d))

During the Data Analysis process, the MSDE, DSE/EIS and stakeholders considered all SPP/APR data, including compliance data from the Monitoring for Continuous Improvement and Results (MCIR). The aggregate State compliance indicator data were substantially compliant at greater than 95%. The LSSs continue to correct noncompliance within one year of notification. One area for continued examination is the significant discrepancy in the disciplinary removals of children and youth with disabilities by race/ethnicity as compared to nondisabled peers in four (4) LSSs. Although noncompliance has not been identified for this indicator, a child's absence from instruction for any reason, including disciplinary removal may need to be addressed within coherent evidence-based improvement strategies.

E. Additional Data Needed (1(e))

Stakeholders did not identify a need for additional data at this time. As Phase II progresses, additional data disaggregation analyses will be conducted as needed to inform decision-making.

F. Stakeholder Participation in Data Analysis (1(f))

The MSDE and stakeholders looked at a variety of disaggregated data to (1) select the State-Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and (2) identify root causes contributing to low performance. Four (4) stakeholder group meetings were conducted to examine data, starting with broad data analysis, which became more focused over time. Facilitated whole and small group activities enabled participants to identify priorities for improving student outcomes and to discuss current practices and issues related to addressing the priority areas.

All stakeholders were invited to attend and participate in each meeting (except the 4/29/14 meeting, which was specific to statewide leaders) and were also provided the opportunity to provide additional input into the data analyses after meeting notes/materials were distributed. The specific participation and feedback of stakeholders is indicated below:

Internal Stakeholders

Stakeholder	4/29/14	5/29/14	10/10/14	10/16/14
Deputy Superintendent, Office of Finance and Administration		X	X	X
Deputy Superintendent, Office of Teaching and Learning	X	X	X	X
Assistant Superintendent Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Assistant Superintendent Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability		X	X	X
Deputy Superintendent, Office of School Effectiveness	X	X	X	X
Policy & Accountability Branch Chief, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Interagency Collaboration Branch Chief, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Programmatic Support & Technical Assistance Branch Chief, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Part B Data Specialist, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
MITP Program Manager, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X

Monitoring & Accountability Section Chief, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Early Education Section Chief, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Quality Assurance Specialist, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Education Program Specialist, Math, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Marilyn Muirhead SPDG Educational Specialist, Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Consultant			X	X

External Stakeholders

Stakeholders	5/29/14	10/10/14	10/16/14
Parents	X	X	X
Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)	X	X	X
Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committees (SECAC)	X	X	X
Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD)	X	X	X
Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC)	X	X	X
Educational Advocacy Coalition (EAC)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)	X	X	X
Maryland Council of Staff Developers (MCSD)	X	X	X
Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM)	X	X	X
Maryland Middle School Association (MMSA)	X	X	X

Maryland State Education Association (MSEA)	X	X	X
State of Maryland International Reading Association Council (SoMIRAC)	X	X	X
Ready At Five Partnership	X	X	X
Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Teacher Educator s (MATE)	X	X	X
Maryland Family Network/Friends of the Family	X	X	X
University of Maryland – Department of Education Policy Studies	X	X	X
Maryland Coalition of Inclusive Education (MCIE)	X	X	X
Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE)	X	X	X
Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health	X	X	X
Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD)	X	X	X
Maryland Department of Human Resources	X	X	X
Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM)	X	X	X
Local Directors of Special Education	X	X	X
Local Preschool Coordinators	X	X	X
Schoolwide integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT)	X	X	X

Below is a brief summary of the data analysis stakeholder meetings:

Stakeholder meeting #1 (4/29/14) – **Preschool and School-Age** Student proficiency in reading and math, suspension, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Data, and students who receive Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) were disaggregated by race. Local leaders from LSSs, Local Infants and Toddlers Programs (LITPs), and Preschool Coordinators examined disaggregated State data then met as an LSS team to examine their local data and recommend targets.

Data discussion: Across all LSSs, students with disabilities performed lowest of all subgroups in reading and math at all grade levels – but more so in math, followed by English Language Learners. Of the racial/ethnic groups in the general population, African American students performed lowest in reading and math at most grade levels. Students living in poverty performed lower than those not receiving FARMs, across all grades for both reading and math, but with a higher gap in performance for math, particularly in recent years.

Stakeholder meeting #2 (5/29/14) – **SPP/APR Data, Assessment, Graduation, Dropout and Race Data** were presented. The reading and mathematics Maryland State Assessment (MSA), graduation, and dropout data were disaggregated by race, disability, gender, and LRE. Stakeholders asked MSDE to examine the performance of students by grade on reading and mathematics assessments, in relationship to attendance to determine if there may be any relationship between absence from instruction and performance on the MSA.

Data discussion: Students with disabilities are performing below the state target for reading and math and for drop out and graduation. Students with emotional disabilities were more likely to be suspended from school than other disability groups. African American students were disproportionately suspended compared to other racial/ethnic groups.

Stakeholder meeting #3 (10/10/14) – The DSE/EIS reviewed the initial broad data analysis, including additional data requested by various stakeholder groups. The following data were examined by stakeholders at this meeting:

- State Part B SPP/APR Results Indicator Trend Data (2007-2012);
- State Part B SPP/APR Compliance Indicator Trend Data (2007-2012);
- Ages of Student – Trend Data (2007-2012) by 3-5, 6-21, and 3-21;
- Race – Trend Data (2007-2012);
- Disability – Trend Data (2007-2012);
- Post School Outcomes by Local School Systems – Trend Data (2009-2012);
- Students with Disabilities, Absent 10 or More Days by Grade and Disability, Three Year Olds, and PreK through Grade 12;
- Students with Disabilities, Absent 10 or More Days by Grade and Race, Three Year Olds, and PreK through Grade 12;
- Absent Less than Five Days – All Students and Students with Disabilities;
- Absent More than 20 Days – All Students and Students with Disabilities;
- Math Performance of Students with Disabilities Absent Less than 20 Days and Absent More than 20 Days, Grades 3 through 8;
- Reading Performance of Students with Disabilities Absent Less than 20 Days and Absent More than 20 Days, Grades 3 through 8;
- Suspension Data – A National Comparison – General Education and Special Education;
- Percentage of Students Suspended by Disability Trend Data (2009 – 2013);
- Percentage of 3-5 Year Olds with Disabilities Suspended Trend Data (2011Suspension Rates in Maryland by Race, General Education vs. Specialized Education (2012-2013); and
- Relative Risk Ratio for Suspension of Students in General and Specialized Education by Race (2010-2012).

Data discussion: Students with disabilities attend school at a rate close to their nondisabled peers. However when looking at absences for 20 or more days, they miss school much more often, particularly in middle school and 9th and 10th grades. African American students with disabilities are only slightly more likely to be absent more than 20 days compared to their White counterparts across grades. Removals from the classroom for suspension and for separate class or school placements occur disproportionately higher for African American students with disabilities. This is particularly influenced by the low rates of placement in general education settings by the two largest jurisdictions whose African American population is over 90%. Upon discussion and following a brainstorming activity, stakeholders targeted theses potential areas of improvement of student results:

- Math performance for all students with disabilities across all grades (gap reduction) and
- Disproportionate placement of African American students with disabilities in separate special education classes and schools.

Stakeholder meeting #4 (10/16/14) – In a joint meeting of the Maryland Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC) and the local Special Education Citizens' Advisory Councils (SECACs), state leaders who represent families of students with disabilities reviewed the data analysis that had occurred to this point. Stakeholders were asked to consider the data in relationship to the Division's involvement with current State initiatives, including the:

- DSE/EIS strategic plan, *Moving Maryland Forward*, that focuses on early childhood, professional learning, access, equity, progress, and secondary transition;
- State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) to close the math gap using tenets of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), evidence-based math practices, and parent engagement;

ü Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Center work to promote inclusive school reform;

ü Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver;

ü Race to the Top (RTTT); and

ü Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTTT, ELCG).

Stakeholders continued to review data related to the composition of the population of students with disabilities, including types of disabilities, race/ethnicity, and FARMS. Data were shared relative to:

ü The ***settings*** in which students are receiving special education and related services, including these distributions by race/ethnicity.

ü ***Student proficiency*** on the statewide assessment, showing data related to proficiency levels by disability category, grade level, as well as gap analysis between students with and without disabilities.

Data discussion: Stakeholders agreed upon the following concerns:

v Disproportionate segregation of African American students with disabilities out of general education and comprehensive schools

v Disparities in assessment performance of certain local school systems, noting that LSSs may need assistance and technical support in understanding, reviewing, and using their local data to make data-informed decisions

v Poor math performance across grades/jurisdictions

v Post-school outcomes (noting that this may not be truly reflective of actual post-school experiences)

v Diversity in achievement by disability, and in particular, discrepancies for students identified with an emotional disability in segregated placements and in academic performance

v The group had no concerns about the adequacy, quality, or depth of data presented and discussed.

Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity

A description of how the State analyzed the capacity of its current infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity in LEAs to implement, scale up, and sustain the use of evidence-based practices to improve results for children with disabilities. State systems that make up its infrastructure include, at a minimum: governance, fiscal, quality standards, professional development, data, technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring. The description must include current strengths of the systems, the extent the systems are coordinated, and areas for improvement of functioning within and across the systems. The State must also identify current State-level improvement plans and initiatives, including special and general education improvement plans and initiatives, and describe the extent that these initiatives are aligned, and how they are, or could be, integrated with, the SSIP. Finally, the State should identify representatives (e.g., offices, agencies, positions, individuals, and other stakeholders) that were involved in developing Phase I of the SSIP and that will be involved in developing and implementing Phase II of the SSIP.

2. Infrastructure Analysis to Support Improvement and Build Capacity

The MSDE DSE/EIS recognizes that the organizational capacity of the MSDE and LSSs to support the improvement of student results, build State and local capacity to sustain improvement, and to scale up evidence-based promising practices is critical to success. Toward that end, the MSDE identified several ways in which infrastructure could be assessed, including state capacity for implementation of evidence-based strategies and sustainment of results.

A. How Infrastructure Capacity was Analyzed (2(a))

The purpose of the infrastructure analysis was to identify systemic strengths and areas for improvement to build State capacity to support LSSs to implement, scale up, and sustain evidence-based practices. The analysis, which resulted in the preliminary SIMR, was used as the base for infrastructure analysis discussions: to improve math results for students with disabilities in

grades 3 – 5. The State structures that were reviewed included governance, fiscal, quality standards, data, professional development/technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring. The infrastructure analyses resulted in the identification of capacity-building areas to be strengthened in order to improve results. The activities, processes, and results of the infrastructure analysis are described below and in the following sections.

State Capacity Assessment

The SWIFT State team is an MSDE cross-Divisional team charged with providing technical assistance to SWIFT partner LSSs and schools in the SWIFT process for change; delivering professional learning to support implementation of priorities; identifying the state capacity needs to sustain and scale up implementation of SWIFT Core Features; and supporting the state in integrated, coherent planning. The SWIFT State Implementation Team participated in an externally facilitated State Capacity Assessment, adapted with approval by the State Implementation and Scaling up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP) Center (Fixen, Duda, Horner, & Blasé, 2014). As a baseline measure (May 2014), many aspects of implementation had not yet occurred. A second assessment is being scheduled for late Spring 2015.

Internal and External Stakeholder Input

An analysis of infrastructure with external stakeholders who also participated in data analysis, and the internal MSDE stakeholders from the State Superintendent's Executive Team were conducted over four sessions. Please refer to Infrastructure Stakeholder Involvement, Section 2F for details of Stakeholder involvement.

B. Description of the State Systems (2(b))

Governance

The organizational structure of the MSDE is designed to effectively, efficiently, and equitably focus the Department's work on the MSDE's ambitious mission: *to provide every student, including students with disabilities, with a world-class education that ensures post-graduation college- and career-readiness*. Under the leadership of the State Superintendent, Dr. Lillian M. Lowery, MSDE is organized into three Offices, each led by a Deputy State Superintendent: the Offices of School Effectiveness, Teaching and Learning, and Finance and Administration. The DSE/EIS is in the Office of Teaching and Learning. The Assistant State Superintendent of the DSE/EIS is a member of the State Superintendent's Executive Team which allows for advocacy for improvement for students with disabilities and to leverage resources – personnel and fiscal**. Please refer to Attachment A - MSDE Organizational Chart.**

Legal Foundation

The Maryland State Department of Education is Maryland's State Education Agency (SEA) responsible for the implementation of the IDEA and the general supervision of Local Education Agencies (LEAs – referred to as LSSs in Maryland) for the provision of services to children and youth with disabilities. The MSDE, DSE/EIS is accountable to the State leadership, Maryland General Assembly, and State Board of Education to improve academic achievement and functional outcomes for children and youth with disabilities, in order to ensure these children leave school college, career, and community ready.

Administrative Structures and Leadership to Carry Out the IDEA

Within the MSDE **Office of Teaching and Learning**, the DSE/EIS is able to complement and collaborate with the other Divisions directly responsible for instruction, assessment, accountability and the public reporting of student progress of all children, including children and youth with disabilities. The mission of the **DSE/EIS** is to provide leadership, support, and accountability for results to LSSs, and stakeholders through a seamless, comprehensive system of coordinated services to children and youth with disabilities, birth through 21, and their families. The DSE/EIS organizational structure is based upon principles of collaboration and shared responsibility and is organized by five branches: Policy and Accountability; Programmatic Support and Technical Assistance; Family Support and Dispute Resolution; Interagency Collaboration; and Resource Management. The Division matrix organizational design integrates knowledge and skills for improvement of compliance and results, and ensures consistent communication within the DSE/EIS, throughout the Department, and with external stakeholders and partners. **Please refer to Attachment B – Division Cross-Matrix Organizational Structure.** The core functions of the DSE/EIS are *leadership, accountability for results, technical assistance and program support, and fiscal and resource management.* For more information on the DSE/EIS Strategic Plan, *Moving Maryland Forward*, please refer to Infrastructure Analysis, Section 2(F). The DSE/EIS is committed to measuring and reporting its progress in accomplishing the ambitious Goals and Action Imperatives set forth in *Moving Maryland Forward*. The *Key Measures of Success* table in the strategic plan presents our expectations for change from baseline in 2013 through 2018. Each Branch within the DSE/EIS is responsible for the development and implementation of an operational plan of objective actions to address each goal and

action imperative.

Fiscal

The MSDE is committed to the use of fiscal and program data to engage in a finance planning process to identify funds and resources needed to sustain the system. It ensures that funds and resources are allocated equitably to meet the needs of the program and used efficiently and effectively to implement high quality programs. Funds and resources are procured, allocated, used, and dispersed to improve program effectiveness and ensure efficient use of resources. The MSDE is organized to ensure that spending is in compliance with contract performance and all federal, state, and local fiscal requirements. Some of the responsibilities related to fiscal stewardship are described below.

The **Office of Finance and Administration** is responsible for developing and implementing the MSDE administrative and financial policies, procedures, and systems. The Chief Operating Officer provides guidance, management, and coordination of the services provided by the **Division of Business Services** and advises the State Superintendent and the State Board of Education on the financial implications of proposed courses of action. The Accounting Branch develops and recommends policies and procedures relative to financial and cost accounting to ensure the MSDE is in compliance with all applicable State and federal accounting and reporting requirements. This Branch also initiates monitoring activities to detect possible financial problems and recommend corrective courses of action, and provides regular and Special Payments payrolls, controls inventory, and transmits authorization to the Comptroller's Office for payments to vendors for various services and goods. The Budget Branch recommends policies and procedures for the formulation and execution of the MSDE budgets. The Procurement, Grants, and Contracts Section: interprets and applies laws, regulations, and guidelines promulgated by the State and MSDE; maintains liaisons with all regulatory agencies; and administers the Risk Management Program. The Financial Reporting and Coordination Branch provides integrated fiscal support services to the Office of the State Superintendent and several Divisions within the Department; including grant management and financial training to MSDE staff; and reviewing program financial documents prior to their submission to the Budget, Accounting, and Administrative Services Branches.

The Local Finance Reporting Office is responsible for developing, collecting, reviewing, evaluating, editing, reporting, and publishing local schools systems' financial data. It administers the automated financial reporting system (the Annual Financial Report and Grant Reporting System) to serve the purpose of answering State and/or federal surveys in the form of special projects or reports. This office also administers compliance with Maintenance of Effort requirements (MOE) under the Bridge to Excellence, makes determinations on eligibility for Nonrecurring Cost exclusions from MOE calculations, and provides support to the LSS Master Plan review process.
The MSDE uses *The Financial Reporting Manual for Maryland Public Schools*, developed and adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education to assure uniform reporting at the local, State, and federal levels. Each LSS and PA that receives sub-awards of the federal IDEA funds to support its special education or early intervention programs must comply with applicable programmatic and fiscal regulations. It is the responsibility of the DSE/EIS to ensure all sub-recipients of federal funds comply with applicable State and federal regulations. The DSE/EIS developed the Local Application for Federal Funds (LAFF) process and the associated submissions as necessary requirements for the DSE/EIS to discharge its administrative responsibilities related to its sub-awards of the federal IDEA Part B funds.

State and federal regulations under the IDEA require that each LSS submit an application for the expenditure of federal funds. Each LSS is required to develop the LAFF with meaningful public input from entities such as its Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (SECAC), parents, community partners, special and general educators, and administrators. Through the LAFF, the LSS provides assurances of compliance with federal and State regulations and reports on the proposed expenditures of allocated federal funds in order to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with disabilities.

In addition to the federal funds passed through to LSSs, the DSE/EIS uses selected IDEA set-aside funds for competitive and noncompetitive grants for LSSs. For the 2014-2015 school year the DSE/EIS awarded one (1) highly competitive Bridges for Systems Change Initiative grant to enable the MSDE, community, and the LSS partners to engage in a collaborative approach to support schools and classrooms to impact student outcomes, and build local capacity to sustain evidence–based promising practices.

Fiscal data are used for both planning and for accountability/monitoring of expenditures. All sub-awards of federal funds must be used and accounted for consistent with all program requirements, State and federal statutes and regulations, grant conditions, and the new Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2CFR §200). The policies, procedures, and practices established by the MSDE for the procurement, distribution of funds, semiannual programmatic and fiscal review, sub-recipient monitoring, and audits support the effective and efficient use of funds. Each step in the process is supported by multiple steps from the DSE/EIS internal fiscal procedures to Department

review procedures.

Data

The MSDE has developed an integrated data system that collects data from LSSs in accordance with the *Maryland Student Record Manual.* This includes, but is not limited to attendance, assessments, graduation, enrollment, and discipline of all students, including students with disabilities. Student records provide an accurate presentation of the academic performance. The MSDE Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability collect data from all LSSs on all students. The State assigns each student a Unique Student Identifier (USID). MSDE integrates two data systems; the Child Find/Special Education data generated from online Individual Education Programs for students with disabilities and the State's accountability system that holds all student demographic, behavioral, and state assessment data. These systems are easily integrated for multiple areas of analysis. Special education data systems are the:

- ***Maryland Online Individualized Education Program (MOIEP).*** The MOIEP is a secure web-based application that serves as the primary case management tool for LSSs serving children and youth with disabilities in Maryland. The main user function is the development and monitoring of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) which are entered into the MOIEP by local users. The State has access to the IEPs of all children receiving services and can utilize the data analysis functions of the MOIEP to generate both predefined and dynamic reports, including reports that display child outcomes progress, to assist with programmatic data-informed decision-making. The MSDE and the LSSs are able to generate reports on a regular basis to monitor statewide and local compliance/results and audit for data validity and reliability. Evidence that the data on the processes and results component is part of a State's or an LSS's system of general supervision includes the following:

  - data are collected as required under the IDEA and by the U.S. Secretary of Education,
  - data are routinely collected throughout the year,
  - LSSs submit data in a timely and accurate manner, and
  - data are available from multiple sources and used to examine performance of the LSSs.

- ***Longitudinal Accountability Decision Support System (LADSS).*** In order to facilitate local data analysis for students with disabilities, the DSE/EIS, in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education (CTE) is developing the Maryland Special Education and Early Intervention Longitudinal Accountability Decision Support System (LADSS). This system encompasses the integration of statewide demographic and outcome data with special education and early intervention services data collection tools through a linked special education longitudinal data warehouse.

- ***Complaint and Dispute Resolution.*** The IDEA provides parents certain rights and procedural safeguards. The Family Support and Dispute Resolution Branch collects and analyzes data on an ongoing basis using the parent contact and dispute resolution database to ensure effective implementation of the dispute resolution system.

- ***Ready at Five.*** Ready at Five publishes school readiness data, based on the performance of kindergarteners on the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) Work Sampling System (WSS). Children are identified as either fully ready, approaching readiness, or developing readiness in seven domains of learning: Language and Literacy, Physical Development, Social Studies, Scientific Thinking, Mathematical Thinking, The Arts, and Social/Personal Development. Statewide Readiness Data are published on the organization's website, found here http://www.readyatfive.org/school-readiness-data/statewide-readiness-data-2014.html

- ***MD EXCELS.*** Maryland EXCELS is a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that awards ratings to registered family childcare providers, licensed childcare centers (e.g., Head Start, facilities, and school age-only childcare), and public pre-kindergarten programs that meet increasingly higher standards of quality identified areas. Maryland EXCELS is voluntary and is designed to increase parent and provider awareness of the key elements of high quality childcare. A database has been created to collect the QRIS data for future monitoring and analysis. Please also see Infrastructure Analysis, Section 2D.

Quality Standards for Teaching Children and Youth

A core value of the MSDE is the belief that: *In order to be prepared for the challenges of work and college, Maryland students must graduate from high school equipped with the knowledge and skills to help them succeed*. Maryland has led the nation in establishing strong academic standards and accompanying curriculum, but to achieve world-class status the State must continue to raise those standards and improve the achievement of all students.

In June 2010, by unanimous vote, the Maryland State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards,

national education standards that define the skills and knowledge that students should master during their K-12 education by unanimous vote. The MSDE website - Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards - includes numerous resources for LSSs, educators, and parents. Through the Division's strategic plan, *Moving Maryland Forward*, the DSE/EIS focuses on building the capacity of LITPs, LSSs, and Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) to narrow the performance gap and enable all children to be college, career, and community ready when they leave school. The Division works collaboratively with other Divisions within the MSDE to improve achievement of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and performance on statewide accountability measures.

Professional Learning and Development (PLD)/Technical Assistance (TA)

The MSDE implements a coordinated system of professional development to address recruitment and retention, standards and competencies, and ongoing systematic professional development strategies. The MSDE has combined Professional Development/Learning (PD/L) and Technical Assistance (TA) as support structures for LSSs. TA has a more individualized focus whereas PD/L may have a more broad based distributive focus.

Since 1986, the MSDE, in conjunction with local school systems and institutions of higher education (IHEs) conduct a survey annually to determine critical teacher shortage areas. Although some data is collected annually, the report is published biennially. The latest Maryland Teacher Staffing Report, 2012-2014, provides data on teacher candidates completing programs in IHEs that have Maryland Approved Programs (MAP) and in Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Programs (MAAPP). The report also collects the hiring needs of the local school systems to determine critical shortage areas by analyzing the data and applying the criteria agreed upon. The process includes additional data beyond the traditional formula used since the beginning of the report. It incorporates the recommendations of an Expert Panel, composed of representatives of various stakeholders, that was convened in 2008 to review the process and make recommendations. The criteria developed by the Expert Committee are used in this study.

The scope of the report has expanded over the years, and now includes shortage areas for both teachers and select non-classroom professionals; information on traditional higher education as well as alternative preparation programs; the graduates; geographic shortage areas; teacher attrition; highly qualified teachers (as defined by the 2001 No Child Left Behind [NCLB] Act); and the number of retired/rehired teachers and principals. This report also includes a number of important incentives and strategies for the recruitment and retention of quality teachers and principals for Maryland public schools.

Standards for Professionals

The Division of Educator Effectiveness certifies teachers and other professional personnel; oversees the preparation of education candidates, and approves the education programs of nonpublic schools. This Division is also responsible for **the Professional Standards and the Teacher Education Board** (PSTEB) that originated in 1971 as an advisory board established to set standards and regulations by which teachers and other professionals are prepared and licensed for Maryland public schools. The board's twenty-five members are appointed to three-year terms by the Governor with Senate advice and consent (Code Education Article, §6-701 through §6-708).

The ***Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards (MTPDS)*** were adopted in 2004 and have guided professional development in the State since that time—not only for teachers but for administrators and other educators at all levels. The Maryland standards are based on the National Staff Development Council's (NSDC) Standards for Staff Development (2001). Importantly, the standards acknowledge that teacher professional development encompasses a wide range of learning activities, such as teacher study groups, coaching and mentoring relationships, teacher networks, participation on school improvement teams and committees that develop curricula and assessments, workshops, and college and university courses.

Currently, Learning Forward ***Standards for Professional Learning*** are at the very core of our professional development and technical assistance and support for local school systems, schools, and general and specialized educators. They are: 1) provide a clear vision of high-quality professional development that recognizes local needs, priorities, and resources; 2) guide planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating high-quality professional development; 3) support alignment of professional development with goals for improving student learning and state, district, and school policies and priorities; 4) inform allocation of resources for professional development; and 5) define accountability for ensuring that professional development is of the highest quality and readily accessible to all teachers.

Professional Learning/Development

The DSE/EIS targets specific universal professional learning activities to local early intervention and early care and education leaders. These include the annual DSE/EIS Professional Learning Institute, quarterly face-to-face Birth through 21 Leadership

professional learning, and monthly Birth through 21 Leadership teleconferences. In addition, there are other formalized professional learning opportunities and tools:

- The MSDE and Maryland colleges and universities have developed the **Maryland Professional Development School (PDS) Network** to connect Maryland colleges and universities and their local school system partners in their efforts to implement the Redesign of Teacher Education in Maryland. The MSDE sponsors regional network meetings of stakeholders in these partnerships: college/university liaisons, school system PDS representatives, school principals and site coordinators, and preservice mentor teachers.

- To assist general and specialized educators, the DSE/EIS, through a federal State Improvement Grant (SIG) developed an online tracker, ***Professional Development Online Tracker (PDot).*** This online tool assists personnel to identify particular areas of strength and areas of need. In addition, it provides clear stepping stones to guide professional development on an ongoing, career-long basis. The online tool includes links to professional development courses, videos, curricula, webinars, books, and other materials that can be invaluable.

- As part of the Maryland RTTT grant, the MSDE conducted 11 regional **Educator Effectiveness Academies** during the summers of 2011, 2012, and 2013. Academy content was delivered through voluntary regional conferences and on-line content sessions in 2014. Beginning in 2013, the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services joined the EEA planning team and the EEA master teacher cadre. Content specific to the needs of educators who teach students with disabilities was subsequently included in the EEA content sessions.

Online Professional Learning Activities and Resources

In order to improve program quality and services to positively impact child and family outcome results, the MSDE, DSE/EIS, in collaboration with numerous partners, provides resources, training, consultation, and technical assistance to LSSs, service providers, community partners, stakeholders, and parents in numerous formats and forums. Dissemination of these trainings, resources, media, and tools to strengthen student outcomes is supported through the DSE/EIS website – Maryland Learning Links - in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University/Center for Technology in Education (CTE). Several online professional learning resources have been highly utilized for providing ongoing training and support to general and specialized educators and service providers.

School Improvement in Maryland – mdk12.org is the **School Improvement in Maryland** web site which provides information on instruction and assessments, data analysis, and school improvement for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and school board members.

Differentiated Framework for Technical Assistance

The DSE/EIS has aligned its general supervisory responsibilities with engagement for program support and technical assistance to provide a tiered system for both **monitoring** and **technical assistance** to address the needs of each LSS. The *Differentiated Framework* illustrates the shared responsibility and shared accountability to improve results for children and youth with disabilities. An LSS is assigned to a tier of general supervision and oversight based upon performance on federal compliance and results indicators, correction of noncompliance, analysis of data, fiscal management, and monitoring findings. The corresponding technical assistance and support (engagement) an LSS can expect to receive is differentiated and based on that system's assigned tier and a comprehensive analysis of needs **. Please see Attachment C, Differentiated Framework.**

- The **Universal Tier of Engagement** is available to all LSSs and focuses on professional development/learning and support to address statewide needs based on overall State trend data, (e.g., performance on SPP Indicators, child outcomes, and student achievement). This includes general information related to special education policies, procedures and practices, as well as the general work of the MSDE. Examples of statewide technical assistance include State and regional professional development, online tools, resources through Maryland Learning Links, and Technical Assistance Bulletins.
- **Targeted Tier of Engagement** focuses on professional learning and support (training, coaching, and technical assistance) to address the needs of the LSS on specific topics identified through general supervision. It is a responsive and proactive approach to prevent the LSS from needing substantial support. The LSS leadership is required to engage with the DSE/EIS to review State and local data and information in order to implement an Improvement Plan that is approved by the DSE/EIS to build capacity to effectively address the identified needs. Evaluation and periodic feedback are critical elements of Targeted Engagement. A Targeted Assistance and Support Committee (TASC), consisting of jointly identified local and state cross-Divisional members, provides performance-based and responsive support.The goal of the **Focused Tier of Engagement** is to direct substantial support to address the continuous lack of improvement of a LSS

through significant systems change. A joint multi-faceted State and local Focused Intervention and Accountability Team (FIAT) meets quarterly to develop, implement, and review progress and change in policy, program, instructional practices, and professional learning at multiple systems levels. Principles of effective systems change, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability are foundational elements of the technical assistance. Frequent feedback and general supervision is maintained throughout the term of the technical assistance.

- The **Intensive Tier of Engagement** focuses on providing support based on a Formal Agreement that is developed to guide improvement and correction with onsite supervision. The MSDE may direct, recover, or withhold State or federal funds.

Accountability/Monitoring

The MSDE is committed to ongoing program evaluation and accountability. It expects the LSSs to meet agreed-upon standards. Mechanisms to document the need for change, track progress, and demonstrate improvement are included, as well as the State's role to facilitate the local use of accountability and improvement planning processes.

Maryland Bridge to Excellence Master Plans

In 2002, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act.* This legislation provides a powerful framework for all 24 school systems to increase student achievement for all students and to close the achievement gap. The *Bridge to Excellence* legislation significantly increased State Aid to public education and required each LSS to develop a comprehensive Master Plan, to be updated annually. This Plan is expected to link school finance directly and centrally to decisions about improving student learning, including a review of the performance of children and youth with disabilities on State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators. The LSS Master Plans are to also address the needs, supports, and technical assistance for general and specialized educators and service providers. By design, the legislation requires school systems to integrate State, federal, and local funding and initiatives into the Master Plan. Under Bridge to Excellence, academic programming and fiscal alignment are carefully monitored by the Master Plan review process. The review of LSS Master Plans involves all Divisions within the MSDE, including the DSE/EIS.

Beginning in 2011, Maryland integrated the Race to the Top (RTTT) Local Scopes of Work with the existing Bridge to Excellence Master Plan (BTE) and reviewed and approved the Scopes of Work within the Master Plan review infrastructure in accordance with RTTT and BTE guidelines. The purpose of this integration was to allow Maryland's LSSs to streamline their efforts under these programs to increase student achievement and eliminate achievement gaps by implementing ambitious plans in the four RTTT reform areas. This integration also enabled the MSDE to leverage personnel resources to ensure that all Scopes of Work receive comprehensive programmatic and fiscal reviews

Differentiated Framework for Accountability and Continuous Improvement

The DSE/EIS has aligned its general supervisory responsibilities with engagement for program support and technical assistance to provide a tiered system for **monitoring** and **technical assistance** to address the needs of each LSS (See also Professional Development/Technical Assistance – Differentiated Levels of Engagement). The *Differentiated Framework* illustrates the shared responsibility and shared accountability to improve results for children and youth with disabilities. **Please refer to Attachment C, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, *Differentiated Framework*, page 25.** An LSS is assigned to a tier of general supervision and oversight based upon performance on federal compliance and results indicators, correction of noncompliance, analysis of data, fiscal management, and monitoring findings.

- **Universal Tier of General Supervision** is assigned to most LSSs. They have met identified performance and compliance criteria, resulting in a determination status of "Meets Requirements" or are in the first year of "Needs Assistance." These LSSs have no findings of noncompliance or have corrected all findings of noncompliance within one year and have maintained compliance. Each LSS is monitored annually through a desk audit and cross-divisional data analysis of SPP Indicators, local priorities, and fiscal data. Additionally, a cyclical general supervision monitoring of select LSSs includes, at a minimum, student record reviews for the IDEA requirements, a review of policy, procedures, and practices, and sub-recipient fiscal monitoring. Each LSS develops and self-monitors an internal work plan including Local Priority Flexibility to address locally identified needs.

- An LSS receiving a determination status of "Needs Assistance" for two or more consecutive years or "Needs Intervention" is assigned to the **Targeted Tier of General Supervision**. An LSS in this tier may have an active Corrective Action Plan(s) (CAPs) for identified noncompliance, and/or although noncompliance may be corrected within one year, compliance is not sustained. Targeted monitoring occurs semi-annually and includes customized data analysis with real-time local and State data. Activities may include, but are not limited to: student record reviews using selected sections of the student record review document, a review of policies, procedures, and practices, a review of the LSS's system of general

supervision, interview questions, and/or case studies. State and local joint cross-departmental and cross-divisional teams are formed to address identified needs. The LSS develops a local Improvement Plan which is submitted to and approved by the DSE/EIS.

- When a LSS is given a determination status of "Needs Substantial Intervention" it is assigned to the **Focused Tier of General Supervision**. This is the result of uncorrected findings of noncompliance, active CAPs for two or more years, and little progress despite general and targeted technical assistance. Focused general supervision is comprised of enhanced and differentiated monitoring and in-depth data analysis. This tier of general supervision oversight also requires the participation of the State Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, and the DSE/EIS Assistant State Superintendent work closely with the local school superintendent to develop a cross-departmental, cross-divisional State and local implementation team. The MSDE provides increased oversight activities to assess progress and may direct federal funds, impose special conditions, and/or require more frequent submission of data. Maryland's focused monitoring as seen in the *Differentiated Framework* occurs quarterly and may include, but is not limited to: student record reviews using selected sections of the student record review document, a review of the LSS's real time data, a review of policies, procedures, and practices, a review of the LSS's system of general supervision, interview questions, classroom observations, and case studies.

- **Intensive Tier of General Supervision** is given to an LSS that fails to progress and correct previously identified noncompliance despite receiving technical assistance and support. The failure to comply has affected the core requirements, such as the delivery of services to students with disabilities or to provide effective general supervision and oversight. The LSS enters into a formal agreement with the MSDE to guide improvement and may have additional sanctions. The LSS informs the MSDE of its unwillingness to comply with core requirements.

Monitoring for Continuous Improvement and Results (MCIR)

In response to OSEP's shift in monitoring priorities, the MSDE, DSE/EIS revised its monitoring procedures and now includes a greater emphasis on requirements related to improving educational results for children and youth with disabilities. In addition, the MSDE, DSE/EIS uses the *Differentiated Framework*, thus enabling the MSDE, DSE/EIS to work collaboratively with the LSSs to focus on areas in need of improvement. This is accomplished through Maryland's Monitoring for Continuous Improvement and Results (MCIR) process. General supervision is accountable for enforcing the requirements and for ensuring continuous improvement. The primary focus of the MCIR process is to improve educational results and functional outcomes for all children and youth with disabilities and their families and ensure that the MSDE meets the program requirements within the IDEA.

The MCIR process verifies data, documents compliance with both the IDEA and the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) regulatory requirements, and provides technical assistance for the timely correction of identified findings of noncompliance. Findings of noncompliance concerning the records of individual students with disabilities always result in verification of correction using a two prong process, consistent with the OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

Comprehensive monitoring occurs at least every 6 years in each LSS. While some monitoring activities are universal for all, other monitoring activities are customized to examine areas of need. These areas are identified through a variety of sources such as but not limited to: indicator data verification; other data reviews, grant reviews, fiscal data, Medicaid monitoring, Family support data, State complaints, and advocacy organization concerns.

C. System Strengths and Areas for Improvement (2(c))

As a part of the review of infrastructure, the internal SSIP planning team reviewed state initiatives, resources, and regulations as well as the areas above. Teacher preparation programs and professional learning opportunities through the MSDE have resulted in higher levels of co-teaching and collaboration among general and specialized educators. Regulations to implement instruction based on the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are supporting the increase in high quality teaching practices that meet the diverse needs of learners. A recent focus on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) in both academic and behavioral supports promises to assist LSSs in systematically meeting the needs of ALL learners and include students with disabilities in those systems. The State's Strategic Plan for the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, *Moving Maryland Forward*, provides a guide for State plans for narrowing the achievement gap for students with disabilities. To meet this vision, competitive discretionary funding has focused strategically on making positive results in narrowing the gap for students with disabilities. Funding for the Maryland State Professional Development Grand (SPDG) has been leveraged to narrow the math gap in 3 school systems. Strategically, the MSDE is partnering with the national SWIFT Center to focus on school-wide change and district capacity building to improve behavioral and academic outcomes for ALL students, with a focus on 16 schools in 4 school systems. The SWIFT Center work is serving as a catalyst for supporting existing cross-Divisional collaborations and developing coherent strategies that can be shared statewide.

In conducting the State Capacity Assessment, strengths were evident in the functioning of the State Implementation Team and the participation of the SWIFT State Coordinators and their access to State leadership. Strengths of the cross-Divisional Implementation team are in providing professional learning opportunities to partner LSSs and supporting the installation of evidence-based practices. Future work will be focused on state planning in concert with the SSIP. Needs were noted in the involvement of leadership across Divisions, communication structures from the State Implementation Team to the State Executive Team, and to Local School System partners. Implications relate to improving cross-Divisional communication and investment in technical assistance capacity on the part of the State.

As a result of iterative SWOT Analyzes by internal and external stakeholders (refer to 2(F)), the chart below summarizes their input on the strengths of Maryland's systems and Areas for Improvement.

	Strengths	Opportunities (Areas for Improvement)
Governance	· Vision and mission of the MSDE and the DSE/EIS · Only 24 LSSs – easier to engage in dialogue (autonomy)	· Shared staff by overlapping divisions to work on similar projects/initiatives · Cross Division communications
Fiscal	· Federal and state competitive grant opportunities · Division offers local priority – local use of funds · Fiscal workgroup that drives through data where money will be spent (stakeholder input) · Shared initiatives	· Increase cross divisional work plans to leverage funds better; cost sharing – integrate funding · Continue to explore opportunities for braiding funding
Data	· Data available online – MD Report Card, Mdideareport.org, mdk12.org, Complaints/due process · LADSS · MOIEP/SSIS	· Increase use of data-informed decision making to prioritize PD/TA · Teach parents how to look at data · Increase LSS use of local data for decision making
Quality Standards	· Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) · Early Learning Standards aligned with MCCRS · Professional Development Standards	· Assist LSS administrators, school personnel, and general and specialized educators to implement strategies to improve results for all students.
Professional Development/ Technical Assistance	· State provides flexible dollars for LSSs to develop and implement specific PD/PL · State monitors use of evidence based practices and standards · Shared initiatives	· Provide onsite PD/TA to LSSs · Provide resources to LSS leaders, school administrators, and general and specialized educators · Blending resources with aligned State initiatives
Accountability/ Monitoring	· Strong monitoring and accountability protocols	· Alignment of Department accountability and monitoring for student results

D. State-level Improvement Plans and Initiatives (2(d))

There are several State initiatives and priorities across the various Divisions within the MSDE that are designed to engage each Division in the MSDE mission to create a world-class education system that prepares all students for college and career success in the 21st century.

MSDE Plan for Education Reform.

Maryland has been engaged in strengthening its education system to meet changing social and economic conditions. Maryland's education reforms have been designed to pave a path for all students to have the skills and academic success to compete in the changing, technology-based, 21st century world. Through several decades of reform that have brought Maryland to its current status as national leader, one thing has remained constant—Maryland's commitment to continually improving the education and achievement of all students.

To fully prepare students to excel in college and the workforce in the 21st century, Maryland has focused its efforts around four areas of reform: higher standards for curriculum and assessments, robust data, effective educators, and strategic help for struggling schools. The State is also committed to strengthening Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education across all four reform areas. Once fully implemented, these comprehensive reforms will provide all students with a world-class education that gives them the skills and knowledge they need for future success. Below is a chart of the various initiatives within the MSDE that are aligned to support our Department mission and strategic plan.

Goals State **Initiatives**	Higher Standards	Robust Data	**Effective** Educators	Strategic Help for Struggling Schools	Science, Technology, Engineering, & **Mathematics** (STEM)
DSE/EIS Strategic Plan	X	X	X	X	X
Race To The Top	X	X	X	X	X
RTTT – Early Learning Challenge Grant	X	X	X	X	X
ESEA Flexibility	X	X	X	X	X
SPDG	X	X	X	X	X
SWIFT	X	X	X	X	X
Bridges	X	X	X	X	X

It can be noted as the SSIP Phase I activities were completed that the four areas of reform and the commitment of the State to STEM were used as unifying themes. The initiatives listed above also served as a means of identifying points of intersection to ensure the MSDE coordinated efforts.

Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) Strategic Plan

The DSE/EIS Strategic Plan, *Moving Maryland Forward* was developed and informed by the innovative thinking and transformative ideas of stakeholders from across the State. This included LSS superintendents, special education directors, early intervention and preschool special education coordinators, instruction and curriculum specialists, family advocates, parents, and community partners. The DSE/EIS Assistant State Superintendent's Advisory Council, State Advisory Councils, and the DSE/EIS leadership staff collaborated to produce this final plan. The MSDE is the State Education Agency and State Lead Agency for early intervention and special education and related services to infants, toddlers, children and youth with

disabilities, and their families, birth through age 21.

This plan fully integrates the overall aims of the MSDE, including a strong commitment to collaboration and shared responsibility, a multi-tiered system of support, and family and community partnerships. By working collaboratively across the Department, and throughout the State, Maryland intends to build the capacity of the Department and LSSs to narrow the existing achievement gap in order to prepare all students for college, career, and community living after successful completion of secondary school. To narrow the gap requires effort in four major areas: Early Childhood, Professional Development, Access, Equity, and Progress, and Secondary Transition**. Please refer to Attachment D for a graphic representation of the DSE/EIS Strategic Plan.**

The DSE/EIS is committed to a strategic planning process rooted in a set of principles that will remain essential to the successful implementation and measurement of the *Moving Maryland Forward* plan and the achievement of its intended outcomes.

- **Strategic Collaboration** We involve stakeholders through participatory processes that promote innovation, the sharing of best practices, and dissemination of research and evidence-based models. We are also committed to strengthening partnerships and planning with the other MSDE divisions and external stakeholder groups.

- **Family Partnerships** We promote families and school staff to engage in active regular two-way, meaningful communication as equal partners in decisions that affect children and families in order to jointly inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

- **Data Informed Decisions** We make every effort to serve stakeholders in a timely and effective manner and to ensure the availability of “real-time” data for decision making and dissemination of models of best practices throughout the State.

- **Evidence Based Practices** We will work to identify and implement evidence-based practices with fidelity to improve child outcomes.

Four (4) DSE/EIS core functions necessary to close the gap are: to provide leadership, a shared accountability for results, technical assistance and program support, and fiscal and resource management. **Please refer to Attachment E – The DSE/EIS Core Functions.** This comprehensive system aligns policy and requires the essential relationship between the MSDE, the LSSs, and schools to ensure the timely and appropriate provision of services to children and youth with disabilities and their families.

Race to the Top (RTTT)

On August 24, 2010, Maryland was awarded one of the federal government’s coveted Race to the Top (RTTT) grants in the amount of $250 million over four years. The aims of the RTTT program were to boost student achievement, reduce gaps in achievement among student subgroups, turn around struggling schools, and improve the teaching profession.

Maryland has one of the nation's most honored systems of public education, but for our State to continue to be competitive our schools must continue to improve. President Barack Obama, in announcing the $4.35 billion Race to the Top initiative, said the program is based on a simple principle: "whether a state is ready to do what works."

Maryland developed its RTTT proposal with unprecedented collaboration and transparency. To help frame its proposal, the State called upon a top level committee of educators and State education leaders. Following extensive stakeholder input, the MSDE laid out the State’s robust plan to move its education system from national leader to world class, setting an ambitious agenda focused on improving education by:

- ***Implementing higher, more rigorous standards and advanced assessments aligned to those new standards to help prepare students for success in college and careers***

  In school year 2013-14, the new Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards were fully implemented in all schools across the State. These new, more rigorous academic standards are based on the Common Core State Standards, a set of consistent, high-quality academic goals for what students should know and be able to do in English Language Arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics. Maryland took the Common Core State Standards and adapted them to the specific needs of the State – creating the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards. Students will receive an education that not only leads to a high school diploma, but also prepares them for success, without remediation, in college, career-training, and life after graduation. (See also Section 2.B. Quality Standards.)

- ***Building a statewide technology infrastructure that links all data elements with analytic and instructional tools to***

monitor and promote student achievement

Maryland's work to improve data collection and analysis and technology in the State's education system hits directly at the heart of the MSDE's overarching vision of equity, efficiency, and excellence. Through the development and expansion of the State's longitudinal data system (see also, 2.B. Data, LADSS), educators, policy makers, parents, and other stakeholders will have a clear view of long-term student outcomes and be able to make policy decisions that help close gaps and increase the achievement of all students.

- ***Redesigning the model for teacher and principal evaluations, with a focus on preparation, development, and retention***

Over the course of the first three years of RTTT, the State worked with its local school systems, teachers' associations, and principals' organizations to develop a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation system, giving school systems the flexibility to include local measures within the broader statewide requirements. During that time, school systems had the opportunity to field test their new evaluations and provide the State with vital feedback. Findings from the field test were used to make refinements and enhancements to the evaluation system before it was implemented across the State in school year 2013-14. Maryland has incorporated **Student Learning Objectives** (SLOs) as a measure of student growth in teacher and principal evaluations, believing the SLOs will allow for specific school and local school system goals to be captured while also maintaining a focus on the importance of student growth. The SLOs are measurable instructional goals for a specific group of students over a set period of time. Through the SLO process, educators are empowered to examine data and student outcomes to make meaningful decisions about what is most important for their students to learn and how their students' learning is measured.

- ***Fully implementing the innovative Breakthrough Center approach for turning around the State's lowest-performing schools***

Through the RTTT, Maryland has worked to significantly improve the performance of the State's lowest performing schools and set them on a path for continued improvement by fully implementing the innovative Breakthrough Center approach for transforming low-achieving schools and school systems. The Breakthrough Center's focus on building a community of practice for turnaround does not begin and end with Priority and Focus Schools. The Breakthrough Center aims to build this community throughout the state, and in many cases, the nation. The MSDE's Breakthrough Center coordinates, brokers, and delivers support to schools and local school systems across the State. During years one through four of Maryland's RTTT grant, the Breakthrough Center provided hands-on support to the State's 21 Priority Schools, the lowest performing five percent of Title I schools in the State, and their 20 feeder schools in Baltimore City and Prince George's County.

Race to the Top, Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTTT – ELC)

On December 16, 2011, Maryland received the US Department of Education four-year, $50 million Race To The Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTTT – ELC) Grant. Maryland was one of only nine states receiving an award. The RTTT – ELC grant will enable Maryland to create a seamless Birth to Grade 12 reform agenda to ensure that all young children and their families are supported in the State's efforts to overcome school readiness gaps and to move early childhood education in Maryland from a good system to a great system. The MSDE is the fiscal agent for the grant and its Division of Early Childhood Development (DECD) takes the lead in applying the funds. The Governor's State Advisory Council on Early Care and Education advises the MSDE on the implementation of the RTT-ELC State Plan. Participating state agencies, including the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR), and the Governor's Office for Children (GOC), collaborate with the MSDE in support of the State Plan. Ten innovative projects address the scope of Maryland's RTTT – ELC State Plan.

ESEA Flexibility Waiver

On May 29, 2012, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) approved Maryland's request for ESEA Flexibility for the 2012-2013 and the 2013-2014 school years. The ED provided all ESEA Flexibility States with the opportunity to apply for an Extension to this ESEA Flexibility for the 2014-2015 school year. Maryland sought to extend ESEA flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year because the implementation of the flexibility has enhanced the ability of the MSDE and the local school systems to increase the quality of instruction for all students as well as improve their achievement levels. The waiver has allowed Maryland to target resources and implement rigorous interventions in our lowest performing schools. Maryland believes that the flexibility of the waiver has allowed the State and its LSSs to focus on implementing the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, transition to the College and Career-Ready PARCC Assessments, provide support, recognition, and intervention to all Maryland public schools, and develop a teacher and principal evaluation system that incorporates student growth as a major component.

The MSDE State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)

The overarching goal of the MSDE's State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) is to improve mathematics achievement results for students with disabilities in Pre-K through Grade 6. Over the remaining two and a half years of this grant Maryland will continue to use SPDG funds to accomplish three major project goals by providing technical assistance and ongoing support to build capacity at the State, LSS, and school levels. The following shows the goals and description of how the State is working toward achieving SPDG goals:

Goal 1: Increase use of data-informed decision-making and implementation science application by State, district and school leaders. The State, in partnership with JHU-CTE, has developed a protocol, ***TAP-IT***, for data-based decision making that provides guidance for: **T**eam formation, **A**nalysis of student learning and teacher implementation data, **P**lan action steps to address identified needs, **I**mplementation, and **T**racking progress and implementation data to enable informed decision-making for needed adjustments to the SPDG program at participating schools. The State is also providing ongoing support at the school level for use of the ***Snapshot Data Tool***. Teachers use this tool to collect classroom assessment information on a daily or weekly basis. This enables teachers to monitor student progress and adjust their instruction based on student needs.

Goal 2: Increase use of evidence-based practices in early and elementary math instruction

The evidence-based practices selected for this project are Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Team Based Cycle of Instruction (TBCI), and Structured Cooperative Learning. By providing ongoing support with the formation and operation of an LSS-IT, the MSDE has helped the LSS to develop a district level system of ongoing support for the implementation of evidence-based strategies with fidelity.

Goal 3: Increase parent involvement in educational decision-making and instruction

The MSDE has partnered with its Parent Information and Training (PTI) center, Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD) to provide training to families on mathematics activities to be used with their students at home. In addition, the MSDE, in partnership with the PPMD, has developed an innovation that integrates parent/family involvement into instructional delivery. This was accomplished by introducing a new component into TBCI. This component, ***Family Connections***, provides a routine way for teachers to address their professional responsibility to communicate with families. The ***Family Connections*** are made through the Community Standard "*Explain what you've learned to your family team member*", the Honeycomb for Home activity, and the Expectation "*Answer the Challenge Question and share with family*".

Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT)

Maryland is one of five (5) States in the nation to participate in the SWIFT Center partnership. SWIFT is a national K-8 technical assistance center committed to eliminating silos in education by bridging general and specialized education through academic and behavioral supports, creating powerful learning opportunities for all students and teachers, and promoting active, engaged partnerships among families and community members. Four local school systems in Maryland are participating in the SWIFT Center work with four schools identified in each system. The MSDE DSE/EIS collaborates with the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability (DCAA) and Division of Student, Family and School Support (DSFSS) to implement this initiative. SWIFT uses implantation science and TA tools aligned with implementation frameworks developed by the SISEP Center, with a framework to promote inclusive school practices in five domains:

- Collaborative and Distributed Leadership
- Multi-tiered System of Academic and Behavioral Supports with data-informed decision making
- Integrated Organizational System
- Positive family and community partnerships
- Aligned Inclusive Policy

Bridges Systems Change Initiative

In March 2014, the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services released a Request for Proposal for a highly competitive State IDEA Set-aside grant to affect change system-wide, birth through 21 years of age. The Bridges for Systems Change Initiative Grant is aligned with the DSE/EIS Strategic Plan: *Moving Maryland Forward* and supports the attainment of the goals and objectives of the strategically targeted Action Imperatives. It requires a strong systemic commitment to the design, implementation, and evaluation of sustainable/scalable processes and products in collaboration with family and

community, Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), the Regional Comprehensive Center, the DSE/EIS, and identified partners. This opportunity was established to serve as a catalyst for supporting local jurisdictions, the DSE/EIS, and their strategic partners in developing an infrastructure that provides a seamless, coordinated, and comprehensive system of services for Maryland's infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities, and their families through the braiding of funds to blend programs. This highly competitive grant has been awarded to one LSS to significantly ***enhance, restructure, and transform*** services within their existing system for improved results; specifically to increase the academic performance of African American students which will directly reduce the number of African American students referred and found eligible for special education services.

Attendance Matters Campaign

The MDSE is partnering with **Attendance Works**, a national nonprofit, to declare September as "Attendance Awareness Month." The MSDE works with local school systems and leaders to get students in school, keep them there, and move them along the track to college and career. **Attendance Works** released a report detailing the correlation between attendance and achievement. It can be found at www.attendanceworks.org. In partnership with **Attendance Works**, the MSDE is making available a wealth of tools and strategies that can be used to fight chronic absenteeism. For **LSS leaders** it is important to provide data and offer support, including the development of a plan to prioritize local needs. **School leaders** must make attendance a priority and provide resources to implement effective attendance plans. **Community leaders and partner**s can support district and school efforts by linking community resources—including afterschool, health, and mentoring, family support, and food and nutrition programs— to meet student needs.

E. Representatives involved (2(e))

The following relevant external education organizations, representing LSS personnel, local school boards, local superintendents, Institutions of Higher Education, content specialists, parents, families, the Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC), and advocates supported the development of Phase I of Maryland's SSIP.

- Educational Advocacy Coalition (EAC)
- Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education
- Local Directors of Special Education
- Local Preschool Coordinators
- Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE)
- Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE)
- Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP)
- Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)
- Maryland Association of Teacher Educator s (MATE)
- Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE)
- Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health
- Maryland Council of Staff Developers (MCSD)
- Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM)
- Maryland Department of Disabilities
- Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC)
- Maryland Family Network/Friends of the Family
- Maryland Middle School Association (MMSA)
- Maryland State Education Association (MSEA)

- Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA)
- Parents' Place of Maryland
- Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM)
- Read y At Five Partnership
- Schoolwide Integration for Transformation (SWIFT) Center
- Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)
- State of Maryland International Reading Association Council (SoMIRAC)
- University of Maryland – Department of Education Policy Studies

The following relevant internal MSDE stakeholders, included representatives from the MSDE Divisions that support the components of State infrastructure that influence and leverage change in State and LSSs include:

- **Office of the State Superintendent,**
  - Race to the Top Coordinator & Teacher/Principal Evaluation (RTTT)
- **Office of the Chief Operating Officer,**
  - Division of Business Services
  - Division of Rehabilitation Services
- **Office of School Effectiveness**
  - Division of Academic Policy and Innovation (ESEA Waiver)
  - Division of Educator Effectiveness
  - Division of Student, Family, and School Support (Title I)
- **Office of Teaching and Learning**
  - Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability (Breakthrough Center)
  - Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (SPDG, SWIFT,Bridges Systems Change Initiative,Strategic Plan)
  - Division of College and Career Readiness

With the selection of the SIMR, the relevant external and internal stakeholders were identified. These stakeholders have direct State or local involvement with LSSs, State initiatives aligned with the SIMR, families, professionals, and advocates. The following relevant Internal and external stakeholders are committed to supporting the implementation of Phase II of the SSIP:

- Local Directors of Special Education
- Educational Advocacy Coalition (EAC)
- Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education
- Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE)
- Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE)
- Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP)

- Maryland Association of Teacher Educator s (MATE)
- Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE)
- Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health
- Maryland Council of Staff Developers (MCSD)
- Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM)
- Maryland Department of Disabilities
- Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC)
- Maryland Family Network/Friends of the Family
- Maryland State Education Association (MSEA)
- Parents' Place of Maryland
- Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM)
- Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)
- **Office of the State Superintendent**
  - Race to the Top Coordinator & Teacher/Principal Evaluation (RTTT)
- **Office of School Effectiveness**
  - Division of Academic Policy and Innovation (ESEA Waiver)
  - Division of Student, Family, and School Support (Title I)
- **Office of Teaching and Learning**
  - Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability (Breakthrough Center)
  - Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (SPDG, SWIFT, Bridges Systems Change Initiative, Strategic Plan)

The role of the external and internal stakeholders will be to work with the DSE/EIS to develop Phase II of the SSIP to address: 1) State and local infrastructure development; 2) support for the LSSs to implement Evidence Based Practices; and 3) Design an Evaluation Plan.

F. Stakeholder Involvement (2(f))

The MSDE engaged both external and internal stakeholders in discussions and feedback related to State and local capacity. Stakeholders participated in a total of five (5) facilitated meetings using the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) process for analysis. They were also provided information and the opportunity to examine alignment and coordination of the MSDE Offices/Divisions. The MSDE and stakeholders also reviewed the results of the adapted State Capacity Assessment (SCA) conducted in late spring 2014.

All stakeholders were invited to attend each meeting and then given the opportunity to provide feedback to the infrastructure analysis after meeting notes were distributed. Some stakeholders were unable to regularly attend stakeholder workgroup meetings due to preexisting commitments, but provided significant input outside of meetings. The Assistant State Superintendent of the DSE/EIS and the MSDE Executive Team, for example, was heavily involved in each step of the SSIP process through internal planning meetings and document reviews.

Internal Stakeholders

Stakeholder	11/10/14	12/10/14	1/12/15	2/5/15
Chief of Staff	X	X	X	X

Special Assistant to the State Superintendent (STEM)	X	X	X	X
Executive Director, Governmental Relations	X	X	X	X
Director, Departmental Coordination & National Legislative Liaison	X	X	X	X
Race to the Top Coordinator & Teacher/Principal Evaluations	X	X	X	X
Chief Operating Officer	X	X	X	X
Division of Business Services	X	X	X	X
Office of Human Resources	X	X	X	X
Office of Information Technology	X	X	X	X
Division of Rehabilitation Services	X	X	X	X
Office of School Effectiveness	X	X	X	X
Division of Academic Policy and Innovation	X	X	X	X
Division of Educator Effectiveness	X	X	X	X
Division of Student, Family, and School Support	X	X	X	X
Director, Program Improvement and Family Support Branch (Title I) Division of Student, Family, and School Support	X	X	X	X
Office of Teaching and Learning	X	X	X	X
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Division of Early Childhood Development	X	X	X	X
Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability	X	X	X	X
Division of Career and College Readiness	X	X	X	X
Division of Library Development and Services	X	X	X	X
Branch Chief, Policy & Accountability, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X

Branch Chief, Programmatic Support & Technical Assistance Branch, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Research Consultant, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X	X	X
Consultant	X	X	X	X

External Stakeholder Input

The external stakeholders represented families, disability organizations, advocacy organizations, general and special education instructional personnel, LSS leadership, Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), the Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC), local Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committees (SECACs), and State organizations representing families and teachers that collaborate on various IDEA services and issues. Areas of expertise among these stakeholders included district and school administration, parent partnerships, delivery of multi-tiered instruction and interventions, data analysis, policy planning, early intervention, early childhood services, behavior interventions, mathematics instruction, and inclusive practices for students who need the most comprehensive supports.

External Stakeholders

Stakeholders	11/10/14	12/10/14	1/15//15
Parents	X	X	X
Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)	X	X	X
Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committees (SECAC)	X	X	X
Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD)	X	X	X
Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC)	X	X	X
Educational Advocacy Coalition (EAC)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)	X	X	X
Maryland Council of Staff Developers (MCSD)	X	X	X
Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM)	X	X	X
Maryland Middle School Association (MMSA)	X	X	X
Maryland State Education Association (MSEA)	X	X	X
State of Maryland International Reading Association Council (SoMIRAC)	X	X	X

Ready At Five Partnership	X	X	X
Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA)	X	X	X
Maryland Association of Teacher Educator s (MATE)	X	X	X
Maryland Family Network/Friends of the Family	X	X	X
University of Maryland – Department of Education Policy Studies	X	X	X
Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE)	X	X	X
Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE)	X	X	X
Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health	X	X	X
Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD)	X	X	X
Maryland Department of Human Resources	X	X	X
Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM)	X	X	X
Local Directors of Special Education	X	X	X
Local Preschool Coordinators	X	X	X
Schoolwide integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Center	X	X	X

Stakeholder meeting #5 (11/10/2014) - Stakeholders were provided an overview of the Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP's) purpose for having states conduct the infrastructure analysis: to have states look at how their agency is working as a whole, not just in the area of special education, in order to see how initiatives are or can be aligned, how activities such as professional development are coordinated, and where coordination and collaboration can be improved. Stakeholders received information about the MSDE infrastructure:

ü Organizational structure of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE);

ü Special Education Strategic Plan, *Moving Maryland Forward*;

ü Two Race to the Top grants;

ü ESEA Flexibility Waiver;

ü Division's State Professional Development Grant (SPDG);

ü Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT);

ü Bridges for System Change Initiative; and

ü Resources for Professional Learning and Development (PLD), and technical assistance.

Following this review, stakeholders worked in groups on infrastructure analysis using the SWOT analysis process. The areas for analysis included ***Governance, Data, Quality Standards, Personnel Development/Technical Assistance, and Accountability/Monitoring.***

Each small group conducted two analyses and then worked as a whole group to discuss and modify each analysis. It was noted that the state elections may affect state leadership and there have been personnel changes at the MSDE. Emphasis was also put on the need for coaching to be an integral part of professional learning and development.

As a result of this initial SWOT analysis, stakeholders made the following observations:

Infrastructure Components	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Governance	· Vision and mission of DSE/EIS	· Too many initiatives, not aligned · No systematic plan statewide that crosses divisions	Only 24 LSSs – easier to engage in dialogue	· Lack of alignment and coordination
Data	· Data available online – MD Report Card, Complaints/due process, distributed at meetings · LADSS · Preschool Readiness Data	· Available online, yet hard to find · Access · Inconsistent databases across LSSs · Accuracy of the data · Indicator 8 – some data not disaggregated enough; response rates	· Generate a variety of data reports from SLDS (LADSS) · Teach parents how to look at data · Local systems can drill down	· Changing assessments (Readiness, Statewide) lose the ability to look at data over time
Quality Standards	· *Moving Maryland Forward* (State strategic plan) · Meetings including general and special ed · Inclusion of advocates and SECAC members in events, such as leadership conference where information is disseminated	· Uneven dissemination of info to people/public in local school systems o Info stays at the top o Staff turnover State beginning to focus on quality as part of accountability. There is a plan in place – some intense work has begun with a few LSSs	· Standards are unifying the work of the State and driving everything the Division of Special Ed/EIS is doing · State using data to prioritize TA and decision-making	· Shift in state leadership (elections) · Budget concerns · Personnel changes at state (MSDE)
Personnel Development/ Technical Assistance	· State provides flexible dollars for LEAs to develop and implement specific PL · State monitors [that] dollars are used	· Lack of time, dollars, knowledge to provide PLD, ongoing **coaching** – may impact LSSs · Not	· Provide onsite TA to LEAs · Provide resources · Blending resources is an opportunity	· Budget concerns · State leadership changes (election) · Personnel changes (MSDE)

Infrastructure Components	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	according to evidence based practices and standards	everybody who needs PLD gets it (e.g., gen ed and support personnel)		
Accountability/ Monitoring	· MMSR · MDIDEA report · MSA · MD Report Card · SESAC, SICC, SSIP Stakeholders	· Data reported annually but not necessarily analyzed systematically · Separate accountability plans, doesn't seem cohesive	· Develop short-term accountability goals · Actually analyze data on a regular basis and develop action plans · State lead stakeholder meetings · Compare data with other states · Leverage various initiatives to support students with disabilities.	· Lack of cohesion · Accountability silos · Teacher prep/PD – special and general ed · Will for change.

Stakeholder meeting #6 (12/10/2014) – By this time it was agreed that math performance would be targeted for grades 3 – 5. Data related to the gap in math performance over time in these grades were reviewed. It was also agreed to target districts participating in the SPDG and SWIFT Center. Both efforts have prioritized math performance and were at initial stages of exploration (SWIFT) and installation (SPDG). Additionally, an LSS receiving a significant state discretionary grant was included. External stakeholders met to take a deeper look at the MSDE infrastructure. Specifically, they examined the components of the MSDE infrastructure in relationship to the targeted SIMR and in conjunction with the identification of root causes of poor performance. This meeting also provided time for stakeholders to have initial discussions about strategies to address improvement of the SIMR.

- ***Infrastructure review:*** Preliminary discussion of root causes (barriers) included low expectations of students with disabilities, teacher preparation in math, lack of parental knowledge of "today's math," paraprofessionals acting as the child's teacher in the classroom, learned helplessness in students, and lack of meaningful access to curriculum. Leverage points are the State's move toward using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, co-teaching emphasis across the State, cooperative learning in elementary schools, and increased use of technology in the classroom. Potential evidence based strategies in professional learning, instruction, organizational structure of schools, and family/community engagement were identified. It is notable that ***UDL, tiered instruction, and culturally competent instruction*** were identified in multiple areas.

Internal Stakeholder Input

Stakeholder Meeting #7 (1/12/2015) The Assistant State Superintendent, DSE/EIS provided an overview of the SSIP process to the State Superintendent's Executive Leadership Team. She enlisted their engagement and support in the SSIP process of infrastructure analysis to address the SIMR and to develop coordinated and collaborative strategies for improvement of results for children and youth with disabilities in Maryland. Specifically, the Assistant State Superintendent, DSE/EIS asked for a representative from each of the Leadership Team areas to meet as an internal stakeholder group and that the Executive Leadership Team would continue to engage in dialogue throughout the phases of the SSIP.

See Stakeholder Meeting #8 in Section 3E.

Stakeholder Meeting #9 (2/5/2015) - For the internal stakeholder meeting it was decided to combine the Part C and Part B SWOT analyses. This was decided for several reasons and purposes. An important reason was that the DSE/EIS is responsible for both Part C and Part B programs. As such, the Division's strategic plan spans the birth through 21 early intervention and special education services. It was decided that taking this unified approach with representatives of the Executive Leadership Team provided a comprehensive approach to address both infrastructure analysis and to begin to consider Phase II, infrastructure development. Additionally, by approaching the infrastructure analysis in this unified manner, it was expected to see the extent to which there were cross program strengths and opportunities for improvement.

The Internal MSDE stakeholders representing the State Superintendent's Executive Team representatives received a brief presentation on the IDEA State Systemic Improvement Plan process. They reviewed and discussed a combined SWOT analysis by external stakeholders for Part C (Early Intervention Services, Birth - 4) and for Part B (Special Education, 3 -21). Additionally, they engaged in analysis and discussion of the infrastructure analyses. They paid particular attention to the ***Governance*** and ***Fiscal*** strengths, opportunities, threats, and weaknesses. Below is a chart of the internal MSDE SWOT Analysis:

Infrastructure Components	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Governance	· Vision and mission of DSE/EIS · Extended IFSP · Online IFSP for all families · Early Childhood Intervention & Education (ECIE) w/DECD in same department (collaboration) · Matrix leadership w/EI in all · Braided funding · Making access happen · Birth mandate · Eligibility criteria · Only 24 LSSs – easier to engage in dialogue (autonomy)	· Variability among jurisdictions · Too many initiatives · Collaboration between ECIE & DECD o improving · Lack of needed staff support · Change from compliance to outcome · Conceptual strength current status is opportunity	· Only 24 LSSs – easier to engage in dialogue · SICC/ SESAC · Evolving collaboration between ECIE and DECD · Transition to results based outcomes (Shift in balance in compliance to outcome) · Maryland Learning Links · Grants · Limited systematic plan statewide that crosses divisions · ECAC	· Non-transparency of SSIP process · Change in State Leadership in Annapolis · Lack of alignment and coordination · Competing interests · Budget cuts
Fiscal	· Federal and state competitive grant opportunities	· Policies and procedures are daunting even as welcomed	· Budget cuts requiring MSDE to look at other sources of funds/creative	· State government turnover – changes in priorities

Infrastructure Components	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	· Division offers local priority – local use of funds · Fiscal workgroup that drives through data where money will be spent (stakeholder input) · Use federal money to share staff throughout MSDE · Share initiatives · Purchasing policies and procedures – guidelines and training · Title 1 103A – funds could be available to support this area · Having only 24 LSSs allows for leveraging of partnerships · Strong monitoring and accountability protocols for fiscal · Share funds with Division of Early Childhood · Leverage of federal funds	· ESEA flex plan currently does not support Title 1 103A funds · Bureaucracy of how many signatures, timelines – slowness of the process for checks and balances · Fiscal process is time consuming	ways and partnerships · Beneficial to have cross divisional plans to learn how to leverage funds better; cost sharing – integrate funding · More opportunities for braiding funding · Shared staff for overlapping divisions to work on similar projects/initiatives · Cross divisional plans · Creating a fiscal workbook for consistency, clarity, maximize completion time, comprehensive workbook · Prioritizing funding activities	
Data	· Data available online – MD Report Card, Complaints/due process data, distributed at meetings	· Available online, yet hard to find · Access · Inconsistent	· Generate a variety of data reports from SLDS (LADSS) · Teach parents how to look at	· Changing assessments (Readiness, Statewide) lose the ability to look

Infrastructure Components	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	· LADSS · Preschool Readiness Data	databases across LSSs · Accuracy of the data · Indicator 8 – some data not disaggregated enough; response rates	data · Local systems can drill down	at data over time
Quality Standards	· *Moving Maryland Forward* (State strategic plan) · Meetings including general and special ed · Inclusion of advocates and SECAC members in events, such as leadership conference where information is disseminated	· Uneven dissemination of info to people/public in local school systems o Info stays at the top o Staff turnover State beginning to focus on quality as part of accountability. There is a plan in place – some intense work has begun with a few LSSs	· Standards are unifying the work of the State and driving everything the Division of Special Ed/EIS is doing · State using data to prioritize TA and decision-making	· Shift in state leadership (elections) · Budget concerns · Personnel changes at state (MSDE)
Personnel Development/ **Technical Assistance**	· State provides flexible dollars for LEAs to develop and implement specific PL · State monitors [that] dollars are used according to evidence based practices and standards	· Lack of time, dollars, knowledge to provide PLD, ongoing coaching – may impact LSSs · Not everybody who needs PLD gets it (e.g., gen ed and support personnel)	· Provide onsite TA to LEAs · Provide resources · Blending resources is an opportunity	· Budget concerns · State leadership changes (election) · Personnel changes (MSDE)
Accountability/ **Monitoring**	· Online data system o MD IDEA Report o MD Report Card · MMSR · MSA · State oversight of data system	· Just starting to focus on outcome data so lack of longitudinal data · Determining outcomes related to personnel · Variability in/across jurisdictions	· Refine data for all the variables · Develop short-term accountability goals · Online IFSP · Dev. screening · Analyze data on a regular basis and develop	· Lack of cohesion · Dev. screening · Lack of state and local resources to fully implement the SSIP process · Accountability silos · Teacher prep/ PD-separate

Infrastructure Components	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	· Linking funds for program improvement · Posting of data/outcomes lends to accountability · Looking at outcomes regularly · SESAC, SICC, SSIP Stakeholders	o Different personnel o Different focuses · Data reported annually but not necessarily analyzed systematically · Separate accountability plans, doesn't seem cohesive	action plans · Stakeholder input and receptiveness to partnerships within MITP · State-lead stakeholder meetings · Compare data with other states · Extended option offers focus on children who might have fallen through "cracks" · Leverage various initiatives to support students with disabilities	special and general ed · Will for change

There are a number of infrastructure strengths:

· A strategic plan that lays out the vision and mission for the DSE/EIS within the broader mission of the MSDE provides a strong governance component;

· Databases that capture most of the individual student information and make it possible to have an online IEP for managing individual student data, LSS data, and aggregating for state data reports. Data reporting that provides both the MSDE and the public with multiple ways of examining and comparing data for students with disabilities, as well as for all students.

· Innovative and creative methods have been used to leverage fiscal resources as well as ensure accountable management and reporting of the use of funds with standardized protocols for monitoring and accountability;

· Quality standards are in place to guide both teacher preparation programs and the MSDE in professional development activities. There are also quality standards for how professional development is delivered to align with adult learning principles;

· Professional Learning and Development and Technical Assistance are guided by the Tiered Approach, Differentiated Framework, as well as the professional learning and development database that supports identifying needs and how they were addressed; and

· DSE/EIS has developed a strong accountability and monitoring component through the Monitoring for Continuous Improvement and Results (MCIR) and the Differentiated Framework.

There are also areas in which the MSDE and the DSE/EIS need improvement. These include further developing and strengthening the cross-divisional communications' channels to continue to support coordination and collaboration. Similarly, there is a need to continue to explore ways that fiscal and human resources can be leveraged and shared to support efficiency and effectiveness of operations that lead to student improvement. There is a wealth of data; yet, a need exists to develop and expand the skills of the MSDE, LSSs, schools, and classroom personnel to use the available data. There is also a need to expand the public's knowledge of the available data and how to access reports of interest. Specifically related to the SIMR area of math, it is recognized that until the last few years much emphasis had been placed on literacy without as much concerted focus on math. This provides an area that can be developed and expanded. The MSDE and the DSE/EIS intend to build on the strengths in order to address the infrastructure improvement areas.

State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities

A statement of the result(s) the State intends to achieve through the implementation of the SSIP. The State-identified result(s) must be aligned to an SPP/APR indicator or a component of an SPP/APR indicator. The State-identified result(s) must be clearly based on the Data and State Infrastructure Analyses and must be a child-level outcome in contrast to a process outcome. The State may select a single result (e.g., increasing the graduation rate for children with disabilities) or a cluster of related results (e.g., increasing the graduation rate and decreasing the dropout rate for children with disabilities).

Statement

A. SIMR Statement (3(a))

The Maryland Part B State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR) is ***to increase the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in six (6) LSSs***. The MSDE, DSE/EIS identified this child outcome as a result of the iterative data and infrastructure analyses with internal and external stakeholders that identified the strengths of the MSDE infrastructure and State initiatives for coordination within and across Divisions.

Description

B. Data and Infrastructure Analyses Substantiating the SIMR (3(b))

The average math achievement gaps for children with disabilities in grades 3 – 5, as compared to their nondisabled peers are 38.2, 39.4, and 44.8 percentage points, respectively (see also Data section 1, Data Results). The average math achievement gap for children with disabilities in grades 6 – 8 compared to their nondisabled peers is 41.1 percentage points. Although the achievement gap is larger in grades 6-8, research shows that the effects of low-quality instruction in math (as well as other subject areas) are cumulative (Pianta et al., 2007). Among children with math under-achievement in the primary grades, approximately two thirds continue to experience difficulties not only through primary school (Mazzocco & Myers, 2003) but also into middle school (Chong & Siegel, 2008; Mazzocco & Devlin, 2008).

There was much discussion in the Stakeholder meetings about whether the SIMR should address closing the gap, as is the case in several federal initiatives, or increasing the percent of students with disabilities who score proficient and above on the statewide assessment of mathematics. It was noted that while the gap between the performance of students with disabilities and all students has not appreciably decreased over the last five or six years, the percent of students with disabilities scoring proficient and above in mathematics on the statewide assessment has generally increased in a parallel trajectory as that of all students. It was also noted that in aligning with indicator 3C, proficiency rate is the key measurement. From these discussions and observations, it was determined that the SIMR would address *increasing the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities.*

Mathematical underachievement ultimately has lifelong consequences. Success in mathematics promotes success in occupations and gains in socioeconomic status (Parsons & Brynner, 1997; Rivera-Batiz, 1992). Beyond career success, low math achievement affects financial decision making and healthcare risk assessment (Hibbard, Peters, Dixon, & Tusler, 2007), as well as social activities (McCloskey, 2007).

The MSDE has also chosen to focus on increasing math proficiency in grades 3 – 5 to leverage alignment with existing initiatives. As was noted above, the MSDE examined statewide initiatives. One of those is the SPDG with a math emphasis on similar grades in three LSSs. Another initiative with a focus on integrity of implementation is the SWIFT Center work which is being initiated in four LSSs. In addition to these two initiatives the one LSS that received a significant Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services competitive grant from State IDEA set-aside funds to engage in implementation science to support schools and classrooms to impact student outcomes and build local capacity to sustain evidence–based practices was considered. The geographic distribution of the LSSs was examined, as well as the ethnic/racial diversity. One additional LSS was included in this preliminary round for consideration.

From this initial pool of 9 LSSs (9/24 = 38%), several factors were analyzed and examined. Data specific to these nine (9) LSSs and the state were examined to determine the percent of students scoring proficient and advanced at each grade for the past three years. Discussions focused on the current capacity of the MSDE to support work in the LSSs. Factors associated with the LSSs were also considered – have there been leadership changes, does the LSS have sufficient resources – personnel and financial – to enhance or expand current initiative work. In the final analysis it was determined that six (6) LSSs would be included in the SSIP. This represents 25% (6/24) of Maryland's LSSs and over 20% of the total number of students with disabilities. These LSSs also provide geographic, racial, and ethnic diversity. All six (6) have agreed to participate in the SSIP

Phase II planning process and Phase III implementation and evaluation.

C. SIMR as Child-Family-Level Outcome (3(c))

The SIMR is aligned with the IDEA Part B SPP Indicator 3C relative to the achievement of children with disabilities in mathematics. Although the SIMR is aligned, it does not duplicate Indicator 3C. The SIMR is specific to mathematics, while Indicator 3C includes reading and mathematics. The SIMR addresses grades 3, 4, and 5, while Indicator 3C addresses all grades tested – grades 3-8 and high school. The SIMR is applicable to only six LSSs, while Indicator 3C applies to all students with disabilities taking the statewide assessment. The SIMR will support statewide improvement on Indicator 3C as improvement strategies are implemented.

D. Stakeholder Involvement in Selecting the SIMR (3(d))

Over a series of meetings as described in Data Analysis, Sections 1(F), Infrastructure Analysis, Section 2(F),and SIMR, Section 3(D), internal and external stakeholders examined and asked questions of data and of the State infrastructure capacity to identify the SIMR. As noted earlier, an iterative approach was used with stakeholder meetings, even as in this document's elements and activities are described in a linear manner. This approach allowed stakeholders to examine data as well as learn about State-level initiatives and priorities, such as those in the Special Education Strategic Plan, in the same meeting to build shared knowledge. In subsequent meetings new elements would be added while reviewing data and information from previous meetings. For example, in the November meeting a description based on the previous data analyses was given in the area of SIMR focus (math) before conducting the infrastructure SWOT analysis. In order to leverage the systemic work being conducted in the LSSs participating in the SPDG and SWIFT Center partnership – both of which are also prioritizing math performance – stakeholders agreed that LSSs, participating in the SPDG and SWIFT Center partnership, and located across all 6 regions of the state, should be targeted.

Internal Stakeholders

Stakeholder	1/12/15	1/15/15
Chief of Staff	X	X
Special Assistant to the State Superintendent (STEM)	X	X
Executive Director, Governmental Relations	X	X
Director, Departmental Coordination & National Legislative Liaison	X	X
Race to the Top Coordinator & Teacher/Principal Evaluations	X	X
Chief Operating Officer	X	X
Division of Business Services	X	X
Office of Human Resources	X	X
Office of Information Technology	X	X
Division of Rehabilitation Services	X	X
Office of School Effectiveness	X	X
Division of Academic Policy and Innovation	X	X
Division of Educator Effectiveness	X	X
Division of Student, Family, and School Support	X	X

Director, Program Improvement and Family Support Branch (Title I)	X	X
Office of Teaching and Learning	X	X
Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services	X	X
Division of Early Childhood Development	X	X
Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability	X	X
Division of Career and College Readiness	X	X
Division of Library Development and Services	X	X
Branch Chief, Policy & Accountability, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X
Educational Program Specialist, Math, Programmatic Support & Technical Assistance Branch, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X
Educational Program Specialist, SPDG, Programmatic Support & Technical Assistance Branch, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X
Research Consultant, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X
Consultant	X	X

External Stakeholders

Stakeholders	1/15//15
Parents	X
Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)	X
Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committees (SECAC)	X
Parents Place of Maryland (PPMD)	X
Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC)	X
Educational Advocacy Coalition (EAC)	X

Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE)	X
Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE)	X
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP)	X
Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)	X
Maryland Council of Staff Developers (MCSD)	X
Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM)	X
Maryland Middle School Association (MMSA)	X
Maryland State Education Association (MSEA)	X
State of Maryland International Reading Association Council (SoMIRAC)	X
Read y At Five Partnership	X
Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA)	X
Maryland Association of Teacher Educator s (MATE)	X
Maryland Family Network/Friends of the Family	X
University of Maryland – Department of Education Policy Studies	X
Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE)	X
Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE)	X
Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health	X
Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD)	X
Maryland Department of Human Resources	X
Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM)	X
Local Directors of Special Education	X
Local Preschool Coordinators	X
Schoolwide integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Center	X

Stakeholder Meeting #7 (1/12/2015) The Assistant State Superintendent, DSE/EIS provided an overview of the SSIP process to the State Superintendent's Executive Leadership Team. She enlisted their engagement and support in the SSIP process of infrastructure analysis to address the SIMR and to develop coordinated and collaborative strategies for improvement of results for children and youth with disabilities in Maryland. Specifically, the Assistant State Superintendent, DSE/EIS asked for a representative from each of the Leadership Team areas to meet as an internal stakeholder group and that the Executive Leadership Team would continue to engage in dialogue throughout the phases of the SSIP.

Stakeholder Meeting #8 (1/15/2015) – The stakeholders met in January to review the data and infrastructure analysis, finalize discussion of the SIMR, identify and review root causes, establish reasonable targets, generate broad areas of improvement based upon the previous meeting activity of "what's working" and "what is not working" and to review and react to a draft Theory of Action. Please see also Stakeholder Meetings #6, #7, and #9 in Infrastructure Analysis, Section 2(F).

E. Baseline Data and Targets (3(e))

The MSDE will support efforts to increase the number of children with disabilities scoring Proficient or above and target an average increase of three percentage points from the baseline average score percentage after the first two years of implementation. The chart below illustrates this rate of improvement to be ambitious and achievable. This target will raise the average percentage of children with disabilities scoring Proficient or above on Maryland's Statewide assessment of mathematics by nine (9) percentage points in five years. Baseline data for FFY 2013 (2013-2014 school year) is student performance as measured using scores on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). Please note that beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, students will take the applicable Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment, based on Maryland's College and Career-Ready Standards aligned with the Common Core. This new assessment will require future standard setting and establishment of targets and at least two years of assessment data before the MSDE is able to predict trends. The baseline and targets established in the SSIP will require future revision.

FFY	Average Percentage of Students with Disabilities At or Above Proficient at Grades 3, 4, and 5 in the Six (6) Selected LSSs
2013 (Baseline)	35%
2014	35%
2015	35%
2016	38%
2017	41%
2018	44%

Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies

An explanation of how the improvement strategies were selected, and why they are sound, logical and aligned, and will lead to a measurable improvement in the State-identified result(s). The improvement strategies should include the strategies, identified through the Data and State Infrastructure Analyses, that are needed to improve the State infrastructure and to support LEA implementation of evidence-based practices to improve the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities. The State must describe how implementation of the improvement strategies will address identified root causes for low performance and ultimately build LEA capacity to achieve the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

4. Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies

A. How Improvement Strategies were Selected (4(a))

Based on the review of data and State infrastructure analyses internal and external stakeholders identified existing evidence-based practices used within other aligned State initiatives. Please refer to the data identified in Data Analysis, Section 1(B), State infrastructure in Section 2(B-D), and State Identified Measurable Result, Section 3(B). From this broad based examination, improvement strategy areas emerged, were discussed, and refined.

Maryland has chosen 5 improvement strategies based on the data analysis that will build the State capacity to support capacity building and improvement in LSSs. These strategies are:

1. Data-informed decision making for continuous improvement;

2. Family engagement and partnership to promote family involvement and student success;

3. High quality general education math instruction based on principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to increase student engagement and learning;

4. Multi-tiered system of supports with evidence-based math instruction and interventions to provide tailored instruction for math deficits; and

5. Equitable access to the general education curriculum and classroom through culturally responsive interactions and specialized instruction for students with disabilities within the regular classroom.

MSDE will support the implementation of these improvement strategies by:

- Increasing collaboration across the MSDE Divisions to provide professional learning and TA in math instruction and culturally responsive practices; and

- Leveraging the resources of the SWIFT, the SPDG, and the competitive State IDEA set-aside Bridges for Systems Change Initiative grant to build upon the LSSs and schools actively engaged in a State TA relationship.

The frameworks of implementation science will be used to identify specific practices within those strategies to implement. DSE/EIS will leverage the SPDG, SWIFT, and other work currently being implemented in the six LSSs to engage in a practice-policy feedback loop. These improvement strategies were selected because they provide a coherent approach and are related to the State's specific needs: 1) narrowing gaps in academic achievement, 2) implementing the College and Career Ready Standards, 3) improving math learning for all students, 4) increasing the use of data-informed decision making, 5) helping educators choose appropriate evidence-based practices, 6) scaling up use of evidence-based practices, 7) providing effective professional development, and 8) increasing family involvement. In addition, they provide the flexibility needed to customize State support to local contexts by increasing the LSSs organizational capacity to sustain evidence-based practices that are yielding improvements in student achievement and to scale up those practices with fidelity.

B. How Improvement Strategies are Sound, Logical, and Aligned (4(b))

Research indicates that many interventions in education fail due to inadequate implementation (Fixsen, D. L., & Blase, K. A., 2009; Fixsen, D. L., Blase, K. A., Duda, M. A., Naoom, S. F., & Van Dyke, M., 2010; Fixsen, D., Blasé, K., Horner, R., Sugai, G., Sims, B., & Duda, M., 2012). What is unique about the DSE/EIS improvement strategies is that they are focused on putting into place structural components that support local capacity building, not just implementing evidence-based math practices. Maryland has chosen improvement strategies that are sound, logical, and aligned from a research perspective, as well as from the data and infrastructure analyses, including identifying LSSs that combine the installation of evidence-based practices, and will result in improvement in the State's SIMR.

1. Data-informed Decision Making for Continuous Improvement

Over the past decade, educators in Maryland and elsewhere have become interested in and committed to using data-informed decision making (also often referred to as data-based or data-driven decision making). Its use at the central office, school, and classroom levels is encouraged. Teachers, principals, and administrators systematically collect and analyze various types of data, including input, process, outcome and satisfaction data, to guide a range of decisions to help improve the success of students and schools. Achievement test data, in particular, play a prominent role among practitioners—in large part due to increased emphasis on data as a result of the requirements of NCLB (Massell, 2001).

However, the existence of data does not guarantee its use. Raw data must be organized and combined with an understanding of the situation to yield ***information***. Information becomes ***actionable knowledge*** when data users synthesize the information, apply judgment to prioritize it, and weigh the relative merits of possible solutions. At this point, actionable knowledge can inform different ***types of decisions*** that might include: setting goals and assessing progress, addressing individual or group needs (such as targeting support to low-performing students or schools), evaluating the effectiveness of practices, assessing whether the needs of students or others are being met, reallocating resources, or improving processes to improve outcomes. To promote improvement decisions based on data and to support strategy alignment, the MSDE promotes two continuous improvement cycles.

With a strong technical assistance connection from the MSDE to participating LSSs and the schools that will be the focus

of the SSIP, practices will inform local and state policy which in turn will enable the implementation of high quality evidence-based practices. "The ***practice-policy feedback loop*** provides organizational leaders and policy makers with information (data) about implementation barriers and successes so that a more aligned system can be developed. Feedback from the practice level engages and informs organization leaders so that they can ensure that policy, procedures, resources, etc. enable innovative practices to occur in classrooms, schools, and districts as intended." (AI Hub: Topic 3: Practice-Policy Feedback Loops)

TAP-IT Process

The MSDE promotes continuous improvement through the TAP-IT process (Team, Analyze, Plan, Implement, and Track). It begins with the formation of an implementation **TEAM** that collects all current, relevant data sources. They then **ANALYZE** the data**,** including formative, summative, longitudinal summary reports, and early warning alert systems that may be in place. The team analyzes the data using an agreed upon protocol to develop a **PLAN** to narrow the gap between children with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. The team shares current research and research based practices and consider the allocation of resources to determine their effectiveness in narrowing the gap. The plan is then **IMPLEMENTED** and progress is monitored. Team members continuously **TRACK** progress through regular meetings. Success is shared, plans are revised, and the work is scaled up as appropriate. The MSDE has actively promoted this collaborative data-based decision making model over the last two year and regularly provides technical assistance and guidance to the LSSs regarding systemic and strategic data use. This will be highlighted in the work of the participating SSIP LSSs.

2. Family engagement and partnership to promote family involvement and student success

Given the power of family involvement to influence learning, it is not surprising that the IDEA strongly supports a parents' right to be involved in the special education their child receives. As the IDEA states: "Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by… strengthening the role and responsibility of parents and ensuring that families…have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home." Maryland's strategic plan promotes engaging families and school staff in active regular two-way, meaningful communication as equal partners in decisions.

Engaging families of students who will be in schools participating in the SSIP work will range from providing family-friendly information (on math problem-solving activities, on their child's performance and progress) and providing training opportunities to understand educational decision-making to soliciting the active input from families in the decisions made by the school and school system. This has the dual purpose of connecting what is being learned to daily life and providing meaningful ways for the student and her/his family to engage in the life of the school. The data and infrastructure analyses revealed a concern that parents do not know "today's math." By engaging families in the improvement process, there is no intent to teach parents "today's math" but rather to help families use math and be engaged in their child's education.

An important component of the Maryland SPDG is family engagement through the partnership with The Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD), the State's Parent Training and Information (PTI) in OSEP's Parent Technical Assistance Center Network. This partnership provides two way communication and commitment. It is also a complementary strategy with high quality math instruction by providing parents/families with ways to interact with their children around math. Currently, PPMD has been developing strategies to engage children with their families around "what are you learning," rather than around "how to solve" problems.

3. High quality general education math instruction based on principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to increase student engagement and learning

UDL is based on educational research that finds students are highly variable in their response to instruction. Accordingly, to meet the challenge of high standards, the UDL approach shuns "one size fits all" curricula and instruction in favor of flexible designs with customizable options to meet individual needs. UDL has three major principles that include providing multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of engagement. Each of these principles intends to address the diversity of student learning styles and means of demonstrating learning. The use of UDL along with high quality math instruction and interventions increases opportunities for students with disabilities to both engage in instruction and effectively demonstrate what is learned.

The MSDE will build upon the UDL network in Maryland and experts within the State who are working closely with the SWIFT Center to build teacher and school capacity to employ UDL principles. It will also leverage the knowledge base resulting from the SPDG work to implement evidence-based math instruction. The data-informed decision making strategy

will be incorporated to support the use of data for formative assessment of student progress. Through the SPDG and SWIFT center work, math has emerged as an important focus area. Leveraging the work of these initiatives, along with implementation of UDL – the lack of which was cited as a root cause – provides a powerful improvement strategy. The implementation of high quality math instruction and intervention using UDL will assist in addressing the root causes of "lack of problem solving skills and perseverance," "curriculum shift (MCCR)," and potentially the "inadequate identification of math learning problems."

4. Multi-tiered system of supports with evidence-based math instruction and interventions tailored instruction to math deficits

Implementing a MTSS in a school requires a significant change in practice, and a need for close collaboration with the school district administration. Particularly when it comes to math, screening and progress monitoring tools are limited; evidence-based interventions are scarce and may be expensive.

The MTSS models (Greenwood, Carta, Baggett, Buzhardt, Walker, & Terry, 2008; Greenwood, Kratchowill & Clements, 2008), such as Response to Intervention (RtI) (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2001) and School-Wide Positive Behaviors Support (SWPBS) (Sugai & Horner, 2009) are based on the premise that classroom instruction should be high quality, evidence-based, and universally designed for all students, considering their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, disabilities, and other learning needs. By using data on student performance and progress, the acquisition of targeted skills can be monitored and the need for more intensive instruction or specific interventions for students not "responding" to the universal instruction can be identified. A second tier of intervention focusing on those target skills or behaviors is provided to students who have not acquired the targeted skills. Through ongoing data monitoring, the need for a third tier of more individualized and intensive intervention can be identified and designed for specific students based on their unique needs. Evidence-based instructional strategies, progress monitoring, and fidelity of intervention characterize the implementation of all tiers.

Each intervention type (e.g., behavior, reading, math, etc.) needs criteria for identifying when students need more or less intensive interventions. It is important to note that as students move to more intensive levels (tiers) of support, they do not need to be removed from regular classes or school settings (Sailor, 2008/2009). Interventions can be embedded within the general education instruction and classroom activities, maintaining opportunities for the benefits of inclusion. Copeland and Cosbey (2008/2009) describe four key MTSS principles:

1. The tiers should be additive, not exclusionary: Tier 1 instruction should be supplemented by Tiers 2 and/or 3, and not replaced by them.

2. This model should be an instructional decision making model, not a placement model.

3. Decisions to change interventions, moving a student from one tier to the next, should be based on data.

4. Teachers should evaluate student performance based upon the documented delivery of strategies that have been demonstrated to be effective for their specific students.

The National Center on Intensive Intervention (http://www.intensiveintervention.org/) provides a variety of resources and current evidence-based tools and interventions for reading, math, and behavior. As can be seen, math resources are limited. The MSDE intends to leverage the work with the SWIFT Center to access current and evidence-based resources to support its ability to provide PD/L and TA for math instruction and intervention.

A MTSS model has evidence of effectiveness in enabling teachers to use screening and progress monitoring tools to identify specific areas in which students are proficient and where they need additional intervention to acquire important skills. The MSDE will work closely with and develop professional learning in MTSS/math that crosses the SPDG, the SWIFT, and the LSS awarded the State IDEA Set-Aside competitive Bridges for Systems Change Initiative grant, and target TA for the schools identified as part of the SSIP.

5. Equitable access to the general education curriculum and classroom through culturally responsive interactions and specialized instruction for students with disabilities within the regular classroom

Research shows a variety of positive short term and long term effects of educating students with disabilities in inclusive classes. In a two-year study of students with learning disabilities, Cole, Waldron, Majd, and Hasazi (2004) found that 41.7% made progress in math in general education classes compared to 34% in traditional special education settings, without the presence of nondisabled peers. When comparing progress with their typical peers, 43.3% of students with disabilities made comparable or greater progress in math in inclusive settings versus 35.9% in traditional settings. The National

Longitudinal Transition Study examined the outcomes of 11,000 students with a range of disabilities and found that more time spent in a general education classroom was positively correlated with a) fewer absences from school, b) fewer referrals for disruptive behavior, and c) better outcomes after high school in the areas of employment and independent living (Wagner, Newman, Cameto & Levine, 2006).

For students with severe disabilities, academic benefits include: high levels of active engagement (Hunt, Soto, Maier & Doering, 2003; Wallace, Anderson, Bartholomay & Hupp, 2002), improved academic performance (Brinker & Thorpe, 1984; Cole et al., 2004; Downing, Spencer & Cavallaro, 2004; Wolfe & Hall, 2003; Hawkins, 2011; Hunt & Staub et al., 1994; Katz & Mirenda, 2002; McDonnell, Mathot-Buckner, Thornson & Fister, 2001; Teigland, 2009; Westling & Fox, 2009), access to general curriculum (Carter, Cushing, Clark & Kennedy, 2005) and higher quality individualized education program goals (Hunt, Farron-Davis, Beckstead, Curtis & Goetz, 1994b).

There are also several tools to promote culturally responsive practices, ranging from policy assessments (Kozleski and Sion (2006) to special education culturally responsive practices assessment (Richards, Artilles, Lingner, and Brown (2005). The MSDE will promote exploration of current practices and development of specific improvement across schools through a professional learning community. Further, the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education, a partner with the MSDE in promoting high quality inclusive instruction and interventions, will provide assistance to participating LSSs in the delivery of specialized instruction within the general education setting.

C. Strategies that Address Root Causes and Build Capacity (4(c))

Root causes of low math proficiency rates for students with disabilities and identified during the data and infrastructure analyses work included: ***low expectations, student mobility, inconsistent instruction, failure to use high quality Tier 1 instruction based on UDL principles, lack of problem solving skills and perseverance, lack of meaningful curriculum access, curriculum shift to the MCCR, inadequate identification of math as a learner problem, and low kindergarten expectations***. In identifying improvement strategies to address the root causes and result in improvement of the SIMR, the MSDE personnel with stakeholders identified five broad areas by looking across data, infrastructure, and root causes.

Broad areas that were determined to need to be addressed were ***data-informed decision-making, access, mathematics instruction, attendance, and behavior/discipline.*** From this initial identification of areas, discussion moved to identifying actionable and measurable strategies. (See Section 4.B. above.) The MSDE personnel with stakeholder input identified five improvement strategies that are aligned with the DSE/EIS strategic plan, current initiatives, and are supported by the data and infrastructure analysis.

A questioning technique was used to delve more deeply into the root causes identified. For example, inconsistent instruction was identified as a root cause. Using probing questions, one reason identified for inconsistent instruction was the lack of adequate or useful formative assessment data. Again questioning why that is, one reason emerged as the lack of skill in collecting and using data at the school and classroom levels. To address this skill gap, the strategy of data-informed decision making was identified. (See other examples of how the strategies address the root causes identified in Section D below.)

To ensure a direct connection between the proposed actionable and measurable strategies and the five broad areas of need (*data-informed decision-making, access, mathematics instruction, attendance, and behavior/discipline)* stakeholders were asked to compare strategies to need factors using the *Hexagon Tool for Assessing Evidence-Based Practice Readiness of Fit*. Specifically, they were asked to use questions for five of the broad factors to assess whether the strategies addressed the Need – SIMR, fit the current initiatives and priorities, were supported by the infrastructure analysis of Resources and Support, and were Evidence-based promising practices. It was noted that the MSDE, DSE/EIS used two broad factors in making the final selection of the SSIP LSSs – Readiness for Replication and Capacity to Implement.

D. Strategies Based on Data and Infrastructure Analysis (4(d))

Data analysis and infrastructure analysis both support the need to continue to address equitable access. As was noted in the Data Section students with disabilities who are African American have a greater representation in the population of students with disabilities than in the general population. They also have the lowest proficiency rates in math in grades 4 and 5. Placement in segregated settings is higher for African American students with disabilities. The infrastructure analysis noted that the Maryland Strategic plan has an action imperative that directly addresses the “implementation of equitable services.” Additionally, “lack of meaningful access” emerged as a possible root cause for the low performance of students with disabilities in math, regardless of race/ethnicity. To some extent this strategy, along with others, will address the root causes of a “shift in curriculum” and “lack of problem solving skills.” By ensuring students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum and the general education classroom, Maryland will be ensuring students are receiving the instruction necessary to demonstrate aligned performance. The two strategies identified as a result of the infrastructure analysis are:

· Collaboration across the MSDE Divisions to provide professional learning and TA in math instruction and culturally responsive practices.

· Leverage the resources of the SWIFT, the SPDG, and the Bridges for Systems Change Initiative work to build upon the LSSs and schools actively engaged in a State TA relationship.

E. Stakeholder Involvement in Selecting Improvement Strategies (4(e))

A series of meetings with stakeholders were held to conduct the data and infrastructure analyses and identify the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR). Representatives of relevant offices within the MSDE as well as advocacy and professional organizations and LSS administrators examined and asked questions of data to identify coherent strategies in relationship to State initiatives and the DSE/EIS strategic plan, *Moving Maryland Forward*. As noted earlier, an iterative approach was used with stakeholder meetings, even as in this document, elements and activities are described in a linear manner.

Internal Stakeholders

Stakeholder	1/15/15	3/17/15
Chief of Staff	X	X
Special Assistant to the State Superintendent (STEM)	X	X
Executive Director, Governmental Relations	X	X
Director, Departmental Coordination & National Legislative Liaison	X	X
Race to the Top Coordinator & Teacher/Principal Evaluations	X	X
Chief Operating Officer	X	X
Division of Business Services	X	X
Office of Human Resources	X	X
Office of Information Technology	X	X
Division of Rehabilitation Services	X	X
Office of School Effectiveness	X	X
Division of Academic Policy and Innovation	X	X
Division of Educator Effectiveness	X	X
Division of Student, Family, and School Support	X	X
Director, Program Improvement and Family Support Branch (Title I)	X	X
Office of Teaching and Learning	X	X
Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X

Division of Early Childhood Development	X	X
Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability	X	X
Division of Career and College Readiness	X	X
Division of Library Development and Services	X	X
Branch Chief, Policy & Accountability, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X
Branch Chief, Programmatic Support & Technical Assistance, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services		
Research Consultant, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X
Consultant	X	X

External Stakeholders

Stakeholders	1/15//15	3/17/15
Parents	X	X
Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)	X	X
Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committees (SECAC)	X	X
Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD)	X	X
Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC)	X	X
Educational Advocacy Coalition (EAC)	X	X
Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE)	X	X
Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE)	X	X
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP)	X	X
Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)	X	X
Maryland Council of Staff Developers (MCSD)	X	X
Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM)	X	X

Maryland Middle School Association (MMSA)	X	X
Maryland State Education Association (MSEA)	X	X
State of Maryland International Reading Association Council (SoMIRAC)	X	X
Read y At Five Partnership	X	X
Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA)	X	X
Maryland Association of Teacher Educator s (MATE)	X	X
Maryland Family Network/Friends of the Family	X	X
University of Maryland – Department of Education Policy Studies	X	X
Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE)	X	X
Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE)	X	X
Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health	X	X
Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD)	X	X
Maryland Department of Human Resources	X	X
Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM)	X	X
Local Directors of Special Education	X	X
Local Preschool Coordinators	X	X
Schoolwide integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Center	X	X

Stakeholder Meeting #8 (1/15/2015) – Stakeholders identified improvement strategies and activities that are working in the broad areas of: professional learning and development, math instruction, organizational structure of the MSDE and LSSs, and family/community involvement. These informed the MSDE in initially identifying broad areas for improvement. They also identified the need for teacher development in math instructional strategies, use of formative assessments to guide instruction and identify intervention needs, improved family engagement – particularly in supporting math skill development and school involvement, and the relationship of low reading skills to math performance.

Stakeholder Meeting #10 (3/17/2015) – The stakeholders met to more fully identify the improvement strategies by comparing them against the State specific needs (see Section 4.A.) and the root causes that had been identified. The stakeholders identified with the MSDE personnel the following - **data-informed decision making, multi-tiered systems of support with evidence-based math instruction, equitable access in the general education curriculum and classroom, family engagement, and high quality math instruction/intervention using Universal Design for Learning.** From this discussion the stakeholders then reviewed a revised draft of the Theory of Action. After much discussion they provided specific recommendations for the MSDE to be able to finalize the Theory of Action. There was also some discussion of what areas the MSDE might want to consider for Infrastructure Development in Phase II of the SSIP process.

Theory of Action

A graphic illustration that shows the rationale of how implementing the coherent set of improvement strategies selected will increase the State's capacity to lead meaningful change in LEAs, and achieve improvement in the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

Attachment F MD Part B Theory of ActionAttachment F MD Part B Theory of Action

Provide a description of the provided graphic illustration (optional)

Description of Illustration

5. Theory of Action

Maryland's Theory of Action is that when students with disabilities are taught within a MTSS framework based on principles of UDL, using culturally responsive instruction and interventions that are provided when performance falls below standards, and when specialized instruction is delivered within that general education framework, their proficiency in math skills will increase and the gap between students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers will decrease. If there is collaboration across Divisions within the MSDE to assist schools and their district administrators in implementing these practices, using data-based decision making processes, and if families are engaged in implementation, then there is a greater likelihood that successes can be sustained within the targeted LSSs and scaled up across other jurisdictions.

A. Graphic Illustration (5(a))

Attached is a graphic illustration of Maryland's Theory of Action that describes how the State anticipates leveraging resources to maximize existing State initiatives, improve the State infrastructure, and build local capacity to scale up the implementation of evidence based practices to improve the mathematics achievement and reduce the gap in performance of students with disabilities in grades 3, 4 and 5 in 6 LSSs**. Please see Attachment F, Maryland Theory of Action**.

B. How Improvement Strategies Will Lead to Improved Results (5(b))

The Theory of Action incorporates the coherent strategies identified by stakeholders, aligns it with the MSDE DSE/EIS strategic functions, and considers the root causes in identifying the changes that are needed to lead to accomplishing the SIMR in six (6) local school systems. The sequential Theory of Action offers certain proof points that can suggest whether or not the DSE/EIS is on the right track. As such, the graphic representation will help the DSE/EIS to develop evaluation strategies for both progress and implementation fidelity in the development of the SSIP, Phase II. Specifically:

- The core function of **LEADERSHIP** is based on the belief that strategic collaboration and partnerships within the MSDE and across Offices/Divisions and meaningful family partnerships promote excellence, innovation, and dissemination of research and evidence-based models. This will guide the improvement strategies of collaboration across the MSDE Divisions to provide professional learning and TA in inclusive math instruction and culturally responsive practices and family engagement and partnership. Cross-Divisional collaboration will result in models for LSSs and schools for how special education leadership can effectively work with general education and student support services to impact instruction. Responsiveness to and partnerships with families should result in greater family involvement in supporting their child's education and school decision-making.

- The core function of **ACCOUNTABILY FOR RESULTS** is based on the belief that real time data and use of data to inform decisions supports the development and implementation of evidence based practices to maximize learning and narrow the achievement gap. This means that data-informed decision making processes are necessary to guide school improvement, and will result in:

  - o School leadership teams that know how to use disaggregated student data to inform decisions,

  - o Schools leadership teams that evaluate their current practices, select new practices (see below) and evaluate the impact on the math proficiency and performance gap of students with disabilities, and

  - o Teachers who work in teams to use data to modify instruction, design individual student supports, and provide secondary and tertiary interventions with fidelity.

- The core function of **TA/PROGRAM SUPPORT** is based on the beliefs that professional learning forms the base for courageous conversations and systems change, technical assistance and coaching provide unique supports to meet the context of individual schools and LSSs. Evidence- based instructional practices and interventions provide access to the curriculum and lead to academic/behavioral proficiency, and specialized instruction, program modifications, and

supplementary aids/services enable students with disabilities to make progress in the general education curriculum and participate in school with their nondisabled peers. These beliefs become evident in the improvement strategies to develop high quality general education math instruction based on principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), multi-tiered system of supports with evidence-based math instruction and interventions tailored to math deficits, and equitable access to the general education curriculum and classroom through culturally responsive interactions and specialized instruction for students with disabilities. These will result in:

- Schools that identify instructional practices to install based on exploration of current practice, student data, and professional learning,
- Schools that install a math MTSS framework,
- Schools and individual teachers who identify and install culturally responsive practices based on self-assessment, identification of specific needs, and professional learning,
- Teachers who select and use or improve student engagement strategies,
- Students with disabilities who participate in universal/general education math instruction and receive tiered intervention based on their math performance,
- Students with disabilities who receive specialized instruction, program modifications, and supplementary aids/services in the general education classroom,
- Students with disabilities who have higher rates of attendance, and
- Students with disabilities who are more engaged in instruction.

- The core function of **FISCAL/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT** is based on a belief that leveraging national and local resources results in effective and efficient implementation and sustainable evidence-based practices. By leveraging the SWIFT, SPDG, and the Bridges for Systems Change Initiative work will enhance the current work with the LSSs and schools actively engaged in a State technical assistance relationship. These LSSs have district planning teams, school based planning teams organized to promote systems change, and have identified math performance as a priority for improvement. They also have begun to be engaged with local and national experts to explore and/or install math instruction and interventions. By focusing on these jurisdictions, we will have with 6 LSSs with active school and district leadership teams engaged in systems change work that includes the SSIP SIMR in their action plans.

These strategies should lead to the change in practices that will enable us to achieve the SIMR, and see the following associated results:

STUDENTS with Disabilities in grades 3-5:

- Increase in math proficiency
- Reduction in performance gap in math
- Reduction in disproportionate placement of African American students in separate classes and schools
- Increase in general education participation and instruction in the regular classroom

TEACHERS:

- Increased confidence with teaching students with disabilities in regular classes
- Increased use of evidence-based math instruction based on UDL interventions
- Improved use of culturally responsive practices

SCHOOLS:

- Improved student outcome data

FAMILES:

- Increased satisfaction with their child’s educational program

- Increased involvement in school decisions

The Theory of Action will also serve as a guidepost for the participating LSSs. It relates which practices should lead to which results, and demonstrates a linkage across initiatives and strategies. For example, the collaboration with other Divisions to provide professional learning and customized technical assistance will support the development of systems within the LSSs to make the important changes needed to see improved results for students. It is anticipated that this theory can drive change and show a clear path to improving the math proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3, 4 and 5.

C. Stakeholder Involvement in Developing the Theory of Action (5(c))

The Theory of Action was developed with stakeholders, as a result of the participation and feedback from internal and external stakeholders for data and infrastructure analysis, identification of the SIMR, discussion of root causes for low math performance, and identification of coherent improvement strategies. The development of the Theory of Action began with the use of a Logic Model to identify the beliefs and values of the MSDE. From this basis the identified coherent strategies were considered as to how the strategies would promote a change in knowledge/practice leading to outcomes. **Please refer to Appendix A, Logic Model**.

Internal Stakeholders

Stakeholder	1/15/15	3/17/15
Chief of Staff	X	X
Special Assistant to the State Superintendent (STEM)	X	X
Executive Director, Governmental Relations	X	X
Director, Departmental Coordination & National Legislative Liaison	X	X
Race to the Top Coordinator & Teacher/Principal Evaluations	X	X
Chief Operating Officer	X	X
Division of Business Services	X	X
Office of Human Resources	X	X
Office of Information Technology	X	X
Division of Rehabilitation Services	X	X
Office of School Effectiveness	X	X
Division of Academic Policy and Innovation	X	X
Division of Educator Effectiveness	X	X
Division of Student, Family, and School Support	X	X
Director, Program Improvement and Family Support Branch (Title I)	X	X
Office of Teaching and Learning	X	X
Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Special Education/Early	X	X

Intervention Services		
Division of Early Childhood Development	X	X
Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability	X	X
Division of Career and College Readiness	X	X
Division of Library Development and Services	X	X
Branch Chief, Policy & Accountability, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X

Branch Chief, Programmatic Support & Technical Assistance Branch, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services		
Educational Program Specialist, Math, Programmatic Support & Technical Assistance Branch, Division of Special Education Early Intervention Services		
Educational Program Specialist, SPDG, Programmatic Support & Technical Assistance Branch, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services		
Research Consultant, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	X	X
Consultant	X	X

External Stakeholders

Stakeholders	1/15//15	3/17/15
Parents	X	X
Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)	X	X
Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committees (SECAC)	X	X
Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD)	X	X
Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC)	X	X
Educational Advocacy Coalition (EAC)	X	X

Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE)	X	X
Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE)	X	X
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP)	X	X
Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)	X	X
Maryland Council of Staff Developers (MCSD)	X	X
Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM)	X	X
Maryland Middle School Association (MMSA)	X	X
Maryland State Education Association (MSEA)	X	X
State of Maryland International Reading Association Council (SoMIRAC)	X	X
Read y At Five Partnership	X	X
Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA)	X	X
Maryland Association of Teacher Educator s (MATE)	X	X
Maryland Family Network/Friends of the Family	X	X
University of Maryland – Department of Education Policy Studies	X	X
Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE)	X	X
Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE)	X	X
Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health	X	X
Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD)	X	X
Maryland Department of Human Resources	X	X
Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM)	X	X
Local Directors of Special Education	X	X
Local Preschool Coordinators	X	X
Schoolwide integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Center	X	X

Stakeholder meeting #8 (1/15/2015) – Stakeholders reviewed the practices identified at the December meeting as "working" and "not working so well" as a prelude to reviewing the continuing refinement of the SIMR, as well as root causes of low performance in math of students with disabilities previously identified. Following this review, stakeholders watched a video describing the process for developing a Theory of Action - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbMIhCZVW-U

A preliminary draft was reviewed in small groups to discuss. It was noted the four areas of focus are the Core Functions of the

DSE/EIS Strategic Plan with the “If the MSDE” statements followed by statements of what will occur at both the MSDE and LSSs levels which will then lead to higher expectations and access to resources that will allow the provision of effective interventions and services which, in turn, will then result in services in natural settings and improved educational results and functional outcomes. In small groups participants were asked to think about:

· what you have learned through the stakeholder meeting discussions,

· the identified SIMR,

· the evidence-based practices, and

· what you know from your own practice.

Stakeholder meeting #10 (3/17/2015) – Following a discussion to refine the coherent strategies, stakeholders reviewed a draft Theory of Action and provided specific recommendations. It was emphasized by participants that there needs to be models of collaborative practice and quality communication across the MSDE, with families, and to the LSSs in this process. Stakeholders also noted that the Theory of Action needs to clearly convey the general approach that will be taken to address the SIMR and needs to be one that can be consistently articulated by the MSDE and stakeholders alike. There was discussion about whether the SIMR should address reducing the gap rather than increasing mathematics proficiency. Participants considered that even when students with disabilities may demonstrate higher levels of achievement, if students with and without disabilities increase in performance at approximately the same rate, the achievement gap for students with disabilities may stay the same. They noted that the SIMR needs to address both areas and that the strategies and theory of action need to take this into consideration.

Infrastructure Development

(a) Specify improvements that will be made to the State infrastructure to better support EIS programs and providers to implement and scale up EBPs to improve results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
(b) Identify the steps the State will take to further align and leverage current improvement plans and other early learning initiatives and programs in the State, including Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, Home Visiting Program, Early Head Start and others which impact infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
(c) Identify who will be in charge of implementing the changes to infrastructure, resources needed, expected outcomes, and timelines for completing improvement efforts.
(d) Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the State Lead Agency, as well as other State agencies and stakeholders in the improvement of its infrastructure.

Phase-II Component #1: Infrastructure Development

1(a) *Specify improvements that will be made to the State infrastructure to better support LEAs to implement and scale up EBPs to improve results for children with disabilities.*

Maryland identified four areas for infrastructure improvement – governance, data, professional development/technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring. The following description (*Figure 2*) illustrates specific changes Maryland has made to its State and Division infrastructure to support the implementation of evidence-based practices identified as a result of the SSIP processes.

In an effort to improve cross-departmental collaboration and communication within MSDE and external stakeholders, the Core Planning Team proposed a structure for SSIP implementation. This structure is designed to engage both Internal and External Stakeholders. Internal Stakeholders, that is, the State Executive Leadership Team, SSIP Core Planning Team, Cross-Departmental Implementation Team and Expert Team are comprised of personnel from across the department. These individuals have otherwise defined roles and responsibilities but are being invited to participate in SSIP implementation. This engagement will optimistically help to build coherence around the State’s technical assistance and performance support infrastructure across Departments within MSDE. External Stakeholders (Advisory Groups) who provided input during SSIP planning will have an ongoing role during implementation.

The Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) has five branches – Policy and Accountability, Performance Support and Technical Assistance, Family Support and Dispute Resolution, Interagency Collaboration, and Resource Management. Historically, Division personnel have worked in a limited way across branches. The Division has reorganized its staff in an effort to improve its continuing role of accountability and monitoring and to augment its performance support and technical assistance. The DSE/EIS is committed to building and sustaining an integrated organizational structure that provides ongoing connections to Divisions across the MSDE and with strategic partners. A *Collaborative Matrix Organizational Structure* is defined in the *DSE/EIS Strategic Plan: Moving Maryland Forward* that is intended to integrate knowledge and skills for improvement of compliance and results, and ensured consistent communication within the Division, throughout MSDE and with external partners.

In support of the intent of the matrix, the Division has created cross-functional teams comprised of monitors and technical assistance providers with established access to experts in assessment, family engagement, general education content, and behavioral specialists. These cross-functional teams are known as Division Implementation Teams (D-IT). Their primary responsibility is to build the capacity of local leaders to collect data to identify needs in relation to LSS/PA APR findings, work in partnership with locals to determine the root causes and then to provide technical assistance support to local school systems as they support schools in the implementation of selected strategies.

To align the role and function of the D-IT when working with SSIP districts, the frequency of support for SSIP LSSs has been aligned to the Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services *Differentiated Framework: Tiers of General Supervision and Engagement*. The frequency of support from the State to local leaders is determined by the DSE/EIS *Differentiated Framework: Tiers of General Supervision and Engagement.* It should be noted that the State’s technical assistance for the six SSIP districts is not

contingent on the *Differentiated Framework: Tiers of General Supervision and Engagement*. What is described here is meant to illustrate the changes the Division has made to its infrastructure as a result of the SSIP process.

Participating SSIP local systems are currently partnering with the DSE/EIS in the design, implementation and evaluation of a Local Priority Flexibility Grant (LPF) and one of three intensive programmatic projects: the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT), or a State designed grant to support systems change at a local level called Bridges for Systems Change (Bridges) in each of these projects there is a coaching/liaison relationship established with Division staff and local school system leadership. In addition, the Division and each of its SSIP local school systems have already established implementation teams (see Figure 2).

The DSE/EIS has developed a protocol and timeline for technical assistance activities aligned to the *Differentiated Framework for Technical Assistance: Tiers of Engagement* (Universal, Targeted, Focused, and Intensive). Locals are assigned to the Tiers annually based on the IDEA State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR). The Framework describes and defines how the State interacts with locals in the delivery of technical assistance. As the Phase II of the SSIP was under development it was apparent to the SSIP Core Planning Team and the DSE/EIS leadership that it would be critical create implementation teams across all levels of the system for the successful implementation of the SSIP and the achievement of the SiMR.

In preparation for SSIP implementation, each Local School System/Public Agency, which includes the six SSIP systems, has been assigned to a newly configured Division Implementation Team (D-IT). As a way to build a sustainable structure for Division support to Local School Systems and to integrate the work of current improvement initiatives the SSIP technical assistance support will employ the *Differentiated Framework for Technical Assistance: Tiers of Engagement* structure and language. The support given by the Division to all six SSIP local systems will follow the *Focused* support level with some adaptations to frequency as needed. The contact between the Division Implementation Team (D-IT) and the local SSIP implementation team (LSS-IT) will include bi-monthly check-in with additional F-2-F meetings as needed, Quarterly TAP-IT meetings (3 cycles per school year), and additional professional learning opportunities directly related to implementation of the EBPs that will include work across the LSSs in mathematics.

Specific improvement activities that the State (Division Implementation Team) will use to improve the State infrastructure and how will those activities improve the State's ability to support LEAs?

The specific improvement strategies the division will use to improve its infrastructure are related to the **data** and **professional development/technical assistance** *infrastructure* components. **TAP-IT and Systems Coaching** are the improvement activities that D-IT will use to help local school systems use data more effectively and to build their organizational capacity to implement EBP with fidelity.

TAP-IT has been embedded into DSE/EIS Technical Assistance protocol. TAP-IT stands for Team, Analyze, Plan, Implement, and Track. It is the Division's continuous improvement process that ensures the formation of a high performance team who uses data along with specific protocols and tools (e.g., Digital Portfolio for Coaching) to: analyze the root cause of the problem, select an Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) to address the identified need, and oversee the implementation of the selected strategy. Through our SPDG project, Division staff in the Performance Support and Technical Assistance Branch has been trained by experts in the field on TAP-IT and Implementation Science. They, in turn, will provide training to other members of the Division's Implementation Teams in order to increase their capacity to use these improvement strategies to actively support local school systems as they support schools with the implementation of EBP.

The following table describes the differentiated framework protocol for technical assistance and the projected minimum amount of time that the Division will meet with all jurisdictions assigned to each of the tiers. LSSs who are engaged in the SSIP will have a frequency of support as would an identified **Focused jurisdiction** (shaded in table 5). Changes that will be implemented as part of SSIP to the Division's technical assistance in each tier of engagement are added to the table in italics.

Table 5: Differentiated Framework for Tiers of Engagement

Differentiated Framework for Tiers of Engagement

TIER	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	FREQUENCY
Universal	In this tier of engagement the Maryland State Department of Education Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (MSDE: DSE/EIS) provides technical assistance through the development of tools, resources and professional learning opportunities that addresses Statewide needs based on overall State trend data, e.g., performance on State Performance Plan indicators, child outcomes, and student achievement.	*-Quarterly Professional Learning Institute (PLI)* *-Webinars, phone conferences* *-Ongoing relationship building*
Targeted	In this tier the technical assistance focus is on providing ongoing support to LSS/PAs in order to address a specific need identified through monitoring and APR indicators. The LSS/PA leadership will be required to collaborate with the Division to review multiple sources of data in order to (1) isolate the root causes(s) of an identified need, (2) select strategies to address it, and (3) develop an Improvement Plan.	*-Monthly Check-In (format optional)* *-Face-2-Face meetings as needed in addition to monthly check-in* *-Quarterly TAP-IT Meetings (3 per school year)*
Focused* ******All six SSIP LSSs will be supported with Focused Tier Intensity.*	**When a local jurisdiction receives a** *Focused* **designation, the State Superintendent and the Assistant State Superintendent will contact the local School Superintendent to advise local leadership of a need to meet together with cross-departmental, cross-divisional State and local leaders. The LSS/PA leadership is also required to participate in a quarterly joint State and local Focused Intervention and Accountability Team (FIAT) to review progress. The MSDE may direct federal or State funds.** **The technical assistance provided in this tier is focused on providing substantial support to LSS/PA in order to address multiple needs identified through monitoring**	**-Bi-monthly Check-In (one of these meetings should be** *Face-2-Face***)** **-Additional** *Face-2-Face* **meetings as needed** **-Quarterly TAP-IT meetings (3 cycles per school year)**

	and APR indicators. Substantial support will necessitate a higher frequency of contact between the State and a local jurisdiction in order to take a critical look as to why the LSS/PA has continuously been unable to improve results. The LSS/PA leadership (including the Superintendent) will be required to collaborate with the Division to review multiple sources of data in order to (1) isolate the root causes(s) of an identified need, (2) select strategies to address it, and (3) develop an <u>Improvement Plan</u>.	
	**SSIP LSSs will identify a Local School System Implementation Team who will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the SSIP EBPs and will use the TAP-IT process to create a data feedback loop to inform decision making. The identified Systems Coach will be a member of the Local School System Implementation Team. This team will meet with MSDE Systems Coaches quarterly to review both adult practice and student learning data and determine adjustments to the implementation plan based on the information analyzed. The LSS at a minimum will complete three (3) TAP-IT cycles per school year. The MSDE Systems Coach will guide the development of the LSS implementation plan provide direct ongoing technical assistance, act as a broker to State resources, and participate in on-going assessment and evaluation of LSS-IT actions to support the implementation of the EBPs in the schools. Professional learning to address the identified needs and interventions will be supported.*	**-Targeted professional learning on an as needed basis**
Intensive	Formal, collaborative agreement between the State and LSS Superintendent to guide improvement and correction, with onsite supervision and sanctions (sanctions may include direction, recovery, or withholding of funds).	

The *Differentiated Framework for Tiers of Engagement* reflects the role and responsibilities of the Division Implementation Teams (D-IT) which embodies the Systems Coaching strategy which is how the Division will increase the LSSs organizational capacity to implement EBPs with fidelity. The Division Implementation Team members serve two distinct roles, Systems Coach and Monitor. The following table outlines the roles and responsibilities of the cross-functional Division Implementation Team members:

Table 6: Roles and Responsibilities of Division Implementation Teams (DI-T)

Roles and Responsibilities of Division Implementation Teams (DI-T)

ROLES	**RESPONSIBLITIES**
Systems Coach	Team Development · Develop a relationship with the LSS team · Facilitate the development of an Implementation Team at the LSS level · Use the “UNITED” protocol (6 high performing teaming principles) to build a high performing team · Facilitate a team based project management process Engagement and Collaboration · Relationship development · Supporting behavior changes o Build relationships o Listen carefully o Understand perspectives o Affirm strength o Build trust o Manage distress o Resolve conflicts Change Facilitation

- Implementation facilitation
- Intervention development
- Systems Coaching

Discovery and Diagnosis

- TAP-IT
  - Diagnose and strategically analyze data
  - Data-informed decision making
  - Action Plan for impact

- Review of APR data to determine which LSS has not met individual Indicators
- Require LSS who has not met an Indicator to develop an improvement plan related to the Indicator

Monitor

- Monitor the progress the LSS is making in implementing the improvement plan
- Collaborative with TA providers as appropriate

These changes to the Division's technical assistance infrastructure will support Local School Systems with the implementation of coherent improvement strategies and activities in a sustainable manner because each LSS will have a designated implementation team (LSS-IT) at the district level focused on providing the ongoing support at the school level that is needed to implement an EBP with fidelity. Two members of the LSS-IT will be selected to receive training in Systems Coaching in order to become competent in four essential functions: engagement and collaboration, team development, discovery and diagnosis, and change facilitation. In addition, strategically selected partners from the Maryland Coalition of Inclusive Education (MCIE), the Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE), Parents Place of Maryland (PPMD), and strategically selected Institutes of Higher Education will be invited to participate in the Systems Coaching training and ongoing support to provide opportunities for a shared experience, dialogue on the effectiveness of the coaching model, and the scaling up of the practice. Selection criteria for Systems Coaches include: a special educator familiar/fluent with MTSS, UDL, CRT, and specially designed mathematics instruction, a general educator fluent in the Standards of Mathematical Practice, Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards for mathematics, differentiated instruction, and formative assessment. In addition, both must be willing to commit the time needed to attend TAP-IT meetings, LSS-IT meetings, school implementation team meetings and briefing sessions with principals and leadership. TAP-IT will be embedded into the discovery and diagnosis function of systems coaching as LSS systems coaches will also be responsible for establishing routines for TAP-IT meetings thereby promoting a practice-to-policy data feedback loop to assess implementation progress and implementation barriers so any needed adjustments can be made.

1(b) *Identify the steps the State will take to further align and leverage current improvement plans and initiatives in the State, including general and special education, which impact children with disabilities.*

With regard to current improvement plans, each LSS/PA in Maryland is required to submit a Master Plan to the MSDE. The Master Plan is a local level improvement plan organized around the four ESEA Flexibility assurance areas: Standards and Assessments, Data Systems to Support Instruction, Great Teachers and Leaders, and Turning-Around Lowest Performing Schools. Currently, Master Plans are reviewed by a State team consisting of general and special educators thereby ensuring that members of the D-ITs are part of the review teams for approval of the plans. In the case of LSSs participating in SSIP, their plans will undergo a further review by their assigned D-IT in order to ensure that SSIP EBP are either aligned with or integrated into current local improvement initiatives.

The selection of Local School Systems (LSS) to participate in SSIP was based on their participation in current initiatives LPF, SWIFT, SPDG and Bridges for Systems Change within the DSE/EIS which has readied them for SSIP activities. The first initiative is the Division's Local Priority Flexibility Plan (LPF). All LSSs are participants in this initiative and have been guided through the TAP-IT Process to identify a need related directly to narrowing the gap for students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers, research promising/evidence-based practices, and propose innovative solutions for LPF funding provided through the Division. In addition, the SSIP LSSs have participated in two federal grants managed by the Division – SPDG and the School-wide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT). Both of these initiatives have established LSS implementation teams who have used the active implementation frameworks (Usable Interventions, Implementation Stages, Implementation Drivers, Implementation Teams, and Improvement Cycles) and are organized around an implementation plan that identifies implementation and performance measures. The Division sees these initiatives as useful preparation for the implementation of SSIP.

The Maryland Race to the Top initiatives included significant cross-departmental work. The SSIP implementation structure that is defined and detailed in Phase II is a direct result of building on the successes and learning from the challenges of State-scale cross-departmental work in support of selected local schools and systems. A critical learning from this work was that the State/Division is most effective when it works to increase the capacity of the LSS to work with their schools and classrooms to change practice. The approach of providing support from the State/Division to LSS to School is also reflected in the work of the Division's initiatives: SPDG [1], SWIFT[2] and a two-year DSE/EIS grant entitled Bridges for Systems Change[3]. Finally, Maryland has Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Regulations and through its *Tiers of Engagement*: Universal Tier of Support, DSE/EIS has promoted an enhanced understanding of how MTSS can be used to include students with disabilities and provide them the intensive instruction and interventions that are needed based on performance data. Collaboration to support implementation of MTSS with fidelity will be continued through conversations at the State and local levels.

Improvement plans currently employed by the MSDE and locals that will further aligned and leveraged to support SSIP implementation have been identified to include:

- **Master Plans:** Each LSS/PA in Maryland is required to submit a Master Plan to the MSDE. The Master Plan is a district level improvement plan organized around the four ESEA Flexibility assurance areas: Standards and Assessments, Data Systems to Support Instruction, Great Teachers and Leaders, and Turning-Around Lowest Performing Schools. Currently, Master Plans are reviewed by a state team consisting of general and special educators thereby ensuring that members of the LSS members are part of the review teams for approval of the plans.

- **Race to the Top Sustainability**
- **Standards and Assessments** (Reading, Math, Science and Reading Proficiency for non-native English speakers)
- **Data Systems to support instruction**
- **Great Teachers and Leaders** (Teacher quality, professional development, Safe Schools, and high school graduation)
- **Turnaround of low performing schools**
- **Universal Design for Learning** (UDL). All LSSs are required to provide a detailed summary of their progress in implementing curricula that is research-based and designed with UDL principles. Their work addresses instruction, assessment, and professional development Implementation status demonstrated that LSSs were at various levels of implementation, ranging from developing a systemic implementation process, to providing instructional materials, techniques, and strategies, infusing UDL in daily lessons and assessments to help differentiate instruction, to intense professional development for teachers throughout the school year. Some LSSs included reporting training for administrators, and developed partnerships with universities to assist and support the development of curriculum materials, and contracting with the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) to provide support and professional development. Additionally, LSSs provided the designated UDL liaison or UDL committee working closely with teachers and administrators to ensure ongoing and improved processes as they move forward with UDL.

- **Local Priority Flexibility Plan (LPF).** All LSSs have identified an area related to narrowing the gap for students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers, using instructional and intervention practices based on research, and proposing innovative solutions for LPF funding through the DSE/IES.

- **State Professional Development Grant (SPDG).** This work, in its fourth year, is designed to increase the performance of students with disabilities in grades Pre-K through 6. It is currently being implemented in 2 local school systems with a focus on instructional improvement in math. As a result of this work, MD has developed: (1) the TAP-IT Digital Portfolio which integrates implementation science frameworks into a continuous improvement process, (2) an evidence-based instructional delivery system that integrated UDL, structured cooperative learning, formative assessment strategies and positive behavior supports into a Team Based Cycle of Instruction (TBCI) which provides effective Tier I instruction for all students but, specifically for students with disabilities, and (3) a strategy to address home/school communication through the creation of a classroom routine where mathematics information is shared with families on a regular basis and provides an opportunity for students to share what they have learned in class. This work includes effective partnerships with the Parents Place of Maryland and the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Technology in Education. These partnerships have helped us develop training resources that can be used with practitioners to increase their knowledge about EBP for Tier 1 mathematics instruction.

- **School-Wide integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT**). Maryland is a SWIFT State and uses the SWIFT tools and processes for identifying priorities for transforming schools to be high performing inclusive schools where all students are included in an effective Multi-Tiered System of Support for behavioral and academic performance, and where the organizational structure – including roles and responsibilities of adults – are integrated to enable children with disabilities to be valued and included members of their school community. The SWIFT Center supports capacity building at the state and district level, and implementation for improvement at the school level. Through the SWIFT process, several priorities have been identified within our 16 partner schools; common priorities across school systems include: family engagement, developing a MTSS based on a strong Tier 1 instructional base with Universal Design for Learning principles, advanced Tier (2 and 3) behavior interventions, and high quality inclusive math instruction and interventions.

- **The Bridges for Systems Change Grant** is established the DSE/EIS to serve as a catalyst for supporting an LSS, the DSE/EIS and their strategic partners in the development of an infrastructure that provides a seamless, coordinated, and comprehensive system of services for Maryland's infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families. This highly competitive grant is awarded to enable local leaders, in collaboration with DSE/EIS to:
  - Ensure Innovative Leadership
  - Use Active Implementation Science
  - Apply the TAP-IT Data-Informed Decision Making Model
  - Build Capacity for LSS, MSDE, PAs and strategic partners to collaborate in narrowing the gaps
  - Apply Bold Strategies
  - Develop a Performance Management System
  - Build Content for Maryland Learning Links
  - Forge Collaborative Partnerships
  - Engage in Strong Family Partnerships
  - Provide Effective Instruction/Intervention
  - Promote Professional Learning of Evidence-Based Practices
  - Develop and Adopt Progressive Policies
  - Support the Application of Technology to Enhance Teaching and Learning
  - Promote and Practice Braiding Funds to Blend Services

- **Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports** (PBIS). Maryland's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Initiative is a collaboration of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Sheppard Pratt Health System, and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. in Maryland. This partnership, known as PBIS Maryland, is responsible for providing training and technical assistance to the local school systems with the implementation and management of PBIS. Each of the 24 local school systems is a partner in the PBIS Maryland Initiative and provides leadership and coaching to support participating schools within its jurisdiction. In addition, ongoing technical assistance has been consistently provided to Maryland through the National Technical Assistance Center for PBIS.

- **Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)**.

In accordance with 34 CFR §300.646, a LSS that is identified as having significant disproportionality based on race and ethnicity with respect to identification of students as having disabilities, placement of these students in particular education settings, and/or disciplinary actions, including suspensions and expulsions, *must* use 15% of their Part B 611 Passthrough and Part B Preschool Passthrough funds for CEIS. A LSS *may* also voluntarily use up to 15% of its IDEA Part B 611 Passthrough and Part B 619 Preschool Passthrough allocation to develop and implement CEIS for students in grades K-12 not identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment.

- **Maryland's ESEA Flexibility Plan**
  - Title 1 Program Improvement and Focus School Grants
  - Title 3 Migrant Education

- **Moving Maryland Forward:** The DSE/IES Strategic Plan. In alignment with the MSDE priorities, the DSE/EIS leads a seamless integrated system that serves children and youth with disabilities from birth through 21 and their families. This comprehensive system balances the statutory requirements with equal emphasis on programmatic leadership and innovation to narrow existing gaps. The DSE/EIS has a bold vision that all students, including students with disabilities, will be ready for school, achieve in school, and be prepared for college, careers, and community living as a result of their participation in Maryland's early intervention and special education programs; and all existing gaps between children with disabilities and that of their nondisabled peers will be narrowed.

1(c) *Identify who will be in charge of implementing the changes to infrastructure, resources needed, expected outcomes, and timelines for completing improvement efforts.*

Who makes up the team that will identify the infrastructure changes critical to implementation of the plan?

We have learned from past cross-divisional efforts and the research of Peter M. Senge and others on systems change that we must engage senior leadership from the onset of any successful innovation. The very nature of Results-Driven Accountability (RDA), the foundation of the SSIP, supports a cross-departmental effort within the MSDE. As shown in Table 7, the SSIP leadership implementation structure will be driven by a *State Executive Leadership Team* comprised of members of the State Superintendent's Executive Team. With bi-annual meetings and regular updates from the *SSIP Core Planning Team*, consisting of Part B and C staff and senior department leadership who will be engaged, informed, and involved in decision-making. In addition, the formation of a *Cross-Departmental Implementation Team*, consisting of staff from the Divisions of Academic Policy and Innovation, Early Childhood Development, Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability, and Student, Family, and School Support Divisions will provide structure so that implementation information is shared across the divisions at MSDE. The formation of this team structure also enables a collaborative approach to resource allocation. Both the SSIP Core Planning and Cross-Departmental State Implementation Teams will meet regularly to discuss SSIP implementation progress. Finally, essential to accomplishing our SiMR, an *Experts/Ad Hoc Expert Team* (Expert Team) will be formed and will meet on an ad-hoc basis. The Expert Team will consist of special and general education mathematics experts who will secure college, university, and national experts as thought partners and trainers. This team will be charged with identifying trainers for mathematics evidence-based practices, Specially Designed Instruction (SDI), UDL, MTSS, and CRT. They will also be charged with collecting, vetting, and disseminating mathematics resources that support achievement of the SiMR in conjunction with the D-IT to the LSS-IT.

The following graphic (Figure 3) demonstrates the relationship among the Executive Leadership Team, the SSIP Design Team, the Cross-Departmental Implementation Team and the Expert Team their relationship to the implementation teams at the DSE/EIS Divisional, LSS and school levels. It also demonstrates how internal and external stakeholders have ongoing involvement in the process.

Figure 3: Implementation Structure

State Systemic Improvement Plan: Maryland Implementation Structure

The DSE/EIS has a Division Leadership Team (D-LT) who represents the DSE/EIS Division's Executive Team. While not specifically charged with the implementation of the SSIP, to ensure a direct link to DSE/EIS leadership, this team will be routinely engaged in the DSE/EIS SSIP work though two-way communication and discussions around data and the allocation of Division resources. The D-LT consists of the division's five Branch Chiefs *(Policy and Accountability, Family Support and Dispute Resolution, Interagency Collaboration, Programmatic Support and Technical Assistance, and Resource Management and Monitoring*). The D-LT lead for SSIP implementation is the Chief for the Performance Support and Technical Assistance Branch, who reports directly to the Assistant State Superintendent. It was this team that identified the need to form a Division Implementation Team that works collaboratively to link monitoring findings with technical assistance support.

The D-LT in preparation for Phase II of the SSIP, is currently engaged in the following activities: (1) identification of the training needed by DSE/EIS staff to implement infrastructure changes, e.g., TAP-IT, Implementation Science, and Systems Coaching, (2) formation and selection of division implementation team members, (3) team assignments to specific LSSs, (4) development of a logistics plan which allocates staff time and other resources to the SSIP LSSs and to LSSs identified in either the Targeted, Focused, or Intensive Differentiated Framework: Tiers of General Supervision and Engagement.

The D-IT consists of staff responsible for compliance and results monitoring, technical assistance provision, and fiscal monitoring and in addition, staff with specific knowledge and expertise in general education mathematics content, assessment, secondary transition, behavior, family engagement, blind and visual impairment, leadership, school improvement, data-based decision making, MTSS, and deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) will be deployed to the implementation teams when a specific need in their area has been identified in a local school system. Each Local School System/Public Agency is assigned a D-IT that will use the systems coaching strategy to increase the capacity of the SSIP locals, as well as other LSSs to use the TAP-IT process to build a policy-to-practice feedback loop using implementation and performance data and the Active Implementation Frameworks to implement, scale-up and sustain the LSS selected EBP that will improve mathematics outcomes for students with disabilities.

The following table identifies the Division's cross functional teams that were formed as a result of the SSIP process:

Table 7: DSE/EIS Division Teams

DSE/EIS Division Teams

TEAM	MEMBERS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Division Leadership Team (D-LT)	Divisions Branch Chiefs · Policy and Accountability, · Family Support and Dispute Resolution, · Interagency Collaboration, · Performance Support and Technical Assistance, and · Resource Management	· Infrastructure for Monitoring and Technical Assistance
Division Implementation Team (D-IT)	· Monitors · TA providers	· Systems Coaching · Monitoring

What resources will be needed to get to the expected outcomes?

In planning for Phase II there has been significant effort focused on the alignment of existing resources and initiatives to support LSS achievement of the SIMR. Through the establishment of the SSIP Implementation Structure (See Figure 3) efforts have been made to use the SSIP to organize the work of the Department, Division and Branches to better support local systems as they implement EBPs with fidelity in order to achieve the State's SIMR.

In addition, we have identified resources needed to accomplish this work – we have formed partnerships with expert leaders in implementation science, family partnerships, research-based practices to differentiate support that address the unique needs of local systems, and in the area of Systems Coaching.

What are the timelines to complete changes to the infrastructure and build capacity within the State to better support the LEA program?

There are four infrastructure components that the MD SSIP is addressing: governance, data, professional development, and accountability/monitoring. See Action Plan on page XX for a more detailed list of activities and timelines.

- Governance – the MD SSIP has created the SSIP Implementation Structure comprised of team members from across the department, local school systems, and external stakeholders.
- Data – MD has embedded the TAP-IT process into its technical assistance model *Tiers of Engagement.* The Division is using the TAP-IT process with LPF grantees and with two of the six LSSs engaged in SSIP. The four other SSIP LSSs will begin to use TAP-IT in Fall 2016.
- Professional Development – training for the Division Implementation Team and Local School System Implementation Team members selected to be system coaches will be completed by summer 2016. In addition, on March 31st an RFP will be released to announce funds for the development of the Parent-Teacher Partnership course. Grantee selection will be completed by during the summer and development of the course in partnership with Parents Place of Maryland will commence. Parents and teachers will be selected from each SSIP school to participate in training by winter 2017 when training will begin.
- Accountability/Monitoring – the Division has formed Division Implementation Teams and they have been assigned to Local School Systems.

1(d) *Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the State education agency (SEA), as well as other State agencies* **[4]** *and stakeholders in the improvement of its infrastructure.*

In an effort to better support LEAs, how does the SSIP promote collaboration with the SEA and among other State agencies to improve the State's infrastructure.

As described in detail in the previous section and organized in Table 8 below, the SSIP will involve multiple offices through the full implementation of SSIP Implementation Teams.

Table 8: SSIP Implementation Teams

SSIP Implementation Teams

TEAM	MEMBERS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Executive Leadership Team	· State Superintendent · Superintendent's Cabinet Members	· Cross-Departmental decision-making
SSIP Core Planning Team	· Part B staff · Part C staff	· SSIP Phase II Plan · SSIP Implementation in collaboration with Cross-Departmental Implementation Team and Expert Team
Cross-Departmental Implementation Team	· Title I · Early Childhood · Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment · Family	· SSIP Implementation in collaboration with the SSIP Core Planning Team and Expert Team · Project Management
Expert Team	· Mathematics experts · Special Education experts in MTSS, UDL, CRT, Specially Designed Instruction · National experts in mathematics, and Special Education	· Collecting, vetting, and disseminating mathematics resources and evidence-based practices for use by LSS-IT · Identifying trainers for mathematics EBPs, SDI, MTSS, UDL, CRT

In an effort to better support LEAs, how does the SSIP promote collaboration within the SEA and among other State agencies to improve the State's infrastructure?

The SSIP implementation structure proposed in Phase II is designed to engage both Internal and External Stakeholders (see component 2(b) for a more detailed explanation of how stakeholders have been involved). Internal Stakeholders, that is, the State Executive Leadership Team, SSIP Core Planning Team, Cross-Departmental Implementation Team and Expert Team are comprised of personnel from across the department. These individuals have otherwise defined roles and responsibilities but are being invited to participate in SSIP implementation. This engagement will optimistically help to build coherence around the State's technical assistance and professional development infrastructure across the Divisions in MSDE.

What mechanisms would the State use to involve multiple offices and/or other State agencies in the improvement of the State's infrastructure?

Through the SSIP Implementation Structure, the DSE/EIS will invite MSDE staff from across the Department, partners from Institutes of Higher Education, and strategic partners outside the Department to collaborate in the planning and implementation of professional learning related to SSIP implementation. This structure will also provide leadership with opportunities to engage in an ongoing dialogue about ways to integrate general education and special education support systems to positively impact MSDEs infrastructure and ultimately be sanctioned by the incoming State Superintendent of Schools.

How will stakeholders be involved in the infrastructure development?

The MSDE has participated in various cross-departmental efforts with varying degrees of success in sustaining and/or scaling up initiatives. We have learned that stakeholder involvement across the hierarchy of the Department is imperative to the success of such efforts. The SSIP infrastructure has been informed by many partners involved in earlier cross-departmental efforts. The design provides each stakeholder group with direct and indirect involvement in the implementation process and continuous communication on the progress of the SSIP. Staff within each team of the SSIP Implementation Infrastructure has been identified to provide a source of knowledge, resources, and skills that can be tapped throughout the implementation of the SSIP. As each phase of implementation is realized, the cross-departmental SSIP implementation representatives will provide direction to any necessary adjustment in response to lessons learned in the SSIP implementation. All stakeholders (internal and external) will be asked to provide information through the SSIP formative evaluation process. In this way, stakeholders will have ongoing involvement in the development of the infrastructure as responses will be used to make any needed adjustments to the technical assistance and professional development being provided to local school systems as they provide support to implement evidence-based practices with fidelity to schools.

[1]The Maryland SPDG is focused on instructional improvement. This work has built the Division's capacity to support local school systems as they implement evidence-based practices with fidelity. It has also increased our ability to successfully build effective partnerships with external organizations. In the case of SPDG, we have partnered with the Parents Place of Maryland and Johns Hopkins University's Center for Technology in Education. These partnerships have helped us develop training resources that can be used with practitioners to increase their knowledge about data-informed decision making and EBP for Tier 1 mathematics instruction.

[2] Maryland is a School-wide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) State. The structures, tools and processes for fully implementing the work of SWIFT are being embraced by participating LSSs and the MSDE. The SWIFT Center focuses on improving the knowledge and skills of classroom educators to implement inclusive school-wide reform; increasing the capacity of schools to implement fully inclusive reform in academic, extracurricular, and school-based settings; and increasing family and community engagement in school-wide reform. The SWIFT Center offers schools, districts, and States the ability to build capacity to scale up and sustain new practices for school-wide inclusive reform in urban, rural, and high-need schools in grades K-8 for students with disabilities.

[3] The Bridges for Systems Change work was designed to reflect the structures and processes of SWIFT and SPDG in partnership with a LSS to provide support for systemic change in conjunction with the MSDE, we have learned a great deal about supporting local school system implementation, data collection and analysis that will inform the SSIP efforts. The design of Phase II, and the collaborative structure between SSIP partner LSSs, facilitated by both general and special education across the SWIFT, SPDG, and Bridges for Systems Change initiatives (each initiative includes family engagement as a critical component) work has built our capacity to ask the right questions and to support local initiatives.

[4] Maryland is a State with a total of twenty-four school districts. There are no regional offices in Maryland as there are in other States.

Support for EIS programs and providers Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

(a) Specify how the State will support EIS providers in implementing the evidence-based practices that will result in changes in Lead Agency, EIS program, and EIS provider practices to achieve the SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
(b) Identify steps and specific activities needed to implement the coherent improvement strategies, including communication strategies and stakeholder involvement; how identified barriers will be addressed; who will be in charge of implementing; how the activities will be implemented with fidelity; the resources that will be used to implement them; and timelines for completion.
(c) Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the Lead Agency (and other State agencies such as the SEA) to support EIS providers in scaling up and sustaining the implementation of the evidence-based practices once they have been implemented with fidelity.

Phase II Component #2: Support for LEA Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

2(a) Specify how the State will support LEAs in implementing the evidence-based practices that will result in changes in LEA, school, and provider practices to achieve the SIMR for children with disabilities.

Maryland chose the following coherent improvement strategies during Phase I of the SSIP:

- Data-informed decision making for continuous improvement – TAP-IT and Implementation Science
- Family engagement and partnership to promote family involvement and student success,
- High quality general education mathematics instruction based on principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to include formative assessment with evidence-based mathematics supports for struggling students, and
- Equitable access to the general education curriculum and classroom through Culturally Responsive Interactions (CRI) and Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)

These critical elements for high-quality Tier 1 instruction are essential for students with disabilities to perform successfully. They have not yet been fully implemented with fidelity in classrooms across our State.

Maryland has categorized its EBP coherent improvement strategies for Part B in two ways (1) strategies that directly impact **system practices** around implementation of evidence-based practices, i.e., TAP-IT data-informed decision making and implementation science, and (2) strategies that impact **classroom/school practices**, i.e., MTSS, UDL, Culturally Responsive Teaching, Specially Designed Instruction, mathematics interventions and supports, and family engagement. The SSIP Part B technical assistance focus by the Division's Implementation Teams (D-IT) will be on the improvement strategies that impact system practices around the implementation of EBP at the school and classroom level. The Division's TA strategy used with the six SSIP LSS Implementation Teams (LSS-IT) is Systems Coaching, that is, the Division will provide coaching support to each LSS Implementation Team to build capacity to develop an implementation infrastructure for selection, implementation, sustaining and scaling-up EB classroom/school mathematics practices. In addition, the Division's Systems Coach will broker the training and resources needed for locally selected EBP from the SSIP Expert Team. A protocol for engagement by the State Systems Coaches with the LSS Systems Coaches will enable the process of State to LSS engagement to be consistent and replicable allowing the MSDE to identify effective practices to be used when scaling up the work of the SSIP. Maryland's Systems Coaches understand that it is the EBP in mathematics that will change outcomes in

mathematics for students with disabilities. As such, these coaches will have the expectation that SSIP schools will develop a coherent Tier I instructional delivery system that incorporates UDL, Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) thereby providing access to the mathematics curriculum for students with disabilities. Simultaneously, through MTSS, the needs of struggling students with disabilities will be identified and addressed by using specially designed mathematics instruction aligned to individual needs.

Systems coaching will enable Maryland to focus on a systemic approach to SSIP implementation by engaging all levels of the education system – State, Local School System, School, and Classroom – in a coherent process (See Figure 2). Furthermore, by building the capacity of the Division and Local School System Implementation Team liaisons to become Systems Coaches, the State will be able to support local school systems not only with the implementation of instructional/behavioral EBP with fidelity but also help them to scale-up and sustain them. Maryland believes if selected members of the Division and Local School System Implementation Team are competent Systems Coaches, the jurisdiction will have the capacity to effectively implement a program, practice, or approach to enhance student outcomes (Metz: SPDG National Conference, 2015). As an active member of the NCIS Mathematics Collaborative, Maryland will have access to nationally identified mathematics practice guides, tools, and resources that will be brokered to LSS-ITs to inform their practice with School-ITs to achieve the SiMR. Maryland has discovered, and consultants have confirmed, that evidence-based practices in mathematics are not abundantly available at this time. They have also identified that there isn't the extensive research about learning difficulties in mathematics in comparison to research on difficulties in learning to read. Hence, research on ways to support mathematics learners who struggle is less so (Tapper, J. *Solving for Why: Understanding, Assessing, and Teaching Students Who Struggle with Mathematics, Grades K-8*: 2012). Consequently, Maryland has focused on implementing a structure (MTSS) that creates instructional supports for students to learn mathematics and UDL, CRT and Specially Designed Instruction all of which improve access to the curriculum.

Did the State describe the evidence used to select evidence-based practices that will be implemented?

In Phase I, stakeholders examined trend and disaggregated data to identify problem areas, a measurable result, and the target population. Based on the review of this data the State and its stakeholders concluded that (1) students with disabilities are being included in general education classes at greater rates each year, and (2) mathematics has lower performance and a larger achievement gap for students with disabilities than reading. Thus the MD SiMR for Part B is **to increase the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3, 4, and 5 in six Local School Systems as measured by state assessments.**

The data analysis, infrastructure analyses and the stakeholder engagement conversations resulted in the identification of coherent strategies that are based on research and, if implemented with fidelity, should result in improvements in student performance.

Following is the research for each of the improvement strategies that will change teacher practices and enable students with disabilities to achieve the SiMR.

Data-informed Decision Making for Continuous Improvement – TAP-IT, Implementation Science, Formative Assessment

Over the past decade, educators in Maryland and elsewhere have become interested in and committed to using data-informed decision making (also often referenced as data-based or data-driven decision making). Its use at the state, LSS central office, school, and classroom levels is encouraged. Various data are systematically collected and analyzed, including input, process, outcome, and satisfaction data, to guide a range of decisions to help improve the success of students and schools. Achievement test data, in particular, play a prominent role among practitioners—in large part due to increased emphasis on data as a result of the requirements of NCLB (Massell, 2001).

However, the existence of data does not guarantee its use. Raw data must be organized and combined with an understanding of the situation to yield information. Information becomes actionable knowledge when data users synthesize the information, apply judgment to prioritize it, and weigh the relative merits of possible solutions. At this point, actionable knowledge can inform different types of decisions that might include: setting goals and assessing progress, addressing individual or group needs (such as targeting support to low-performing students or schools), evaluating the effectiveness of practices, assessing whether the needs of students or others are being met, reallocating resources, or improving processes to improve outcomes.

The MSDE has an existing process that promotes the synthesis of information and application of judgment to prioritize findings and the relative merits of possible solutions. The TAP-IT process (Team, Analyze, Plan, Implement, and Track) begins with the formation of an implementation TEAM that collects current, relevant data sources. They then ANALYZE the data, including formative, summative, longitudinal summary reports and early warning alert systems that may be in place. The team analyzes the data using an agreed upon protocol to develop a PLAN to improved results for children with disabilities. The team shares current research and research based practices and considers the allocation of resources to determine their effectiveness in achieving improved results for children with disabilities. The plan is then IMPLEMENTED and progress is monitored. Team members continuously TRACK progress through regular meetings. Successes are shared, plans are revised, and the work is scaled up as appropriate. The MSDE has actively promoted this collaborative data-informed decision making model over the last two years and regularly provides technical assistance and guidance to the LSSs regarding systemic and strategic data use. This will be highlighted in the work of the participating SSIP LSSs.

With a strong technical assistance connection (through systems coaching) from DSE/EIS to participating LSSs the TAP-IT process will become a routine practice at the local and school levels creating the "practice to policy feedback loop" necessary for successful implementation of evidence-based practices. "The practice-policy feedback loop provides organizational leaders and policy makers with information (data) about implementation barriers and successes so that a more aligned system can be developed. Feedback from the practice level engages and informs organization leaders so that they can ensure that policy, procedures, resources, etc. enable innovative practices to occur in classrooms, schools, and districts as intended." (AI Hub: Topic 3: Practice-Policy Feedback Loops)

The data-informed decision making strategy will be incorporated to support the use of data at the classroom level through formative assessment strategies. Through the SPDG and SWIFT center work, mathematics has emerged as an important focus area. Leveraging the work of these initiatives, along with implementation of UDL – the lack of which was cited as a root cause – provides a powerful improvement strategy. The implementation of high quality math instruction and intervention using UDL will assist in addressing the root causes of "lack of problem solving skills and perseverance," "curriculum shift (MCCR)" [Maryland College and Career Ready standards], and potentially the "inadequate identification of math learning problems."

Family engagement and partnership to promote family involvement and student success

Given the power of family involvement to influence learning, it is not surprising that the IDEA strongly supports the right of parents to be involved in the special education their child receives. As the IDEA states: "Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by… strengthening the role and responsibility of parents and ensuring that families…have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home." Maryland's strategic plan promotes engaging families and school staff in active regular two-way, meaningful communication as equal partners in decisions.

Engaging families of students who will be in schools participating in the SSIP work will range from providing family-friendly information (on math problem-solving activities, on their child's performance and progress) and providing training opportunities that will include the introduction of a Parent Teacher Partnership model and a parent engagement course for teachers and leaders to understand educational decision-making and to solicit the active input from families in the decisions made by the school and school system. This has the dual purpose of connecting what is being learned to daily life and providing meaningful ways for the student and her/his family to engage in the life of the school. The data and infrastructure analyses revealed a concern that parents do not know "today's math." By engaging families in the improvement process, there is no intent to teach parents

"today's math" but rather to help families use math and be engaged in their child's education.

An important component of the Division work as evidenced in the Maryland SPDG is family engagement. Through the partnership with The Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD), the State's Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center in OSEP's Parent Technical Assistance Center Network, SPDG has developed a strategy to support mathematics instruction by providing parents/families with ways to engage children around "what are you learning" rather than around "how to solve problems" as a means to improve home/school communication.

High quality general education math instruction based on principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to increase student engagement and learning

UDL is based on educational research that finds students are highly variable in their response to instruction. Accordingly, to meet the challenge of high standards, the UDL approach shuns "one size fits all" curricula and instruction in favor of flexible designs with customizable options to meet individual needs. UDL has three major principles that include providing multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of engagement. Each of these principles intends to address the diversity of student learning styles and means of demonstrating learning. The use of UDL along with high quality math instruction and interventions increases opportunities for students with disabilities to both engage in instruction and effectively demonstrate what is learned.

Maryland legislation (Senate Bill 567 and House Bill 59) established a Task Force to Explore the Incorporation of the Principles of UDL into MD Education Systems, which resulted in a comprehensive report of recommendations, "A Route for Every Learner." The Task Force recommendations resulted in action by the Maryland State Board of Education to publish Maryland Regulations (COMAR 13A.03.06 Universal Design for Learning) to ensure implementation of UDL guidelines and principles by:

- promoting the application of UDL principles to maximize learning opportunities for all students, and
- guiding local school systems in the use of UDL in the development of curriculum, instructional materials, instructional planning and delivery, professional development, and assessment.

Maryland has worked steadily to implement the recommendations of the task force with fidelity. A network of leaders from across the State has formed a UDL network. The MSDE will build upon the UDL network in Maryland and experts who are working closely with the MSDE, LSSs and the SWIFT Center to build teacher and school capacity to employ UDL principles. It will also leverage the knowledge base resulting from the SPDG work which has integrated UDL principles into an instructional delivery system, Team Based Cycle of Instruction (TBCI) developed in partnership with JHU-CTE. This evidence-based instructional delivery system is currently providing access to the mathematics curriculum in SPDG schools. This promising practice has yielded increased mathematics achievement for students with disabilities in SPDG schools after one year of implementation.

Multi-tiered system of supports with evidence-based math instruction and interventions tailored address to math deficits

Implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) in a school requires a significant change in practice, and a need for close collaboration with the Local School System administration. Particularly when it comes to math, screening and progress monitoring tools are limited; evidence-based interventions are scarce and may be expensive.

The MTSS models (Greenwood, Carta, Baggett, Buzhardt, Walker, & Terry, 2008; Greenwood, Kratchowill & Clements, 2008), such as Response to Intervention (RtI) (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2001) and School-Wide Positive Behaviors Support (SWPBS) (Sugai & Horner, 2009) are based on the premise that classroom instruction should be high quality, evidence-based, and universally designed for all students, considering their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, disabilities, and other learning needs. By using data on student performance and progress, the acquisition of targeted skills can be monitored and the need for more intensive instruction or specific interventions for students not "responding" to the universal instruction can be identified. A second tier of intervention focusing on those target skills or behaviors is provided to students who have not acquired the targeted skills. Through ongoing data monitoring, the need for a third tier of more individualized and intensive intervention can be identified and designed for specific students based on their unique needs. Evidence-based instructional strategies, progress monitoring, and fidelity of intervention characterize the implementation of all tiers.

Each intervention type (e.g., behavior, reading, math, etc.) requires criteria for identifying when students need more or less intensive interventions. It is important to note that as students move to more intensive levels (tiers) of support, they should not be removed from regular classes or school settings (Sailor, 2008/2009). Interventions can be embedded within the general education instruction and classroom activities, maintaining opportunities for the benefits of inclusion. Copeland and Cosbey (2008/2009) describe four key MTSS principles:

- The Tiers should be additive, not exclusionary: Tier 1 instruction should be supplemented by Tiers 2 and/or 3, and not replaced by them.
- This model should be an instructional decision making model, not a placement model.
- Decisions to change interventions, moving a student from one tier to the next, should be based on data.
- Teachers should evaluate student performance based upon the documented delivery of strategies that have been demonstrated to be effective for specific students.

The National Center on Intensive Intervention (http://www.intensiveintervention.org/) provides a variety of resources and current evidence-based tools and interventions for reading, math, and behavior. As has been seen, math resources are limited. The MSDE intends to leverage the work with the SWIFT Center to access current and evidence-based resources to support its ability to provide Professional Learning and Development and TA for mathematics instruction and intervention.

A MTSS model has evidence of effectiveness in enabling teachers to use screening and progress monitoring tools to identify specific areas in which students are proficient and where they need additional intervention to acquire important skills. The MSDE will work closely with and develop professional learning in MTSS/math that crosses initiatives to target TA for the schools identified as part of the SSIP.

Equitable access to the general education curriculum and classroom through culturally responsive interactions and Specially Designed Instruction for students with disabilities within the regular classroom

Research shows a variety of positive short term and long term effects of educating students with disabilities in inclusive classes. In a two-year study of students with learning disabilities, Cole, Waldron, Majd, and Hasazi (2004) found that 41.7% made progress in math in general education classes compared to 34.0% in segregated special education settings, without the presence of nondisabled peers. When comparing progress with their typical peers, 43.3% of students with disabilities made comparable or greater progress in math in inclusive settings versus 35.9% in traditional settings. The National Longitudinal Transition Study examined the outcomes of 11,000 students with a range of disabilities and found that more time spent in a general education classroom was positively correlated with a) fewer absences from school, b) fewer referrals for disruptive behavior, and c) better outcomes after high school in the areas of employment and independent living (Wagner, Newman, Cameto & Levine, 2006).

For students with severe disabilities, academic benefits include: high levels of active engagement (Hunt, Soto, Maier & Doering, 2003; Wallace, Anderson, Bartholomay & Hupp, 2002), improved academic performance (Brinker & Thorpe, 1984; Cole et al., 2004; Downing, Spencer & Cavallaro, 2004; Wolfe & Hall, 2003; Hawkins, 2011; Hunt & Staub et al., 1994; Katz & Mirenda, 2002; McDonnell, Mathot-Buckner, Thornson & Fister, 2001; Teigland, 2009; Westling & Fox, 2009), access to general curriculum (Carter, Cushing, Clark & Kennedy, 2005) and higher quality individualized education program goals (Hunt, Farron-Davis, Beckstead, Curtis & Goetz, 1994b).

There are also several tools to promote culturally responsive practices, ranging from policy assessments (Kozleski and Sion, 2006) to special education culturally responsive practices assessment (Richards, Artilles, Lingner, and Brown, 2005). The MSDE will promote exploration of current practices and development of specific improvement practices across schools through a professional learning community. Further, the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education, a partner with the MSDE in promoting high quality inclusive instruction and interventions, will provide assistance to participating LSSs in the delivery of Specially Designed Instruction within general education.

Systems' Coaching to support the implementation fidelity of the SSIP EBPs

There is extensive research on the benefits of coaching. A summary of a meta-analysis of the effects of training and coaching on teachers' implementation (Joyce & Showers, 2002) has shown substantial gains in the use of new skills in the classroom when on-the-job coaching was added to training. While this research specifically looks at teacher implementation of a particular innovation, Joyce & Showers also noted that two other implementation drivers – selection and administrative facilitation – need to be attended to for coaching to be done.

Table 9 provides a summary of a meta-analysis of the effects of training and coaching on teacher implementation (Joyce & Showers, 2001).

Table 9: The Effects of Training and Coaching on Teacher Implementation

Effects of Training and Coaching on Teacher Implementation

	OUTCOMES **(% of Participants who Demonstrate Knowledge, Demonstrate new Skills in a Training Setting, and Use new Skills in the Classroom)**		
TRAINING COMPONENTS	**KNOWLEDGE**	**SKILL** **DEMONSTRATION**	**USE IN THE** **CLASSROOM**
Theory and Discussion	10%	5%	0%
Demonstration in Training	30%	20%	0%
Practice & Feedback in Training	60%	60%	5%
Coaching in Clinical Setting	95%	95%	95%

In addition to providing coaching support to teachers, there are significant challenges related to choosing, implementing, sustaining, and improving evidence-based approaches to academic instruction and interventions (Blasé, K. A., Fixsen, D.L., Sims, B. J., & Ward, C. S. *Implementation Science: Changing Hearts, Minds, Behavior, and Systems to Improve Educational Outcomes:* NIRN) that need to be addressed. This is why a systems or change coach is needed.

Neufeld and Roper (2003a)[1] distinguish change coaches from content coaches, in that change coaches typically focus on organizational improvement. A system/change coach focuses on developing the capacity of the school district to effectively implement a program, practice, or approach to enhance student outcomes Metz (2015). The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) has identified the coaching skills that competent Systems Coaches need to acquire. Those skills include foundation skills such as:

- Getting and Giving Information- the ability to observe and describe behavior,
- Connecting People through Rationales – identify systemic and individualized rationales that help communities and individuals "buy into" the change process and recognize diversity of perspectives,
- Developing and Maintaining Relationships – Recognition for Colleagues and Stakeholders - positive, descriptive and sincere recognition for leaders,, staff, families, stakeholders,
- Maximizing Feedback Opportunities – soliciting feedback, accepting and providing positive feedback, accepting and providing constructive feedback, and
- Able to address adaptive challenges.

And four essential functions that system coaches must be competent to address:

(1) Engagement and Collaboration,

(2) Team Development,

(3) Change Facilitation, and

(4) Discovery and Diagnosis.

How did the State consider the LEA needs and the best fit for the coherent improvement strategies and EBP?

The State focuses its technical assistance at the local school system level. It does not provide direct technical assistance support to schools. From our work with central-office level staff, we know that most local school systems need ongoing support to institutionalize the use of Active Implementation Frameworks and while they used student performance data to make decisions, they may not collect data on adult behavior on an ongoing basis. Consequently, when a new mathematics innovation is selected it may conflict with other initiatives, teachers may not understand what it is or have sufficient training and ongoing support, the environment may be inhospitable, and very often there is no ongoing data collection on practitioner implementation. We have learned from our research and experience with other initiatives that a selected EBP needs the ongoing support of an Instructional Coach and district personnel, as well as attention to the other implementation drivers, if it is going to be implemented with fidelity. Consequently, our rationale for adding Systems Coaching as the overarching improvement strategy is recognition that if we do not help system level personnel understand the necessity of institutionalizing the

implementation frameworks, it is unlikely that schools will be able to implement the selected EBP (UDL, Family Engagement, MTSS, CRI, and SI) with fidelity. That is why we are focused on building the capacity of division and local personnel in the four essential functions (engagement and collaboration, team development, change facilitation, and discovery and diagnosis) of a systems coach. Knowledge and skill in these areas will build the competency of division staff to coach system level staff who in turn will coach school personnel to implement EBPs with fidelity.

As part of the implementation process, i.e., working with the implementation drivers, Local School System Implementation Teams will not only select which EBP to implement but will also select and train an Instructional Coach to support the EBP implementation by practitioners. A selected mathematics EBP needs the ongoing support of an Instructional Coach and local system personnel, if it is going to be implemented with fidelity. System coaches will work with their LSS Implementation Teams to: identify resources for instructional coaching, and develop the selection criteria for EBP and Instructional Coaches. In addition, they will assist with the development of an Instructional Coaches' interview protocol to ensure that schools select the best possible person to fill this role.

Systems' coaching is an overarching improvement strategy to help system level personnel understand how to use implementation frameworks and why they are important to implementation success. As part of the implementation process, i.e., working with the implementation drivers, Local School System Implementation Teams will apply the TAP-IT protocol and tools of Implementation Science, such as the Hexagon Tool, to not only select which mathematics EBP to implement but to select and train an Instructional Coach to support the EBP implementation by practitioners. The MSDE will concentrate efforts on building State capacity to deliver coaching support that expands the LSS capacity to achieve the SiMR. They will demonstrate the skills to guide the LSS team to provide the local support of implementation of the SSIP coherent improvement strategies including mathematics EBP. LSS Leaders will in turn be focused on the full implementation of the coherent improvement strategies at the school and classroom level.

How did the State assess the readiness and capacity for implementation of the LEAs, schools, and with personnel/providers?

Maryland invited its SPDG, SWIFT, and Bridges for Systems Change systems to participate in SSIP because the strategies to be employed in SSIP will build on already existing structures (implementation teams) and practices (attending to implementation drivers, creation of a practice-to-policy feedback loop). Each of the LSSs selected have established implementation teams at the central office level, have a good understanding of most of the Active Implementation Frameworks and are using data to inform their decision making on a regular basis. Data will be collected and analyzed data to determine school readiness and capacity for the implementation of selected EBP.

What implementation drivers are needed to effect change in LEA, school, and personnel/provider practices?

As would be expected during Phase 2 of the SSIP, Maryland is working in different stages of implementation simultaneously. At the State and LSS levels we are at the installation stage. However, the SSIP work at the school level is at the exploration stage. Looking at the State and LSS levels, which are at the installation stage of implementation, the competency drivers (selection, training, coaching, and fidelity assessment) will be used to effect changes at the State and LSS levels. The table below describes the Installation Stage Activities and aligns actions with each of the competency drivers. These actions are targeting the implementation of the **system** improvement strategy – Systems Coaching.

Table 10: State and LSS Activities during Installation Stage

State and LSS Activities during Installation Stage

Competency Driver	State/Division Level	LSS Level
Selection	· Identify the prerequisite skills and responsibilities for the role of Systems Coach · Select monitoring and technical assistance staff from the Divisions Implementation Team to take the role of a Systems Coach. · Through an Institute of Higher Education (IHE) grant process select a university (or universities) to develop a parent/teacher partnership course.	· Identify the prerequisite skills and responsibilities for the role of Systems Coach · Select a special education and general education member of the LSS Implementation Team to take the role of a Systems Coach · Select Schools · Use Hexagon Tool to evaluate new and existing interventions in identified schools · Begin process for Instructional Coach position (funds, existing staff) · Select Instructional Coach or create a plan to provide instructional coaching support
Training	· Selected State staff will be trained by NIRN/SISEP in the four essential functions of systems coaching and will develop the Useable Intervention document that includes a clear description of the program, clear essential functions that define the program, operational definitions of essential functions and a practical performance assessment e.g., practice profile for systems coaching.	· Selected LSS staff will be trained by NIRN/SISEP in the four essential functions of systems coaching and will develop the Useable Intervention document that includes a clear description of the program, clear essential functions that define the program, operational definitions of essential functions and a practical performance assessment e.g., practice profile for systems coaching. · Ensure availability of funding streams and human resource strategies o Create reporting frameworks o Prepare Organization o Prepare Staff

Coaching	· State staff will receive ongoing support from NIRN/SISEP.	· LSS staff will receive ongoing support from the State/Division System Coach
Fidelity Assessment	· Development of practice profile for Systems Coaches	· Development of practice profile for Instructional Coaches.

The table below focuses on the drivers that the LSS will attend to during the exploration stage when they are assessing the potential match between school needs and the EBP requirements and available resources in order to make a decision to proceed or not. These actions are targeting the implementation of LSS selected evidence-based **classroom/school** improvement strategies (MTSS, UDL, Culturally Responsive Interactions, Specially Designed Instruction and Family Engagement).

Table 11: LSS and School Level Activities during Exploration Stage

LSS and School Level Activities during Exploration Stage

Competency Driver	**LSS Level**	**School Level**
Selection	· Facilitate school exploration stage of implementation to select EBP	
	· Select SSIP schools	· Schools agree to participate in SSIP and to implement selected EBP
	· Select Evidence-based practice based on Hexagon Tool	· Schools sign letter of commitment
	· Assess fit and decide to proceed or not	· School and LSS Implementation teams use data to identify needs
	· Develop a letter of commitment outlining expectations for selected schools	· School selects EBP using implementation science tools and processes
	· Select administrators and teachers for the university designed family engagement course	· Selection of teachers for initial implementation
	· Discuss with LSSs and schools the identification process for identifying parent/teacher participants for the partnership course	
Training	· Development of training or selection of training provider for selected EBP	· Selected teachers receive initial training in EBPs in mathematics
	· Conducts training for teachers	· Instructional Coaches receive initial training for EBP and coaching skills
	· Conducts training for instructional coaches	
Coaching	· Select Instructional Coaches or identify an instructional coaching plan	· Coach establishes a relationship with principal and keeps principal informed on implementation progress and any barriers to implementation
	· Instructional Coaches develop a service delivery plan for ongoing coaching support for teachers	· Coach implements service delivery plan
	· District designs mechanism, e.g. coaches clinic, for ongoing support for Instructional Coaches	· Coaches attend coaches training sessions

What is the professional development (PD) support for high-fidelity adoption, implementation, and sustainability of selected coherent improvement strategies and EBP?

Technical Assistance Model: Maryland believes its systems coaching strategy will provide the necessary support for high-fidelity adoption, implementation, and sustainability of selected EBP. Maryland plans to work with its SISEP partner to provide Systems Coaching training to selected members of the Division's Implementation Teams (D-IT) and Cross-Departmental Implementation Team. The Division's System Coach will provide ongoing support to LSS Implementation Teams (LSS-IT). Training will also be provided to selected members of the LSS Implementation Teams (LSS-IT) in systems coaching. LSS Systems Coaches will develop the capacity of the local school system to effectively implement evidence-based practices with fidelity. Maryland will also provide Systems Coaching training to its Johns Hopkins University-Center for Technology in Education, Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education, Parent's Place of Maryland and select IHE partners in order to build a community of practice for the D-IT liaisons.

Professional Learning Opportunities: There will be three types of learning opportunities for SSIP participants: (1) Professional Learning Opportunities (PLOs) where mathematics strategies such as Concrete, Representational, Abstract (CRS) Assessment will be introduced and studied to determine if it is a strategy the district wants to consider for implementation, (2) Local School System Implementation Team meetings, at least three times a year, when LSS-IT teams will have the opportunity to assess how well they are using the implementation drivers and share how they have addressed some of the barriers to implementation, and (3) training and instructional coaching for practitioners on the selected evidence-based practice they are being asked to implement.

Resource Toolbox

School-wide evidence-based practices. There is not the level of research about strategies to address learning difficulties in mathematics in comparison to research on

difficulties in learning to read. Hence, research on ways to support mathematics learners who struggle is less so (Tapper, 2012). Consequently, Maryland is focusing on building a toolbox of resources (tools, research, descriptions of implementation) for:

- High quality Tier 1 instruction in math based on UDL
- Components of a math MTSS
- Culturally responsive instruction
- Designing standards-based IEPs and specially-designed instruction linked to improving math outcomes.
- Family engagement

Math evidence-based practices. MSDE had begun to collect information on the screening and progress monitoring tools used by LSSs and the technically adequate, research-based math interventions that are being used in Maryland and otherwise available for use. In addition, in collaboration with the Mathematics Specialists in the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability, MSDE has begun to amass research on "strategies that work" for all students as well as students with disabilities. Our intent is to develop resources for learning and for selecting instructional approaches that are based in research and are appropriate for students based on their specific performance patterns gathered through formative and summative assessment. Resource sites such as those shared by the NCSI math collaborative and National Centers (e.g., the National Center on Intensive Intervention: http://www.intensiveintervention.org/standards-relevant-instruction-multi-tiered-systems-support-mtss-or-response-intervention) will be shared; opportunities for teaching LSS staff how to use resources will be designed as needed through the in-state math collaborative (see below).

Implementation Tools: In order to have standard protocol or steps to begin the installation process for both school-wide organizational practices and classroom instructional practices, MSDE will identify or adapt tools that are based on the Implementation Science Frameworks. This begins with using data to select the organizational and instructional evidence-based practices, identifying the current status of implementation, and identifying initial steps for implementation. For example the Stages of Implementation Tools (http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/AIModules-Activity-4-6-StagesOfimplementationAnalysis.pdf) will enable teams to identify where they are in implementing a selected evidence-based math intervention; the Implementation Drivers Best Practices Assessment Tool (http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/AIModules-Activity-1-3-ImplementationDrivers.pdf) will help schools determine actions for implementing either a school-wide organizational practice or a specific math intervention. Fidelity tools for specific practices (e.g., MTSS) will be identified or designed based on what is currently available. The SWIFT Center has, for example, developed a practice profile for MTSS that would be applicable for schools and districts that want to begin to install a school wide system of math instruction and intervention. A specific math intervention fidelity tool might be available with a selected program or may be designed based on the features described in research.

How will the State support the LEA in scaling up EBPs?

Maryland believes that the adoption of the **Systems Coaching**, that is, an improvement strategy that directly impacts system practices around implementation, will enable the State/Division System Coaches to competently coach the Local School System as they embark on scaling-up activities. As part of their role, systems coaches will lead LSS-IT members in the TAP-IT process (see component 2 (a) for TAP-IT explanation) to select EBP in mathematics specifically aligned to student needs. In turn, the Local School System will also have System Coaches with the capacity to competently coach selected schools within the local to effectively implement EBPs.

2 (b) *Identify steps and specific activities needed to implement the coherent improvement strategies. Include communication strategies, stakeholder involvement; how identified barriers will be addressed and who will be in charge of implementing. Include how the activities will be implemented with fidelity; the resources that will be used to implement them; and timelines for completion.*

What are the communication strategies the State will use to implement the Plan?

The goal of communication of the SSIP is to (1) share resources and successful strategies that support implementation beyond the targeted partners, and (2) disseminate the methods and outcomes of SSIP work to keep stakeholders informed and provide opportunities for input. Initial, the following areas for communication related to the SSIP have been identified. In addition, the Cross-Departmental Implementation Team will have an agenda item that focuses on communication in their monthly meetings.

- Dissemination of the SSIP Plan. The SSIP plan will be posted on the MSDE Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services web page http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/earlyinterv/index.html with a link to the SSIP page on Maryland Learning Links our interactive web-based portal for educational stakeholders.
- Statewide Dissemination. Quarterly newsletter.
- Resource Dissemination. Maryland Learning Links (MLL).
- Quarterly Statewide Professional Learning Institute (PLI)
- Quarterly Statewide Meeting of local Chief Academic Officers

Inter and Intra Departmental Communication. The DSE/EIS assigned coordinator for the SSIP (SSIP coordinator) will be a conduit for two-way communication among key SSIP teams, e.g., the Core Planning Team, the Cross-Departmental Implementation Team and the Divisions' and LSSs Implementation Teams. The SSIP coordinator will provide opportunities for two-way communication about implementation efforts with Maryland stakeholders external to MSDE, e.g., advisory groups. .

How will stakeholders be involved in implementation and what are their decision-making roles during the planning stage?

The SSIP implementation structure proposed in Phase II is designed to routinely engage both Internal and External Stakeholders. Internal stakeholders, that is, the State Executive Leadership Team, Core Implementation Team, Cross-Functional State Implementation Team and Expert Team are comprised of personnel from across the department – our internal stakeholders. These individuals have otherwise defined roles and responsibilities and have brought their broad set of skills and experiences to the SSIP planning. Through the SSIP Implementation Structure and defined roles and responsibilities each of the stakeholders will be involved in an ongoing manner in SSIP implementation.

Our external stakeholders (Advisory Groups) provided input during SSIP planning and will have an ongoing role during implementation. All stakeholders (internal and external) will be asked to provide information through the SSIP formative evaluation process. In this way, stakeholders will have ongoing opportunity to assess SSIP implementation progress and provide input on any needed adjustments to the process. The following describes each of the external stakeholder groups and their role in the SSIP.

Engaging Stakeholders in the development of the SSIP

In order to obtain input that crossed a wide variety of stakeholders during the Phase 2 SSIP planning, MSDE chose to engage different existing stakeholder groups. In each case, following a presentation of the SSIP planning to date, a rich dialogue was held to discuss current practices, answer questions related to SSIP implementation, and most importantly, obtain recommendations for the planning and implementation process. Below is a summary of the input obtained from stakeholder group meetings.

Education Advocacy Coalition (EAC) October 20, 2015

The EAC is a group of special education advocates who represent various disability or issue constituencies. Some are individual advocates, such as special education lawyers; others are representatives of advocacy groups such as the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, the Learning Disabilities Association of Maryland, or the Parents' Place of MD. Recommendation from this group included:

- Look at information from Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (https://www.marylandmath.org/)
- Develop case examples for evaluation
- Develop a strategy for helping teachers reach students who are really struggling
- Determine a way to calculate if the goals and strategies are reasonable for improving mathematics – look at the intensity, frequency, and ratio.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Users Group October 28, 2015

The IEP Users Group is comprised of specialized educators for Maryland's LSS who have lead responsibilities for supporting the use of Maryland's online IEP in their district. This group provides regular feedback to MSDE on issues/concerns, recommendations for improvement, and input on the changes being made to the State's online system. This group meets 3 to 4 times per year and acts as an important resource for making Maryland's online IEP system a valuable tool for special education planning. Recommendation from this group included:

- Focus on teachers vs. paraprofessionals as deliverers of instruction for students with disabilities: this will require a look at the role and responsibilities of general and special educators in the classroom, the competencies of special educators to teach mathematics and the competencies of general educators to deliver Specially Designed Instruction. The role of the paraprofessional should be to carry out the direction of the teachers.
- Make sure special education is represented on committees within the school
- Discuss the definitions of interventions within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) vs. Specially Designed Instruction (as it relates to the MD Student Compass) – we need a consistent message
- Consider professional development of both general and special education teacher substitutes in delivering mathematics instruction and interventions
- We need to be clear on what Specially Designed Instruction in mathematics instruction is – it is different for students who are performing lower than grade level vs. students who have dysgraphia or a specific leaning disability related to learning mathematics.

Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC) November 16, 2015

The Maryland Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC) is established in accordance with the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part B). The mission of the SESAC is to advise and assist the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services in administering, promoting, planning, coordinating, and improving the delivery of special education and related services to assure that all children with disabilities, three through 21 years of age, and their families have access to appropriate education and related services. Maryland's SESAC meets on a monthly basis to learn about updates on current issues and priorities for the State's special education practices, provide input on proposed positions or projects of MSDE, and discuss areas that they'd like MSDE or LSSs to address. Recommendation from this group included:

- Make sure a parent participates on the state and district implementation teams
- Make sure district teams consider what parents need to know to contribute to their implementation team discussions and decisions
- Develop a communication plan for sharing information from the State to the LSSs that is collaborative across special education and general education (district teams need to have both types of educators involved and need to see the State in a collaborative planning team as well)
- The State Implementation Team and support from the State to local districts should include members of the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, & Accountability as well as Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services
- Experts used for professional learning and technical assistance need to have relevant experience teaching students with disabilities, including students with disabilities in general education classes (mathematics, Specially Designed Instruction, other disabilities and the impact on learning), and school-wide systems for using data and developing interventions
- Put out more information to parents than less: this will increase trust
- Address higher education: teacher and administrator leadership preparation; we are still preparing teachers for an old "pull-out" model that is not working

Local School System Stakeholders November 24, 2015

Six (6) LSSs were invited to participate in the SSIP. They were selected based on their current relationship with MSDE in a technical assistance partnership, as well as an expressed desire to address the delivery of mathematics instruction to students with disabilities. These LSSs are part of the SWIFT national Center for Inclusive School Reform, the State Professional Development Grant (SPDG), or the MSDE Bridges grant. They have established district level planning teams, are working in a supportive relationship with targeted or selected schools, and are eager to address instruction to improve mathematics proficiency. All LSSs will need to agree to begin the exploration work to install a mathematics MTSS (if they have not already initiated this work), and engage in the development of district-level "Systems Coaching" to support schools in the improvement process. The MSDE SSIP Core Team met with this group, consisting of LSS chief academic officer or director of curriculum/instruction and the LSS special education director. Recommendation from this group included:

- **Generate a list of expectations for LSSs**
  - g., what data would need to be generated? Are we looking at LEA implementation meetings?
  - The state would create a system of supports to help LSSs achieve the target (mathematics) and implement whatever EBPs they select. State would provide training related to systems coaching and how to implement EBPs with fidelity to get results.
- **Bring in State and local mathematics/curriculum professionals to collaborate on this work**
- **Comments:**
  - In SPDG the LSS implementation team meets monthly (1 hour) and gets reports about school implementation, barriers, etc. Three times a year there are "TAP-IT" meetings (1 – 2 hours), currently looking at data to set annual goals, implementation schedules for strategies.
  - Cecil – might use the SWIFT implementation team, using the 2 elementary schools (aligned with targets), and bring on elementary mathematics coordinator.
  - Allegany – will discuss alignment with SWIFT team and include Superintendent in discussion
  - QACPS – may target the 2 SWIFT Elementary Schools.
  - Worcester – aligned with expanding BRIDGES project; may need to narrow the focus to target schools; need to meet with mathematics supervisor as follow up. Also need to target schools
- **The PLI (NOV) – focused on mathematics instruction for struggling learners; looking forward to follow up.**

Local School System/Public Agency/Institutes of Higher Education/General Education Partners/Advocacy Community Leaders and Strategic Partners December 9, 2015

The group of over 200 educational partners was brought together for our Professional Learning Institute and a session was presented on the SSIP Data-Based Decision Making Process, Theory of Action and Logic Model. Discussion was held and participants were encouraged to offer suggestions for the SSIP Part C and Part B Theory of Action and Logic Model.

Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services December 16, 2015

The SSIP Theory of Action and Logic Model were shared across the Division to ensure understanding of the process and SSIP efforts ahead. Questions were fielded and smaller groups have been provided the opportunity to dig deeper into the direction of the work. The Performance Support and Technical Assistance Branch has reviewed and offered revisions/clarifications through their Branch and Section work. Included in their efforts is:

- The connections made to the DSE/EIS *Tiers of Engagement*
- The exploration and eventual acceptance of the Systems Coaching to be included in SSIP
- The clarity of the role of the DSE/EIS staff in the Division Implementation Teams with other Branch personnel
- The acceptance of the strategies to implement the EBPs with the Local School System Implementation Teams

Local School System Stakeholders January 8, 2016

After the six (6) LSSs had discussions with their district-level colleagues, they met again with the SSIP Core Team met with the group from the November meeting, and with their mathematics district-level supervisors. The MSDE team discussed the further planning and Systems Coaching component of the work, answered questions, and asked for additional input. Recommendation from this group included:

- **Special Ed/Mathematics Representation**: are we bringing together general education and special education from MSDE: YES. We would like to continue this collaborative process and appreciate the idea of a collaborative network.
- Will there be the same school-level implementation team as SPDG now experiences? SPDG is class-focused with input to the district. SWIFT is System-wide/school-wide focus with classroom applications supported by district and school leadership. EBPs used in SPDG can inform SWIFT partners. SWIFT school-wide planning can inform SPDG partners. Scale-up discussions are happening in Charles now.
- Think about: family engagement improvement practices.
- Combine what has been learned by all projects and look at a way to blend current practices.

State Mathematics Advisory Group February 10, 2016

The Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability holds a state-wide mathematics advisory group meeting on a quarterly basis. Key experts and LSS leaders in mathematics instruction are members of this group, including representatives of advocacy groups and institutes of higher education. The purpose of this group is to advise MSDE, share local successes, and provide an opportunity for statewide planning around mathematics instructional practices. Recommendation from this group included:

- MTSS is the goal: having a school-wide system for screening students, using data for decisions, providing small group intensive instruction based on performance and not on disability label is key.
- Special education pull out on mathematics is often disconnected from the core curriculum instruction; homogeneous grouping for mathematics should be based on specific skill needs.
- Mathematics teachers don't always have the diagnostic background they need
- We need more collaboration between mathematics and special education teachers especially in grades 3 – 5; diving into conceptual understanding is procedural and not deep.
- We need to invest in teacher education – this must be a priority or we will always need to train and retrain educators once hired.
- Universal screening (e.g., MAP) is key – needs to be installed in the schools; shift to collaboration of mathematics and special education instruction related to building and implementing IEPs - not around discrete mathematics skills, but more on building proficiency of student engagement in mathematical practices.
- Consider retraining for co-teaching – *teachers who behave as mathematicians*.
- Check Journal of Learning Disabilities for new fractions article
- Worcester used I-Ready for K-12 and using with Agile Minds and Intensified Algebra – it worked!!!
- Look at K scores to identify students early on; the new Kindergarten assessment predicts children who will struggle in mathematics
- Look at student growth – individual student data – use benchmark data
- This needs to be a school-wide system! MTSS!

SPDG Presenting SSIP to Stakeholders February 23, 2016

The State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) holds quarterly meetings with all stakeholders. The group was provided with a detailed presentation of the SSIP and asked to provide connections and innovations they would like to see included in the SSIP. The following is their list of connections between the SSIP and current SPDG work:

- Implementation infrastructure
- TAP-IT Protocols and tools (e.g., Digital portfolio, Maryland Online IEP, and Student Compass)
- Equitable Access
- Team Based Cycle of Improvement
- Know the data and various levels of decision making
- Tier 1 mathematics in place
- High quality mathematics practices delivered with fidelity
- Importance of families as partners understanding data
- TAP-IT with School Teams
- Buy in of Parents regarding Co-teaching and instruction models
- Structured coop learning
- Protocols in place
- Parents are informed and understand the various instructional practices
- High quality coaches-consistency and accountability
- Systems coaches in place

Given the barriers identified in Phase I, how are they being addressed within the plan?

There were no barriers identified in Phase 1. As the Phase 2 has been developed the capacity of the State to deploy staff to work with the LSSs, who work with the schools, has been a possible barrier and a theme that has significantly influenced our infrastructure design. We believe that the SSIP Implementation Structure, Division Implementation Teams, the inclusion of the Systems Coaches, and the direct link made between the DSE/EIS Strategic Plan, most notably the *Tiers of Engagement* will reduce the potential for impeding progress toward achievement of the SiMR.

How will the implementation teams at the district and local level ensure that personnel/providers are trained to implement the coherent improvement strategies and EBPs with fidelity?

The State of Maryland is focusing on building the capacity of Local School System Implementation Teams in the four essential functions of Systems Coaching. Consequently, the State is recommending that the Local School System Implementation Team (LSS-IT) address the exploration and installation stages of implementation during the first year of SSIP. This will enable the implementation teams to (1) work with schools to select an evidence-based practice aligned to school needs, (2) ready staff and the organization (3) select Instructional Coaches or a coaching plan to implement the EBPs with fidelity, (4) develop practice profiles for Instructional Coaches (5) select and work with State experts/providers to design training for selected EBP, and (6) provide initial training to coaches and teachers. We will target the 2017-16 school year for initial implementation of selected evidence-based practices at the school level

In relation to the quality of training, the State will provide support to ensure that professional development/training provided by either district personnel or State experts/providers adheres to high quality professional development indicators, e.g., preparation, introduction to content, demonstration, engagement, self-evaluation and content and skill mastery activities (Dunst & Trivette (2012).

What are the short term and long term activities for each coherent improvement strategy and timelines for completion of those activities?

Table 12 provides the short and long term activities for each of the improvement strategies and timelines for completion.

Table 12: Action Plan

Action Plan

STRATEGY #1: Provide leadership to prepare for strategic collaboration and resource management

Implementation Activity (Logic Model)	**Long and Short Term Activities**	**Responsibility**	**Resources Needed**	**Timelines**
		Division Implementation Team		
	1.1.1 DSE/EIS invites six Local School systems (LSS) to participate in SSIP. Each invited LSS is associated with one of the key initiatives in the State and has an existing LSS Implementation Team (LSS-IT) working in partnership with DSE/EIS.			
Increased level of State-local communication and collaboration	1.1.2 The formation of a cross-functional teaming structure at DSE/EIS focused on providing technical assistance and support to districts. The Division Implementation Team (D-IT) consists of monitors, TA providers, and fiscal staff to provide support to LSS Implementation Teams who will be overseeing implementation of EBP at the school level.	DSE/EIS Branch Chiefs	Time and Opportunities for Collaboration	Winter/ Spring 2016
	1.1.3 DSE/EIS develops a new protocol and timeline for technical assistance activities aligned to the Differentiated Framework: Tiers of Engagement (Universal, Targeted, Focused, and Intensive).			
- Increased level of communication and collaboration across MSDE	1.1.4 DSE/EIS develops a logistics plan for deploying D-IT to support LSS Implementation Teams in order to build their capacity to develop an infrastructure for the implementation of EBP with fidelity.			
	1.1.5 Formation of the Executive Leadership Team.			
	1.1.6 Formation of the Cross-Departmental Implementation Team.			

Action Plan

STRATEGY #1: Provide leadership to prepare for strategic collaboration and resource management

Implementation Activity (Logic Model)	Long and Short Term Activities	Responsibility	Resources Needed	Timelines
		Performance Support and Technical Assistance (PSTA) Branch Leadership		
		PSTA Branch Leadership		
		MSDE Executive Leadership Team DSE/EIS Assistant State Superintendent		

Identify any barriers or challenges to implementation:

1.1: Staff availability for this work (time)

Action Plan

STRATEGY #2: Provide technical assistance and support focused on building the capacity of Local School Systems to build an implementation infrastructure that enables them to implement evidence-based practices with fidelity.

Implementation Activity (Logic Model)	Long and Short Term Activities	Responsibility	Resources Needed	Timelines
				Spring - Summer 2016
Participate in systems coaching training and provide TA on implementation to LSS and schools. - - Disseminate resources toolbox to support systems coaching, implementation science & TAP-IT. - - - - Conduct needs assessments/ surveys in EBP with locals.	2.1 Selected members of Division Implementation Teams (D-IT), LSS Implementation Teams (LSS-IT), and external partners are trained in systems coaching. 2.1.1 DSE/EIS develops technical assistance protocol for systems coaching. 2.1.2 D-IT systems coaches provide coaching support to LSS Implementation Teams (LSS-IT) for the development of an implementation infrastructure that enables the LSS-IT to support schools with the implementation of EBP with fidelity. 2.1.3 MSDE will provide online tools and resources to support system coaching.	Performance Support and Technical Assistance (PSTA) Branch Leadership, LSS Implementation Teams, Policy and Accountability Branch (Monitoring Team)	Time and Opportunities for Collaboration	
Collaborate with LSS data analysts to use student performance data to identify instructional needs.		DSE/EIS Branch Chiefs, PSTA Branch Leadership, Policy and Accountability Branch (Monitoring Team)		Fall 2016
Provide TA support to use data based on strengths/needs to select EBP priorities.				
Provide TA support to apply implementation science to install/implement EBPs.				

Identify any barriers or challenges to implementation:

2.1: Staff availability for this work (time)

Action Plan

STRATEGY #3: Provide professional learning opportunities focused on building the capacity of Local School systems to implement evidence-based practices.

Implementation Activity (Logic Model)	Long and Short Term Activities	Responsibility	Resources Needed	Timelines
		Parents' Place of Maryland, Towson University, The Ohio State Department of Education		
Identify/develop training on EBP i.e., Family Engagement, MTSS, UDL, Culturally Responsive Teaching. Disseminate resources toolbox to support EBP i.e., MTSS, UDL, Culturally Responsive Tier 1 Math instruction.	3.1 MSDE provides content experts, including IHEs, to develop professional learning training on Family Engagement through parent-teacher partnerships, MTSS, UDL, and Culturally Responsive Teaching. 3.1.1 MSDE convenes SSIP LSS-IT, at least three times a year, to discuss and assess how well they are using the implementation drivers and share how they have addressed some of the implementation barriers they have encountered. 3.1.2 MSDE's expert team identifies/develops training for practitioners implementing EBP i.e., UDL, culturally responsive teaching, Specially Designed Instruction. 3.1.3 Conduct practitioner training for EBP at LSS level. 3.1.4 Convene Instructional Coaches for fidelity check training. 3.1.5 MSDE convenes SSIP participants from the school and district levels to learn about mathematics strategies. 3.1.6 MSDE will provide online tools, resources, and fidelity measures to support EBP professional development and instructional coaching.			Winter/ Spring 2017

Action Plan

STRATEGY #3: Provide professional learning opportunities focused on building the capacity of Local School systems to implement evidence-based practices.

Implementation Activity (Logic Model)	Long and Short Term Activities	Responsibility	Resources Needed	Timelines
		Dr. Jim Knight and University of Kansas Team, SISEP/NIRN Centers		

Identify any barriers or challenges to implementation:

3.1: Staff availability for this work (time)

Action Plan

STRATEGY #4: Preparing Division Implementation Teams (D-IT) and Local School Systems Implementation Teams (LSS-IT) to use TAP-IT and Implementation Science for a practice-to-policy feedback loop that informs decision making.

Implementation Activity (Logic Model)	Long and Short Term Activities	Responsibility	Resources Needed	Timelines
Conduct needs assessments/ surveys with local programs around TAP-IT	3.1 Assess current knowledge of D-IT and LSS-IT members on TAP-IT and Implementation Science frameworks.			
Develop professional learning (PL)/training for Division Implementation Teams and LSS Implementation Teams for TAP-IT and Implementation Science frameworks.	3.1.2 Develop a training plan to address D-IT and LSS-IT needs in TAP-IT and Implementation Science. 3.1.3 Provide training to D-IT and LSS_IT on TAP-IT and Implementation Science.			Winter/ Spring 2016

Identify any barriers or challenges to implementation:

[1] Neufeld, B. & Roper, D. (2003a). Coaching: A strategy for developing instructional capacity – Promises and practicalities. Washington, DC: Aspen institute Program on Education and Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform.

Evaluation

(a) Specify how the evaluation is aligned to the theory of action and other components of the SSIP and the extent to which it includes short-term and long-term objectives to measure implementation of the SSIP and its impact on achieving measurable improvement in SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
(b) Specify how the evaluation includes stakeholders and how information from the evaluation will be disseminated to stakeholders.
(c) Specify the methods that the State will use to collect and analyze data to evaluate implementation and outcomes of the SSIP and the progress toward achieving intended improvements in the SIMR(s).
(d) Specify how the State will use the evaluation data to examine the effectiveness of the implementation; assess the State's progress toward achieving intended improvements; and to make modifications to the SSIP as necessary.

Phase II Component #3: Evaluation

3(a) Specify how the evaluation is aligned to the theory of action and other components of the SSIP and the extent to which it includes short-term and long-term objectives to measure implementation of the SSIP. Specify its impact on achieving measurable improvement in SIMR for children with disabilities.

The MSDE leadership, in collaboration with an external evaluation team, designed a multi-year evaluation plan identifying clear indicators with short-, medium- and long-term outcomes aligned to the *SSIP Theory of Action* (Figure 1) addressed through the implementation science drivers. The evaluation plan will monitor the implementation process and outcomes of Systems Coaching training and implementation, MTSS infrastructure development, training, coaching, and LSS implementation of evidence-based practices. Together, through formative evaluation aligned with implementation science and guided by data-based implementation, the SSIP will impact the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in six LSSs, resulting in measurable improvement in the identified SIMR.

Inputs and Outputs

The *SSIP Logic Model* (Attachment 3) includes inputs, implementation activities and outputs, as well as short-, medium- and long-term outcomes aligned with the *SSIP Theory of Action*. The *Evaluation Plan* (Attachment 1) provides outcomes, indicators, evaluation questions and measures aligned with the *Logic Model*, *Theory of Action* and overarching evaluation questions. Evaluation of inputs and outputs will ensure that the processes and products (i.e., state-level collaboration, Systems Coaching, MTSS and EBPs training and coaching) meet the needs of Local School Systems (LSS) and adhere to implementation science principles. Inputs include state infrastructure, intra- and interagency staff, national and state experts, research/literature on math and other EBPs, local expertise, learning from state initiatives, partnerships, systems coaching, implementation science frameworks, stakeholder involvement, data systems, and braided funding. Outputs include trained state and local systems coaches, needs assessment, a resource toolbox, structured professional development processes and tools, and protocols for implementation fidelity.

Short, Medium and Long-Term Outcomes

The short-term, medium-term and long-term indicators identified in the evaluation of the SSIP encompass short-term outcomes including increased communication and collaboration, as well as increased knowledge and skills necessary to implement Systems Coaching and MTSS; medium-term outcomes including infrastructure and behavior changes which result in implementation fidelity of evidence-based practices, research-based math curriculum across all grades, systems change through collaboration and data-based decision making, and increased engagement of families; and long-term outcomes including the SIMR: Increase in the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in six LSSs as measured by state assessment. Annual SIMR data will inform inputs and outputs, identifying both areas of success and continued improvement.

The *Evaluation Plan* displays the alignment of the *Logic Model*, overarching evaluation questions, outcomes, indicators, evaluation questions, and measures. Indicators include:

- DSE/EIS leadership participates on the State Executive Leadership Team.
- SSIP Core Planning Team collaborates with the Cross-Functional Implementation Team to implement SSIP Improvement Strategies.
- SSIP Expert Team in collaboration with external partners develops/conducts practitioner training/products for EBP.
- SSIP Core Planning Team meets with SSIP stakeholders bi-annually to get feedback on SSIP implementation progress.
- MSDE partners with six 6 Local School Systems to support the development of a local school system infrastructure for implementation of EBP within an MTSS framework in 12 schools.
- Training is of high quality and addresses the needs of adult learners.
- MSDE and LSS Systems Coaches demonstrate expertise in essential functions of systems coaching, e.g., implementation science (active implementation frameworks), TAP-IT and innovation fluency in EBP e.g., family engagement strategies, UDL, culturally-responsive instruction, and Specially Designed Instruction.
- MSDE and LSS Systems Coaching is of high quality and addresses the needs of adult learners.
- Participants have knowledge of how to provide high quality, culturally responsive Tier 1 math instruction within a MTSS Framework and how to promote family engagement through parent-teacher partnerships.
- Teachers provide evidence-based math instruction within a MTSS Framework that includes specially-designed instruction based upon a standards-based IEP
- Families of students with disabilities are involved in data-based discussions regarding their child's performance and instructional needs.
- The LSS Implementation Team establishes a routine to complete at least three TAP-IT cycles to track implementation progress by analyzing student performance and teacher implementation data.
- Teachers provide evidence-based math instruction within a MTSS Framework that includes specially designed instruction based upon a standards-based IEP.
- Collaborative teams follow TAP-IT process to use data to inform professional development, modify instruction, design individual student supports, and provide tiered supports.
- Increase in percentage of students with disabilities who achieve grade level benchmarks in mathematics.
- SiMR goal: *To increase the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in six LSSs.*

3(b) Specify how the evaluation includes stakeholders and how information from the evaluation will be disseminated to stakeholders.

As described in section 1(d), key internal stakeholders consist of the Executive Leadership Team, Expert Team, Core Planning Team, and the Cross-Departmental Implementation Team. Evaluation results will be disseminated to these stakeholders on a regular basis during regularly scheduled meetings. In addition, evaluation results will be shared with external stakeholders including the LSS Implementation Teams and the Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC). The SESAC will be an ongoing partner in the evaluation design, implementation, and data-based decision making for ongoing improvement. The SSIP will be an agenda item at each of the General SESAC and Executive SESAC meetings. Ongoing implementation and evaluation data will be provided, and this group will discuss and inform modifications to inputs, outputs, evaluation measures, and training content in order to meet the indicators (identified above) and ensure progress on the SIMR. Finally, the Annual SSIP Evaluation Report will be available on Maryland Learning Links.

The SSIP Logic Model and Evaluation Plan were developed collaboratively by the Birth-21 Core Implementation Team which includes representatives from MSDE comprised of Part B and C staff and two external consultants. Additional input and feedback from stakeholders on the SSIP evaluation will be attained through presentations explaining the evaluation design and implementation progress to all external stakeholder groups involved in the design process. Progress and outcomes will be monitored on an ongoing basis and disseminated through an annual evaluation presentation/report. Data from LSS progress updates, implementation and feedback surveys, and fidelity measures will inform the evaluation of implementation. In addition to implementation progress and areas for improvement, these data will provide feedback into the usefulness, effort, and timeliness of data to inform state-level and local-level decision making. Modifications to the evaluation measures will be a direct result of this feedback.

Family Involvement

Families will inform the implementation and evaluation of the SSIP. Parents are members of the External Stakeholders and Advisory Council and will provide ongoing feedback

through that group. Families will also be asked to complete an Exit Ticket at the end of IEP meetings. Maryland administers an annual *Special Education Parent Involvement Survey* to families of every Preschool or School-Age child who receives special education services. Through this short survey, families will identify their perceptions of the IEP data-based decision making process and the collaborative nature of this process. This feedback will be aggregated, analyzed and used to inform both LSS and MSDE implementation efforts.

3(c) Specify the methods that the State will use to collect and analyze data to evaluate implementation and outcomes of the SSIP and the progress toward achieving intended improvements in the SIMR.

The evaluation will be conducted by MSDE in collaboration with external evaluators, State data systems, MSDE Systems Coaches, and Local Systems/Instructional Coaches. Quantitative and qualitative methods will be utilized to collect and analyze data to evaluate implementation and outcomes of the SSIP and the progress toward achieving intended indicators in the SIMR.

State Level:

To measure implementation in the state infrastructure, agendas and meeting minutes from the Cross-Departmental Implementation Team and the Expert Team meetings will be analyzed to determine progress in collaboration strategies, alignment efforts, and implementation of the coherent improvement strategies. These agendas and meeting minutes will also be reviewed to determine outcomes of collaborative efforts and the ongoing use of data to inform infrastructure refinement. A document analysis of collaborative products will be used to determine the extent to which MSDE provides protocols, resources and tools that support implementation and sustainability of evidence-based practices. Feedback from Local Systems Coaches, through surveys and progress updates will be used to determine the extent to which the state infrastructure is meeting the needs of the participating six LSS in implementing MTSS and EBPs in math.

To measure knowledge and skills necessary to implement systems coaching, a pre-post knowledge assessment of the essential functions of systems coaching will be analyzed. In addition a document analysis of coaching roles, responsibilities, qualifications, practice profile, Division and Local Implementation Team Progress Updates, and TAP-IT artifacts and fidelity checks will be used to determine the extent to which MSDE has successfully demonstrated expertise in essential functions of systems coaching, implementation science, and TAP-IT (Attachment 1: TAP-IT Fidelity Check). Trained MSDE leaders will observe workshops/training provided to MSDE and local systems coaches. Through a structured observation protocol, they will document training fidelity and the presence or absence of indicators of high-quality professional development, including opportunities to practice skills, relate the content to the local context, and reflect on learning. Participant knowledge assessments and demonstration of skills will ensure that the training facilitators effectively taught the essential content of the practice(s). State Systems Coaches will log their coaching, including the focus areas and next steps. These coaching logs will be analyzed to determine implementation progress and areas for continued training across local school systems. Feedback from Local Systems Coaches, through monthly progress updates and surveys will be used to determine the extent to which the state infrastructure is meeting the needs of Local Systems Coaches and schools.

Local-Level:

The SIMR evaluation will measure improvements in LSS implementation of MTSS, including TAP-IT and stage-based EBP implementation in math. Methods of evaluating the effectiveness of professional learning will include content knowledge measures and observation of training for content fidelity and high-quality professional development indicators. See Attachment 3: *Observation of High-Quality Professional Development Indicators*. The quality of coaching will be evaluated using the indicators of high-quality coaching rubric and a coaching recipient survey.

MTSS in the participating LSS will be evaluated at LSS and classroom levels. Fidelity of implementation of the evidence-based practices UDL, Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Specially Designed Instruction in each LSS will be evaluated using fidelity checks and/or protocols selected or developed by the State and local participants for example See Attachment 4:*Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunity: Addressing Success Gaps.* Data from these measures will provide ongoing feedback to the LSS to continually expand implementation and increase/maintain fidelity. These data will also support MSDE and Local Implementation Teams to monitor progress, evaluate the effectiveness of training and coaching, and customize their focus to meet the needs of teachers and administrators.

Student progress will be measured through universal screening data collected by the schools. Through sustained implementation of evidence-based instructional practices, and collaborative data-based decision making structures, the SIMR will be achieved: Increase in the mathematics proficiency of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in six LSSs as measured by state assessment.

3(d) Specify how the State will use the evaluation data to examine the effectiveness of the implementation; the evaluation, assessment of the progress toward achieving intended improvements; and to make modifications to the SSIP as necessary.

MSDE will incorporate evaluation data from multiple sources to examine the effectiveness of the implementation, progress toward achieving intended improvements, and to make modifications of the SSIP inputs and outputs as necessary. At the State level, the Core Planning Team in collaboration with the Cross-Departmental Implementation Team will be responsible for directing and utilizing ongoing analysis of input, output, and outcomes data. The team will meet monthly to monitor progress and determine implementation strengths and areas for improvement. This team will be directly responsible for initiating modifications that will lead to increased implementation fidelity and student outcomes. Formative and summative evaluation data will be used to determine strengths and areas of continued improvement. The Cross-Departmental Implementation Team will strategize inputs and outputs to address continued or newly-identified areas of improvement. These modifications will be implemented by MSDE to better support LSSs to implement evidence-based practices that improve the instructional practices for students with disabilities. Successes and modifications to training, coaching, and systems alignment will be documented through meeting minutes. As described in section 3(b), stakeholder groups, including the Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC) and the LSS Implementation Teams will be ongoing, integral partners in examining the effectiveness of implementation, assessing progress toward achieving intended improvement, and recommending modifications to the SSIP as necessary.

Technical Assistance and Support

Describe the support the State needs to develop and implement an effective SSIP. Areas to consider include: Infrastructure development; Support for EIS programs and providers implementation of EBP; Evaluation; and Stakeholder involvement in Phase II.

To effectively implement the State's SSIP, the Division of Special Education/ Early Intervention Services will continue to rely on federal funding to support the process. The State plans to utilize federal funds to support the contracting of external evaluators, as well as to provide discretionary funds to Local School Systems/ Public Agencies and Institutes of Higher Education with a focus on the SSIP work, including the provision of training and implementation of evidence-based practices. Support for local SSIP systems will be provided as described in Phase 2 will be provided, again using federal funds allocated to the State.

In addition to funding, the State continues to rely on federal Technical Assistance (TA) providers, including the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) for SSIP-related guidance and utilizes many of the online resources around evidence-based practices. Staff from NCSI have reviewed the State's Phase II submission and provided feedback.

Finally, the MSDE continues to rely on the Mathematics Cross-State Collaborative coordinated by federal TA centers. MSDE staff participate in numerous learning communities/communities of practice The MSDE requests that these supports continue throughout SSIP Implementation and Evaluation.

Certify and Submit your SPP/APR

This indicator is not applicable.