



Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

# MARYLAND PART B STATE SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Phase III, Year 4 Report

(January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019)



The goal of the *Moving Maryland Forward: Sharpen the Focus for 2020* remains the same – to narrow the school readiness and achievement gap between children and youth with disabilities and their non-disabled peers to ensure that youth with disabilities are college, career, and community ready when they complete their schooling.

**Maryland State Department of Education**  
 Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services  
**Part B State Systemic Improvement Plan**

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## A. Summary of Phase III, Year 4

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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services (DEI/SES) continues to make progress in the implementation of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Maryland's schools moved from installation and initial implementation stages of mathematics Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) to strategic scale up across elementary schools in all 4 participating districts. In the last year, MSDE has worked with Local School Systems (LSSs) and external partners to provide professional learning opportunities in data literacy and instructional coaching methods as teachers use data to inform practice, and districts build the capacity of teachers to deliver specially designed instruction within high quality and effective general education lessons.

This report outlines Maryland's progress in implementing the SSIP during the 2019 calendar year, spanning two school years. Data will be reviewed in the context of the Theory of Action, activities for fidelity of implementation, progress toward improvements in infrastructure and our plans for continued improvements and sustainability.

### 1. Theory of Action, Logic Model, and State-identified Measurable Result

As the Maryland SSIP-Part B team engaged in its fourth year of implementation and worked with local and external partners, stakeholders, and our external evaluator, the team continued to strengthen and align the theory of action with the logic model, implementation plan, and evaluation plan.

Maryland's **Theory of Action** is: **If** the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services (DEI/SES) uses its resources strategically, provides technical assistance and professional learning to LSSs, and engages in infrastructure improvements, **then** Local School Systems will implement evidence-based practices with fidelity and these practices will lead to improved math proficiency and narrowing of the gap in math performance for students with disabilities.

The MSDE **resources** (inputs) include State, local, and federal personnel supporting and participating in this work; systems and tools already available and continually improved to support LSS implementation; and capacity-building strategies that have been demonstrated to result in effective implementation (e.g., Implementation Science, Systems Coaching, and data-informed continuous improvement cycle). The **technical assistance activities, professional learning opportunities, and tools** (outputs) are those used by the MSDE staff with partners and LSS participants to create the organizational structures and personnel capacity for implementing evidence-based practices that result in improved math achievement. The **outcomes** of this work are educators and families who are engaged and knowledgeable of evidence-based practices, coaches and teachers who implement evidence-based practices, and students whose math skills increase with a reduction in the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. These can be visualized in the logic model on the following page.

INPUTS	IMPLEMENTATION		OUTCOMES		
	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
<p>Research/literature on math instruction and other evidence-based interventions</p> <p>National, state, and local experts</p> <p>AnLar – external evaluator</p> <p>LSS expertise related to EBPs</p> <p>MSDE resources (data systems, PD modules, tools, Maryland Learning Links)</p> <p>Learning from Local, State, and National Organizations (TIES, MCIE, SWIFT, etc.)</p> <p>Tiers of general supervision and performance support</p> <p>Systems coaching</p> <p>Implementation Science frameworks</p>	<p>Implement <b>Cross Departmental team</b> meetings</p> <p>Develop and implement professional learning and resources for <b>state and local</b> implementers on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation Science (IS)</li> <li>• Systems coaching</li> <li>• Data-informed decisions</li> <li>• Implementation of math EBPs</li> <li>• Integrated tier system of supports including specially designed instruction</li> <li>• Data Literacy</li> <li>• Instructional Coaching</li> </ul> <p><b>Disseminate resources</b> to promote scale-up/sustainability</p>	<p>Protocol for State Technical Assistance</p> <p># of trained <b>state/local Systems Coaches</b></p> <p># of trained <b>educators</b> (in each LSS)</p> <p># of trained <b>instructional coaches</b> (in each LSS)</p> <p><b>Resource Toolbox</b> with sections for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• math EBPs</li> <li>• systems coaching</li> <li>• implementation science</li> <li>• fidelity tools for math EBPs</li> <li>• implementation fidelity tools for systems coaching</li> <li>• implementation tools for TAP-IT</li> </ul> <p>State and local <b>annual professional learning</b> institutes</p>	<p>MSDE provides <b>high quality technical assistance</b> that is grounded in evidence.</p> <p><b>Increased knowledge and skills</b> of coaches in systems coaching and instructional coaching.</p> <p><b>Increase in knowledge and skills</b> of educators for data-informed decision-making and high quality specially designed evidence-based math instruction.</p> <p><b>Increase in family involvement</b> in their child’s education and SSIP engagement.</p> <p><b>Use of Resource Toolbox</b> resources (increasing use each year)</p>	<p>State systems coaches provide <b>programmatic support and technical assistance</b> consistent with the MSDE DEI/SES Differentiated Framework with fidelity</p> <p>SSIP LSSs <b>develop or refine capacity to support implementation</b> and scale up of EBPs</p> <p>LSSs <b>use evidence-based math assessments and interventions</b> for students with disabilities.</p> <p>State and local implementation teams <b>use an evidence-based data-informed decision-making process</b> with fidelity</p> <p><b>EBPs are implemented in classrooms as intended with fidelity.</b></p> <p><b>Families are engaged</b> as partners in their child's education</p>	<p>Students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in five LSSs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate <b>increased proficiency in math</b> performance as measured by state assessment.</li> <li>• Increase their <b>time that they participate in general education</b> instruction</li> <li>• Increase their <b>achievement of grade level benchmarks</b> in mathematics</li> </ul> <p>State and Local districts <b>reduce the gap</b> between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers on grades 3, 4, and 5 level mathematics standards.</p>

Figure 1. Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services: SSIP Part B Logic Model.

Table 1. *List of Original Participating SSIP Local Schools continuing into 2020*

<b>LSS</b>	<b>Original Schools</b>	<b>Scale up in 2019</b>
Cecil	Cecil Manor ES	All 17 elementary schools
Cecil	Thompson Estates ES	
Charles	Matula ES	Indian Head ES
Charles	Dr. Mudd ES	
Queen Anne's	Matapeake ES	Church Hill ES
Queen Anne's	Sudlersville ES	
Worcester	Berlin Intermediate	All 8 schools serving grades 3-5
Worcester	Pokomoke MS	Increased focus on PMS
Worcester	Snow Hill MS	Increased focus on SHMS

The long-term outcome is the Maryland Part B **State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)** or target of our SSIP: ***Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 will demonstrate progress and narrowing of the gap in mathematics performance.*** Originally, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers test (PARCC) was identified as the measure for this outcome. However, it was given for the last time in 2018 and has been replaced with the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). The new tests are broken down into math and English, the same as the PARCC exams, although MCAP exams will be broken down further in order to give more flexibility for schools. The math exam for MCAP is now be broken into four units, each 40 minutes long, giving schools the ability to administer exams in a single class period if so chosen.

Maryland’s students with disabilities have demonstrated improved performance in the SSIP participating districts, from 3.96% baseline to 12.5% in the most recent school year (2019). Similarly, all students with disabilities across the state demonstrated an increase in math performance from a baseline of 7.51% meeting or exceeding expectations to 11.47% in 2019. It is notable that the increase in participating SSIP districts overall, has exceeded the improvement across the state. However, as will be seen in the evaluation section, the results are quite variable from district to district, and the gap between students with and without disabilities remains relatively constant. Consequently, we will also look at student performance on local benchmark data.

## **2. Coherent Improvement Strategies Implemented**

Over the course of SSIP implementation, the MSDE DEI/SES Strategic Plan, ***Moving Maryland Forward: Sharpen the Focus for 2020***, has three strategic imperatives driving the work of the Division: (1) early childhood; (2) access, equity, and progress; and (3) secondary transition. The work of the Part B SSIP falls within the imperative for narrowing the gap through activities to promote access, equity, and progress. The strategic plan calls for the implementation of five key strategies that cross all three imperatives to improve results for children and youth with disabilities and their families; these are the SSIP coherent implementation and infrastructure improvement strategies:

- Strategic Collaboration
- Family Partnerships
- Data-Informed Decisions
- Evidence-Based Practices
- Professional Learning
- Technical Assistance through Systems Coaching

### ***a. Strategic Collaboration***

Strategic collaboration occurs within the MSDE across Divisions, within the Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services across SSIP and other technical assistance and programmatic support staff, with Local School Systems (LSSs) implementing coaching and evidence-based practices, and with external partners and stakeholders. During all years of Phase 3 implementation, the following activities occurred to build infrastructure improvements:

- A “**Core B-21**” team composed of the leaders of the Part B SSIP, Part C SSIP, SSIP Coordinator, and MSDE Assistant Superintendent met to review progress on implementation, data on short and medium-term outcomes, and to provide guidance and support to participating local organizations. By meeting together, common elements of both Part C and Part B SSIP work could be shared to ensure coherence and consistency.
- A **State Implementation Team (SIT)** was formed, composed of the SSIP Coordinator and the MSDE staff who are liaisons to the participating LSSs. In Year 4.
- A **Cross-Departmental Team (CDT)**, composed of representatives of MSDE programmatic Divisions, with an emphasis on coordination with math experts within the department.
- **Local Implementation Teams** supported by their MSDE SSIP Liaison (i.e., systems coach) to meet regularly, engage in collaborative teaming structures, use brainstorming strategies for problem-solving, and use the TAP-IT process for data-informed decision making.
- **Strategic engagement with Stakeholder Groups** composed of advocates, family members, professional collaborators outside of MSDE, and LSS leaders. MSDE recognizes that cross-stakeholder engagement in a meaningful and structured manner to share perspectives is important to engage persons with expertise as well as those directly influenced by SSIP work, and to gather input to influence implementation and outcomes.

### ***b. Family Engagement and Partnership***

During Phase I, our stakeholders clearly emphasized that families needed to be engaged in the targeted districts and schools, and that resources for family and teacher collaboration needed to be developed for use across the State. During Phase 3, Year 1 Implementation, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, in partnership with DEI/SES, began the development of the Parent-Teacher-Partnership modules designed to be delivered in a face-face workshop manner for teachers and parents to strengthen the relationships between teachers and the parents of students with disabilities in their classes. Parent and teacher co-facilitators led discussions and interactive activities designed to strengthen parent and teacher relationships, including understanding effective strategies for partnering. These eight (8)

modules were field-tested by two SSIP districts in 2017 (Phase 3, Year 2). In 2018 (Phase 3, Year 3), a second set of eight (8) modules was developed for piloting in the 2018-19 school year. These modules are in the process of being revised to wide-range distribution across the State.

### ***c. Data-based Decision Making for Continuous Improvement***

MSDE DEI/SES designed and implemented a structured process to facilitate systems and instructional planning utilizing a plan-do-study-act approach (see: <https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/resources/activity-L61-apply-pdsa-cycle-your-work>). This process, called TAP-IT (Team, Analyze, Plan, Implement, Track) is used by the LSSs and school-based staff who have learned protocols to

- form collaborative teams;
- analyze student performance or other relevant data;
- select organizational, instructional, or behavioral interventions;
- plan to implement those strategies with fidelity; and
- monitor implementation to determine the effectiveness and fidelity of practices and impact on the desired results for students.

In implementation Year 1, the TAP-IT process was field tested in three of the four districts, and scaled up in Year 2 with additional training across all sites. In Year 2 a fidelity tool was developed and used by all participating teams in Years 2 and 3. Three of the four districts elected to continue using this tool and have created their own data-decision making processes. One of the lessons learned in Year 3 was that most educators were able to make sound instructional decisions for teaching and learning for their students with their available local student performance data such as benchmark measures or curriculum-based measures or assessments based on math progressions. However, data was rarely gathered in a way that supported evaluation of implementation to assess the impact of an intervention or individual student progress over time in a quantitative manner. Consequently, MSDE DEI/SES began to provide training options in data literacy by the end of 2019, with plans to expand that professional learning option into 2020.

### ***d. Evidence-Based Practices***

The evidence-based practices (EBPs) that are critical to achieving the SiMR are ***pecially designed mathematics instruction within an Integrated Tiered System of Supports (ITSS)***. MSDE continues to work with LSSs to make sure that there is clarity related to the definition of specially designed instruction (SDI) for students with disabilities in the areas of: adapting content, teaching methods, and/or delivery of instruction to:

- Address the unique needs of a child that results from their disability,
- Ensure access to the general curriculum, and
- Accelerate progress in achieving grade level standards to reduce the performance gap.

In 2019, four LSSs continued to implement selected EBPs to promote mathematics proficiency for students with disabilities in targeted elementary schools AND scaled up implementation to other schools within their districts:

- Cecil County:** *“Targeted Mathematics Instruction”* designed through a practice profile and fidelity tool.
- Charles County** *Team Based Cycle of Instruction (TBCI)* and *Structured Cooperative Learning (SCL)* with embedded culturally responsive practices within math instruction.
- Queen Anne’s County** *“Do The Math”* Intervention scaled up across all elementary schools (<https://www.hmhco.com/products/do-the-math/>)
- Worcester County** *Main Lesson, Menu Lesson* Instructional Framework based on John Tapper’s instructional strategies and Concrete, Representational, Abstract (CRA) assessments.

### **e. Professional Learning**

MSDE defines professional learning activities to encompass methods to deliver information coupled with resources and follow up learning opportunities to strengthen understanding and foster implementation with fidelity. Toward that end, MSDE DEI/SES addressed math instruction in all of its new guides and tools developed for Statewide dissemination, and provided professional learning with coaching support grants to each participating SSIP LSS. In Year 1 of SSIP implementation, professional learning focused on systems coaching, TAP-IT as a decision-making tool, and effective math instruction with adaptations for students with disabilities. In addition to skill development workshops for systems and instructional coaches, the SSIP team worked to develop resources and follow up sessions with implementers. In Years 2 and 3, additional training on math evidence-based practices was provided to each district. In Year 4, MSDE DEI/SES focused on the development of the math tool box (to be available on Maryland Learning Links (<https://marylandlearninglinks.org/leveraging-evidence-based-practice-state-systemic-improvement-plans/>)). In Year 4, training for the SSIP districts in instructional coaching and data literacy was initiated, to be expanded in 2020. A Statewide professional learning institute for all Maryland districts included a day-long session for local teams focusing on the co-development, co-implementation, and co-evaluation of Individual Education Programs (IEPs). An accompanying **Guide for Implementing Specially Designed Instruction** was disseminated to all 24 school systems with exemplars for math; additions and expansions to this Guide will be made in 2020.

### **f. Technical Assistance through Systems Coaching**

The MSDE DEI/SES continues to refine its differentiated framework to address the unique strengths and challenges that individual LSSs and public agencies have in regard to compliance requirements and implementation of effective practices. Technical Assistance (TA) with coaching is provided by Program Specialists and Section Chiefs in the Performance Support and Technical Assistance Branch. Each jurisdiction receives support defined in tiers:

- **Universal** – All LSSs and public agencies receive resources and funding and have access to statewide and regional technical assistance for identified needs.
- **Targeted** – Responsive support by joint State and local leadership teams to implement local improvement plan, including: coaching, training, periodic feedback.
- **Focused** – Substantial support by the State and local leadership (including Superintendent) and other required stakeholders to jointly implement action plan focused on Systems Change through: onsite intensive technical assistance, ongoing assessment of progress, direction of funds. Jurisdictions in this tier will receive TA from the DEI/SES that provides them with a systems coach who will guide them through staged-based implementation using the TAP-IT data-informed decision-making process.
- **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. Jurisdictions in this tier will receive TA from the DEI/SES that provides them with a systems coach who will guide them through staged-based implementation using the TAP-IT data-informed decision-making process.

The Focused and Intensive tiers are identical except for the formal collaborative agreement between the State and local Superintendent/Agency Head. An intensive designation is assigned because of the length of time that the district or agency has continued to be non-compliant or unwilling to comply with core requirements. Targeted or Focused support may also be provided through the MSDE Systems Coaches or partners to enhance and improve identified practices, and not only because of compliance concerns.

The SSIP LSSs receive the **Focused tier** of technical assistance and support with an emphasis on the four Systems Coaching domains:

- Engagement and Collaboration
- Team Development
- Change Facilitation
- Data-Informed Decision Making

Maryland’s Systems Coaches (MSDE Program Support Specialists and trained local leaders) provide more intensive support through the early stages of implementation until new practices are skillfully embedded into instruction. Skilled coaches supplement the formal knowledge and basic skills developed in professional learning sessions. It is the responsibility of the MSDE Systems Coach to promote fidelity of implementation and support LSS Implementation Teams. Local Systems Coaches, in turn support implementation at the school level. In Year 3, staff turnover of trained Systems Coaches has resulted in reassignment of staff to local jurisdictions and mentorship of new staff to acquire these skills. The State SSIP technical assistance staff continue to work closely with the LSS leaders. Figure 2 illustrates the framework for State and local systems coaching and communications.

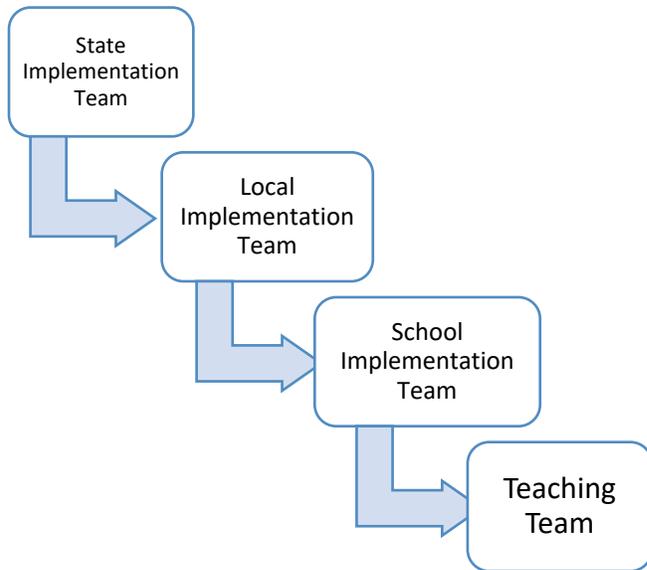


Figure 2. SSIP State and Local Systems Coaching Infrastructure

### 3. Evidence-Based Practices Implemented

As LSSs selected or designed their evidence-based practices to promote math proficiency of elementary students with disabilities; local Systems Coaches and their math Instructional Coaches developed the “Usable Intervention” definitions as a precursor to designing fidelity of implementation tools. With MSDE support, LSSs gathered fidelity of implementation data, and Instructional Coaches expanded the delivery of professional learning opportunities and site-based coaching. Table 2, below, describes the EBP implemented, and key activities in each LSS.

Table 2. SSIP LSS Year 2 Implementation of EBPs.

SSIP LSS	EBPs	Implementation Stage – Year 2	Year 3 Key Activities
Cecil County	Targeted Mathematics Instruction	Initial Implementation in scale-up schools  Full Implementation in initial target schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full implementation in all elementary schools!</li> <li>• Professional development and coaching were expanded across all elementary schools. A Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure was used monthly on early dismissal Wednesdays and then followed up with coaching in the following week. Student work was analyzed to identify content for subsequent PLC.</li> <li>• A universal screener (MAP) is used to determine which students need an intervention, and conducted three times a year to determine progress toward grade level standards. A formative assessment coupled with intensive analysis of error patterns results in the identification of specific instructional design correlated to IEP goals and services.</li> </ul>

SSIP LSS	EBPs	Implementation Stage – Year 2	Year 3 Key Activities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student performance and progress data is collected and reviewed regularly</li> <li>• SY 2020 goals are to audit student IEPs and work with special educators through coaching to ensure measurable gains on IEP goals and grade level performance. Analyses to date indicate a need to focus on students who do not yet have additive skills. Coaches model lesson planning, co-teaching, and co-evaluation.</li> </ul>
<b>Charles County</b>	<b>Team Based Cycle of Instruction</b>  <b>Structured Cooperative Learning</b>	Full Implementation in target schools  Initial implementation in expansion school  Scale-Up planned for 5 schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core instruction in math classes focuses on the Team-Based Cycle of Instruction and Cooperative Learning. While this district has not identified a specific math evidence-based practice, they have continued to turn key the professional learning from previous State held sessions.</li> <li>• A “new teacher” training was conducted in fall 2019; a half-day for experienced teachers was provided to enable them to reflect and identify practice improvement areas.</li> <li>• Ongoing professional learning through a PLC model is focusing on number sense and lesson planning for special education teachers in all participating buildings.</li> <li>• Instructional coaching professional development was obtained through Jim Knight’s model; a coaching handbook was developed and they are seeking to align coaching processes across the district while implementing consistently in SSIP schools.</li> <li>• Student benchmark data, collected three times/year is used to determine the need for interventions and aligned with the IEP math goals; student progress is reviewed monthly with quarterly data review meetings with Principals.</li> <li>• SY 2020 includes planning for a summer professional learning opportunity, expanding participation to new math teachers and administrators, and plan full implementation of EBPs across 5 elementary schools in grades 1 – 5.</li> </ul>
<b>Queen Anne’s County</b>	<b>Do the Math Intervention Program</b>  <b>ADDED: Number Talks</b>	Initial Implementation in scale up schools  Full implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 4 focused on coaching by IEP chairs and collaborating with math specialists for instructional coaching in math with adaptations for students with IEPs. They would like to develop a consistent instructional coaching model.</li> <li>• Interventionists were hired to deliver “Do the Math” with an emphasis on individualizing for students with disabilities.</li> </ul>

SSIP LSS	EBPs	Implementation Stage – Year 2	Year 3 Key Activities
		in initial target schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and coaching on math progressions using a clinical interview approach was conducted by math specialists.</li> <li>• A math universal screener was discontinued, making it a challenge to evaluate student progress and performance in comparison with peers other than through classroom assessments. The district has decided to bring back STAR Math as a screener.</li> <li>• Staffing turnovers (math coordinator and instructional coaches) have resulted in a need for professional learning support from MSDE.</li> </ul>
Worcester County	<b>Main Lesson, Menu Lesson Instructional Framework (Tapper)</b>  <b>Collaborative diagnostic process</b>	Full Implementation and Scale Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2019, piloted a “collaborative diagnostic process” in SSIP schools and scaled up implementation of the math EBP to all schools serving grades 1 – 5.</li> <li>• Created a practice profile and fidelity tool for the collaborative diagnostic process.</li> <li>• Increased emphasis in Year 4 on targeting specially designed instruction within general education math classes; student showed significant growth in IReady.</li> <li>• Fidelity of implementation data is used to create the content for teacher coaching; PLCs (weekly or monthly as needed) are used to support teacher implementation.</li> <li>• Summer 4-day training provided on proportional reasoning.</li> <li>• To do: assess each IEP to understand student learning needs to create individualized lesson plans during “menu” time, providing training to general education classroom teachers on how to use that time to focus on a high leverage math goal.</li> <li>• Their coaching handbook guides instructional coaches; coaches meeting monthly to reflect and provide peer support.</li> </ul>

**4. Evaluation Activities, Measures, and Outcomes**

Maryland hired a new external evaluator, AnLar, in 2018 to plan, revise, and oversee the SSIP evaluation activities. In 2019 AnLar worked with MSDE and the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE) to streamline and standardize data collection practices to support aggregation across LSSs. Currently, each LSS is collecting its own data, using its own systems, formats, and measures, which limits the ability of the state to aggregate information. This individualized data collection also makes it more challenging to access information in a consistent, timely way leading to challenges using the data to inform decision-making at the local and state levels. In addition, the SSIP evaluation plan needed to be updated to

reflect current activities and priorities of the State. Interviews with LSS administrators indicated that data collection practices are inconsistent across school systems and that there is a varying degree of familiarity and comfort with data collection and use practices. These differing levels of expertise contributed to further inconsistencies in data collection practices and raised questions about the quality of data being collected.

The SSIP Evaluation Plan includes evaluation questions on activities, outputs, fidelity of implementation and short, medium, and long-term outcomes, as well as corresponding performance measures for each. This plan measures these factors at various levels of the Maryland system including at the child, family, teacher, school, district, and state levels. The implementation questions help the state to ensure that activities of the SSIP are being implemented according to the plan, and that data are reflecting progress in implementation. The short-term outcomes are foundational to the effective implementation of the SSIP and are about learning that is taking place by teachers, coaches, and administrators. The medium-term outcomes focus on implementation of the knowledge and skills learned as well as infrastructure improvements. Finally, long-term outcomes address the overall impact of the SSIP and reflect child-level improvements. *See section C of this report.*

## **5. Changes to Implementation and Improvement Strategies**

During Year 4, LSSs requested that no additional training on math EBPs be provided by the State as they wanted to turnkey what they had learned and disseminate this information to their participating schools, coaches, and new staff members. Each district received funding for professional learning and coaching to enable them to take on the additional work locally. One district (Worcester) added an EBP (collaborative diagnostic process) and another district (Queen Anne's) brought back a universal math screener. All districts expanded their focus on instructional coaching. MSDE focused on developing guides and tools for local use, with a focus on the co-development, co-implementation, and co-evaluation of math specially designed instruction. While initial professional learning webinars on instructional coaching and on data literacy were initiated, the current lock down has prevented continuation of that training in 2020. A focus for the coming school year will include attention to coaching math specially designed instruction and use of data for instructional decisions.

One area of infrastructure improvement that changed is in the strategic collaboration across Divisions within MSDE through the Cross-Departmental Team. Due to staffing changes and competing priorities, staff from other Divisions found it increasingly more difficult to meet monthly. Meetings were changed to quarterly, and given low turnout, this structure is being revisited in 2020 to identify the barriers and opportunities for this group. MSDE has had a challenge during the 4 years of the SSIP to adequately staff the Specialists assigned as SSIP Coordinator and SSIP Systems Coaches for a number of reasons, including staff turnover and reassignments. Consequently, attention was given to staffing within the Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services. A new SSIP Coordinator has been appointed and for the first time in several years, the Performance Support and Technical Assistance Branch is fully staffed. We predict that, with a refocus on our TA model, we will strengthen the Systems Coaching, infrastructure improvements, and professional learning tools for our districts and across the State.

## B. Progress in Implementing the SSIP

### 1. Description of the State’s SSIP Implementation Progress

MSDE’s greatest area for attention is in the coordination of internal team structures to support infrastructure improvements for collaboration of work at the State level and provision of coordinated and efficient technical assistance to SSIP districts. This includes strategic collaboration with stakeholder groups as well as coordination within MSDE.

MSDE’s greatest accomplishments are in the products developed and technical assistance provided directly to local systems coaches and instructional leaders.

#### a. Activities Implemented, Accomplishments, Timeline

Table 3. Implementation plan activities

Activity	2019 Accomplishments	Timeline
<p><b>Cross-Departmental Team</b></p> <p>Establish a MSDE Cross-Departmental Team with representatives of Divisions within MSDE to review, support, and contribute to the SSIP implementation</p>	<p>The revised Cross-Departmental Team members for 2019 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Marcella Franczkowski (DEI/SES - Assistant State Superintendent)</i></li> <li>• <i>Marcia Sprankle (Division of Curriculum, Instructional Improvement, and Professional Development, [DCIIPD] Assistant Superintendent)</i></li> <li>• <i>Karla Marty (SSIP Coordinator)</i></li> <li>• <i>Tiara Booker-Dwyer (Office of Leadership Development an School Improvement)</i></li> <li>• <i>Marny Helfrich (DEI/SES – Systems Coach)</i></li> <li>• <i>Annie Wheeler (DEI/SES – Systems Coach)</i></li> <li>• <i>Lynne Muller (DSFSS – Counseling)</i></li> <li>• <i>Deborah Nelson (DSFSS – PBIS)</i></li> <li>• <i>Cecilia Roe (DCIIPD – Professional Learning)</i></li> <li>• <i>Carol Quirk (MCIE)</i></li> <li>• <i>Linda Schoenbrodt (DCRAA – Elementary mathematics)</i></li> <li>• <i>Debra Ward (DCRAA – mathematics)</i></li> </ul> <p>In 2019, this team met three times: January 31, April 18, and July 18. A scheduled fall meeting had to be cancelled due to scheduling conflicts</p>	<p>2016 and ongoing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not started</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Started and making adjustments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On target &amp; continuing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Completed</p> <p>This Team continues to be developed and will be reconfigured for Year 5.</p>
<p><b>Core SSIP Leadership Team</b></p>	<p>This team, composed of both Part C and Part B SSIP Leads (Karla Marty, Pam Miller) with Marcella Franczkowski and MCIE partner, Carol Quirk meets quarterly to discuss progress and identify potential areas for ongoing support or decisions related to technical assistance. In 2019, this team met only twice, again due to scheduling conflicts: May 22 and August 15.</p>	<p>2016 and ongoing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not started</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Started and making adjustments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On target &amp; continuing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Completed</p>

Activity	2019 Accomplishments	Timeline
<b>Division Implementation Team</b>	Composed of the Program Specialists and Section Chiefs in the Branch for Performance Support and Technical Assistance for both Part C and Part B SSIP work, this team regularly reviews local implementation, progress, and support needs. This team is intended to meet bi-monthly, and due to staffing changes, met three times in 2019: April 4, Sept. 5, and December 5.	2016 and ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Not started <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Started and making adjustments <input type="checkbox"/> On target & continuing <input type="checkbox"/> Completed
<b>Family Engagement</b>	Family engagement modules have been completed and piloted. These were intended to be branded for MSDE and marketed to all local school systems. Due to changing SSIP Coordinator, this did not occur and will be targeted for 2020.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not started <input type="checkbox"/> Started and making adjustments <input type="checkbox"/> On target & continuing <input type="checkbox"/> Completed
<b>Professional Learning</b> <i>Data Literacy</i> webinar and face-face training in 2020 <i>Instructional Coaching</i> webinar series and face-face training in 2020	Data Literacy: 3 webinars were provided by AnLar staff and attended by 4 school systems, MCIE staff, and MSDE staff. The face-face training, scheduled for March 2020 is postponed.  Instructional Coaching: 2 webinars were provided by Kat Pfannenstiel in the fall 2019. A face-face training will be postponed until fall 2020.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not started <input type="checkbox"/> Started and making adjustments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On target & continuing (pending return to school) <input type="checkbox"/> Completed
<b>Product Development</b> Online Resource <i>Toolbox SDI Guide</i> with elementary math examples	A resource toolbox was organized in an online tool to provide a variety of organized resources that support evidence-based math practices, to be posted on Maryland Learning Links. This was slightly delayed due to changing staff members.  A Guide was developed to provide guidance with examples for the co-development, co-implementation, and co-evaluation of specially designed instruction. This 50-page guide includes an example student with IEP goals in math and provides exemplars for all parts of an IEP, including the selection of evidence-based practices to address learning needs. This Guide will continue to be modified annually, based on feedback from stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not started <input type="checkbox"/> Started and making adjustments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On target & continuing <input type="checkbox"/> Completed
<b>Technical Assistance through Systems Coaching</b>	The SSIP LSSs continue to receive the <b><i>Focused tier</i></b> of technical assistance and support with an emphasis on the four Systems Coaching domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement and Collaboration</li> <li>• Team Development</li> <li>• Change Facilitation</li> <li>• Data-Informed Decision Making</li> </ul> An area for continued development is in the finalization of the MSDE TA manual and methods for systems engagement. The MSDE Systems Coaches continue to complete the TA log and engage their districts as they continue EBP implementation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not started <input type="checkbox"/> Started and making adjustments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On target & continuing <input type="checkbox"/> Completed

**b. Intended Outputs Accomplished**

Table 4. *Outputs Accomplished as a result of Activities.*

<b>Output</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Accomplishment Status</b>
<b>MSDE Cross-Divisional and Division Team Collaborations</b>	Infrastructure Development	While implementation of the MSDE Team structures is in place, the conduct of these structures has been limited by changing staff and scheduling conflicts. However, this is expected to change for the positive in 2020 as staffing is in place and leadership for SSIP work has been strengthened.
<b>Family Engagement</b>	Family Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement	Families have been engaged in SSIP work through their local implementation communications and piloting of the teacher-family modules. We expect this to be widely disseminated in 2020. Further, a structure to foster communications with local implementing districts with a tool for them to share with families will be developed in 2020.
<b>Professional Learning Opportunities</b>	Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices	Local implementation districts made it clear that in 2019 they did not want additional cross-district training. They wanted to “hunker down” with their own staff and spread their learning within schools across staff, and across schools. MSDE did identify needs, validated through structured discussions with local leaders, that data literacy and instructional coaching continued to be an area for development. Initial professional learning has been provided; face to face follow up learning is expected (postponed to fall 2020). Further assessment of professional implementation needs will be conducted in the next school year.
<b>Product Development</b>	Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices	MSDE DEI/SES is proud to have developed applicable tools for both leaders and implementers that provide guidance on the implementation of math EBPs. This will be a continued focus, especially with consideration of online access to current knowledge about “what works” when teaching math to a variety of students with disabilities. The next level will be to focus on a variety of adaptations for different disabilities.
<b>Technical Assistance and Systems Coaching</b>	Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices	Local School Systems continue to be engaged in the work of improving the math performance of children with disabilities and reducing the achievement gap. Our districts continue to be dedicated to collaborating with the MSDE Liaison (Systems Coach) who can share information, obtain resources, provide direction, and bring back their challenges and successes. The realigned MSDE DEI/SES staff are working collaboratively to build their own capacity to deliver TA and Systems Coaching. The revised TA manual will support this work.

## 2. Stakeholder Involvement

Key Stakeholders were engaged in Phase I and II of the SSIP development and were critical in providing input into the creation of the SSIP and disseminated information about SSIP development with their constituents. The primary vehicle for stakeholder engagement has been two-fold:

- **Regular structured communications** with LSS leaders in SSIP districts, and key staff to understand a) implementation, b) changes to plans, c) barriers, d) successes, and e) supports needed. In 2019, MSDE conducted three structured discussions with LSS to engage them as partners in developing TA supports from MSDE and providing feedback on TA received.
- **Communications with advocates, family members, and professional collaborators** outside of MSDE. The Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC) is composed of these stakeholders and was selected as the primary external group with whom to share information about SSIP progress as well as solicit their input as plans progressed. Three SESAC meetings were attended in 2019, with presentations made by MSDE staff as well as local leaders involved with SSIP work. Input was shared with MSDE Systems Coaches

In Phase 3, communication and discussions with these Stakeholder groups also continues to occur with the following groups:

- Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)
- Education Advocacy Coalition (EAC)
- State Mathematics Advisory Group

### **a. How Stakeholders Have Been Informed**

During 2019, three SESAC face-to-face meetings occurred to share data, share practices, and solicit input. This State advisory group not only has advocates and educators from around the State, but also has some SSIP implementers as a part of the group, contributing to the sharing of “the story” of SSIP work in the district and school house. Information related to the SSIP is also being posted on the Maryland Learning Links website. In early 2019, the SSIP Coordinator met with math experts from around Maryland who meet quarterly as an advisory group. In addition to learning about SSIP progress, they provided input on continuing strategies. In particular, they expressed interest in the math toolbox being developed and wished to have continued engagement through 2020.

### **b. How Stakeholders Have Had a Voice**

The LSS implementation team members have input on decisions about SSIP implementation locally and provide feedback to MSDE Systems Coaches through interviews and on-site visits. Special education directors, general education mathematics supervisors, special education coaches, and general education mathematics coaches provide input through the periodic phone interviews, on-site discussions, and

clinics to discuss implementation challenges and solutions. In response, the MSDE DEI/SES pledged supplemental grants for 2019-2020 to each of the four SSIP districts to be used for:

- Professional learning to:
  - Enhance local implementation of identified EBPs to improve math outcomes for students with disabilities in grades 3 – 5
  - Scale up implementation of identified EBPs to additional schools
  - Increase the quality and effectiveness of the IEP process focused on writing achievable IEP goals that effectively narrow the gap and accelerate progress for students with disabilities
- Ongoing content or strategy coaching to support EBP implementation
- Strengthening data collection activities to evaluate the impact of EBP on student performance.

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## C. Data on Implementation and Outcomes

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### 1. State Monitoring and Measurement to Assess Implementation and Outcomes

In the fall of 2018, MSDE partnered with AnLar, LLC, a Washington, D.C.-based educational consulting firm as the external evaluator for the SSIP. At that time, MSDE and AnLar partnered to review the Phase III, Year 2 evaluation plan, examine current data collection activities, and discuss opportunities to revise and update the evaluation plan based on the current needs of the SSIP. AnLar and MSDE continue to reflect upon and revise the evaluation plan as needed to ensure the timely, accurate collection of data to inform the implementation of the SSIP. The current version of the evaluation plan was most recently updated in May 2019, and is embedded in this report and within Section C.

MSDE, in partnership with our external evaluator, reviewed our data management and analysis procedures. MSDE has centralized data collection by supporting participating LSSs through the use of a web-based data collection tool created by AnLar that addresses most of the evaluation questions. This tool addresses a strong need to standardize data collection and reporting across LSSs for the SSIP in order to facilitate the state's analysis and use of that data. All of the questions are integral to assessing the areas defined in the theory of action and logic model.

MSDE continues to build upon the success detailed in previous SSIPs by supporting ongoing implementation and scale-up of evidence-based practices and continuing improvements to infrastructure at the state and local levels. MSDE is continuing to reflect on our logic model, implementation plan, and evaluation plan to ensure alignment with current initiative goals. We have continued to refine our evaluation plan based on the results of ongoing data collection activities, stakeholder input, and the input of our new external evaluator. MSDE plans to continue to use these data collection activities to inform adjustments to the implementation and evaluation plans over time.

Baseline data was collected using the new web-based data collection tool at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year in October 2019. Follow-up data was collected in January and February 2020. For those questions that require just-in-time reporting such as PD evaluations, respondents submitted their data as activities occurred.

LSS and MSDE staff report information on the following activities and outcomes using the survey tool:

- Participants in professional development sessions report on those sessions after each occurs;
- Coaches and teachers in 3rd-, 4th-, or 5th-grade mathematics report on coaching activities in October, January, and April of each school year;
- MSDE staff report on infrastructure development as activities occur;

- School and/or district administrators report on evidence-based practices implementation each October, January, and April (at least one response per district in each timeframe); and
- School and/or district administrators report on student mathematics performance in October, January, and April of each school year.

Data on student participation in general education and performance on PARCC (now MCAP) assessments are obtained through the MSDE data analyst assigned to the DSE/EIS and are analyzed annually. Data related to family engagement is collected using the processes for Indicator 8 as described in the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR).

This revised data collection method using the web-based tool has allowed MSDE to focus data collection efforts on those aspects of SSIP implementation and evaluation that are most critical to informing a cycle of continuous quality improvement. Data collected during this phase have demonstrated progress by MSDE on a number of different metrics supporting implementation of our improvement strategies, changes in educator practices, and improvements in student outcomes. MSDE has documented that progress towards intended improvements in the following section.

Table 5 presents the number of responses by county for each of the two measurements.

Table 5. *Responses by Local School System to Evaluation Survey*

County	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	N	%	N	%
Cecil County	378	79.6%	77	42.3%
Charles County	60	12.6%	73	40.1%
Queen Anne’s County	11	2.3%	4	2.2%
Worcester County	26	5.5%	27	14.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The significant number of responses for baseline measures from Cecil County reflect the transcription of a large number of professional development evaluations into the web-based tool. Apart from this unique circumstance, MSDE generally received a similar number of responses each time the data were collected.

Table 6 presents the type of responses received at each measurement.

Table 6. *Types of Responses by Local School System to Evaluation Survey*

Type of Response	Baseline		Follow-Up	
	N	%	N	%
Logging Professional Development (PD) session	310	65.3%	28	15.4%
Reporting on teaching, coaching, district, or MSDE practices	149	31.4%	119	65.4%
Reporting on student performance	12	2.5%	9	4.9%
Logging a meeting of a PLC	4	0.8%	26	14.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

As shown in Table 6, there was a backlog of previously delivered professional development sessions reported in the baseline measure. Reporting on all other measures remained fairly consistent over time with the exception of an increase in the number of PLCs reported from four at baseline to 26 at the follow-up reporting. This increase is understandable given that PLCs are expected to occur throughout the school year. Additional information about the content of each of these activities is presented in the following sections.

## 2. State Progress and Modification to the SSIP: Key Successes and Challenges

MDSE has identified four key focus areas for our work on the SSIP:

- Participation and Learning (short- and medium-term outcomes),
- Improvements to Infrastructure (medium term outcomes),
- Fidelity of Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices (medium term outcomes); and
- Progress Toward Achievement of the SiMR (long term outcomes).

The following sections present tables and accompanying narratives describing progress in each of the four areas. Each table includes information on implementation and outcome questions, data sources, data collection timelines, and current data, and each section is followed by a narrative describing key successes and challenges in each of the four areas. The evaluation plan is thus embedded within this report.

### a. *Participation and Learning*

This section includes data on evaluation questions related to establishing the foundation necessary for changes in infrastructure and capacity to implement evidence-based practices. Table 7 outlines the evaluation plan for participation and learning.

Table 7. *Participation and Learning by LSS Staff*

Measure Type	Practice	Measurement Level	Evaluation Question	Measure of Success	Data Source	Collection Timeline
Output	Professional Development	Teacher	To what extent do teachers know effective math instructional strategies?	% of teachers reporting increased knowledge	Post-assessment of PD	As activities occur
Output	Professional Development	Teacher	To what extent do teachers know how to provide specially designed math instruction?	% of teachers reporting increased knowledge	Post-assessment of PD	As activities occur
Output	Professional Development	Teacher, Instructional Coach, district leads	To what extent do district leaders, instructional coaches, and teachers know how to use data to make informed decisions and evaluate the impact of their interventions?	% of staff reporting increased knowledge	Post-assessment of PD	As activities occur
Output	Professional Development	Instructional Coach	To what extent do instructional coaches know how to provide effective coaching in math specially designed instruction?	% of coaches reporting increased knowledge	Post-assessment of PD	As activities occur
Output	Professional Development	District	How many, what topic, and what kind of professional development opportunities were offered by participating SSIP districts?	# of PD activities, count of types of PD activities, and # of attendees	Post-assessment of PD	As PD occurs
Output	Professional Development	District	To what extent do district administrators have increased knowledge of specially designed instruction?	% of district admin reporting increased knowledge as a result of PD	Post-assessment of PD	As activities occur
Medium-Term Outcome	Family Engagement	School or District	To what extent do families of children with disabilities in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade report being meaningfully involved in their child's education?	Percent of families who report meaningful engagement	Indicator 8 survey	Annually
Medium-Term Outcome	Family Engagement	School or District	To what extent are families engaged in math planning and support at the district level?	Percent of teachers who report meaningful engagement	Web-based data collection tool	At least three times a year

Measure Type	Practice	Measurement Level	Evaluation Question	Measure of Success	Data Source	Collection Timeline
Medium-Term Outcome	Family Engagement	State	To what extent are families engaged in SSIP planning at the state level?	Number of times families are engaged in SSIP planning at the state level	Web-based data collection tool	At least three times a year

### **Key Successes in Improvements to Participation and Learning**

In calendar year 2019, MSDE continued to build upon the successful professional learning sessions hosted in previous years.

**Professional Learning in Data Literacy.** MSDE, in partnership with AnLar, developed a series of web-based modules to support improved data literacy in SSIP districts. The first module introduced data analysis. Participant objectives for this webinar included being able to describe the importance of using and understanding data, having a foundational understanding of the different types of data and the uses of each, and understanding key elements of data visualization. The second webinar, Data-Based Decision Making, provided information about how data can inform decision-making at all levels of the education system, ensured participants have a foundational understanding of the process that can be used for data-based decision making, and provided them with strategies that they can apply in their professional context. The final webinar in the series was an intermediate-level webinar focused on developing data collection systems and tools. By the end of the webinar, participants were able to identify specific strategies for systematically collecting data for ease of access and interpretation; understand the importance of collecting consistent, accurate data for analysis; and have familiarity with multiple tools that can be used for collecting and analyzing data. Each of these webinars was presented live to personnel from SSIP districts and was recorded so that they could be watched asynchronously by anyone interested in the content. MSDE also partnered with AnLar to offer a corresponding two-day face-to-face data literacy training for personnel from SSIP districts. This two-day practice-based training was planned for March 2020 and is postponed. It will focus on how educators, coaches, and school and district administrators can improve data use practices, especially for students with disabilities.

**Professional Learning in Instructional Coaching** MSDE also partnered with the National Center on Systemic Improvement (NCSI) to offer web-based and face to face training on instructional coaching. Two webinars were held in September and November 2019. The initial webinar focused on sharing an overview of best/evidence-based practices and discussing these in the context of current coaching practices of participants. It was noted that *“Coaching is a collaborative process in which coaches support teachers in implementing best practices, supporting professional learning and supporting data driven instruction.”* The session ended with a discussion of how instructional coaches can and do use data to guide feedback in the coaching conversation. All agreed that *“We also use data to pinpoint the student gaps and use that to drive observation to track frequency of items noted during instruction”* and expressed a desire to continue the discussion. Districts are at different places in terms of the formality of

their coaching protocol. The second session focused on essential coaching components and fidelity of coaching, with an emphasis on coaching mathematics instruction. The group compared notes on how coaches use peer coaching to support and strengthen the quality of their work and to brainstorm strategies. The next steps were to take this group to the next level of establishing a coaching network, beginning in 2020. Unfortunately, the planned event had a scheduling conflict with other MSDE activities and is not postponed until the fall of 2020.

**Local Professional Learning Opportunities.** In addition to MSDE-sponsored Professional Learning (PL) events, the LSSs held their own PL opportunities to facilitate administrator, teacher, and coach effectiveness. The most common method of delivering PL was through in-person sessions, but some of the districts utilized alternative delivery methods to supplement the in-person presentations. For example, Cecil County created a webinar that teachers and support staff could use to learn about Targeted Mathematics Instruction (TMI). Teachers noted that the webinar gave them the necessary tools to employ questioning strategies and effectively incorporate those strategies into their lesson plans. Furthermore, Charles County used Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) throughout the 2019-2020 school year to provide teachers with information on how to tailor EBPs to students with IEPs. These PLCs involved community building and norm setting such that the group would become comfortable providing feedback and challenging each other to become better teachers.

The topics that the PL sessions covered varied among districts, yet overall they were targeted to explaining and implementing EBPs for mathematics teachers. The districts integrated general and special education teachers in a majority of these sessions so that teachers would understand strategies for helping all students succeed in their classrooms. The most common topic of the PL sessions was learned from the OnGoing Assessment Project (OGAP: <https://ogapmathllc.com/>) and focused on Additive Reasoning, which involves teachers considering student reasoning when carrying out lessons. Other topics that the districts provided PD presentations on include mathematics problem solving, TMI, mathematics calculation, and Math Concepts and Application (MCAP). Some districts offered PL opportunities specifically for the coaches, such as Charles County's presentation on MCAP for mathematics coaches. Prior to implementing professional development, coaches, curriculum planners, and the administrative team looked at school-level data and their fidelity assessments tool to identify any gaps or weaknesses in current practices and to make sure professional development is targeted. In total, 15 professional development sessions including PLCs, trainings, and webinars were offered by the 4 LSSs.

A review of participant evaluations of professional development activities offered by LSSs and MSDE indicates that, overall, they were very successful. An evaluation included questions related to quality, usefulness and relevance of the training as well as knowledge of the content prior to and following the training session.

In Table 8 below the results of the applicability of the training is reported (quality, usefulness, and relevance) for two data collection periods.

Table 8. Professional Development Participant Ratings

Statement	Percent Agreement			
	Fall 2019		Winter 2019-2020	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree
Substance is high quality and grounded in evidence and professional practice.	73.2%	17.9%	68.8%	18.8%
Communication is understandable, well-organized, and appropriately formatted.	74.5%	18.2%	50.0%	43.8%
The content is important to my students.	60.0%	25.5%	68.8%	18.8%
The content is related to my students' success.	64.3%	23.2%	62.5%	25.0%
The session is applicable to diverse groups of students with IEPs.	60.7%	26.8%	62.5%	31.3%
The session is easy to understand and had clear directions.	64.3%	23.2%	56.3%	31.3%
I will likely use the material.	66.1%	19.6%	62.5%	25.0%
The information will be useful over time.	73.2%	14.3%	60.0%	26.7%

The acquisition of knowledge is reflected in participant ratings of PL sessions.

- Prior to participating in training, participants including administrators, coaches, and teachers' self-reported knowledge of PL topics was relatively low, with 2.7% of participants reporting no knowledge, 42.5% reporting minimal knowledge, and 46.6% reporting moderate knowledge.
- After participating in PL sessions only 2.7% of participants reported minimal knowledge while 46.6% reported moderate knowledge and 50.7% reported extensive knowledge.

Teachers and support staff were also asked to report on the impact that PL opportunities had on their knowledge of effective mathematics instructional strategies, their ability to provide specially designed math instruction, and their knowledge about using data to make informed decisions and evaluate the impact of their practices. On each of these measures, teachers and support staff overwhelmingly reported that the PL opportunity increased their knowledge and skills to a good or great extent (ranging from 87.5% indicating to a good or great extent for improving their knowledge about providing specially designed math instruction to 92.2% agreeing that the PD improved their knowledge about using data to make informed decisions and evaluate the impact of their practice).

See Table 9 below for impact data.

Table 9. Professional Staff Report of Professional Development Impact

Question	Percent Agreement	
	To a Great Extent	To a Good Extent
To what extent did the PD session increase your knowledge of effective mathematics instructional strategies?	62.5%	29.7%
To what extent did the PD session improve your knowledge about providing specially designed math instruction?	45.3%	42.2%
To what extent did the PD session increase your knowledge about using data to make informed decisions and evaluate the impact of your practices?	54.0%	36.5%

Instructional coaches and school administrators were also asked to rate the PL opportunities they attended on these metrics. Both groups were in strong agreement with each of the questions about increases in knowledge. Furthermore, **100% of school administrators believe that the PD sessions are improving their knowledge about providing specially designed math instruction** in the classroom. These strong levels of agreement by coaches and administrators will support teacher buy-in into these practices, and the schools in general will continue to have increased knowledge on how to implement these practices.

Increased **family involvement** is another intended outcome of the Part B SSIP. MSDE has seen sustained or improved family engagement practices across two of the four SSIP LSSs, according to families. The following figure presents statewide and local-level Indicator 8 data for the past three years from the Statewide survey disseminated annually to all families and stakeholder groups to share with their families. The Statewide target for Indicator 8 is 70%. As demonstrated in Figure 3, SSIP LSSs are slightly exceeding State targets as a whole for Indicator 8.

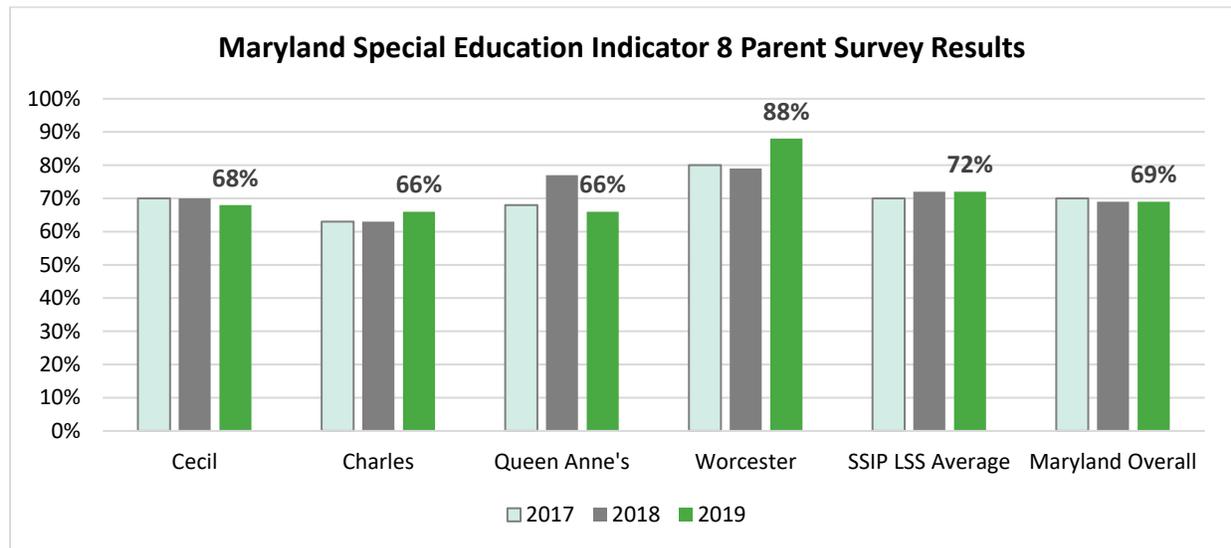


Figure 3: Maryland Part B Special Education Indicator 8: Parent Survey Results

As a part of the data collection directly from LSS staff (teachers, coaches, and administrators), all were asked to rate the extent to which families are involved in their school or district. Most faculty agreed that families are involved in some capacity with district or school planning. For example, 8.3% of staff believe that families are involved to a great extent, and 45.9% of staff believe that families are involved to a good extent (see Table 10 below). Very few staff reported that families are involved to no extent (0.5%). These data suggest that staff are working closely with families of students, and that staff value family involvement. Incorporating families into school- or district-wide decision-making is one approach to improve student outcomes, so staff perceptions support the idea that these schools and counties are moving in the right direction to improve student and family engagement.

Table 10. *Family Involvement*

<b>To what extent are families of students involved in your school or district?</b>	
<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage Agreement</b>
To a great extent	8.3%
To a good extent	45.9%
To some extent	23.4%
To a little extent	18.5%
To no extent	0.5%
I don't know	3.4%

### ***Challenges to Improving Participation and Learning***

MSDE began work on the SSIP by focusing on training in implementation science and systems coaching. Participation and learning activities were then focused on mathematics instructional strategies and family engagement. Parent-teacher training modules were developed, piloted and shared with SSIP districts. New professional learning activities have focused on data literacy and instructional coaching. Informal conversations with districts indicate that while the professional learning activities are highly valued and have impact, the extent to which parents are engaged could be improved. Teachers have agreed that there is a need for more family input and engagement in the SSIP process. Stakeholder groups agree. This is supported by the data collected in the fall of 2019 and in early 2020. The initial data indicated that approximately 51% of teachers reported that families are involved to a good extent and 6.4% indicated families are involved to a great extent. At the second data collection point, more teachers reported families were involved to a great extent (8.1%), and fewer teachers reported that families are involved to a good extent (41.9%) reflecting an overall lower perception of family involvement for students with and without disabilities.

This is further validated by the Indicator 8 data shows there may be an additional need to support family engagement overall, or the low feedback rate may reflect the input from families with more concerns about their involvement. In either case, this presents a follow-up opportunity.

**b. Improvements to Infrastructure**

This section includes data on evaluation questions related to changes in local and state infrastructure. Table 11 provides the evaluation plan for infrastructure improvements.

Table 11. *Improvements to Infrastructure*

Practice	Measurement Level	Evaluation Question	Measure of Success	Data Source	Collection Timeline	Practice
Output	Professional Development & Coaching	District	To what extent do coaches have increased capacity to support teachers?	% of coaches who report increased capacity to support teachers as a result of PD	Post-assessment	Semi-annual reporting
Output	Infrastructure Development	State	To what extent is the state engaging in cross-departmental collaboration to build state capacity to support improved mathematics outcomes for students with disabilities	# of interdepartmental meetings and # of departments represented at each	Web-based survey	As it occurs
Medium-Term Outcome	Data Literacy	District	To what extent are districts using data to make decisions?	% of district admin reporting regular data use; % of stakeholders who believe district leaders are sharing/using data to make decisions	Web-based survey	Semi-annual reporting
Medium-Term Outcome	Data Literacy	State	To what extent is the state using data to make decisions?	% of state system admin reporting regular data use	Post-assessment	Semi-annual reporting

**Key Successes in Improvements to Infrastructure**

**Technical Assistance through Systems Coaching.** MSDE continues to provide extensive technical assistance to all LSSs in the state including those participating in the SSIP. As part of the data collection process, SSIP leads in each participating LSS were asked in January 2020 to report on their engagement with systemic planning related to the SSIP, including the quality of TA support they received from MSDE. Each respondent indicated that they have been actively involved in the SSIP in their jurisdiction and indicated a variety of SSIP technical assistance that they received last year from MSDE, including:

consultation, coaching, on-site and/or in-person meetings, presentations, virtual meetings, resources; and facilitation of stakeholder and/or leadership team meetings.

Respondents indicated that they engage with their MSDE DEI/SES SSIP Liaison on average at least once a month. When asked to rate the overall quality of the SSIP TA provided by MSDE, and whether the TA provided was aligned with current research, practice, or policy, 50% of respondents indicated that it was excellent and 50% of respondents indicated that it was very good. All participants indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the TA they received from MSDE. Technical assistant contacts with SSIP LSSs over the last calendar year were as follows:

- Queen Anne’s County received TA from MSDE 63 times
- Worcester County received TA 56 times
- Charles County received TA 52 times
- Cecil County received TA 43 times

Each LSS was also asked to rate how much their capacity has improved in the several areas as a result of working with DEI/SES on the SSIP. The following table summarizes their responses and shows that overall LSS administrators found the support from MSDE contributed to improvement on a variety of factors related to the SSIP.

Table 12. *Administrator Perceptions of MSDE Support*

	No Improvement	Some Improvement	Moderate Improvement	Considerable Improvement	Maximum Improvement
Improving district/local lead agency infrastructure to support implementation of selected practices	0%	25%	25%	0%	50%
Developing high-performing implementation teams	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%
Implementing evidence-based practices with fidelity	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%
Data-informed Decision Making*	0%	0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Improving outcomes for children and youth with disabilities	0%	0%	25%	25%	50%

\*One LSS did not respond to this question

**Data Use for Decision Making.** As part of the web-based data collection tool, LSS staff were asked to provide information about improvements to infrastructure at the local level including the extent to which their school system is regularly using data to make decisions. More than 80% of respondents indicated that they are using data to a good or great extent for decision-making. Teachers were also

asked about their specific perceptions of data use in their school. Those results are presented in Table 13.

Table 13. *Teachers' Perception of Data Use*

Which data does the district or school share with you?	Percent Agreement Fall 2019	Percent Agreement Winter 2020
Student grades	70.9%	79.1%
Student attendance	87.3%	88.4%
Student socioeconomic status	40.9%	32.6%
Student disciplinary records	61.8%	57.0%
Student special education needs	81.8%	86.0%
Student performance on year end high-stakes tests	87.3%	87.2%
Student performance on lower-stakes tests	68.2%	77.9%
School demographic rates	50.9%	44.2%
School achievement	75.5%	73.3%
School enrollment rates	41.8%	40.7%
Grade completion / advancement rates	58.2%	20.9%
Formal teacher observations	43.6%	46.5%

**Instructional Coaching.** While instructional coaching is also a critical element of infrastructure. As a result of participating in PD opportunities, **100% of coaches indicated that they had increased their capacity to support teachers to a good or great extent.**

### *Challenges Improving Infrastructure*

The largest challenge to improving infrastructure has been staff turnover at MSDE. However, in 2020, this has been alleviated by new staff hiring and realignment of responsibilities. The second largest challenge has been the collaboration across Divisions in MSDE and within the Division. Conflicting schedules, changing SSIP Coordinators, and competing priorities in other Divisions have made this a challenge. We believe that with a full staff for programmatic support and technical assistance and a new SSIP Coordinator (as of March 2020) who has both grants management, professional learning, and instructional coaching strengths, this will be a focus for internal improvement in 2020 and beyond.

### *c. Fidelity of Implementation of EBPs*

This section includes data on evaluation questions related to fidelity of implementation of evidence-based practices. Below in Table 14, the evaluation plan for this section is provided.

Table 14. *Fidelity of Implementation Measures*

Practice	Measurement Level	Evaluation Question	Measure of Success	Data Source	Collection Timeline	Practice
Output	Math Instructional Practice	Teacher	How many teachers are implementing identified EBPs as a part of the SSIP	Count of teachers implementing identified EBPs in participating schools	Number of teachers reported in primary targeted schools and in scale up schools	Semi-annual reporting
Output	Coaching	Teacher	How frequently are teachers meeting with coaches?	Counts of teachers engaging with coaches	Coaching reports and teacher reports	As coaching occurs; teacher's semi-annual reporting
Short-Term Outcome	Coaching	District	To what extent do districts report that coaching is valuable to improving mathematics instruction?	% of district admin reporting value in coaches	Web-based form	Semi-annual reporting
Medium-Term Outcome	Coaching	Teacher	To what extent are teachers using specially designed instruction in their classrooms?	% of teachers using specially designed instruction	Coaching reports	As coaching occurs
Medium-Term Outcome	Math Instructional Practice	School	To what extent are schools implementing high-quality math instruction for all students, including those with IEPs?	% of teachers using high-quality math instruction	Web-based form	Semi-annual reporting
Fidelity	Math EBP	Teacher	To what extent are teachers implementing the identified EBP with fidelity?	% of classrooms implementing with fidelity	Coaching reports	Semi-annual reporting

### *Key Successes in the Fidelity of Implementation of EBPs*

The following table summarizes the EBPs selected by school systems and the implementation status for each.

Table 15. *Evidence-Based Practices to Improve Math Outcomes*

<b>School System</b>	<b>Evidence-Based Practice</b>	<b>Status of implementation of EBP</b>
Charles County	Team Based Cycle of Instruction and OGAP: Additive Reasoning	Full implementation in three schools
Cecil County	Targeted Math Instruction (TMI), Do the Math Intervention Program	Full implementation of EBP in all elementary schools in county (15 additional schools this year)
Worcester County	Main Lesson, Menu Lesson Instructional Framework (Tapper)	Expanded from implementation in three schools last year to implementation in seven this year
Queen Anne’s	Do the Math Intervention Program	Expanded from implementation in two schools last year to implementation in seven this year

It is noteworthy that the three schools who were not at full implementation significantly expanded their implementation this year. Cecil County added 15 schools this year while Worcester County added four schools and Queen Anne’s County added five schools. Implementation across these four school systems represents a significant number of teachers. Table 16 presents the number of teachers implementing the LSSs’ identified EBP(s) in each county.

Table 16. *Number of Teachers Implementing EBPs in Participating Schools*

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>
Cecil County	121
Charles County	41
Worcester County	18
Queen Anne’s County	21

MSDE and LSSs developed seven fidelity of implementation tools for systems coaching and mathematics EBPs: the TAP-IT fidelity assessment; the system coaching fidelity assessment; and assessments for the *team-based cycle of instruction*, *structured cooperative learning*, *Main lesson-Menu lesson*, *Do The Math*, and *Targeted Mathematics Instruction (TMI)* for struggling students.

A number of tools to assess math EBPs are also in use by the LSSs:

- Do the Math Fidelity Tool (Queen Anne's),
- Clinical Interview Fidelity Assessment Template (Worcester),
- School and Classroom Use of CRA Universal Screening Assessment to Analyze Student Understanding of Math Concepts (Worcester), and
- Classroom Use of Math Menu for Differentiation of Math Concepts Fidelity Assessment (Worcester).

**Fidelity of Implementation.** MSDE and its external evaluator made significant progress in evaluating fidelity of implementation across LSSs using the new web-based data collection tool by standardizing data collection and reporting regardless of the EBP being implemented at the local level. In addition to the established fidelity measurement tools, coaches reported various practices to assess implementation of the EBPs and administrators were asked to report on fidelity assessment practices. The table below presents the percentage of school administrators who report that their school uses each practice to assess fidelity.

Table 17. *Practices Used to Assess EBP Implementation Fidelity*

Practice	Percent Using this Practice
Coach assessments	75.0%
School administrator assessments	69.4%
Established fidelity tool	47.2%
Lead teacher assessments	5.6%
Informal or formal observations (but not of all teachers)	2.8%

Based on the data, a majority of schools are using coaching or school administrator assessments to measure fidelity of implementation EBPs. Roughly half of the schools report using the established fidelity tool. Only one SSIP school reported using informal or formal observations of just some teachers.

**Instructional Coaching.** A majority of teachers in the fall and winter data collection were engaging with their coach at least monthly. Similarly, coaches were asked how frequently they work with each teacher. A majority of coaches also reported that they work with each teacher at least monthly. Interestingly, teachers report a higher level of engagement with their coaches (21% - 29% of coaches indicated that they engage with teachers at least monthly, while 35% to 49% of teachers indicated that they engage with their teachers at least monthly. Differences in the percentages of teachers reporting coaching interactions and coaches reporting teacher interactions may represent differences in individual teacher needs compared to how frequently coaches engage with their assigned teachers on average.

The following table presents information on the frequency with which teachers are engaging with coaches.

Table 18. *Teacher Engagement with Coaches*

Percent of teachers who engage with their coaches...							
Time	At least daily	At least weekly	At least monthly	At least once per quarter	About twice per year	I do not engage with my coach	I do not have an assigned coach
Fall 2019	11.7%	9.0%	49.5%	19.8%	1.8%	4.5%	3.6%
Winter 2020	9.4%	15.3%	35.3%	25.9%	5.9%	5.9%	2.4%

Table 19. *Frequency of Coach-Teacher Interactions*

"On average, how often do you work with each teacher?" Percentage of coaches who responded with...							
Time	At least daily	Twice per week	At least weekly	At least once every 2 weeks	At least monthly	At least once per semester	At least once per year
Fall 2019	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	28.6%	28.6%	0.0%
Winter 2020	0.0%	14.3%	35.7%	21.4%	21.4%	7.1%	0.0%

**Teacher delivery of Specially Designed Instruction.** Teachers reported how often they use specially designed instruction in their classrooms. As expected, an overwhelming majority (approximately 75%) of teachers of students with disabilities report using specially-designed instruction at least daily.

**Teacher and Coach Expertise in Math EBP.** Teachers were also asked to report on their understanding of their school’s mathematics EBP. The following table shows an increase in the percent of teachers who indicate that they are experts in or have a solid understanding of their EBP.

Table 20. *Teachers’ Understanding of their School’s Mathematics Evidence-Based Practice*

Percent of teachers who...				
Time	Are an expert in this practice	Have a solid understanding of this practice	Are somewhat familiar with this practice	Are unfamiliar with this practice
Fall 2019	1.8%	60.0%	35.5%	2.7%
Winter 2020	3.7%	65.8%	30.5%	0.0%

Similarly, coaches were asked about their understanding of their identified mathematics EBP. As shown in the following table, there was a shift in the percentage of coaches indicating that they are an expert in the EBP from 71.4% in the fall to 38.5% in the most recent winter data collection; 14.3% indicate a solid understanding in the fall while 61.5% indicated a solid understanding at follow up. It is believed that

these shifts represent changes in the focus of the EBPs in individual LSSs rather than overall changes in understanding of the EBPs. Of note, 84.7% of coaches indicate at least expertise or solid understandings of their EBPs in the fall of 2019, while 100.0% of coaches indicate that knowledge level in winter 2020.

Table 21. *Coaches’ Understanding of their Mathematics Evidence-Based Practice*

	Percent Fall 2019	Percent Winter 2020
“I am an expert in this practice.”	71.4%	38.5%
“I have a solid understanding of this practice.”	14.3%	61.5%
“I am somewhat familiar with this practice.”	0.0%	0.0%
“I am unfamiliar with this practice.”	14.3%	0.0%

Coaches were asked about teachers’ use of EBPs by selecting from a range of percentages (0%, 1-25%, 26-50%, 51-75%, 75-99%, or 100%). Table 21 shows that coaches believe that teachers were consistently implementing EBPs in the fall and winter of this school year, and that a majority of teachers are implementing those practices with fidelity. There are additional opportunities for improvement in the fidelity of implementation based on coaches’ responses, but their responses indicate that SSIP counties have a strong foundation in EBP implementation.

Table 22. *Coaches’ Ratings of Teachers’ Use of EBPs*

	Median Percent Fall 2019	Median Percent Winter 2020
Percentage of teachers that use mathematics Evidence-Based Practices	76-99%	76-99%
Percentage of teachers that use mathematics Evidence-Based Practices <i>with fidelity</i>	51-75%	51-75%

Administrators were also asked about their beliefs regarding several key statements, including whether or not coaching is valuable to improving mathematics instruction. More than 90% of administrators indicated agreement or strong agreement with the statement, “**Coaching is valuable to improving mathematics instruction**” in the fall of 2019. There was a slight decline to 83.4% of administrators who agreed or strongly agreed with this statement in the winter 2020 data collection.

### *Challenges Implementing EBPs to Fidelity*

Last year, MSDE identified the need for both State and local Systems Coaches and instructional coaches to become better versed in the use of data for evaluating impact of EBPs. This is a high priority and MSDE provided three webinars and plans to provide a face-to-face two-day training on data literacy to SSIP LSSs to provide state- and local-level personnel with training on effective data use. MSDE is also

concerned with the capacity of local districts to provide consistent instructional coaching strategies. While some districts appear to have strong coaching approaches, there is not a consistent and evidence-based strategy that can be identified with the SSIP districts. Consequently, MSDE planned instructional coaching webinars and face to face trainings to occur in 2019 and 2020. These trainings are part of ongoing work to improve both the use of data for evaluating the impact of EBPs and instructional coaching to support the implementation of EBPs. MSDE is also working to improve communications between MSDE and local personnel regarding the SSIP by engaging in more consistent informal communication and collaboration.

Teachers have received positive results on implementing the EBPs to fidelity, but the districts have recognized that some of the EBPs did not perfectly align with the core curriculum content. As a result, the fidelity tools underemphasize the content area that teachers are required to cover and made fidelity scores seem lower than if they were tailored to the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards. The districts are working to align fidelity tools with the content to eliminate this discrepancy and ensure that future measurements of fidelity are consistent with district content goals.

Finally, coaches and administrators were asked about the extent to which schools are implementing high-quality mathematics instruction for all students, including those with IEPs. Responses to this question indicated that some coaches and administrators believe that their schools could do a better job implementing high quality instruction for all students, regardless of disability status. In the coming months, MSDE plans to conduct additional outreach and data collection with coaches and administrators to better understand this response and where they feel as though current practices may not be sufficient.

*d. Progress Toward Achievement of the SiMR*

This section includes data on evaluation questions related to achievement of the SiMR. The table below represents the evaluation plan component for the long-term outcome of improved math performance and reduction of the achievement gap for students with disabilities in grades 3, 4, and 5.

Table 23. *SiMR Outcome Measures*

Practice	Measurement Level	Evaluation Question	Measure of Success	Data Source	Collection Timeline	Practice
Long-Term Outcome	Instruction	Child	To what extent do students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in four LSSs demonstrate increased proficiency in math performance as measured by local progress monitoring tools?	Percent of students meeting and exceeding standards as assessed using local tools	Local progress monitoring tools	Semi-annually

Practice	Measurement Level	Evaluation Question	Measure of Success	Data Source	Collection Timeline	Practice
Long-Term Outcome	Instruction	Child	To what extent do students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in four LSSs demonstrate increased proficiency in math performance as measured by state assessment?	Percent increase in students approaching, meeting, or exceeding grade level expectations on PARCC mathematics test	PARCC	Annually
Long-Term Outcome	Instruction	District	To what extent are the districts reducing the gap in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade mathematics performance between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers?	Percentage point reduction of the gap between student with disabilities and their non-disabled peers who are approaching, meeting, or exceeding grade level expectations in grades 3-5	PARCC Mathematics assessment results	Annually
Long-Term Outcome	Instruction	State	To what extent is the state reducing the gap in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade mathematics performance between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers?	Percentage point reduction of the gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers who are approaching, meeting, or exceeding grade level expectations in grades 3-5	PARCC Mathematics assessment results	Annually

*Key Successes in Progress Toward Achieving the SiMR*

**Increase in students with disabilities approaching, meeting, or exceeding expectations in mathematics.** The SiMR for the SSIP is the percentage of students with disabilities in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade who are meeting or exceeding expectations on the statewide PARCC mathematics assessment. MSDE measures the SiMR using PARCC student data for the SSIP schools in each SSIP county. In last year’s report, there were generally decreases in the percentage of students grades 3 to 5 with disabilities in the four SSIP counties who were approaching, meeting, or exceeding grade-level expectations between the mathematics tests in spring 2017 and spring 2018. However, three of the four counties reversed that trend and saw increases in students approaching, meeting, or achieving expectations from spring 2018 to spring 2019 (Figure 4).

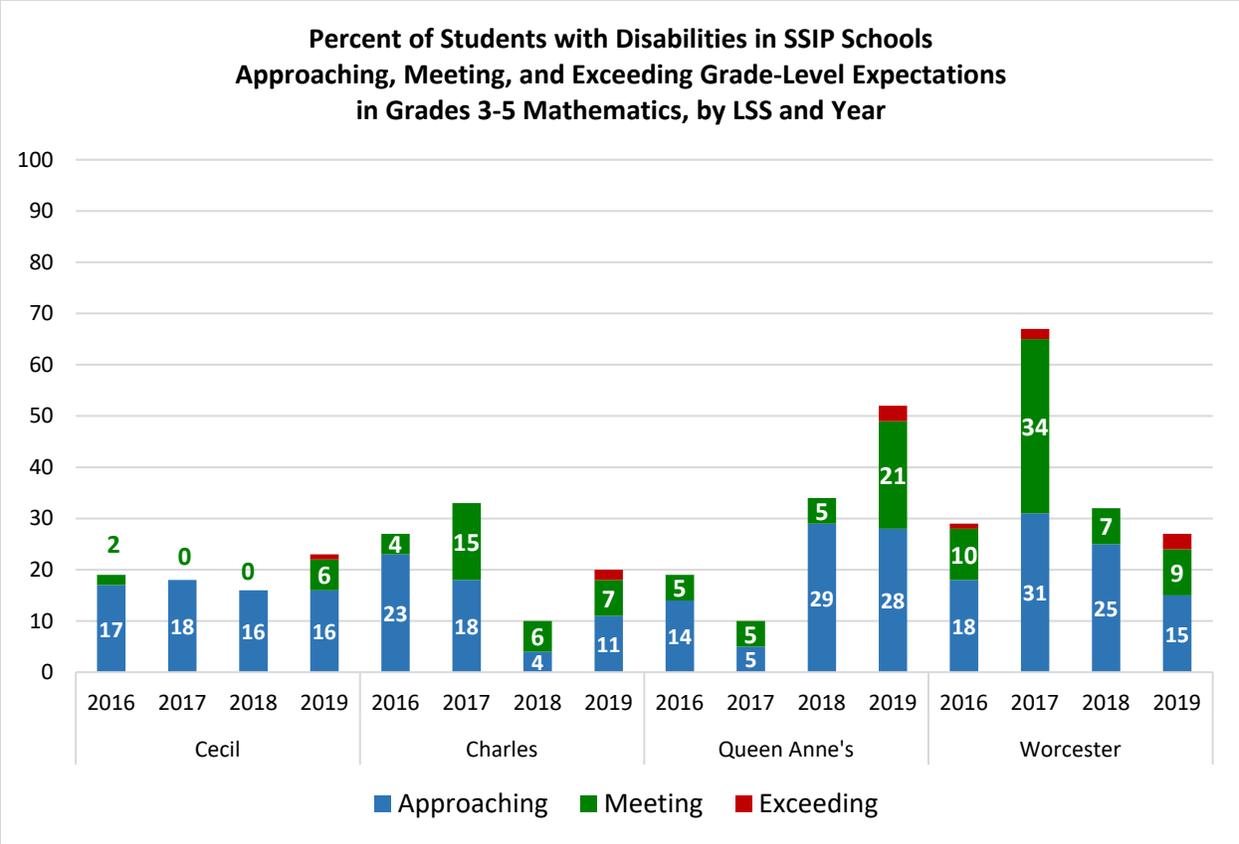
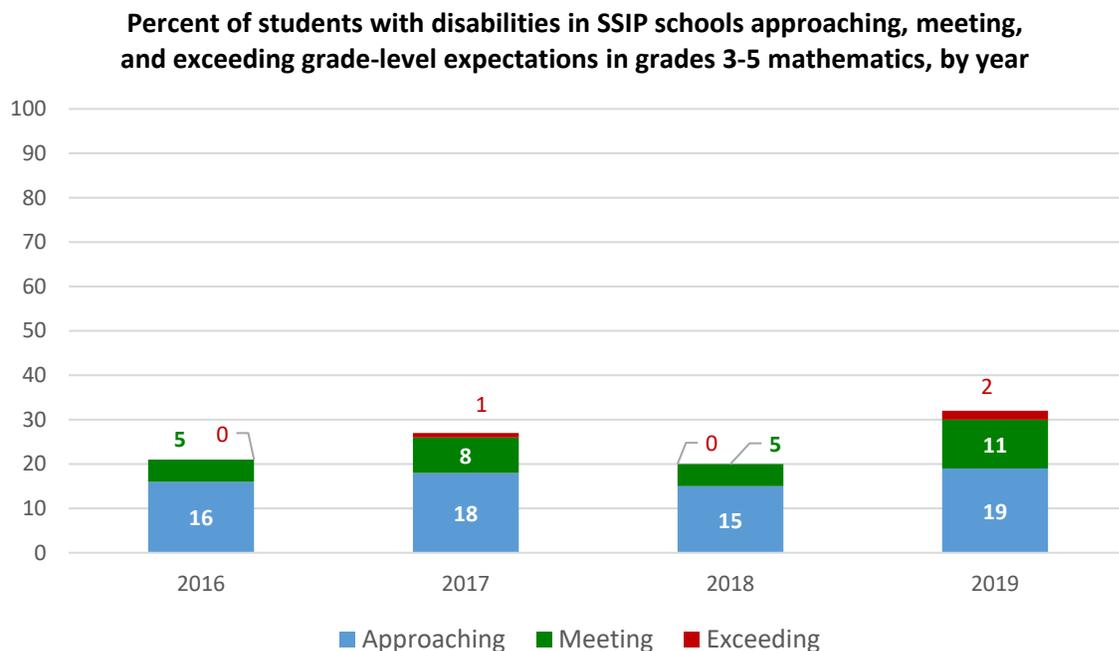


Figure 4. Percentage of students with disabilities approaching, meeting, and exceeding expectations in grades 3-5 mathematics in SSIP Part B schools, by LSS, 2016 through 2019

- Cecil County, Charles County, and Queen Anne’s county increased the percentage of students with disabilities approaching, meeting, and exceeding grade-level expectations in grades 3 to 5 mathematics by 12 percent on average.
- While Worcester County experienced an overall decrease in the percentage of students approaching, meeting, and exceeding expectations, Worcester actually increased the percentage of students with disabilities meeting grade-level expectations by 2 percent, and the percentage exceeding grade-level expectations increased by 3 percent.
- In 2018, none of the four SSIP counties had any students with disabilities exceeding mathematics grade-level expectations, yet in 2019, all four SSIP counties had at least one percentage of students with disabilities in this category. Both Queen Anne’s and Worcester had 3 percent of students with disabilities exceeding grade-level expectations. Two percent of students with disabilities exceeded grade-level expectations in Charles County.
- In the seventeen Cecil County elementary schools, there was no change in the percent of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 approaching expectations in mathematics between 2018 and 2019. There was a 6 percent increase in the percent of students meeting expectations, and a 1 percentage increase in the percent of students exceeding expectations.

- In the three Charles County elementary schools, there was a 7 percent increase in the percent of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 approaching expectations, a 1 percent increase in the percent of students meeting expectations, and a 2 percent increase in the percent of students exceeding expectations.
- In the seven Queen Anne’s County elementary schools, there was a 1 percent decrease in the percent of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 approaching expectations. In contrast, there was a 16 percent increase in the percent of students with disabilities meeting expectations, and a 3 percent increase in the percent of students with disabilities exceeding expectations.
- In the seven Worcester County elementary schools, there was a 10 percent decrease in the percent of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 approaching expectations. In contrast, there was a 2 percent increase in the percent meeting expectations, and a 3 percent increase in the percent exceeding expectations in mathematics between 2018 and 2019.

MSDE’s progress on the SiMR represents a significant improvement over last year’s result. Last year there was a 6 percent decrease in the percentage of students with disabilities approaching, meeting, and exceeding expectations in grades 3 through 5 mathematics between 2017 and 2018. However, there was a 12 percent increase in the percentage of students with disabilities approaching, meeting, and exceeding expectations in grades 3 through 5 mathematics between 2018 and 2019 (see Figure 5).



*Figure 5.* Percentage of students with disabilities approaching, meeting, and exceeding expectations in grades 3-5 mathematics across all SSIP Part B schools, 2016 through 2019

From 2018 to 2019, there was a 4 percent increase in the percentage of students with disabilities in grades 3 through 5 mathematics approaching grade-level expectations, a 6 percent increase in the

percent meeting grade-level expectations, and a 2 percent increase in the percent exceeding grade-level expectations.

**Increase in student proficiency on lower-stakes mathematics tests.** The LSSs participating in the Part B SSIP also assessed students using locally selected assessments which are aligned with the district curriculum. Each district reported the number of students with and without disabilities who met grade-level expectations using the web-based survey. Table 24 presents the percentage of students with and without disabilities who met grade-level expectations at the beginning and middle of the current school year. This shows that in 2019 and

Table 24. *Student Performance in Mathematics on Local Assessments*

Student Group	Percent of Students Beginning of 2019-2020 School Year		Percent of Students Middle of 2019-2020 School year	
	Met Grade-Level Expectations	Do Not Meet Grade-Level Expectations	Meet Grade-Level Expectations	Do Not Meet Grade-Level Expectations
<b>3rd Grade Total</b>	<b>51.9%</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>73.3%</b>	<b>26.7%</b>
Students with IEPs	42.1%	57.9%	47.1%	52.9%
Students without IEPs	52.9%	47.1%	75.7%	24.3%
<b>4th Grade Total</b>	<b>80.2%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>
Students with IEPs	51.7%	48.3%	60.2%	39.8%
Students without IEPs	83.2%	16.8%	67.5%	32.5%
<b>5th Grade Total</b>	<b>46.5%</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	<b>51.0%</b>	<b>49.0%</b>
Students with IEPs	21.3%	78.7%	28.4%	71.6%
Students without IEPs	49.3%	50.7%	54.0%	46.0%
<b>All Students</b>	<b>61.6%</b>	<b>38.4%</b>	<b>64.4%</b>	<b>35.6%</b>
<b>All Students with IEPs</b>	<b>39.2%</b>	<b>60.8%</b>	<b>45.6%</b>	<b>54.4%</b>
<b>All Students without IEPs</b>	<b>63.9%</b>	<b>36.1%</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>33.5%</b>

Figure 6, below, presents this data disaggregated by grade level and IEP status. Each of the grade levels experienced an increase in the percentage of students with IEPs who were proficient in mathematics from the beginning to middle of the school year. In contrast, the percentage of students without IEPs who were proficient in mathematics decreased in fourth grade.

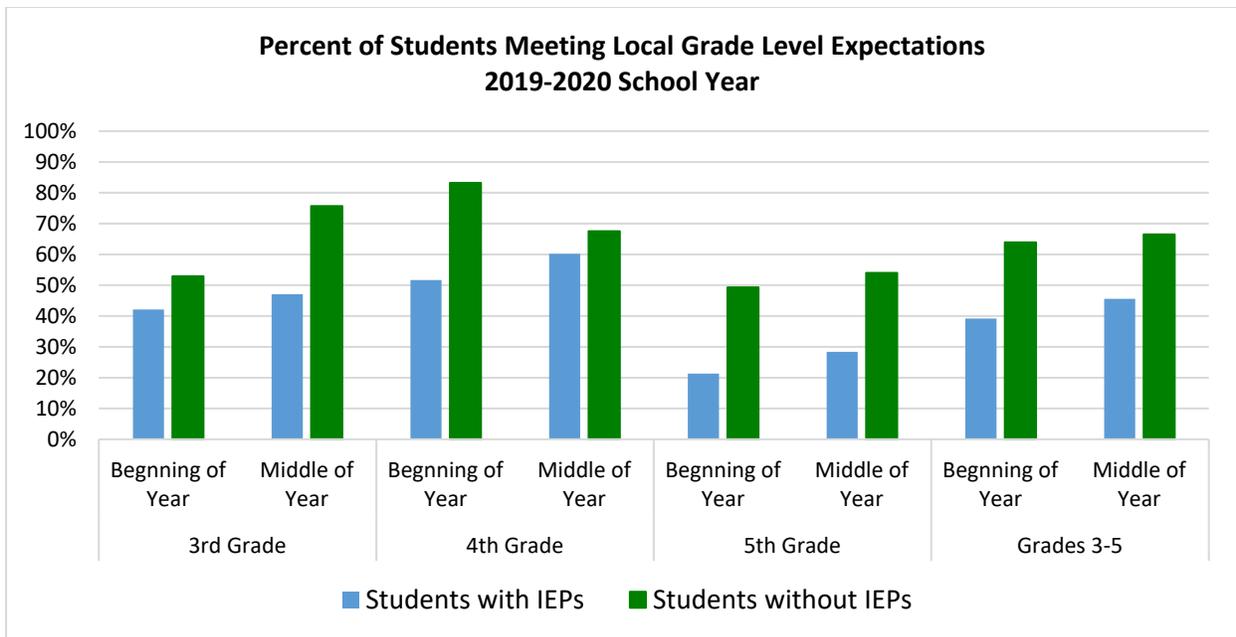


Figure 6. Percentage of students with and without IEPs in Part B SSIP schools who were proficient in low-stakes mathematics assessments at the beginning and middle of the 2019-2020 school year

**Participation of students with disabilities in general education instruction.** MSDE identified access to general education alongside peers without disabilities as an indicator of success. Currently, the only measure available of general education participation is the amount of time in or removed from general education recorded on IEPs. In Year 4 of SSIP implementation, 91 percent of children with IEPs in SSIP schools, aged 6 through 21, were placed in general education classrooms 80 percent or more of the day (LRE A). This was a nine percent increase over 2017-18.

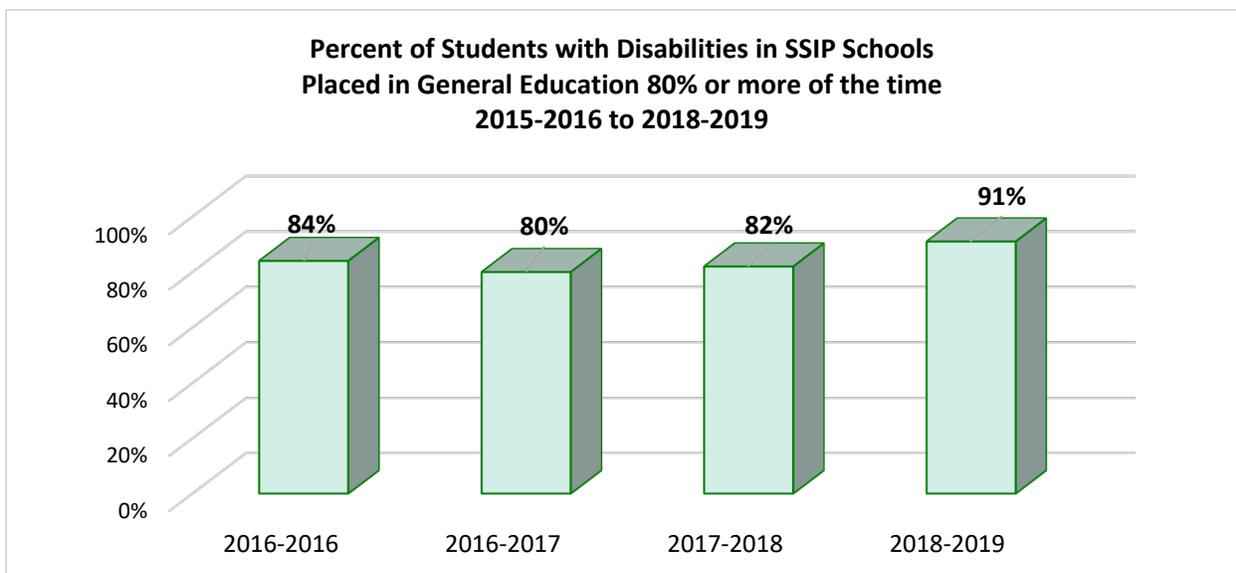


Figure 7. Percentage of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 in SSIP schools by placement in least restrictive environment (LRE), 2015-16 through 2017-18

## ***Challenges to Achieving the SiMR***

**Comparisons in data collection over time, across districts, and among school, district, and State data sources.** State assessment data is collected only once a year, and the PARCC data has not been sensitive to changes in growth of student proficiency over time, especially for lower performing subgroups. While this is the primary data source identified to measure progress toward the SiMR, MSDE has looked to local data sources to evaluate student performance and progress. At the school level, teachers use formative assessments to monitor their students, which are important to inform instruction, but not to evaluate progress. Universal screening and progress monitoring data used by districts vary from one local jurisdiction to another; and sometimes across years within one district or across grades within a year. This makes it impossible to aggregate those data for any analyses or to examine trends over time. Consequently, this year our external evaluator collaborated with MSDE to gather data from each school on the number of children with and without disabilities meeting grade-level standards on local assessment tools. District staff were asked to provide the number of children at, above, and below benchmark expectations at the fall of 2019 and winter 2020. This at least provides a measure that can be used comparatively across schools and time.

**Reduction of the gap between students with disabilities and students without disabilities on math performance.** In addition to improving performance on mathematics assessments, MSDE seeks to reduce the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. As reported last year, between 2017 and 2018 the achievement gap in mathematics proficiency, as measured by those students achieving levels 4 and 5 (meeting and exceeding expectations) on the State assessment (PARCC and now MCAP) varied very little. *The gap stayed the same in Cecil County and grew in other districts from 2017 to 2018 by:*

- 1 percentage points in Charles County
- 10 percentage points in Worcester County
- 0 percentage point in Cecil County
- 2 percentage points in Queen Anne’s County

In 2019 all four SSIP districts experienced slight decreases in the achievement gap between students with disabilities and all students in grades 3-5 mathematics scores, *the gap decreased from 2018 to 2019 by:*

- 2 percentage points in Charles County
- 3 seven percentage points in Worcester County
- 1 percentage point in Cecil County
- 6 percentage points in Queen Anne’s County

The chart below (Figure 8) shows the gap between students with and without disabilities. The lower boundary for each bar represents the percent of students with disabilities who scored level 4 or 5 on the State Assessment, and the upper boundary of the bar represents the average proficiency scores for all students.

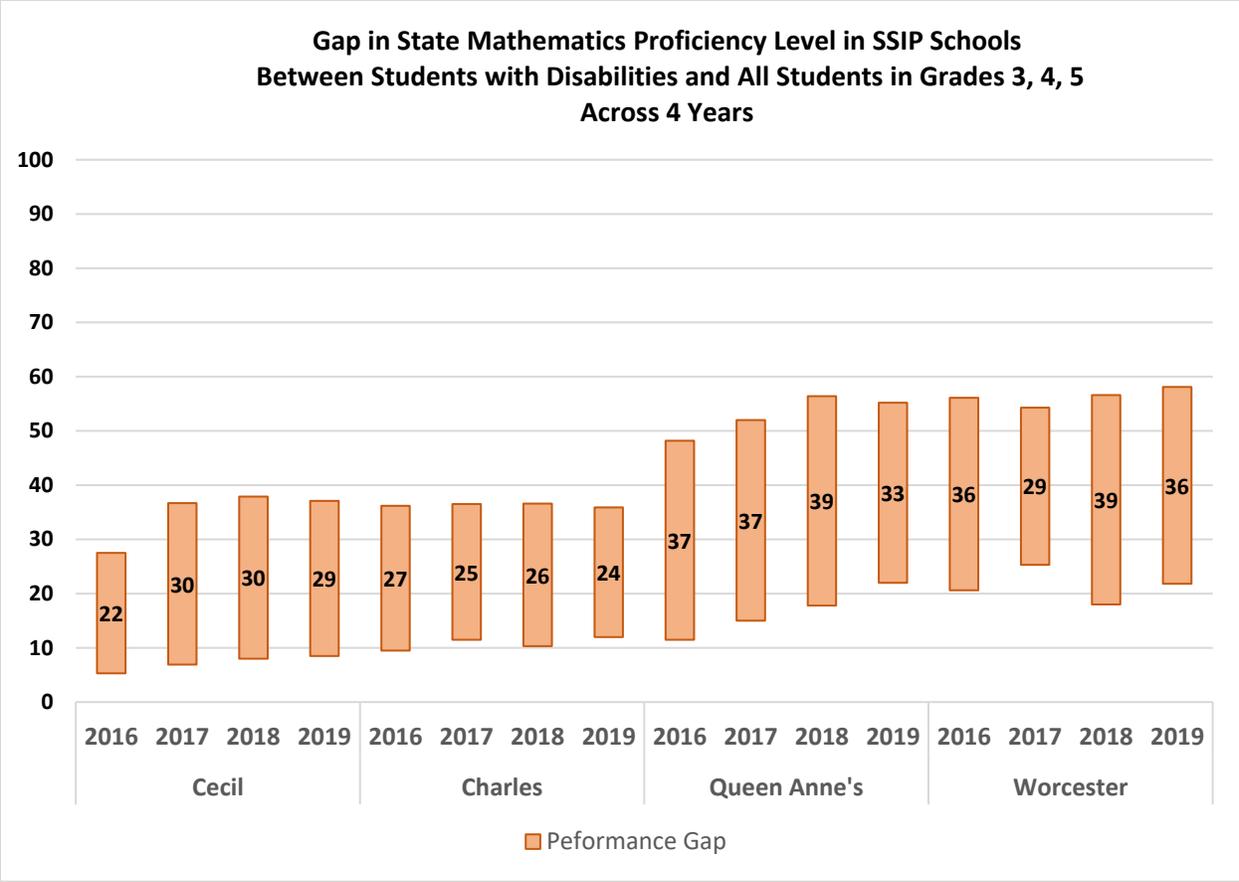


Figure 8. Percentage point gap in percent proficient in mathematics in SSIP schools between students with disabilities and students without disabilities, by year and county

To continue to decrease the gap, the percentage of students with disabilities who are proficient must increase at a faster rate than for students who do not have disabilities. From 2018 to 2019, the lower boundary of the gap (i.e., the percentage of students with disabilities who are proficient in mathematics) increased in all four counties. This pathway to closing the achievement gap is demonstrates that the proficiency of students with disabilities is increasing as is the proficiency of students without disabilities. However, the gap between these groups is not sufficiently narrowing.

As a part of this evaluation, MSDE looked at the reported performance of students on local assessments in comparison to grade level expectations. Districts reported the number of students below, at, and above grade level standards. This data, collected in the fall of 2019 and winter of 2020 indicates, with one exception for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students without IEPs, the percent meeting grade level standards increased from the fall to winter data collection. Students with IEPs in each grade level experienced increases in grade level performance, ranging from a 5% increase for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students to 8.5% increase for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. This data is displayed in Figure 9 below.

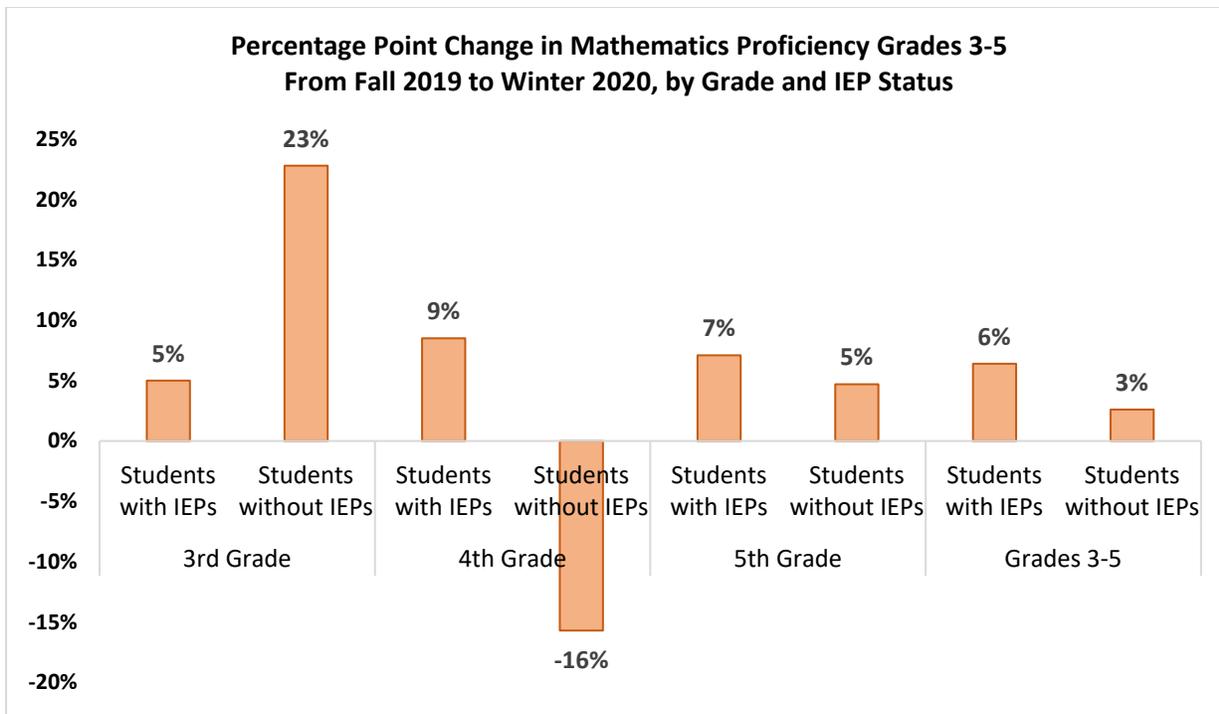


Figure 9. Percentage point change in mathematics proficiency grades 3-5 in Part B SSIP schools from baseline to follow up, by grade level and IEP status

**e. How Data Informs Change to Implementation and Improvement Strategies**

MSDE has not made any significant changes to the implementation strategies identified in previous years’ SSIP reports. Rather, we are using the results of our data analysis to refine, streamline, and improve individual strategies to meet the current needs of the state, local providers, students, and their families. Data indicate that schools are implementing with fidelity or very near full implementation fidelity. However, the results are not yet being seen in student performance. We believe that by increasing our focus on using data for strong instructional decision making by collaborative teams of general and special educators, coupled with strong coaching based on student performance as well as teacher fidelity are critical. In addition, we expect to further streamline data collection and assist local districts with consistent data collection tools and practices so that data the impact of the SSIP work can be fully evaluated.

**f. How Data are Informing Next Steps in the SSIP Implementation**

MSDE has engaged in ongoing reflective practice regarding the SSIP since data collection began. MSDE has identified the following next steps in SSIP Implementation based on the data presented and analyzed above:

- Ongoing revisions to communications with and among the members of the State Cross-Departmental Team to support meaningful collaboration.
- Ongoing support to LSS staff on implementation of EBPs.

- Statewide training on using data for instructional decision-making and program evaluation.
- A focus on both Systems Coaching and Instructional Coaching to strengthen supports from the State to LSSs and from districts to schools.
- Ongoing improvements to the data collection and management of data on fidelity of implementation, student performance, and local and statewide activities.

***g. How Data Support Planned Modifications to Intended Outcomes (including the SIMR)***

MSDE has not made any changes to the intended outcomes of the SSIP.

### **3. Stakeholder involvement in the SSIP Evaluation**

The implementers of the SSIP work are the stakeholders with whom MSDE has been most engaged. Through structured interviews as well as through the web-based survey, implementers, administrators, and coaches have provided input and feedback on both MSDE technical assistance as well as their experiences with implementation, including successes, challenges, barriers and solutions. This engagement will continue to be structured on at least a quarterly basis.

MSDE also continues to work on developing and strengthening stakeholder involvement from other interested individuals and groups, including those who can provide input and advice to SSIP staff as well as those who would provide feedback on this work. As mentioned earlier in this report, MSDE has experienced changes in staffing that limited the development of a steady, predictable, and engaged relationship with external stakeholders. MSDE plans to continue to engage with the SESAC, the math supervisors across the Stat, the Local School System Special Education Directors and System Coaches, and with other groups identified by the Assistant State Superintendent. In addition to attending advocacy group and groups external to MSDE, the SSIP team will consider alternative ways to engage the State and local math experts in sharing innovative practices learned from the SSIP statewide and gaining input into implementation and evaluation of the SSIP.

In particular, this report will be disseminated to our Stakeholder groups and will be shared through discussion in regular meetings (online and in person in the fall). With the newly appointed SSIP Coordinator, MSDE DEI/SES will work strategically to engage all Stakeholders from math experts to family members, advocacy groups, and local implementers in feedback to the implementation and evaluation of the SSIP.

Finally, the State is working to build stronger informal connections with the LSSs and other state personnel through regular communication and collaboration. Moving ahead, MDSE would like to engage in more collaborative work in which state personnel and LSS staff will have meaningful opportunities to collaborate to promote access with outcomes for our children with disabilities, with a special focus on mathematics teaching and learning.

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## **D. Data Quality Issues**

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### **1. Concern Related to the Quality or Quantity of Data**

The new web-based data collection method for the SSIP was first introduced to LSS administrators participating in the SSIP at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. As with any new data collection tool, there were challenges in implementation, particularly across different roles within the LSSs. In addition to a webinar and written instructions on how to enter information, MSDE and our external evaluators provided one-on-one technical assistance to LSS personnel reporting data. Furthermore, MSDE and the external evaluator sent email reminders to SSIP liaisons in the districts throughout the school year to encourage active participation. One challenge that the external evaluator plans to address in future data collection activities is the consistency of who is reporting data at each data collection point. In this year's data collection, there was not always alignment between who submitted data at the baseline data collection and follow-up data collection, particularly for district administrators and coaches. This discrepancy can make it more challenging to draw conclusions about changes over time.

### **2. Implications for Assessing Progress or Results**

This report has been the first year that MSDE has been able to report significant trend data and more substantial quantitative data in aggregate on both implementation and outcomes. This standardization has allowed the State to assess delivery and the effects of professional learning and coaching, and to quantify the delivery of technical assistance, as well as the fidelity of systems coaching. It also has allowed the State to assess student progress in mathematics outside of the annual statewide assessment. The State remains confident in the SPP/APR data collection activities related to student assessment and LRE.

### **3. Plans for Improving Data Quality**

MSDE plans to engage in the following five significant data management efforts:

- Work with LSS staff to continue to gather benchmark data that is based on an EBP assessment tool to identify student performance and progress at a more granular level.
- Work with LSS staff to gather implementation fidelity data that is reliable and informative to improving practice.
- Create opportunities for increased State and local capacity for data literacy.
- Provide ongoing coaching and support for use of the web-based data collection tool to ensure standardization of reporting and accurate data.
- Work with the SSIP Coordinator and with the MSDE data staff to continue to ensure accuracy of reporting.

## E. Progress Toward Achieving Improvements

Note: this information was provided in Section C.

## F. Plans for Next Year

### 1. Additional Activities to be Implemented

Table 25. SSIP Areas, Activities, Timelines, and Impact of Plans for 2020 - 2021

Area	Activity	Timeline	Impact
<b>Infrastructure</b> <i>Strategic Collaboration across MSDE, within the Division (DEI/SES), and with Local Implementation Teams, with a focus on Shared Learning and Planning through Data</i>	Reconvening of the Cross-Departmental Team with a focus on Liaisons and math specialists working with other MSDE staff on an as-needed basis.  Enhanced structure and process for the Division (State) Implementation Team to follow across Part C and Part B SSIP Systems Coaches	Meet 3x/year Sept. Dec. and March  4 Bi-monthly meetings Sept 2019 – March 2020	Expanded understanding of math instructional best and evidence-based practices; increased support Statewide, and coherent messaging from MSDE.  Structure and documentation of challenges, successes, barriers, and solutions, as well as peer coaching in the TA process by DEI/SES Liaisons
<b>Infrastructure</b> <i>Strategic Collaboration across MSDE, within the Division (DEI/SES), and with Local Implementation Teams, with a focus on Shared Learning and Planning through Data</i>	Professional Learning in Systems and Instructional Coaching  Systems Coaching webinar and face-face learning with MSDE  1 Webinar to establish the coaches network (obtain coaching resources from each district; collaborate with NCSI)  1 2-day Face-Face PL	August 2020  Sept. 2020  Jan. 2021	Increased capacity of State Liaisons to provide quality technical assistance based on systems coach research; increased quality and consistency across SSIP districts to provide effective coaching with the ability to document both coaching effectiveness and
<b>Infrastructure</b> <i>Strategic Collaboration within the Division (DEI/SES), and with Local Implementation Teams</i>	Protocol for Systems Coach and Tiered Technical Assistance and Programmatic Support: to be finalized.	August 2020	State Systems Coaches (Liaisons) provide consistent TA consistent with the Divisions Differentiated Framework for Support, with high ratings for fidelity and quality/impact from LSS.

Area	Activity	Timeline	Impact
<b>Evidence Based Practices: Resources, Professional Learning</b>	Resource Toolbox: while many resources have been developed, the MD Learning Links (MLL) website is under re-development. The toolbox will be enhanced and uploaded	Sept. 2020	LSS further develop and refine their capacity to implement effective instruction in math, using evidence-based practices, adapted as needed to address the unique needs of learners with disabilities.
<b>Evidence Based Practices: Resources, Professional Learning</b>	Professional Learning in Data Literacy: Face to face 2-day training  Assessment/report of actual data collection, analysis and use practices for continuous improvement  Consultation with SSIP Leads to better understand and support data use	TBD (reschedule)  TBD – in planning; collaborating with other Division members Fall 2020 and winter 2021	Increased capacity of local leaders and their school teams to analyze and use student data for both instructional planning and evaluation.
<b>Evidence Based Practices: Family engagement</b>	Family Engagement a. Revise Parent-teacher modules and disseminate b. Offer tele-webinar for families (2) c. Follow up with family participants	Summer 2020 Fall 2020  Winter 2021	Increased capacity of families to support their child with a disability to apply math concepts at home and in the community.
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>	SESAC: quarterly meetings: attend, present, solicit input Math Work Group: attend, present, solicit input LSS Leaders and Implementers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 annual site-based school visits</li> <li>• Monthly TA communications and attend 5 local implementation meetings</li> <li>• 2 annual video conference Strengths/Challenges, Barriers/Solutions activity</li> </ul> Information Dissemination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newsletter disseminated</li> <li>• Feedback for improvements</li> <li>• Testimonial and other citations to be gathered through stakeholder meetings (local and external)</li> </ul>	4/year  2/ year  To be scheduled with local leaders 2/year through blast email and MLL  At each convening	Stakeholder engagement will enhance the implementation and outcomes of SSIP work as the MSDE Liaisons and LSS leaders learn more about what works, what to change, what to add or remove, and how to achieve fidelity of implementation and improved outcomes for children with disabilities.

Of particular interest is increasing our focused attention on the data being collected to evaluate both delivery of TA and support to LSSs and schools, implementation of EBPs, but in particular family

engagement, but also use of data for both instructional decisions and this evaluation. This focus is further described below.

## 2. Planned Evaluation Activities

An overview of Evaluation Plan activities for Year 5 include:

- Ongoing data collection and analysis using the web-based data collection tool, qualitative input gathered through stakeholder and MSDE collaborations, State assessment data, and
- The provision of statewide training and resources as needed;
- Ongoing improvements to ensure implementation fidelity data is reliable and informative to improving practice; and
- Revisions to the evaluation plan and associated measures of success as needed.

### *a. Data collection*

Data collection will continue through 2020 and throughout the 2020-2021 school year, using the web-based survey to obtain data directly from LSS leaders, school administrators, participants in professional learning activities, and to collect student performance data. The external evaluator, AnLar, will work with the SSIP Coordinator and the local staff to provide information and support as needed to respond in a timely manner and completely. Local staff will enter data through the survey for each “event” (e.g., training session), and also respond to regular data requests. State data will be accessed in January of the next year for analysis.

### *b. Measures*

Measures include:

- State and Local Systems Coach fidelity data
- Satisfaction of LSS staff with MSDE technical assistance and programmatic support
- Rating scale of professional learning opportunities (quality, usefulness, and relevance)
- Rating scale of learning prior to and following a training event
- Qualitative themes and summaries from MSDE departmental, Division, and stakeholder engagements
- Local measures of number of students (with and without disabilities) performing below, at, and above grade level
- State assessment data of students who meet and exceed expectations

### *c. Expected outcomes*

Increases in fidelity of implementation, high ratings on technical assistance, training, and products disseminated, expansion of implementation of evidence-based practices, and improved performance with narrowing of the gap for children with disabilities in mathematics assessments.

### **3. Anticipated Barriers and Solutions**

A barrier that has impacted MSDE's infrastructure support has been the turnover of SSIP coordination and TA staff. This issue has been resolved in the hiring of new staff and internal reassignments to better align staff talents with position requirements. To address this, MSDE plans to conduct several training opportunities in house with MCIE for new staff providing technical assistance and program support to Local School Systems. With a fully staffed TA group, MSDE will be able to refine and document both the TA implementation as well as the concerns and successes of schools and districts.

Another barrier has been the lack of consistent local data or a means for using local data for comparative purposes. AnLar's web-survey tool provides a means for gathering this input using local data to identify students who are on grade level in math and those above and below the grade level standards. Through the development of this report, it was also noted that we may want to standardize how we are retrieving school and student data to ensure consistent comparisons from year to year.

### **4. Need for Support**

At this time, MSDE wishes to continue its relationship and involvement with NCSI in support of our instructional coaching initiative.