

STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN / ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT: PART B

for STATE FORMULA GRANT PROGRAMS under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**For reporting on
FFY 2020**

Arizona



PART B DUE February 1, 2022

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202**

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

Instructions and Measurement

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

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

Measurement

The State's SPP/APR includes an SSIP that is a comprehensive, ambitious, yet achievable multi-year plan for improving results for children with disabilities. The SSIP includes each of the components described below.

Instructions

Baseline Data: The State must provide baseline data that must be expressed as a percentage and which is aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

Targets: In its FFY 2020 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2022, the State must provide measurable and rigorous targets (expressed as percentages) for each of the six years from FFY 2020 through FFY 2025. The State's FFY 2025 target must demonstrate improvement over the State's baseline data.

Updated Data: In its FFYs 2020 through FFY 2025 SPPs/APRs, due February 2, 2022, the State must provide updated data for that specific FFY (expressed as percentages) and that data must be aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities. In its FFYs 2020 through FFY 2025 SPPs/APRs, the State must report on whether it met its target.

Overview of the Three Phases of the SSIP

It is of the utmost importance to improve results for children with disabilities by improving educational services, including special education and related services. Stakeholders, including parents of children with disabilities, local educational agencies, the State Advisory Panel, and others, are critical participants in improving results for children with disabilities and should be included in developing, implementing, evaluating, and revising the SSIP and included in establishing the State's targets under Indicator 17. The SSIP should include information about stakeholder involvement in all three phases.

Phase I: Analysis:

- Data Analysis;
- Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity;
- State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities;
- Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies; and
- Theory of Action.

Phase II: Plan (which, in addition to the Phase I content (including any updates) outlined above:

- Infrastructure Development;
- Support for local educational agency (LEA) Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices; and
- Evaluation.

Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation (which, in addition to the Phase I and Phase II content (including any updates) outlined above:

- Results of Ongoing Evaluation and Revisions to the SSIP.

Specific Content of Each Phase of the SSIP

Refer to FFY 2013-2015 Measurement Table for detailed requirements of Phase I and Phase II SSIP submissions.

Phase III should only include information from Phase I or Phase II if changes or revisions are being made by the State and/or if information previously required in Phase I or Phase II was not reported.

Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation

In Phase III, the State must, consistent with its evaluation plan described in Phase II, assess and report on its progress implementing the SSIP. This includes: (A) data and analysis on the extent to which the State has made progress toward and/or met the State-established short-term and long-term outcomes or objectives for implementation of the SSIP and its progress toward achieving the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities (SiMR); (B) the rationale for any revisions that were made, or that the State intends to make, to the SSIP as the result of implementation, analysis, and evaluation; and (C) a description of the meaningful stakeholder engagement. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision.

A. Data Analysis

As required in the Instructions for the Indicator/Measurement, in its FFYs 2020 through 2025 SPP/APR, the State must report data for that specific FFY (expressed as actual numbers and percentages) that are aligned with the SiMR. The State must report on whether the State met its target. In addition, the State may report on any additional data (e.g., progress monitoring data) that were collected and analyzed that would suggest progress toward the SiMR. States using a subset of the population from the indicator (e.g., a sample, cohort model) should describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR if that was not described in Phase I or Phase II of the SSIP.

B. Phase III Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

The State must provide a narrative or graphic representation, e.g., a logic model, of the principal activities, measures and outcomes that were implemented since the State's last SSIP submission (i.e., Feb 2021). The evaluation should align with the theory of action described in Phase I and the evaluation plan described in Phase II. The State must describe any changes to the activities, strategies, or timelines described in Phase II and include a rationale or justification for the changes. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision.

The State must summarize the infrastructure improvement strategies that were implemented, and the short-term outcomes achieved, including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up. The State must describe the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next fiscal year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 APR, report on anticipated outcomes to be obtained during FFY 2021, i.e., July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022).

The State must summarize the specific evidence-based practices that were implemented and the strategies or activities that supported their selection and ensured their use with fidelity. Describe how the evidence-based practices, and activities or strategies that support their use, are intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (i.e., behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes,

and/or child outcomes. Describe any additional data (i.e., progress monitoring data) that was collected to support the on-going use of the evidence-based practices and inform decision-making for the next year of SSIP implementation.

C. Stakeholder Engagement

The State must describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts and how the State addressed concerns, if any, raised by stakeholders through its engagement activities.

Additional Implementation Activities

The State should identify any activities not already described that it intends to implement in the next fiscal year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 APR, report on activities it intends to implement in FFY 2021, i.e., July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022) including a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes that are related to the SiMR. The State should describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.

17 - Indicator Data

Section A: Data Analysis

What is the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)?

By FFY 2025, targeted Public Education Agencies (PEAs) will increase the performance of SSIP students with disabilities in grade 3 on the English Language Arts (ELA) state assessment from 9.58% to 12.23%.

Has the SiMR changed since the last SSIP submission? (yes/no)

NO

Is the State using a subset of the population from the indicator (e.g., a sample, cohort model)? (yes/no)

YES

Provide a description of the subset of the population from the indicator.

From the cohort of PEAs going into their monitoring year, a subset of that cohort enters self-assessment, as determined by the Risk Analysis tool and through the differentiated monitoring process. Subsequently, a subset of the PEAs participating in self-assessment monitoring activities are determined from having below average literacy outcomes on the most recent state testing data for entrance into the SSIP cohort.

Is the State's theory of action new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)

YES

Please provide a description of the changes and updates to the theory of action.

The Theory of Action was revised to reflect the changes in the SSIP SiMR in moving from outcomes in grades 3-5 to grade 3 and comparing data for students with disabilities to students with disabilities in SSIP. The Theory of Action was also updated to include completing activities with fidelity, using data to inform decisions, accounting for feedback, and engaging in continuous collaboration as important elements of active SSIP participation toward positive student outcomes.

Please provide a link to the current theory of action.

<https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2022/01/SSIP%20Logic%20Model%20and%20Theory%20of%20Action%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

Does the State intend to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications? (yes/no)

NO

If no, describe any changes to the activities, strategies or timelines described in the previous submission and include a rationale or justification for the changes.

In addition to the change from collecting benchmark data to collecting screener data, the SEA-SSIP Team also aligned screener data submission dates with MOWR. Other changes to activity submission timelines also occurred in accordance with the new federal submission of February 1. This included the initial submission for both the Success Gaps Rubric (SGR) and Action Plan (AP) and the first EBP Diagnostic Tools, which the SEA-SSIP Team moved to late August and early October respectively. As a positive consequence, PEAs have more time in the school year to use data for analysis and growth and to pursue initiatives.

For example, in SY 2020–2021, there were 41 calendar days between the first and second submission period for the EBP, given a common PEA classroom. However, there was a notable variance of when PEAs submitted the EBP Tools due to issues largely related to COVID-19, as the SEA was informed by feedback. Analysis showed that when the submission dates between the first and second EBP Tools were less than 45 calendar days, the average growth was closer to 2 practices per classroom, while the average growth when at or exceeding 45 calendar days was closer to six practices per classroom. Therefore, when having to shift the activity timeline due to federal reporting, adjustments to the EBP timelines also made sure to allow for an extra two weeks between the first and second submission dates.

As a result of stakeholder feedback and analysis, changes in activity structure were made to shift some of the energy from documentation to implementation and toward PEAs completing activities with fidelity. Changes made in simplifying documentation included reformatting of the following tools to allow all submissions to live on one working document for the duration of participation in SSIP (3 years): the SGR and AP, the SGR and AP Fidelity Feedback Guide, and the Literacy Screener Reporting Form. For example, where PEAs would previously submit six SGR and AP documents through their three years in SSIP, PEAs now have one form that they can use to reference context, make cohesive goals, and visualize progress.

To improve PEAs completing the SGR and AP with fidelity, revisions were made to the way that PEAs considered evidence for Indicator self-assessment. In prior years, the field for evidence was placed after the fields for placement of self-assessment for level of implementation. In SY 2021–2022 and beyond, fields for evidence are placed prior to the consideration of self-evaluation and are outlined as specific questions that come from the practices within the Indicator level descriptions. In conjunction with improved guidance and resources, the rate of PEAs targeting Indicator practices in their evidence sections and within their Action Plan action steps has risen by 28% to 81% in Fall of SY 2021–2022, as compared to the previous year.

In concert, the SGR and AP Feedback Form was aligned to the new focus on fidelity to provide specific feedback to PEAs on the documentation of the activity in accordance with fidelity and was rebranded as the SGR and AP Fidelity Feedback Guide. Prior to engaging in the SGR and AP activity, ESS/PSM Specialists were trained on the use of the Feedback Form with inter-rater reliability in mind. Then one month prior to the activity submission date, PEAs were provided with both the Feedback Form and a support video that referenced how the Feedback Guide was being used in conjunction with completing the SGR and AP activity with fidelity. Upon receiving completed SGR and AP activities, ESS/PSM Specialists reviewed submissions and

completed Feedback Forms together to further improve feedback reliability, before sending SGR and AP Fidelity Feedback Forms to PEAs for their consideration and subsequent conversation upon request. PEAs received specific feedback pertaining to aspects of fidelity, such as the explicit consideration of indicator evidence prior to the evaluation of current implementation level and the incidence of targeting the indicators with the lowest levels of implementation for Action Plan initiatives. By improving the process for understanding and completing the SGR and AP with fidelity, there is also an improved connection between engaging in the activity, resulting in positive student outcomes.

Progress toward the SiMR

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

Select yes if the State uses two targets for measurement. (yes/no)

NO

Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2020	9.58%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target>= =	9.58%	10.11%	10.64%	11.17%	11.70%	12.23%

FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

The number of grade 3 students with disabilities within SSIP cohort PEAs, receiving a score of Proficient or Highly Proficient, on the ELA component of the state assessment.	The number of grade 3 students with disabilities within SSIP cohort PEAs, receiving a score of Minimally proficient, Partially Proficient, Proficient, or Highly Proficient, on the ELA component of the state assessment.	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
66	689		9.58%	9.58%	N/A	N/A

Provide the data source for the FFY 2020 data.

Data Source: State ELA assessment data for SWD in grade 3 from the Arizona Assessment Data Warehouse

Clarification: The absence of FFY 2019 data is due to a cancellation of state testing administration in that year due to COVID-19.

Please describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR.

From a list of all grade 3 students with disabilities (SWD) that have a score on the state ELA assessment in the Assessment Data Warehouse, the data of students who are associated with a District of Residence Identification (DOR ID) corresponding with PEAs in years 1–3 of SSIP is disaggregated and compiled. Within the compiled list of students in years 1–3 of SSIP, the number of students testing as proficient are added to the students testing as highly proficient, and the resulting number is divided into the total number of SWD receiving any score on the ELA state assessment to calculate the proficiency for SSIP.

Optional: Has the State collected additional data (i.e., benchmark, CQI, survey) that demonstrates progress toward the SiMR? (yes/no)

NO

Did the State identify any general data quality concerns, unrelated to COVID-19, that affected progress toward the SiMR during the reporting period? (yes/no)

NO

Did the State identify any data quality concerns directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the reporting period? (yes/no)

YES

If data for this reporting period were impacted specifically by COVID-19, the State must include in the narrative for the indicator: (1) the impact on data completeness, validity and reliability for the indicator; (2) an explanation of how COVID-19 specifically impacted the State's ability to collect the data for the indicator; and (3) any steps the State took to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the data collection.

Before students began the fourth quarter of SY 2019–2020, Arizona issued mandatory school closures statewide for the duration of the school year due to COVID-19. Because several SSIP activity submissions and the state assessment window fell within this period of closure, the SEA-SSIP Team not only has the issue of data being incomplete during this period of time but also the issue of being unable to use this data to reliably track progress and make subsequent progress decisions based on the data for this period.

After the school closures in the fourth quarter of SY 2019–2020, PEAs were allowed to locally determine how instruction would be provided in SY 2020–2021. This caused a landscape where many PEAs opted to provide virtual instruction for the entire year, others instituted a hybrid model of both online and in-person instruction, and several learning communities vacillated between instructional formats. While activities and data collection resumed with more regularity, and despite state legislative protections for students with disabilities to ensure in-person instruction based on individual student needs and safety during SY 2020–2021, there were still COVID-related issues that made it difficult to ensure data reliability. The state was able to mitigate factors against data reliability through such methods as ensuring improved communication with PEAs and accounting for the factors that affect reliability. For example, accounting for whether instructional observations or benchmark assessments were held in hybrid or online environments was taken into consideration when analyzing activity outcomes and when monitoring progress. The SEA-SSIP Team further improved progress monitoring data reliability from the alignment with MOWR and transitioning from collecting literacy benchmark to literacy screener data.

The results of statewide testing in literacy show significant learning loss for students statewide. The proficiency for all Arizona students in grade 3 decreased by about 11% between FFY 2018 and FFY 2020, and, comparatively, only decreased by 3.49% for grade 3 students with disabilities in Arizona that were not in an SSIP cohort. For grade 3 students with disabilities in SSIP PEAs in this timespan however, there was an increase of 1.3%. As COVID-19 has not only been a variable in past data progression, it will also continue to be an unpredictable variable going forward. This will undoubtedly cause challenges to data reliability that will have to be closely monitored going forward.

Section B: Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

Please provide a link to the State's current evaluation plan.

<https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2022/01/SSIP%20Evaluation%20Plan%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

Is the State's evaluation plan new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)

YES

If yes, provide a description of the changes and updates to the evaluation plan.

From the evolution of the SSIP, and according to the guidance for Evaluation Plan language provided by the IDC at the November SSIP Data Quality Peer Group Meeting, there were revisions made to contents and language of the Evaluation Plan. In the first column of the table, while many of the priorities remain as interwoven practices, SSIP priorities have shifted. This is both due to the natural evolution of continuous improvement and in accordance with ongoing guidance at the federal level from such partners as the IDEA Data Center. Some of the new priorities that guide the Evaluation Plan include the focus on evidence-based practices, alignment and collaboration, and collecting stakeholder feedback. Subsequently, the following column for evaluation questions has been revised accordingly and has become more precise as data offers the opportunity to become more precise. SSIP partnerships have been fortified over time, and the data sources have changed according to how SSIP activities have been modified, and timelines have changed in response to data analysis, feedback, and alignment with partnerships and due to the revised timeline for federal reporting.

If yes, describe a rationale or justification for the changes to the SSIP evaluation plan.

As continuous improvement is necessary for growth and development, the evaluation plan needed to be revised accordingly. Additionally, the evaluation process overall had to be adjusted due to the federal reporting timeline. These revisions were then made in conjunction with the guidance provided by federal reporting partnerships as described above.

Provide a summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy implemented in the reporting period:

While shifting the submission dates for most activities in SSIP during SY 2021–2022 was primarily driven by the escalation of timeline for federal reporting, this shift also aligned with feedback from survey and analysis. Regarding survey feedback, for example, several Year 1 PEAs expressed the difficulty of answering survey questions pertaining to initiative progress when having less than two months between the submission of the Action Plan and the Survey. Consequently, moving the fall submission of the SGR and AP in SY 2021–2022 to August 27 is not only conducive to federal reporting but also allows for an additional month of initiative progress before providing survey feedback. This shift is especially important for this school year, as the initial data from the Fall SGR shows the average level of implementation for Indicators between the Partially Implemented and Implemented range, down 40% from SY 2020–2021, to begin SY 2021–2022. In addition, rather than an open-ended narrative, fields were created that ask the user to answer questions about the specific Indicator practices and that are embedded within the language of moving to higher levels of implementation in the self-assessment. This shift in the structure of the document guides the PEA-SSIP Team to consider the specific Indicator practices that are contingent on moving up levels of implementation prior to considering the self-assessment rather than considering the self-assessment more broadly and then substantiating the broader assessment with general evidence, often then going on to overlook the specific Indicator practices in the action initiatives. Then as the companion piece in SY 2021–2022, the Fidelity Feedback Guide was created to provide feedback that was clearly defined, qualitative, and aligned with the fidelity revisions in the SGR.

Over the past two years, revision of processes for providing feedback for the completion of the SGR and AP submission have been evolving. At the beginning of SY 2020–2021, revisions focused on changes that made criteria for completion with fidelity less subjective. After the SY 2020–2021 submissions however, despite PEAs completing the activity with significant growth in completion with fidelity as compared to the year prior, it was apparent that not only did the process of providing feedback need further revising to continue improving fidelity of activity completion, but the SGR itself had to undergo revisions to guide fidelity. As a result, the evidence section that was originally provided in narrative form, was moved prior to the self-assessment in SY 2021–2022. In addition, rather than an open-ended narrative, fields were created that ask the user to answer questions about the specific Indicator practices and that are embedded within the language of moving to higher levels of implementation in the self-assessment. This shift in the structure of the document guides the PEA-SSIP Team to consider the specific Indicator practices that are contingent on moving up levels of implementation prior to considering the self-assessment rather than considering the self-assessment more broadly and then substantiating the broader assessment with general evidence, often then going on to overlook the specific Indicator practices in the action initiatives. Then as the companion piece in SY 2021–2022, the Fidelity Feedback Guide was created to provide feedback that was clearly defined, qualitative, and aligned with the fidelity revisions in the SGR.

As previously described, alignment with MOWR has also led to improvements in infrastructure. The shift in focus toward more foundational literacy outcomes comes with the structural shift of collecting both classroom observation and literacy screener data in the primary rather than intermediate elementary grade levels. This will also result in more reliable data collection, as PEAs will be mandated to submit MOWR data from an approved list of screeners beginning in SY 2022–2023. Only screeners that were able to meet criteria based on research support, sub-measure requirements, and the ability to identify characteristics consistent with dyslexia were able to make the list of approved screeners for administration and reporting. In addition, alignment has improved structure for collaboration, both between different agency partnerships within the SEA and between special and general education at the PEA. This reliability in data collection and structure for enhanced collaboration will then result in a refined system for continuous SSIP process improvements.

Describe the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved for each infrastructure improvement strategy during the reporting period including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Please relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up.

After moving the SGR and AP timeline to earlier in the year, although several PEAs reported time constraint issues on the SSIP survey the year prior, there were no respondents reporting the same issue after providing an additional month between the SGR and AP and the SSIP Survey in SY 2021–2022. In addition to aligning with the SSIP Evaluation Plan regarding the consideration of stakeholder feedback, this shift in timeline provided for the outcomes of effective evidence-based practices and data reliability. More than ever before, PEAs will have time to implement growth and development initiatives during the school year, and students will have more time to benefit from the implementation of these practices. With an additional three months to implement initiatives between the fall and spring submissions, that extra time can allow for students to receive the benefit of those improved evidence-based practices during the school year, which in turn should have a positive effect on student outcomes.

After adding two weeks between the first and second EBP Walkthrough Tool submissions, there were, on average, five additional EBPs between these submissions in SY 2021–2022. While this maintained the positive difference between submissions 45 or more days between walkthroughs, it also represented less overall growth than the year prior by one EBP on average. Looking within the quadrants of like-practices on the EBP Tool, while practices in the categories of Inclusive Learning Environment, Instructional Practices, and Student Engagement either remained stable or showed growth between the first and second submission, the average practices in the category of Student Interactions fell by 44.96%. The category of Student Interactions includes such practice subcategories as providing for diverse learning modalities, learning styles, expression, and collaboration. As part of the SSIP Evaluation Plan monitoring EBP growth, this will be the target of continuing improvement as outlined in the section for next steps.

After providing enhanced support, the outcome of completing the SGR and AP with increased fidelity for data reliability, in connection to the SSIP Evaluation Plan, continues to show improvement. For example, to complete the SGR and AP with fidelity, the PEA-SSIP Team should be targeting specific Indicator practices in both the evidence section and within the associated initiatives. In the fall submission of SY 2019–2020, PEAs targeted these Indicator practices in 43% of the possible instances. While improved guidance elevated this level by 10% at the fall SY 2020–2021 submission, this still only resulted in targeting practices that are necessary for higher levels of implementation at just over half of the possible instances. Subsequently, improved support that includes a restructuring of format, improved guidance and tutorials, and the use of the SGR and AP Fidelity Feedback Guide in SY 2021–2022, resulted in the fidelity of targeting Indicator practices rising by 28% to 81%. In turn, and with the addition of improved guidance, the instance of PEAs targeting the lowest Indicators from their Rubric for Action Plan initiatives rose an additional 12% to 83% in fall of SY 2021–2022. By targeting these and other areas for improved fidelity, and according to the Fidelity Feedback Guide, the average overall fidelity of activity completion for the SGR and AP was 76%.

After aligning with MOWR, a stronger impetus for collecting literacy data, improved data reliability with consistency between assessments and subtests, and context for growth toward the SiMR have provided for improved outcomes in accordance with the SSIP Evaluation Plan. As MOWR has a state mandate for reporting literacy screener data, and by aligning the dates for data submission, this not only provides the PEA with the opportunity for collaboration, but it also has provided for consistent submission and timeline between measures. For example, 77% of PEAs submitted complete literacy benchmark data for the first submission of SY 2020–2021. For the first submission of SY 2021–2022, however, 97% of PEAs have submitted complete literacy screener data. In SY 2020–2021, while most PEAs reported the administration of their fall literacy benchmark assessment in August and September, there were several PEAs that reported administration into the month of October. In SY 2021–2022 however, with the mandate to report literacy screener data to MOWR by October 1, the first assessment administration only goes beyond September for one of 34 PEAs. In SY 2020–2021, there was no consistency in the tools being used and reported for literacy benchmark data. In the first submission of SY 2021–2022, however, only eight different screening tools comprised 91% of all screening tools reported. The shift from benchmark to screener data has led to the outcome of more reliable data.

The alignment of submission timelines with MOWR supports collaboration between special and general education at PEAs for literacy screener data collection, analysis, and subsequently toward continuous improvement initiatives. This alignment will assist in sustainability over time at the PEA level and aid in increased collaboration, at the PEA level, for SSIP related activities. From the SY 2021–2022 SSIP Survey, just as many respondents indicated an occasional level of collaboration between special and general education involving SSIP activities as reported engagement in frequent to continuous levels of collaboration. Subsequently, in an effort to collect further information and illuminate a pathway for improving support, special education directors from around the state were asked to characterize the frequency of some specific areas of collaboration within their learning community at the January Director's Feedback session. On that survey, 90% of respondents characterized collaboration on "Planning Instruction" as between "Occasional" and "Non-Existent." In addition, 80% of respondents characterized collaboration on "Setting Student Goals" and "Planning School Programs" as between "Occasional" and "Non-Existent." This data seems to indicate that not only does alignment with MOWR provide the opportunity for greater collaboration, but this continues to be an area of need for PEAs, and the SEA-SSIP Team now has a good idea where to infuse that collaborative support. In accordance with the SSIP Evaluation Plan and toward the outcome of improved collaboration at the PEA-level, this will be a direction for growth in SSIP moving forward, and this data will be used as a baseline for tracking progress.

Did the State implement any new (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategies during the reporting period? (yes/no)

YES

Describe each new (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategy and the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved.

The most dynamic new infrastructure improvement is SiMR alignment with MOWR, which is a part of K-12 Academic Standards at the SEA. In addition to the resulting shift from collecting benchmark data to the more reliable screener data as mentioned in ongoing improvements, comparisons can now be made between SSIP and statewide screener data for students in SSIP PEAs. While there has been extensive research to indicate a growing divide between students with and without challenges to literacy development in elementary school, alignment with MOWR has allowed for reliable data to show how this applies to SSIP targeted students with disabilities in Arizona. In reference to scoring benchmark on literacy screeners, the subgroup of students with disabilities in SSIP are behind the aggregate by an average of 7.5% in grade 1, 15.5% in grade 2, and 24.8% by grade 3. The new alignment has also resulted in the ability to make connections between initiatives. As a part of the legislative initiative, PEAs must submit and update literacy plans to MOWR in our state database three times each year. SSIP and MOWR are beginning to look at similarities and differences between these literacy plans and SSIP Action Plans, in order to highlight opportunities for aligning these initiatives and making connections to professional development opportunities that may address both.

Another new infrastructure improvement is in changing all activity forms that are used throughout all three years in SSIP to three-year activity forms. Prior to this improvement, new forms would be completed for each submission. This was the case when PEAs completed the SGR and AP in the fall and spring, and for the literacy benchmark data forms in the fall, winter, and spring each year. This was also the case for the SEA completing the Feedback Form each time the SGR and AP was submitted. While this would result in 22 forms being completed through the three-year process for each PEA, the new structure allows for one form to be completed for each of these activities during the three-year process, for a total of three forms. Rather than completing a new form at each submission, each form has a new structure that allows for updates to be added during SSIP development. It is easier to keep track of documentation, to reference within forms rather than between them for the context that prior submissions provide, to see growth and development, and, in the case of the Action Plan, having continuous information on a single form allows the PEA to progress through initiatives with more continuity. As a result, this streamlining of SSIP forms shifts the time and energy that PEAs spend on activities, from documentation to implementation, resulting in an increased capacity to pursue initiatives.

Prior to SY 2021–2022, the structure of data analysis remained isolated by activity and by year. At the beginning of SY 2021–2022 however, all structures were transferred to spreadsheets that allow for historical data, ongoing data, and different activities that share a relationship. For example, the analysis spreadsheet for the SGR now goes back to when Cohort 3 began SSIP in SY 2019–2020, will continue to incorporate future data, and includes Fidelity Feedback Guide data and both Action Plans and Literacy Plans from MOWR. The EBP data analysis structure includes the beginning of SY 2020–2021, when the current collection structure was put in place, will continue to incorporate new data, and contains notations from the EBP Survey. Although the Literacy Screener data analysis spreadsheet begins this year at its inception, it will always include historical data, and contains MOWR literacy screener data for General Education and state testing data for both general and special education. This new data analysis structure will allow for the determination of outcomes, trends, growth, correlation, and targets. By looking at the data with the broadest perspective and specific detail, it will also allow for making data-driven decisions with the highest degree of accuracy, development, and outcomes.

Provide a summary of the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.

While the initial revisions to the SGR and AP submission timeline appear appropriate to provide for student outcomes, based on the extent to which PEAs are now able to implement initiatives during the year and according to stakeholder feedback, the SEA-SSIP Team will monitor the feedback and effectiveness going forward. As SSIP expands analyzing the relationship between MOWR literacy plans and SSIP Action Plans, particularly in regard to addressing the aligned initiatives, there will be particular attention paid to the appropriateness of this revised submission timeline.

Expanding the time between EBP Walkthrough Tool submissions in response to data analysis did maintain growth in practices but was also expected to result in growth that exceeded the prior year. While adding two weeks between submissions did result in half of the PEAs with 45 or more days between submission dates, there were still 20% of PEAs that submitted Tools with under 45 days between submissions. When again disaggregated, the growth of EBPs with less than 45 days between measures was significantly less than those with 45 or more days between measures in SY 2021–2022. Analysis seems to suggest that adding at least an additional week between submissions to account for PEA scheduling would go further toward improving overall growth in classroom practices. In addition, SSIP plans to include specific guidance about the data and process during the 45-day period.

As SSIP experiences the benefits of aligning with MOWR, especially regarding collaboration on literacy initiatives and data, the SEA-SSIP Team will continue to strengthen this relationship and explore opportunities to align with other interagency and intra-agency groups for the benefit of development and outcomes. For example, alignment with the SEA's School Support and Improvement division may be advantageous, given that they also use a system of self-analysis and initiatives promoting evidence-based practices for the benefit of student populations that are exhibiting below average outcomes. With respect to improving collaboration within PEAs, the SEA-SSIP Team will focus on guidance and modeling. After being identified for participation in SSIP, PEAs will receive a short presentation at setup meetings that emphasize opportunities for collaboration through each SSIP activity with a growing body of data to show how collaboration supports activity and student outcomes. Directions within activities and discourse with PEAs will reinforce the positive messaging toward collaboration. Then, as PEAs progress throughout each year, they will see evidence of SSIP and MOWR collaborating on literacy screener submissions, in finding alignment between MOWR literacy plans and SSIP Action Plans, and in making connections to professional development opportunities that meet common needs.

In relationship to the new infrastructure improvement of MOWR alignment, the resulting shift in collecting literacy screener data as opposed to benchmark data will allow the SEA-SSIP Team to make appropriate data-driven decisions toward leveraging growth and development. Literacy screener data has revealed a proficiency deficit of 7.6% in Grade 1, 14.7% in Grade 2, and 23.1% in Grade 3. This newly-available data provides a more comprehensive picture of the growing deficit between special and general education outcomes, allowing for reliable targets and plans for reducing this deficit yearly. Beyond sharing this data with the possibility of initiating a response from collaborative partnerships, the SEA-SSIP Team will also put more emphasis on PEAs conducting EBP Walkthroughs at the primary grades and earlier in this growing divide.

Regarding the revisions to both the SGR and AP and Feedback structures that have resulted in improved fidelity, there are still components that can be targeted toward improving the overall planning of the activity with fidelity. Moving up Levels of Implementation for several Indicators in the SGR and AP depend on the PEA implementing an evidence-based practice in their learning community with fidelity. As implementing practices with fidelity was often overlooked in past narrative Evidence sections by PEA-SSIP Teams, the SEA-SSIP Team created specific Evidence sections to explicitly target indicator language, including prompts to respond particularly to the fidelity of practices. Then, this targeting of fidelity in documentation would result in a higher incidence of targeting practice fidelity within subsequent initiatives. While revisions have resulted in PEAs completing the SGR and AP with improved fidelity overall, the specific area of PEAs providing evidence and targeting initiatives involving the fidelity of implementing practices has room for continued improvement. For example, PEAs outline Action Plan steps that account for fidelity in practices, such as reviewing lesson plans or conducting classroom observations, 69% of the time. Going forward, the SEA-SSIP Team will provide targeted guidance and support to PEAs in Action Plans that lead more consistently to higher levels of implementation. This will provide for improved activity outcomes and improved student outcomes as a consequence.

The new structure of providing three-year activity forms to PEAs has been well-received by the stakeholders involved in activity completion, despite an issue that arose from the transition. Creating the new activity format with the most current version of Microsoft Office caused some information to shift on the page when PEAs used Google Docs and even prior versions of Office to complete the SGR and AP. While this issue was mitigated by simplifying the format to work with both programs mentioned, the SEA-SSIP Team can further improve its positive effect of working efficiently within capacity constraints. Replicating the forms in a web portal would not only eliminate the shifting issue but would also allow for a more efficient transfer of information between the three-year activity forms and the new format of comprehensive data-analysis spreadsheets. If the opportunity to use a web portal for activity completion is not available for SY 2022–2023 however, the SEA-SSIP Team can still make minor alterations to allow for more efficient transfer while also making sure not to reinitiate the shifting issue.

Then the SEA-SSIP Team can use the new analysis spreadsheet format to incorporate even more data sources for comparison and toward making developmental connections. For example, not just the literacy screener but all of the analysis spreadsheets should incorporate literacy outcome data for SWD in SSIP PEAs, SWD not in SSIP, General Education in SSIP, and General Education not in SSIP. The EBP Diagnostic Tool data should also include screener data, and the spreadsheet for literacy screener data should also include data for MOWR literacy plans and SSIP Action Plans. By including related data sets together, the SEA-SSIP Team will be able to make more comprehensive and reliable connections and to use those connections toward further improvements and outcomes.

List the selected evidence-based practices implement in the reporting period:

- The Success Gaps Rubric: https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2021/07/3-%20SGR%20and%20AP%20%20-%20FINAL%21_.docx
- Indicator Group 1: Data-Based Decision Making
- Decisions about curriculum, instructional programs, academic/behavioral supports, and school improvement are based on data.
- Indicator Group 2: Cultural Responsiveness
- Culturally responsive instructional interventions and teaching strategies are used throughout the school or district.

- Indicator Group 3: Well-Articulated Curriculum
- A consistent, well-articulated curriculum is in place and is implemented with fidelity.
- Indicator Group 4: Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring
- Universal screening is used to identify needs for early intervention or targeted supports.
- Indicator Group 5: Interventions and Supports
- Evidence-based behavioral interventions and supports are multi-tiered and implemented with fidelity.

-The EBP Diagnostic Walkthrough Tool: <https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2021/07/6-%20EBP%20Diagnostic%20Tool%20-%20SSIP%20SY21-22.docx>

- Quadrant 1: Inclusive Learning Environment
- Classrooms exhibit an inclusive learning environment that is student-centered and engaging.
- Quadrant 2: Instructional Practices
- Classroom instruction is evidence-based, engaging, and responsive.
- Quadrant 3: Student Interactions
- Student interactions are collaborative and support learning objectives.
- Quadrant 4: Student Engagement
- Students are engaged in meaningful activities that support learning objectives.

Provide a summary of each evidence-based practices.

Indicator Group 1 of the SGR focuses on data-based decision making. This includes making decisions about the school curriculum, instructional programs, academic and behavior supports, and school improvement initiatives, based on data. It also includes the use of screener and benchmark assessments, making decisions with subgroups in mind, and evidence of use from the administrative to classroom levels for the benefit of student outcomes.

Indicator Group 2 of the SGR focuses on cultural responsiveness. This includes celebrating diversity with professional development and during gatherings and with supporting linguistic accessibility diversity with families in all correspondence and interactions.

Indicator Group 3 of the SGR focuses on implementing a well-articulated curriculum. This includes ensuring both horizontal and vertical alignment, flexible grouping, instructional technology, differentiated instruction with accommodations and modifications, providing for student learning styles and interests, instructional collaboration, professional development of curriculum and practices, implementation with fidelity, and informing families about the core curriculum and how it is differentiated for their student.

Indicator Group 4 of the SGR focuses on the incorporation of tools for universal screening and progress monitoring. This includes the use of universal screeners and progress monitoring tools for both academics and behavior, the use of benchmark assessments, and informing families about results.

Indicator Group 5 of the SGR focuses on practices involving interventions and supports. This includes a proactive and restorative district-level discipline policy that is implemented responsively and with fidelity. It includes employing a multi-tiered system of supports for both academics and behaviors, guidance by screeners and diagnostic tools, and interventions that are continually monitored for progress by teachers who are trained to use resources and operate with cultural sensitivity and fidelity within this system of supports. It also includes continually informing families about how their student fits within this system of supports.

Quadrant 1 of the EBP Tool focuses on classroom practices involving an inclusive learning environment. These include the display of measurable learning outcomes, classroom expectations, and word/sound walls that students can use toward learning goals, a classroom library that provides for choices and reading accessibility, the use of manipulatives for connections to abstract concepts and relevance, and effective transitions between activities.

Quadrant 2 of the EBP Tool focuses on instructional classroom practices. These practices include “I Do” practices involving frontloading, adequate response wait times, and explicit-systematic explanations that incorporate a variety of learning modalities and fosters engagement. It includes “We Do” practices that involve scaffolding, provides immediate and specific feedback, informal formative assessment that is responsive prior to independent practice, and a variety of problem-solving methods. It involves “You Do” practices for independent practice that are responsive and include coaching, monitoring, and time for mastery. It also includes lesson closure that reviews learning targets and learning assessment.

Quadrant 3 of the EBP Tool focuses on student interaction in the classroom. This includes students engaging in a variety of collaborative learning expressions, text activities, goal setting and planning, and higher order learning modalities. It also includes the ability for students to make choices and present learning in a variety of ways.

Quadrant 4 of the EBP Tool focuses on student engagement in the classroom. This includes students involved in activities with real-world relevance that are targeted to the zone of proximal development, are considerate of strength and needs, involve self-regulation, and allow for a high degree of student-lead communication. Quadrant 4 also includes differentiated activities with accommodations and modifications to content and process.

Provide a summary of how each evidence-based practice and activities or strategies that support its use, is intended to impact the SIMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (e.g. behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes, and/or child /outcomes.

Focusing on data-based decision making allows PEAs to appropriately meet the needs of their learning community. This is not only done with data for general education but also for subgroups such as English language learners and special education students. It is only by the juxtaposition of both the aggregated and disaggregated data that administrators and teachers can make the most appropriate decisions, from curriculum to intervention and from the masses to the individual. Comprehensively and specifically using data to inform decisions is a foundational piece for providing outcomes.

Focusing on cultural responsiveness allows PEAs to appropriately meet the needs of their learning community. As an individual's outcomes are a product of their learning, learning is a product of experiences, and culture is a key component of a student's experiences. It is important to respect the cultural similarities and differences of all members in the learning community. The cultural diversity within and amongst people is a key component of how they have learned and of how they will continue to learn. Respecting this diversity allows students and stakeholders to feel appreciated, to buy in to the learning community, and to be motivated to learn within it. It can also be used as a filter to understand perspective, which is the window to understanding what an individual needs to learn and develop. Beyond the inherent nature of how important language is toward accessing learning, culture is also an important part. As it is particularly important to understand the learning needs for a student with disabilities, it is particularly important to understand that individual's perspective and learning components, including how culture has guided and continues to guide the process of learning.

Focusing on implementing a well-articulated curriculum, allows PEAs to appropriately meet the needs of their learning community. When the learning community develops a curriculum that accounts for the variety of learning components and equips the curriculum with tools that meet the variety of ways in which students learn, teachers can flexibly use that comprehensive framework to deliver that instruction with evidence-based practices to meet the needs of learners in general and as individuals. The tools for differentiating the curriculum are particularly important for students with disabilities to provide access to the curriculum.

Focusing on the incorporation of universal screening and progress monitoring allows PEAs to appropriately meet the needs of their learning communities. By screening at several points through the year, members of the learning community have reliable data for growth and the development of foundational learning skills. The resulting data can then be used for comparison to prior learning and other groups/subgroups for the development of learning targets and toward the categorization and initial application of learning groups. Then after diagnostic and refinement where needed, the learning plan and progress can be monitored to make adjustments that provide for developmental precision and the highest potential for positive outcomes. This includes screening and monitoring for behavioral development as a factor for learning access and their resulting outcomes.

Focusing on interventions and supports allows PEAs to appropriately meet the needs of their learning community. After reliable data is used to determine the needs of a student, it is vitally important for the progression of learning to meet the more specific and involved needs with a structure and learning plan to meet those needs. While this may mean that a zone for optimal learning can be found within a small group structure, it may also mean that the zone for optimal learning can only be met through the application of an individualized learning structure and plan. Meeting student needs includes having interventions and supports for behavioral development as a factor for learning access and their resulting outcomes.

Focusing on having an inclusive classroom learning environment allows teachers to appropriately meet the needs of the students in their classrooms. Much like the dynamic of respecting cultural diversity, having an inclusive learning environment provides students the ability to feel appreciated, to buy in to the learning community, and to be motivated to learn within it. As well, it can provide a support structure that offers learning accessibility and paves the way for improved outcomes.

Focusing on instructional classroom practices especially allows teachers to appropriately meet the needs of the students in their classroom. At the center of pedagogy, effective instructional practices include an intimate knowledge of subject matter, learning tools, and of students from the individual members of the group, to the dynamics of the group itself. Further, effective instructional practices involve a nuanced plan to meet these needs and a skillful implementation of scaffolding that also requires constant monitoring of feedback and adjustment throughout the process toward skill independence. Particular attention has to be paid to this arena of practices because of how multi-faceted, interconnected, and critical these practices are for positive student outcomes.

Focusing on student interactions allows teachers to appropriately meet the needs of the students in their classrooms. When students experience a variety of ways to interact with the learning process, content, materials, and with others, they can make cognitive connections and experience development to a greater degree. They also have more opportunity to make choices, to take ownership of their learning, and to experience drive toward positive outcomes.

Focusing on student engagement allows teachers to appropriately meet the needs of the students in their classroom. In connection with interactions, engagement also includes the identification of strengths and needs, and the skillful use of differentiation to meet those needs. Targeting these individual facets of learning will provide for the positive outcome of individuals.

Describe the data collected to monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change.

The completion of SSIP activities with fidelity begins with making sure that activity forms provide the proper format and guidance. Toward improvements in SY 2021–2022, PEA and stakeholder feedback and data analysis were reviewed, and restructure of the activity forms was made accordingly. Feedback was especially helpful in making form directions that took past questions and issues into consideration. In the SGR, both feedback and analysis were used to make the specific prompts for the Evidence sections and moving them in front of the self-assessment. In the AP, this meant making the field prompts with more explicit guidance for PEA-SSIP Teams to make the connection toward using the lowest levels of implementation from the SGR for their action initiatives. It also meant making the forms as easy to use as possible, knowing that cumbersome activity documentation can lead to a feeling of completing the form with irreverence. Toward this end, drop-down options, check boxes, and navigation hyperlinks were embedded wherever possible.

Fidelity assurance extends to ensuring activity support resources are available to PEAs. For example, the EBP Diagnostic Walkthrough Process has three tiers of understanding for evidence-based practices to aid PEA-SSIP Team members in coming to a common understanding of practices prior to conducting walkthroughs. The first tier is the EBP Diagnostic Tool itself, as it contains not only a list of practices but also brief summaries of the practices for each Indicator. The second tier can be found within the EBP Tool and Process Presentation, and the third tier is an Examples and Non-Examples document. Created with differentiation in mind, these flexible documents are used with question and navigation prompts in mind during presentation to PEA-SSIP Teams by the SEA, and also give the ability to PEAs to use the question and navigation prompts during internal use. After the background information in the EBP Presentation, rather than scrolling through each practice description, the user can click on specific Indicators that the PEA-SSIP Team wants to explore with more depth. After a video narrative that explains the practices and their relationship to learning, hyperlinks are available to go back to that quadrant or to the next for review. Using the same system of navigation, which allows the user to differentiate for his or herself, the Examples and Non-Examples document goes through specific classroom scenarios where each practice might be observed, and through adjacent examples that would not serve as evidence of the practice.

The next step toward fidelity is with the timing, availability, and presentation of the SSIP activities. As PEA-SSIP Team members are busy doing their other responsibilities at the PEA, to conduct activities with fidelity they need to have the necessary information with a sufficient degree of explanation and advanced notice and to be given courtesy reminders when necessary. At the SEA, this means making yearly revisions to the SSIP Tracking Sheets for PEAs and to the Internal Specialist Checklist for SEA Specialists so that each document has an overview of submission responsibilities to be used as a guide throughout the school year. SEA Specialists then email activity submission prompts at least one month in advance to prompt the activity initiation, describing the activity, and to either attach resources or provide links to the resources that are always available on the SSIP Website. They also provide a reminder email to PEAs at the beginning of the week that the activity submission is due, when applicable.

In addition, PEAs are offered a presentation meeting one month prior to both the SGR and AP and the EBP Diagnostic Tool activities. Prior to COVID-19, SEA onsite support was offered to PEAs, aiding in activity completion with fidelity. Since the third quarter of SY 2019–2020, only remote presentations have been made available to support PEAs. When again available to provide onsite support, the SEA will be able to use remote presentation as a tool to provide support where onsite opportunities are prohibitive due to capacity, thereby expanding capacity to provide support and fidelity of activity completion overall. While local control does not allow for the mandate of presentations, those that accept the invitation have consistently provided the feedback that they have a greater understanding and feel more comfortable completing the activity with fidelity. Specialists

make sure that PEAs always have an open channel to feel comfortable asking questions and providing feedback throughout the activity completion and beyond with timely response.

After completing the activity, points of fidelity are tracked on an analysis spreadsheet. The analysis includes a comparison to other cohorts, to all SSIP PEAs, and to former fidelity for trend analysis and for improving future fidelity. The Indicators with the most improved fidelity on the SGR are with addressing horizontal/vertical alignment and flexible grouping in Indicator 3a and instructional technology in Indicator 3b. Both fidelity indicators showed that 90% or more of PEAs addressed these evidence-based practices within the SGR and/or AP. This is substantially up from previous years, where there were never half of the PEAs addressing these practices in the past, despite it being core to the Indicator descriptions, to moving up levels of implementation, and as being targeted for action initiative more than most other Indicators. It is also a positive trend that of the three cohorts currently in SSIP, the two that have entered during this period of improved emphasis on fidelity have fidelity percentages of addressing evidence-based practices in their SGR and/or AP at 79.97% on average, above the remaining cohort that entered SSIP prior to this improved emphasis on fidelity. By improving the fidelity of PEAs addressing the evidence-based practices within the activity, PEA learning communities will target the practices for growth more consistently, which will result in positive activity and student outcomes.

Describe any additional data (e.g. progress monitoring) that was collected that supports the decision to continue the ongoing use of each evidence-based practice.

As the SEA has not had the opportunity to visit PEAs and collect data on implementation fidelity during this time of COVID-19 and coincidental correspondence of emphasis on fidelity, the SSIP and EBP Surveys have demonstrated indications of both activity fidelity and the effectiveness of evidence-based practices. For example, all PEA-SSIP Teams responded that they meet at least quarterly to discuss the progress of their SSIP activities, with over half meeting either weekly or monthly. Pertaining to the SGR and AP, 84% report having challenges to action initiatives that can be overcome and lead to positive outcomes, and 96% report that their SSIP action initiatives provide at least some positive effect, up to being highly effective. Pertaining to the EBP Walkthrough Process, two-thirds of the PEAs in Year 2 reported using the resources that support fidelity of implementation, no PEAs reported the process as being a substantial challenge to implement properly, and all PEAs reported positive activity outcomes that included improved collaboration and classroom instruction.

Between the SY 2019–2020 fall submission and SY 2020–2021 spring submission, the evidence-based practices for data-based decision making had the lowest growth of any Indicator group, showing PEA growth averaging 38% of a full level of implementation during that time. The SY 2021–2022 fall submission, however, showed a decline of 14% as compared to the prior submission, now only netting 24% growth since the beginning of SY 2019–20.

Between the SY 2019–2020 fall submission and the SY 2020–2021 spring submission, the evidence-based practices for cultural responsiveness had a growth of 48% toward an additional full level of implementation during that time. Not only is this below average growth as compared to the overall average growth, but the SY 2021–2022 fall submission declined by 45%, only netting 3% growth since the beginning of SY 2019–2020.

Between the SY 2019–2020 fall submission and SY 2020–2021 spring submission, the evidence-based practices for a well-articulated curriculum had an average growth of one full level of implementation, and 39% toward an additional full level of implementation, during that time period. While the SY 2021–2022 fall submission declined by 25%, the Indicator group still netted over one full level of growth since the beginning of SY 2019–2020. As this this group of practices contains curriculum, classroom practices, and differentiation, it is also one of the most targeted and supported practice groups, with growth that supersedes all other practice groups.

Between the SY 2019–2020 fall submission and SY 2020–2021 spring submission, the evidence-based practices for universal screening and progress monitoring, had an average growth of 69% toward an additional full level of implementation. Subsequently, however, the SY 2021–2022 fall submission declined by 52%, only netting 17% growth since the beginning of SY 2019–2020.

Between the SY 2019–2020 fall submission and SY 2020–2021 spring submission, the evidence-based practices for interventions and supports had an average growth of 71% toward an additional full level of implementation. Subsequently, however, the SY 2021–2022 fall submission declined by 81%, showing a decline in practices of 10% since the beginning of SY 2019–2020.

In comparing the number of evidence-based classroom practices reported within the quadrants of Inclusive Learning Environment and Student Engagement on the EBP Diagnostic Tool between November–December of SY 2020–2021 and November–December of SY 2021–2022, both showed an average of between two and three additional evidence-based classroom practices this school year, as opposed to last school year. In contrast, when comparing the number of evidence-based classroom practices reported within the quadrants of Instructional Practices and Student Interactions on the EBP Diagnostic Tool between November–December of SY 2020–2021 and November–December of SY 2021–2022, both showed an average of between one and two fewer evidence-based classroom practices this school year, as opposed to last school year. Further emphasizing the depreciation of data in the quadrants of Instructional Practices and Student Interactions, while November–December submissions were from the first classroom walkthroughs of last year, the November–December submissions were from the second walkthroughs of this year. Unlike last year, this year's November–December submission came after an opportunity for growth and development between measures.

In an effort to collect more information toward the possibility of targeting support improvements, the SEA-SSIP Team presented this data at the January Directors' Feedback session for Indicator Stakeholders at learning communities around the state of Arizona. After asking special education directors to use their experience to rate what they feel may have led to fewer EBPs this year as opposed to last year in the quadrants of Instructional Practices and Student Interactions, 90% reported "Overwhelmed Teachers" as the most significant factor, and 80% also reported "Staff Turnover" as a very significant factor. As these stressful factors within the learning community are not inherent to the evidence-based practices themselves but are rather external factors that appear to have had a negative effect on the growth in practices in these two quadrants, the EBP Tool will continue to include and monitor these evidence-based practices in their current form, and the SEA-SSIP Team will keep this stressful dynamic in mind during collaboration and while making any SSIP process improvements.

Provide a summary of the next steps for each evidence-based practices and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.

As prior data for evidence-based practices in Data-Based Decision Making had the lowest growth of any Indicator group in the SGR and AP, the SEA-SSIP Team will target this Indicator for improved growth. Collaboration will take place with agency partners regarding the possibility for professional development supports being made available.

As prior data for the evidence-based practices in Cultural Responsiveness also had below average growth in prior data on the SGR and AP, this Indicator group will also be targeted for improved evidence-based practices going forward. The SEA-SSIP Team will look toward collaborating with interagency partners such as School Support and Innovation, which has information on culturally responsive teaching practices, for organized opportunities of future professional development.

As prior data for evidence-based practices in Core Instructional Program had the most prior growth of any other practice group on the SGR and AP, the SEA-SSIP Team will continue to monitor the well-articulated curriculum group for growth as emphasis is expanded to other practice groups of need.

Since all Indicator groups within Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring showed a decline on the SGR and AP to start SY 2021–2022, and because this group should be supported by the recent MOWR legislation and alignment with SSIP, the SEA-SSIP Team will continue to monitor this group for growth in practices commensurate with or exceeding growth prior to this school year.

Despite showing average growth prior to SY 2021–2022, the extent of decline in SY 2021–2022 of practices concerning Interventions and Supports on the SGR and AP point toward an emphasis in the practice group going forward. The SEA-SSIP Team will look to strengthening collaboration with interagency departments of Professional Learning and Sustainability and School Support and Innovation to pair their professional development opportunities with SSIP PEAs for multi-tiered systems of supports. The SEA-SSIP Team will continue to monitor this group for growth in practices that are commensurate with or exceeding growth prior to this school year.

Although the data showed some decline in the growth of evidence-based practices on the EBP Diagnostic Tool, stakeholder feedback reveals that, more than ever, any activity changes to improve growth have to be done with the consideration of PEA capacity. While changes to the walkthrough process that include expanding the observational set and support for growth specifically pertaining to Instructional Practices and Student Interactions between observations could be pursued cautiously, the SEA-SSIP Team will refrain from any process revisions that could result in further taxing of already stressed teachers and administrators, especially while COVID-19 is a contributing factor.

Section C: Stakeholder Engagement

Description of Stakeholder Input

As data and other information became available after the close of the 2020–2021 school year, individuals from the ADE/ESS staff reported to the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP), Arizona's advisory group. SEAP was established in accordance with the IDEA. The purpose of SEAP is to provide policy input concerning special education and related services for children with disabilities in Arizona. SEAP is composed of a broad range of stakeholders throughout Arizona. Groups represented on the panel include parents of children with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, teachers, early childhood educators, charter schools, school districts, institutions of higher education that prepare special education and related services personnel, secure care facilities, and public agencies. SEAP provides input and feedback during the process of determining targets, and ADE/ESS representatives respond to questions and comments from SEAP members regarding indicator data. In addition to the SEAP meetings, ADE solicited input on targets from the following stakeholder groups:

- Inclusion Task Force
- Raising Special Kids (Arizona's Parent Training and Information Center)
- East Valley Community of Practice on Transition
- Post School Outcome Focus Group
- Northern Regional Cohort
- Southern Regional Cohort
- Eastern Regional Cohort
- Western Regional Cohort
- Central Regional Cohort

These efforts resulted in 214 stakeholders who completed the SPP/APR surveys. These stakeholders represented a variety of races/ethnicities. Survey completers identified their primary roles as individuals with a disability, community members, special education professionals, agency representatives, parent/guardians, or vocational/business professionals.

For SSIP, stakeholders include all people who are invested in the outcomes for students with disabilities in SSIP PEAs. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, individuals with disabilities, teachers, administrators, parents and family members of students with disabilities, intra-agency partners, interagency partners, officials for homeless assistance, representatives for foster care and juvenile facility placement, and SEA specialists.

Stakeholder input includes any collaborative efforts toward documenting and implementing activities and providing feedback, whether collected formally or informally, through correspondence or verbal discourse. Feedback may be received in the body of an email, during meetings, or through survey results.

Other than SEAP, as described above, the stakeholder groups that contribute toward the outcomes for students with disabilities include:

PEA-SSIP Teams

PEA-SSIP Teams are typically comprised of 4–6 members of learning community leadership, often including the special education director, principals and assistant principals, instructional specialists and coaches, and teachers in both special and general education. These PEA-SSIP Teams are the primary stakeholders involved with the SGR self-assessment, the AP documentation and implementation, and in conducting EBP walkthroughs for the collection and development of classroom practices. They meet between monthly and quarterly to review initiative goals, available resources to meet those goals, how to mitigate or circumvent barriers to goal progress, and to use progress monitoring data toward fortifying or revising plans toward goals.

PEA-SSIP Learning Community Members

As the implementation of initiatives from the SGR and AP activity depend on a variety of stakeholders within PEA learning communities, they are integral SSIP stakeholders. This not only includes administrators, but also school leadership, instructional coaches and specialists, teachers, support staff, and families. School principals are a primary source of feedback for the EBP survey.

Raising Special Kids (RSK)

RSK is a group of parents and guardians of students with disabilities that provides feedback specifically from the perspective of families. It is also Arizona's Parent Training and Information Center.

Special Education Directors

Special education directors are the leaders of PEA-SSIP Teams, are members of SEAP, are the exclusive source of feedback at Directors' Check-In meetings, and are the primary respondents of the SSIP Survey. They also provide continuous communication through the progress of SSIP activities as the primary contact for the SEA at PEAs.

Literacy Initiatives Work Group (LIWG)

The LIWG is an opportunity for literacy development stakeholders between special and general education within the SEA to come together and share progress on agency initiatives, progress toward outcomes, professional development status, and alignment opportunities. The group includes members from K-12 Academic Standards, ESS Professional Learning and Sustainability (PLS), Early Childhood Education, ESS Early Childhood, Assessment, ESS Program Support and Monitoring, and ESS Special Projects.

ADE/ESS Program Support and Monitoring (PSM)

Specialists in ESS/PSM are the primary contacts between the SEA and PEA, involving the initiation, submission, and progress through SSIP activities. They are also a source for ongoing feedback through all forms of communication and from monthly PSM meetings.

ADE/Exceptional Student Services (ESS)

ADE/ESS holds monthly meetings to share information and progress and to collect feedback from other perspectives within the SEA. The ESS group includes PSM, Professional Learning and Sustainability (PLS), Operations, Special Projects, Early Childhood Special Education, and Dispute Resolution. It also collaborates regularly with agency partners such as Assessment, Unique Populations, and K-12 Academic Standards.

Describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts.

The SEA collects informal feedback continuously while collaborating with PEAs. Through ESS/PSM Specialists and the ESS/SSIP Coordinator, the SEA communicates directly with PEA Special Education Directors and PEA-SSIP Teams prior to each activity submission and throughout the year whenever questions arise. Directors and PEA-SSIP Teams collaborate together toward documenting and implementing SSIP activities. PEA-SSIP Teams then engage their learning community to become active stakeholders toward goals and outcomes.

Feedback from PEA learning communities is communicated through PEA SSIP Teams and special education directors and is collected through meeting notes and written correspondence. The feedback is aggregated and categorized into a document for continuous improvement. To determine if feedback would provide for activity and student outcomes and is actionable, it is presented to agency leadership during collaboration. If both criteria are met, depending on when it is actionable, the feedback is put into practice.

The SEA collects formal feedback through the SSIP and EBP Survey in early December of each year and through surveys after presentations to stakeholder groups, such as Arizona's special education directors, SEAP, and RSK. This feedback is then used toward continuous improvement efforts. In SY 2021–2022, for example, SEAP survey feedback was directed toward setting SPP/APR targets, and RSK survey feedback was directed toward collecting the parent perspective concerning SGR Indicators that involve family engagement to make data comparison with levels of implementation from PEA-SSIP Teams.

Interagency presentations are delivered quarterly to LIWG, to SEA members within ESS, and to PEA specialists within PSM. In addition to feedback toward activity improvements, collaboration within the SEA often includes opportunities to connect professional development with ongoing PEA initiatives from agency partners. PEAs are generally alerted to professional development opportunities from various SEA listserv emails but are specifically alerted when there is an opportunity to pair an expressed need from an action initiative with a professional development offering.

PEA-SSIP Teams, Special Education Directors, and Learning Community Members

While special education directors are the primary contact for every communication between the SEA and PEA learning communities, PEA-SSIP Teams are often included in the regular correspondence that takes place to discuss activity submission and progress. Then, at opportune times for deeper discussion, such as at the beginning of the school year and prior to new submissions for activities such as the SGR and AP and the EBP Walkthrough Process, the SEA extends opportunities for PEA-SSIP Teams to meet with the SEA. This collaborative structure is not only how key improvement efforts circulate from the SEA to PEA-SSIP Teams and PEA learning communities but is also the most consistent means of collecting feedback from PEA learning communities and PEA-SSIP Teams for SSIP Improvements. Feedback is encouraged, recorded, shared with agency stakeholders, and used toward SSIP improvement efforts continuously. In addition, PEA-SSIP Teams share targeted feedback on the EBP Survey in Year 2 and on the SSIP Survey annually. Examples of SSIP improvements that have resulted from these communications, include activity forms that reflect continuous progress, using links for navigating within and outside of documents for added support, and in dissecting compiled resource videos and presentations to make them more targeted and flexible for PEA-SSIP Teams to use efficiently.

SEAP

Annually, the SEA-SSIP Team presents activity and student outcomes to SEAP. The SEA-SSIP Team then receives feedback on progress and process implementation through meeting and survey response. Some examples of feedback that has been collected and that has led to key SSIP improvements include the alignment with MOWR and setting six-year targets for progress toward the SIMR.

RSK

Annually, the SEA-SSIP Team presents activity and student outcomes to RSK. In SY 2021–2022, the SEA-SSIP Team asked RSK stakeholders for their perspective on SGR Indicators 2c, 3d, 4c, and 5d. As these Indicators ask PEA-SSIP Teams to relay information pertaining to family perspectives, and with SGR evidence rarely showing an indication of parent survey, the SEA-SSIP Team took advantage of the opportunity to ask families about their experience directly. With a small sample size of response and not receiving feedback that deviated in any way from PEA-SSIP Team responses, the SEA-SSIP Team will need to rely on future results for actionable response and improvement.

LIWG

Although the LIWG meets quarterly, collaboration takes place continuously throughout the year. For example, when MOWR corresponds with an SSIP PEA pertaining to MOWR literacy plans and screener data, the SSIP Coordinator and the PEA's PSM Specialist is included in the correspondence. That leads to collaborative opportunities for aligning initiatives and discussing progress. Subsequently, PLS may then be contacted, regarding the connection between the initiatives and professional development opportunities, which may then be extended directly to the PEA.

ESS, ESS Leads, PSM, and PSM Leads

At monthly meetings, intra-agency stakeholders for the positive outcomes of students with disabilities come together to discuss all facets of supporting PEAs toward student growth, including literacy outcomes. Especially significant, these groups all contain the primary contact for regular communication with PEA learning communities. Feedback toward improvement efforts often involves the consideration of PEA capacity, regularity and form of communication, and PEA community needs and concerns.

Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities? (yes/no)

YES

Describe how the State addressed the concerns expressed by stakeholders.

An example of how feedback is continuously collected and used to inform SSIP practices can be seen through the evolution of the SGR and AP support video. Through informal feedback at a virtual meeting during SY 2020–2021, the Special Education Director from an SSIP PEA mentioned that, while

they found the support video helpful, it would be more helpful if it provided not only direction for the completion of the activity but also example responses for each section. This feedback was recorded, the feedback shared, and the video was realigned not only to an eventual reformatting of the SGR and AP, but also to include specific examples for each section. It was then made available to PEAs on the SSIP website and was referenced in correspondence with PEAs at the beginning of SY 2021–22, prior to the fall SGR and AP submission. Then, through formal feedback in the SY 2021–2022 SSIP Survey, while there were many resources that PEA-SSIP Teams found useful toward completing the SGR and AP activity, only a small percentage of PEA-SSIP Teams reported finding the video useful. Upon dissemination of these results to stakeholders, informal feedback was collected, suggesting that Year 2 and Year 3 PEA-SSIP Teams may not have found the need to watch the video or that the effort toward covering examples comprehensively may have also made the overall length of the video time-prohibitive. Through the collaboration, a plan was devised to make the resource more valuable toward completing the activity with fidelity in SY 2022–2023 by embedding links to shorter videos that are specific to each section within the SGR and AP document and so that PEA-SSIP Teams can more easily make the choice to use the targeted resource during completion.

Additional Implementation Activities

List any activities not already described that the State intends to implement in the next fiscal year that are related to the SiMR.

In association with the SSIP Logic Model, the SEA-SSIP Team will be analyzing data and feedback to expand the capacity for providing PEA-SSIP Teams with differentiated supports. On the SSIP Survey, while most PEAs reported SSIP resources positively, 29% expressed the desire for more guidance and support in using the resources toward activity completion. By becoming more targeted in supporting PEAs through the documentation and implementation of their activities, this should provide for fidelity of implementation, which in turn would result in improved literacy outcomes. To initially assess PEA needs, the SEA-SSIP Team will collect information based on PEA capacity. The information collected would include such things as staffing and existing initiatives. While the SEA-SSIP Team can offer virtual support to introduce all new PEAs to SSIP and for initial submissions of an SSIP activity, it can also use capacity information for additional and targeted onsite support, when available.

The SEA-SSIP Team will also use prior fidelity data from PEA activity submissions to extend enhanced support. For example, when fidelity analysis reveals a group of PEAs with common and moderate issues to fidelity, a presentation can be extended to these PEAs as a group, including time for questions and group collaboration. Where fidelity analysis shows PEAs with more extensive and intensive issues to completing the activity with fidelity, a presentation can be tailored and presented to specific PEAs and their SSIP Teams with time for questions and team collaboration. When available and where appropriate, onsite visits will be offered to improve both the collection and support of implementation fidelity.

Provide a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes for these activities that are related to the SiMR.

Prior to the SY 2021–2022 submission, the SEA-SSIP Team will develop the structure for collecting and organizing information pertaining to PEA capacity, and for organizing supports based on fidelity data. Through the month of April 2022, the SEA-SSIP Team will create an overview presentation for Cohort 6—Year 1 PEAs. The SEA-SSIP Team will deliver these presentations with PSM Specialists at Monitoring Set-Up meetings in May 2022 and will offer enhanced support toward the creation of their PEA-SSIP Team and the initial completion of the SGR and AP in the fall of SY 2022–2023. For those that would like this differentiated level of support, the SEA-SSIP Team will collaborate with the PEA to collect information pertaining to the current structure and systems of their PEA and assist PEAs in creating tools that not only aid in the documentation and implementation of the SGR and AP but are also individualized to the specific needs of PEA learning communities.

Describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.

The dynamic of local control is always a barrier to collecting consistent and reliable data, to providing support, and to activity implementation with fidelity. The alignment with MOWR was a significant step toward collecting more consistent and reliable literacy progress data. While the SEA-SSIP Team will continue to look for ways to improve the collection of data with further consistency and reliability, steps will also need to focus on providing PEAs with support toward completing activities with fidelity. The SEA will need to ensure messaging makes it clear that PEAs have the choice to attend additional support opportunities and, at the same time, show the value of pursuing SSIP activities with fidelity toward positive outcomes. Toward this end, the SEA will include data to support these connections in presentations. Personalizing presentations whenever possible will help PEAs to not only see value, but also to feel valued.

Capacity will be a potential barrier for both the PEA and SEA. To overcome capacity issues with PEAs, the SEA will find opportunities to integrate existing initiatives in the SGR and AP. For the SEA, especially if onsite support becomes available from the subsidence of COVID-19-related concerns, the SEA will need to begin the implementation of supports with small groups of like-fidelity issues and the ability to conduct the supports remotely. The SEA will slowly integrate individualized supports and monitor capacity issues during regulated expansion.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional).

17 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

17 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020 and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

17 - Required Actions

Certification

Instructions

Choose the appropriate selection and complete all the certification information fields. Then click the "Submit" button to submit your APR.

Certify

I certify that I am the Chief State School Officer of the State, or his or her designee, and that the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report is accurate.

Select the certifier's role:

Designated by the Chief State School Officer to certify

Name and title of the individual certifying the accuracy of the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report.

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