# **Massachusetts State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) FFY 2019 Indicator B-17/C-11 Annual Performance Report (APR)**

## Section A: Data Analysis

**What is the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR).** (Please limityourresponseto 785 characters without space)*.*

Massachusetts’ SSIP is designed to improve social emotional outcomes for preschool children with disabilities. The SiMR is aligned with the MA Theory of Action and is assessed via statewide results for Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes, Outcome A: Percent of preschool children ages 3-5 with IEPs who demonstrate improved positive social-emotional skills. Indicator 7 child level data are collected via the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Process and analyzed to address two Summary Statements (SS). SS1 = Of preschool children who entered the program below age expectations the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by age 6 or exit from the program. SS2 = The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations by age 6 or exit from the program. This report reflects SiMR data from FFY 2019 and additional evaluation data collected since the last report (March 2020 through February 2021).

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

**If “Yes”, provide an explanation for the change(s), including the role of stakeholders in decision-making.** (Please limityourresponseto 1600 characters without space)*.*

NA

**Progress toward the SiMR**

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

**Baseline Data:** (FFY 2017) Summary Statement 1: 488/570 = 85.61%; Summary Statement 2: 306/651 = 47.00%

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

**FFY 2018 Target**: SS1: 86%; SS2: 50% **FFY 2019 Target**: SS1: 86%; SS2: 50%

**FFY 2018 Data:** SS1: 764/897 = 85.17%; SS2: 481/1,045 = 46.03% **FFY 2019 Data:** SS1: 826/ 1,002 = 82.44%; SS2: 503/1,150 = 43.74%

**Was the State’s FFY 2019 Target Met?** No

**Did slippage[[1]](#footnote-1) occur?** Yes

**If applicable, describe the reasons for slippage.** (Please limityourresponseto 1600 characters without space).

Programming adjustments due to COVID-19 during the latter part of the 2019-2020 school year – specifically, providing services to children remotely when buildings were closed – may have had an impact on overall child outcomes for FFY 2019, including children’s social emotional skills. In terms of data completeness, the number of useable records for FFY 2019 (1,150) increased slightly as compared to FFY 2018 (1,045) and the number of districts reporting was stable (133 vs. 134). As such, completeness is not perceived to be a factor. Furthermore, the validity of the data were not likely impacted, as the COS Process served as the outcome measure as in prior years.   
  
In terms of reliability, data collection processes from March through June 2020 differed from prior years due to building closures and remote service delivery. District teams’ ability to convene meetings for COS ratings with all stakeholders present, full access to all prior assessments/documentation, and day-to-day interactions with students and families may all have been affected to some extent. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the overall reliability of the measure compared to prior years may have been impacted by the COVID-19 modifications.   
  
The State took steps to mitigate the potential impacts of COVID-19 on data collection and on child outcomes more broadly including State-level guidance for remote service delivery for preschool students with disabilities, and links to resources for service provision and assessment (from MA, Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center-ECTA, and others). The State also provided guidance for conducting the COS Process remotely (created by ECTA), to support reliability in data collection for this measure. These steps have continued into the 2020-2021 school year to support improved child outcomes aligned with the SiMR and high-quality data collection.

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

**If “Yes”, describe any additional data collected by the State to assess progress toward the SiMR.**(Please limityourresponseto 1600 characters without space)*.*

The MA SSIP Theory of Action (TOA) serves as a blueprint for implementation and assessing progress toward the SiMR. The TOA is a tiered system of support building from state-level infrastructure to district-level efforts, to classroom-level practices. Family engagement is an ongoing focus. Data are collected at all levels to assess progress toward the SiMR including feedback from professional development events, quality of district supports, progress on fidelity measures of Pyramid Model implementation, district surveys, and child outcomes data via Indicator 7.   
  
District-level Progress – Progress toward implementation is assessed via the Early Childhood PBS Benchmarks of Quality (EC-BOQ) self-assessment tool. Over the past four years, EC-BOQ results have consistently shown progress over time on indicators of Pyramid Model implementation. Data collected since last year’s report from 23 districts indicate an average overall score of 60%. The 23 districts represent 77% of Cohort 1 through 4 districts (Cohort 5 data are baseline and are not included in this score). Data were also analyzed by Cohort to assess progress from FFY 2018 to FFY 2019 (pre to post-COVID); 3 of 4 cohorts reported progress. Results: Cohort 1 (C1): 71% to 63%, C2: 63% to 66%, C3: 50% to 64%, C4: 26% to 44%.   
  
Child-level Progress - Results on the annual Leadership Team Survey have consistently suggested increased skills among staff and progress for children in social emotional skills. On average, perceived benefits have increased with each successive year. For FFY 2019 (n=54) 75% of survey respondents report that as a result of this work, children are demonstrating improved social emotional competencies (moderate/great extent); 71% reported that children with disabilities are demonstrating improved social emotional competencies. This latter data point is directly aligned with the SiMR.

**Did the State identify any provide describe of general data quality concerns, unrelated to COVID-19, that affected progress toward the SiMR during the reporting period?**

No

**If “Yes”, describe any data quality issues specific to the SiMR data and include actions taken to address data quality concerns.** (Please limityourresponseto 3000 characters without space).

NA

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

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

Several data sources were impacted by COVID-19 program adjustments since March 2020. These include the potential impact on SiMR data as described on page 2; program implementation data collected via the EC-BOQ; classroom fidelity data assessed via the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT); and survey efforts (Leadership Team Survey, Teacher Survey).

EC-BOQ: Data completeness was affected as nearly a quarter of districts (22%) have not yet completed the measure during this reporting period. Delays are due to competing priorities among districts and schools; administrator and staff focus on wellness, health/safety, and family engagement during remote learning; and Leadership Team challenges scheduling full team meetings amid the pandemic. Most districts have plans to complete the EC-BOQ later in the school year. There are no concerns about validity and reliability of the data received. The State’s ability to collect the data are reliant on districts’ ability to complete the self-assessment tool. To mitigate the impact and to continue supporting progress, the State allowed school districts to balance data collection timelines to best meet their needs. At the same time, completion of this measure has been encouraged when possible to continue to guide implementation locally. This support was further extended by external coaches who are guided by the State to support districts – there are currently eight coaches providing individualized support to districts.

TPOT: Data completeness was affected as the majority of districts/schools have not used this classroom fidelity measure since spring 2020. Use of this observational tool to assess classroom fidelity has been impacted by remote and hybrid learning models and limited staffing/limited staff allowed in classrooms. Pyramid Model developers have indicated the TPOT is not recommended for remote use due to potential diminished validity and reliability. While no data have yet been collected since last year’s report, several districts are moving toward TPOT use later in the school year as conditions allow; data will be requested by the State to assess progress. To mitigate impact, the State’s Pyramid Model vendor has supported external coaches and district teams by providing resources for alternatives to assessing classroom fidelity in virtual learning environments. Feedback from coaches and program staff indicate that TPOT indicators/scales have been used in more “informal” ways this year by some districts to continue to support fidelity. Examples include using TPOT indicators for teacher self-reflection, group coaching, and by reviewing prior results to support fidelity. Other supports for fidelity include teachers meeting virtually to support each other, and internal coaches supporting teachers by providing resources and visuals to support modifications in the current teaching and learning environment.

Leadership Team and Teacher Surveys: Data completeness of the Leadership Team Survey (n=54) was likely impacted by competing priorities at the local level - 35% of team members and 90% of districts responded to the survey (lower than typical response rates). To mitigate impact, the survey was streamlined to key data points to increase the likelihood of team members completing the survey. The Teacher Survey has been postponed until later in the year due to the reasons described in this section. The State plans to collect feedback from teachers in spring 2021 if conditions become more favorable for this activity.

## Section B: Phase III Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

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

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

NA

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

**If “Yes”, describe each new (previously or newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategy and the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved*.*** (Please limityourresponseto 1600 characters without space)*.*

New Principal Activities:  
  
External coaches, with support from the State and Pyramid Model Consortium (PMC), began developing resources for infrastructure improvement and sustainability during spring 2020. The draft External Coach Guide includes a process for on-boarding coaches, provisional training requirements, and a catalogue of resources to support high-quality implementation. This resource will include Program-wide Implementation in Phases, a roadmap for guiding local implementation toward scale-up and sustainability.  
  
  
New Interagency Initiatives - MA Early Education and Care (EEC):  
  
1) In September 2020, the ePyramid Modules in Pyramid Model practices were added to the MA Learning Management System (LMS). All staff across the mixed delivery system of early education have access. As of September, 9,270 individuals have enrolled in the training (comprised of 3 modules, 15 hours each); 2,575 have completed at least 1 of the 3 modules.  
  
2) Beginning in October 2020, a series of Peer Learning Communities (PLCs) to support social emotional development was offered to early childhood education administrators and teachers (English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese offerings). There have been 355 participants (with duplicates) to date across 28 PLCs (4 sessions each). The vast majority of participants reported achieving the learning objectives and indicated the relevance of the sessions in supporting social emotional development.  
  
3) MA is also currently participating in the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations Scale up and Sustainability Work Group to help guide development of new resources.   
  
  
New Infrastructure Activity:  
  
In spring 2020, MA began work toward an online system for collecting Indicator 7 COS data from districts with links to the Student Information Management System to streamline data collection and support data analysis.

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

This section highlights improvement strategies and outcomes across the principal activities being implemented in targeted districts (see pp. 6-7 of FFY 2018 report).   
  
1) MA DESE continues to collaborate with Pyramid Model Consortium (PMC) to support districts toward implementation of Pyramid Model evidence-based practices (EBPs) to foster children’s social-emotional development. Intermediate outcomes: Current reach is 32 school districts, 52 schools, 304 classrooms, and 273 teachers. These numbers increased slightly from FFY 2018 (two districts joined during 2020-21;14 additional classrooms have begun implementation efforts). There are also 58 early childhood education (ECE) programs and 3 community-wide sites implementing Pyramid Model through EEC initiatives.  
  
2) PMC continues to support 19 external coaches who support the districts and ECE programs  
toward implementation and sustainability. PMC and external coaches meet monthly to discuss progress, training opportunities, and next steps. This year coaches received supplemental training in two priority areas for FFY 2019 – supporting equity and using child outcomes data (SiMR). Short-term outcomes: External coaches have developed equity plans to guide their own professional development and participated in team meetings to explore data use and resources for supporting districts, continuing work that began last year.  
  
3) PMC continued to offer professional development (PD) opportunities to support implementation (see p.15).  
  
4) External coaches continued to provide individualized support to districts for implementation (remotely as of March 2020). Short-term outcomes: On average, coaches had two contacts with districts each month. Coaches met most often with program administrators (77%), followed by Leadership Teams (53%), internal coaches (36%), and classroom teachers (33%). Support most often focused on Leadership Team activities including using EC-BOQ for planning (73%) and family engagement strategies (21%). Intermediate outcomes: Coach Survey results from fall 2020 (n=16, 84%) suggested coaches felt best-prepared for supporting Leadership Teams including use of the EC-BOQ, supporting staff wellness efforts, and supporting children in social- emotional development. Coaches expressed interest in additional supports focused on promoting equity, remote coaching and implementation strategies, and providing training remotely.   
  
5) District Leadership Teams continue to guide local efforts toward all aspects of implementation. Intermediate outcomes: Results from the Leadership Team Survey (n=54, 90% of districts) suggest that on average all Cohorts (1-4) made progress this year increasing family engagement (61% report moderate or significant progress), broadening school/district use of culturally responsive practices to address equity (58%), increasing internal coach capacity for supporting Pyramid Model practices (41%), and increasing data use for program planning and improvement (37%). Survey comments suggest that the focus shifted to increased communication with families to support remote learning and social emotional development, and updating program-wide expectations to address remote/hybrid learning and social distancing. Team members commented that Pyramid Model practices, visual supports, and other foundational aspects have served them well during the pandemic by providing a common language and framework to support staff, children, and families at this time.

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

SSIP programming is continually adjusted based on evaluation data and ongoing communication with stakeholders with the overall goal of improving child outcomes.  
  
PD Feedback – As of spring 2020, feedback from PMC PD events was collected online. Feedback addressed the quality and usefulness of trainings, progress on learning objectives, and suggestions going forward. Participant feedback consistently pointed to session effectiveness and relevance and participant satisfaction. Feedback from external coaches further contributed to identifying PD needs of district/program staff throughout the year.  
  
Monthly External Coach Log – The monthly log captures coach supports provided to districts each month and each district’s status in level of engagement toward implementation – summaries are shared with project leaders each month. Data indicated most districts regularly engaged with their external coach and worked toward implementation. Given the COVID-19 context, spring 2020 coach logs revealed districts’ need for resources and general support, while fall 2020 logs revealed ongoing needs for resources, access to training, and support for engagement and staff wellness approaches.   
  
EC-PBS Benchmarks of Quality – The EC-BOQ is used by Leadership Teams to assess program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model across seven critical elements. The current version includes benchmarks associated with culturally responsive practices to ensure equity. Data received during this reporting period indicate that teams continue to be engaged in moving implementation forward. Feedback from external coaches and team members indicate the value of the EC-BOQ for developing action plans and planning next steps. Additional EC-BOQ results are provided on page 14, with respect to specific outcomes by cohort.  
  
External Coach Survey – Coaches completed a survey in fall 2020 to learn about their preparedness for the shift to virtual coaching, effective strategies and coach needs, and perceptions of districts’ needs. Coaches reported success with a variety of strategies including using the EC-BOQ to help provide team focus, using virtual meetings to provide coaching and training on content, and setting up shared electronic files for collaboration, among others. District training needs that emerged included: staff wellness, Trauma-Informed Care, Implicit Bias, training on the Pyramid Model Coaching Equity Guide and others. Survey results were shared with project leaders and used for planning external coach and district supports from PMC.  
  
Leadership Team Survey – This survey captured districts teams’ assessment of progress toward implementation, perceived benefits for children and families, and needs going forward. The survey was completed by 54 individuals across 26 districts (Cohorts 1-4), for a 35% participant and 90% district response rate, respectively. Survey data indicated progress toward implementation, the value of the Pyramid Model framework at this time, and perceived benefits for children and families. In addition to the benefits previously described, 74% of survey respondents indicated that the Pyramid Model has resulted in stronger relationships between practitioners and families; 61% reported that families have gained skills and strategies for interacting with their children to support social-emotional development; and 62% reported children are making greater cognitive and academic progress overall.

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

MA DESE anticipates that the improvement strategies currently in place to support social-emotional development will continue and expand during the next reporting period. This includes targeted efforts with school districts/communities, interagency initiatives, and broader statewide efforts. With respect to anticipated outcomes an evaluation plan will be designed for the next cycle with corresponding activities, measures, and outcomes.  
  
In addition to the current SSIP focus and SiMR MA, will continue to prioritize equity and anti-racism, culturally responsive practices, and Trauma-Informed Care approaches to help ensure that all children are successful in school and in life. Continued traininig on the Behavior Incident Reporting System (BIRs) will help to support these initiatives, and evaluation plans will reflect equity as a priority area. Given the realities of 2020-21, MA will ensure that accelerated learning models are in place when students return to in-person learning to compensate for losses during remote learning. Relatedly, the SSIP may expand to focus on early literacy and overall preparation for learning and success in the early grades with social-emotional competencies as the foundation. Evaluation efforts going forward could explore correlational and/or quasi-experimental studies to assess relationships between EC-PBS/Pyramid classrooms and social-emotional competencies, early literacy, and other skill-building.   
  
Anticipated next steps:  
  
1) PD - In spring 2021, PD in Pyramid Model and supporting topics will continue including: Positive Solutions for Families; Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC); Practice Based Coaching (PBC); PBC Equity Guide; PBC Peer-to-Peer; PBC in a Group; Targeted Strategies for Successful Inclusion of Children with Disabilities; and Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS). External coaches are being trained in Emotional Literacy for training local personnel. Additionally, ePyramid Modules will continue to be available to all personnel across the early childhood mixed delivery system. Finally, the 2021 State Leadership Team-sponsored 9th Annual Summit will focus on Equity and Intergenerational Trauma.   
  
2) District Implementation - School districts will continue to receive support toward EC-PBS/Pyramid implementation through PD opportunities, external coach supports, and grant opportunities. Scale-up will continue as these opportunities are offered to additional districts as state resources allow. With respect to next steps, evaluation findings suggest that progress has been made each year toward program-wide implementation, staff skills including fidelity of classroom practices, and perceived benefits for children and families. Areas for continued development toward high-fidelity implementation include building internal coach capacity and alternatives to the PBC coaching model (i.e., group and peer coaching), increased use of the TPOT as a fidelity measure, and increased data use for program improvement. Efforts will continue in strengthening each of these areas including external coach preparation to support districts/programs.   
  
Developing processes for scalability and sustainability will allow districts a gradual fade from external coach support to ensure the EC-PBS/Pyramid framework is embedded in district policies and procedures. Continued support for external coaches’ work on the Implementation in Phases ‘roadmap’ will support next steps.

**Did the State implement any new (previously or newly identified) evidence-based practices?** No

**If “Yes”, describe the selection process for the new (previously or newly identified) evidence-based practices.** (Please limityourresponseto1600characterswithoutspace):

NA

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

The MA SSIP is designed to improve social-emotional outcomes for preschool children with disabilities. MA selected the implementation of Early Childhood Behavior Supports through Pyramid Model Strategies (EC-PBS/Pyramid) as its EBP to achieve this goal. The Pyramid Model is a research-based intervention framework that has an effective workforce as its foundation; nurturing relationships and high-quality environments; targeted social-emotional supports; and intensive intervention for addressing persistent challenging behavior.   
  
The Pyramid Model framework is a key component of the MA TOA. As key state and interagency early childhood special education (ECSE) initiatives support scale-up of implementation of EBPs, ECSE programs will have access to high-quality PD and develop Leadership Teams to guide improvements. In turn, as staff implement EPBs and continue to engage families, classroom-level activities will move toward greater fidelity to the model. Therefore, by building local capacity and using data for continuous improvement, social-emotional outcomes for preschool children with disabilities will improve (SiMR).  
  
In terms the specific EBPs that comprise the EC-PBS/Pyramid Model at the classroom level, the TPOT is comprised of 14 Key Practice Areas (114 indicators): Schedules, routines, and activities; Transitions between activities are appropriate; Engaging in supportive conversations with children; Promoting children’s engagement; Providing directions, Collaborative teaming; Teaching behavior expectations; Teaching social skills and emotional competencies; Teaching friendship skills, Teaching children to express emotions; Teaching problem-solving; Interventions for persistent challenging behavior; Connecting with families, and Supporting family use of the Pyramid Model.

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

As described, the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) serves as a measure of fidelity at the classroom level. This past year, TPOT data are not yet available due to COVID-19 adjustments. As a point of reference, based on TPOT scores representing approximately one-quarter of implementing teachers in FFY 2018, personnel were demonstrating fidelity (80%) on many of the key practices and moving toward overall fidelity. On average, teachers were observed to be strongest in providing directions (81%-90% across cohorts), transitions between activities (80%-88%), and supportive conversations with children (81%-87%). On average, teachers had the most room for growth in teaching behavior expectations (46%-57%), teaching social skills and emotional competencies (56%-66%), and teaching problem-solving (53%-68%).   
  
With respect to fidelity of implementation at the program level, the EC-BOQ self-assessment tool serves as the primary measure. There are seven Critical Elements: 1) Establish Leadership Team, 2) Staff Buy-in, 3) Family Engagement, 4) Program-wide Expectations, 5) PD and Staff Support Plan, 6) Responding to Challenging Behavior, and 7) Monitoring Implementation and Outcomes (using data). Overall EC-BOQ results across two years were provided on page 4. The average percent of points for each Critical Element and overall are shown below – data shown are from the most recent EC-BOQ (FFY 2019), post-COVID:  
  
Cohort 1 (n=8 districts, 2016-17 start): 1) 74%, 2) 66%, 3) 64%, 4) 83%, 5) 53%, 6) 71%, 7) 30%; overall 63%  
Cohort 2 (n=5 districts, 2017-18 start): 1) 70%, 2) 65%, 3) 65%, 4) 79%, 5) 53%, 6) 87%, 7) 41%; overall 66%  
Cohort 3 (n=5 districts, 2018-19 start): 1) 80%, 2) 63%, 3) 58%, 4) 68%, 5) 56%, 6) 79%, 7) 39%; overall 64%   
Cohort 4 (n=5 districts, 2019-20 start): 1) 67%, 2) 55%, 3) 38%, 4) 41%, 5) 36%, 6) 57%, 7) 20%; overall 44%

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

PMC continued to provide statewide trainings to support the use of EBPs, shifting to virtual events after March 2020. A supplemental statewide training was offered in July/August – Transitioning back to school in MA – in response to district needs. PD events related to EBPs and numbers of attendees are provided below. Participants represented both school district and ECE personnel as the work is streamlined across the mixed-delivery system.   
  
March 2020 - Feb. 2021: Practice Based Coaching (PBC), 25 attendees; Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS), 25; PBC, 16; Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT), 23; Prevent, Teach, Reinforce for Families (PTR-F), 20; Positive Solutions for Families (PSF), 24; Prevent, Teach, Reinforce for Children (PR-YC), 22. Total attendees = 155 (with duplicates). Evaluation feedback shows the majority of attendees achieved the session learning objectives.  
  
As described, participating districts and ECE programs have access to online ePyramid Modules for self-paced learning via the LMS. PMC has provided external coaches with detailed manuals to facilitate this content with participants. Finally, districts/programs have access to additional modules in Wellness: Taking Care of Yourself, Trauma-Informed Care, and Culturally Responsive Practices to Reduce Implicit Bias, Disproportionality, Suspension and Expulsion.  
  
The Pyramid Model State Leadership Team (SLT) continues to collaborate on statewide planning to extend the reach of support for Pyramid Model EBPs. The SLT includes members from DESE, EEC, UMass Boston, MA Department of Health (DPH), Head Start, and program and district leadership team members. Other key initiatives to support ECSE include Building Equitable Supports (formerly BIC), the Early Childhood Leadership Institute (ECLI), and many others (pp. 20-23 of FFY 2018 SSIP report).

## Section C: Stakeholder Engagement

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

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of the SSIP at the State, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals; training events and embedded supports statewide; and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully – strategies include all facets of the evaluation plan. This year, stakeholder feedback pointed to needed support for remote learning and assessment, including family collaboration and engagement strategies, to support progress toward child outcomes.  
  
At all levels including state interagency efforts, evaluation findings and recommendations are shared and discussed, helping to set the course for improvements. Key aspects of the feedback structures include presentations and discussion via state-level leadership and steering committee meetings, and by providing mechanisms for frequent feedback from participants in SSIP districts and from the external coaches who support them. Other methods include a bi-monthly SSIP eNewsletter, sharable infographics, and social media including Facebook and Pinterest pages.  
  
Statewide/Interagency:  
  
PBS/Pyramid Model SLT – In FFY 2019, the SLT met bi-monthly to collaborate on statewide efforts and provide feedback on progress. Evaluation findings and recommendations across the DESE and EEC initiatives were shared and discussed.   
  
Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) – MA DESE presented child outcomes (SiMR) data and reviewed annual targets with this interagency group comprised of members appointed by the Commissioner on behalf of the MA Board of Education. DESE presented a plan for Equity in Early Childhood and led discussion of findings from the Children’s Equity Project report.   
  
District/Program Level:  
  
District Leadership Team Feedback – Leadership Team Surveys and external coach collaboration are key avenues for engaging district and school personnel in the SSIP improvement efforts. In addition to findings shared throughout this report, a brief summary of comments helps to highlight the type of information gained from the surveys.   
  
- Nearly all survey respondents suggested that Pyramid Model strategies and practices provided common ground by keeping expectations, schedules, and routines consistent through remote, hybrid and in-person learning environments.   
  
- Examples of family engagement activities included a greater focus on providing virtual training/workshops for parents and an increased emphasis on individual communications with parents (via email, phone calls, and/or video calls). Family engagement focused on providing Pyramid Model strategies and activities that could be useful in the home learning environment while supporting social emotional development.  
  
- While many team members indicated that this has been a challenging year, they remain optimistic about making greater progress toward implementation once schools can return to in-person learning. In terms of what districts need most to move forward, the three top responses were: continued external coaching, ongoing professional development for teachers and staff, and time to carry out action plans and implement Pyramid Model practices.

**Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities?**No

**If “Yes”, describe how the State addressed the concerns expressed by stakeholders.** (Please limityourresponseto1600 characters without space)*:*

NA

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

NA

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

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

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)