

New York State Education Department

State Systemic Improvement Plan

PHASE III – YEAR 4

APRIL 1, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Executive Summary	3
<i>I. Infrastructure Changes</i>	5
<i>II. Summary of Phase III – Year 4</i>	7
A. <i>Progress Toward the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)</i>	8
B. <i>Logic Model, Theory of Action, and Evaluation</i>	10
<i>III. Progress Toward Achieving Intended Improvements</i>	12
A. <i>Infrastructure Improvements and Impact on State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)</i>	12
B. <i>Coherent Improvement Strategies Update</i>	12
C. <i>Fidelity Measures</i>	20
D. <i>Barriers to Implementation</i>	21
E. <i>Stakeholder Engagement in Implementation</i>	22
<i>IV. Data on Implementation and Outcomes</i>	24
A. <i>SSIP District and School Implementation Efforts, Results, and Impact</i>	25
B. <i>Stakeholder Engagement in Evaluation</i>	27
<i>V. Data Quality Issues</i>	29
A. <i>Fidelity Measures</i>	29
B. <i>Collection Systems – Data Limitations</i>	29
C. <i>Improvement Measures Related to Data Quality</i>	30
<i>VI. Sustainability and Scale-Up</i>	30
A. <i>Sustainability Considerations</i>	30
B. <i>Scale-Up Considerations</i>	32
<i>VII. Plans for FFY 2019</i>	33
A. <i>Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Implementation Analysis</i>	33
B. <i>SiMR Target for FFY 2019</i>	34
C. <i>Federal Technical Assistance</i>	34

APPENDICES

Appendix A	<i>SSIP Logic Model</i>
Appendix B	<i>SSIP Theory of Action</i>
Appendix C	<i>OSE Educational Partnership Organizational Structure</i>
Appendix D	<i>NYSED SSIP Phase III Improvement Plan</i>
Appendix E	<i>NYSED SSIP Phase III – Year 4 Evaluation Plan</i>
Appendix F	<i>SSIP – Partnership Cascade Comparison and Descriptions</i>
Appendix G	<i>NYSED’s SSIP MTSS Model</i>
Appendix H	<i>Partnership Data Management System (DMS) Details</i>
Appendix I	<i>Partnership Professional Learning Details</i>
Appendix J	<i>NYSED SSIP MTSS School-Level Self-Assessment</i>
Appendix K	<i>Transformation Zone (TZ) Visits Summary</i>
Appendix L	<i>TZ Literacy Benchmarking Results</i>
Appendix M	<i>SSIP MTSS Implementation Impact</i>

Executive Summary

Since the last submission of the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Office of Special Education's (OSE) State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) report, OSE has undertaken a major initiative to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities. As of July 1, 2019, OSE established a new Statewide model for provision of support and professional learning to educational organizations (*e.g., district, schools, approved private schools, special act schools, preschools, and agencies*) and families. Concurrently, implementation of OSE's SSIP Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework continued in three regions designated as the transformation zone (TZ).

State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) and Targets

NYSED has maintained its SiMR and targets since its submission of the FFY 2017 SSIP. In addition, NYSED will continue the same target for the extended year FFY 2019 as it was for FFY 2018, based on stakeholder feedback.

SiMR: For students classified as students with learning disabilities in SSIP schools (grades 3-5), increase the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 2 and above on the grades 3-5 English Language Arts State Assessments.

Progress in Implementation

Although NYSED did not meet its FFY 2018 SiMR target this year, several other mechanisms were utilized to demonstrate impact of the SSIP efforts on student outcomes. Some of the improvements identified in one or more of the cohort schools for students with learning disabilities include literacy benchmark improvements, increase in appropriate behaviors, increase in percentage of instruction in the general education classroom, and increase in attendance rates. These results are included in future sections of this report (See section IV. Data on Implementation and Outcomes).

Table 1. Percentage of Students Classified with Learning Disabilities in Grades 3-5 who scored at proficiency levels 2 or above on the New York State English Language Arts Assessment

FFY	Annual Targets	SSIP Cohort	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Statewide
2015*	20%	17.1% (N = 19)	18.5% (N = 40)	2.6% (N = 42)	24.4% (N = 137)	25.5% (N = 28504)
2016	24%	25.6% (N = 200)	27.8% (N = 30)	27.4% (N = 46)	22.2% (N = 115)	32.4% (N = 28359)
2017	32%	29.1% (N = 237)	14.3 (N = 38)	40.4% (N = 52)	33.4% (N = 147)	41.4% (N = 28251)
2018	42%	30.7% (N = 269)	36.2% (N = 53)	25.4% (N = 66)	28.4% (N = 150)	39.8% (N = 28382)
2019	42%					

*Key: * = Baseline year; N = number of Students*

Infrastructure and Operating Highlights

NYSED initiated a significant restructuring of its professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) resources with the establishment of the OSE Educational Partnership (“Partnership”). The Partnership is a coordinated and cohesive network of support focused on enhancing services and supports for students with disabilities, ages birth to 21. The focus of this work is to increase school and district capacity using an intensive team approach to PD and TA that is implemented with consistency across all regions of the State. Additionally, the learnings from implementation of the SSIP such as the use of a cascade of collaborative teams, communication loops, data-based decisions, research and evidence-based resources, significantly informed the development and design of the Partnership.

Stakeholder Engagement Impact

Multiple stakeholder engagement activities occurred during FFY 2018 to garner information on the effectiveness, implementation efforts and impact of the SSIP MTSS implementation. Stakeholder input has been reviewed and is being used to inform scale-up of MTSS implementation for FFY 2019 SSIP. The following are stakeholder engagement activities conducted during FFY 2018:

- OSE staff visited the schools in the TZ to celebrate successes and identify and problem solve barriers to the implementation efforts of MTSS. This information will be shared with other schools during scale-up.
- Members of the SSIP Implementation Design Team (SIDT) convened to study the initial implementation of MTSS in the TZ.
- Partnership Regional Level Teams (RLT) from across the State convened to discuss, and complete a subsequent survey, to determine their readiness to support educational organizations in MTSS implementation.
- Families were surveyed to determine their understanding of MTSS.

I. Infrastructure Changes

NYSED has engaged in a realignment of both its internal structure of the OSE and its funded special education networks, with the shared purpose of improving outcomes for students with disabilities. This transition was initiated after stakeholder input indicated the need for greater alignment of the delivery system for PD and TA to educational organizations.

The OSE management structure was reorganized to better facilitate the collaboration between the unit that oversees its special education networks, the Program Development and Support Services (PDSS) unit, and the Special Education Quality Assurance (SEQA) units that monitor schools and districts for compliance with special education laws and regulations. These units were shifted to one manager that would ensure the districts with the highest needs were provided PD and TA to address their areas of significant need as identified by their determinations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and/or performance on State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators.

Although OSE has supported several TA centers intended to improve outcomes for students with disabilities for many years, the various centers were designed to impact a specific area of special education (behavior, families, instruction, literacy, early childhood, transition). The level of impact on student outcomes was diminished because each of the TA centers functioned independently of one another and lacked a structure that enabled the work to intersect. After studying the impact and effects of the previous TA centers and with many previous OSE funded special education network contracts ending in June 2019, NYSED leveraged this opportunity to rethink the best approach to providing support to students with disabilities and their families. The resulting Partnership is rooted in implementation science, which is also the foundation of the SSIP and MTSS design and addresses the OSE priority areas (least restrictive environment, family engagement, performance, disproportionality, transition).

The Partnership is designed to:

- provide a structure that facilitates systems change efforts and sustainability of those changes;
- encourage and promote culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining educational practices that includes families and communities as valued partners;
- promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of high-quality services to families and professionals who work with students with disabilities;
- create a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary team approach focused on principles from NYSED's [Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities](#) that supports stakeholders; and
- rely on data-based problem-solving and decision-making, as well as the use of evidence-based practices.

Funded contracts are used within the Partnership to provide PD and TA to a variety of stakeholders. These contract partners include: 12 Regional Partnership Centers (RPC); 14 Early Childhood Family and Community Engagement (EC FACE) Centers; 14 School-age FACE (SA FACE) Centers; and 5 Special Education Technical Assistance Partnerships (TAPs): Data, Transition, Behavior, Academics, and Equity. The RPCs and FACE Centers are located across the State and serve their designated geographical region.

The goal of the Partnership is to increase the capacity of educational organizations by using an intensive team approach for the provision of PD and TA that is implemented with consistency across the State. Under the direction of OSE, all members of the Partnership are required to work professionally and collaboratively with one another to address the needs of educational organizations, with the common

goal of building and sustaining systems, policies, procedures, and practices to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

The Partnership consists of a cascade of teams, as shown in Figure 1 below (see Appendix C OSE Educational Partnership Organizational Structure).

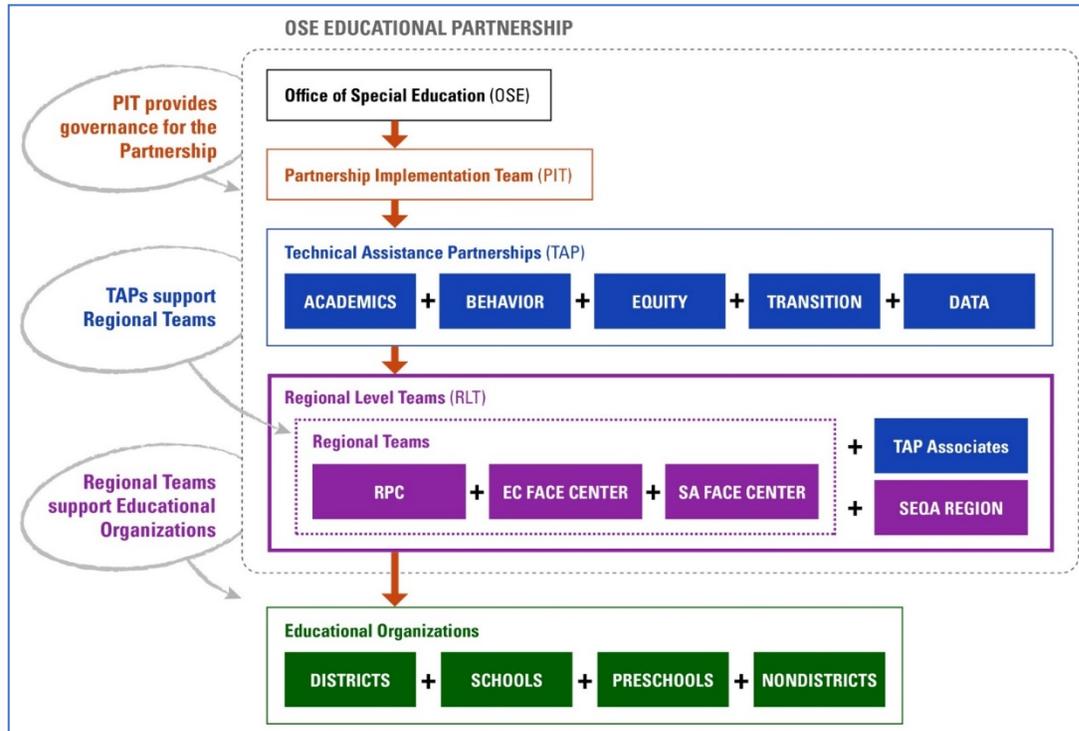


Figure 1. The OSE Educational Partnership Organizational Structure

The Partnership Implementation Team (PIT) (see Appendix C OSE Educational Partnership Organizational Structure) makes recommendations and decisions for the Partnership based on input from stakeholders within the Partnership and across OSE units and operates under the direction and guidance of OSE management. Based on a broad understanding of strengths and needs across agencies, the PIT identifies and/or establishes workgroups to develop tools, resources, and/or materials that are to be utilized by Regional Teams to conduct Statewide regional learning, targeted skills/support groups, and intensive partnerships. The current workgroups include:

- Onboarding and Administrative
- Communication and Marketing
- Evaluation
- MTSS
- Resource Planning
- Branding Identity
- Curriculum and Materials Development
- Resources Review
- Data Management System (DMS)/Public Website

The Partnership includes five TAPs (TAP for Academics, TAP for Behavior, TAP for Data, TAP for Equity, and TAP for Transition) which are located within institutions of higher education (IHE). Each TAP serves two primary purposes: to provide tools and resources for families and professionals and to provide direct support to the professionals within the Partnership. The TAPs are integral to the development, review, and revision of materials that are utilized across the Partnership regions. These materials include information for stakeholders at the beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Materials may consist of full training packages (including slide decks, handouts, webcasts, or other multimedia) or core messages presented in alternative formats (such as infographics, flip charts, webcasts or other multimedia). The TAP for Data also supports activities provided by the RPCs and FACE Centers, provides guidance on the new infrastructure and processes, and is in the process of developing an online DMS to centralize the tracking, reporting, and evaluation of Partnership activities. The DMS is currently under intense development and is scheduled to become operational in May of 2020.

The RPCs consist of a team of specialists (Systems Change Facilitator, Special Education Trainer, Behavior Specialist, Transition Specialist, Culturally Responsive Educator, Literacy Specialist, and Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Specialist) with content expertise who engage in systems change work through the provision of a variety of supports. The RPCs provide PD and TA to educational organizations that serve early childhood and/or school-age populations. The PD and TA provided by the RPCs is identified through a resource planning process. This process utilizes a team approach (RPC, EC/SA FACE Centers, TAPs, OSE) and data-based decision making, including IDEA accountability and SPP data specific to each school district across the State, to determine how much support educational organizations will receive. The focus of the RPC's work is on improving the infrastructure of educational organizations so that they can successfully implement evidence-based practices and more meaningfully engage with their students and families.

The EC FACE Centers and SA FACE Centers work collaboratively with the RPCs to provide PD and TA that promotes meaningful family involvement within the educational system, builds collaborative community relationships, and provides information and training regarding available service options and delivery systems. A particular emphasis of the work of the FACE Centers is to build the capacity of our educational organizations so that they can effectively engage parents and families, in a culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate way. While EC FACE Centers primarily provide supports for children from birth to age five, and the SA FACE Centers primarily provide supports for school-age students. These Centers also collaborate to support early childhood learning (birth to grade 3). Families can use the resource and referral services provided by the EC FACE Centers and the SA FACE Centers to assist them in engaging as meaningful partners in the education of their children.

II. Summary of SSIP Phase III – Year 4

Amid all these changes to the infrastructure, work within the 14 schools of the SSIP TZ continued. The participating schools utilized the SSIP MTSS framework and self-assessment to examine their current systems, infrastructure, and practices to determine areas in need of improvement, and then operationalized action steps to ensure improved outcomes for all students. With guidance and support from the Regional Team specialists, each school selected up to three MTSS core components to focus on and build capacity while implementing a framework aligned to each individual school community and culture.

Implementing MTSS requires knowledge of resources and organizational structures at district, school and classroom levels. The TZ is a representative sample of the schools and districts within the State. The schools in the TZ are serving as the first cohort to participate in the change processes necessary to build a sustainable MTSS framework. NYSED's SSIP TZ consists of three regions of the State: Long Island, Lower Hudson Valley, and New York City, with a total of 14 participating schools across 10 districts.

The SSIP's six-year reporting cycle enabled OSE to take a deep dive into its infrastructure, systems, policies and practices to study what has worked and to determine where change is needed. Prior to the implementation of the Partnership, the systems and structures were not aligned to provide the SSIP schools and teams with the necessary supports that they required. Under the structures of the new Partnership, Regional Teams are provided with substantial resources and supports to build capacity for more consistent practices, measures, and systems within the SSIP schools.

During FFY 2018, the goal of the SSIP work has been to enable district and school leaders to not only operationalize and implement an MTSS framework, but to drive sustainable changes in process and performance that are needed to truly impact student achievement. As research states, large scale change generally requires three to five years of focused implementation efforts (i.e., training, systems development, coaching, tools, and resources) before sustainable systems and practices can be achieved (Fixen et al., 2005). Although the NYSED SSIP MTSS model is in its initial implementation, it has helped to drive some significant changes in the participating schools. The subsequent pages in this report will detail the changes, progress, and impact this work has had on the cohort of schools.

A. Progress toward the SiMR

SiMR: For students classified as students with learning disabilities in SSIP schools (grades 3-5), increase the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 2 and above on the grades 3-5 English Language Arts State Assessments.

To measure the impact of SSIP activities, OSE utilizes several mechanisms, 1) the New York State Grades 3-5 English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment that is administered annually in the spring, 2) administration of the NYSED's SSIP MTSS School-Level Self-Assessment for fidelity of implementation, 3) collection of student-level data from the cohort of schools, and 4) quarterly activity logs completed by Regional Team specialists and the school implementation teams. Disaggregated data garnered from the sources mentioned above are included in future sections of the report (See section III. Data on Implementation and Outcomes - A. TZ Data/ FFY 2018 - Student Level Data, B. SSIP District and School Implementation Efforts and Results.) Below you will find longitudinal data for the cohort of schools within the three regions of the transformation zone.

Table 2. Percent of students in grades 3-5, scoring at proficiency levels 2 and above on the NYS ELA Assessment

FFY	Annual Targets	SSIP Cohort	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Statewide
2015*	20%	17.1% (N = 19)	18.5% (N = 40)	2.6% (N = 42)	24.4% (N= 137)	25.5% (N = 28504)
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Key: * = Baseline year; N = number of Students

As identified in Table 2 above, there was an increase of 10 percentage points in the annual SiMR target from FFY 2017 to FFY 2018. Overall, the SSIP cohort showed an increase of 1.6 percent of students with learning disabilities in grades 3-5 scoring at a proficiency level of 2 and above on the NYS ELA Assessment. However, when the data was disaggregated by region, Region 1 showed an increase of 21.9 percentage points in the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 2 and above. Regions 2 and 3 showed a decrease in proficiency rates of 15 percentage points and 5 percentage points, respectively. OSE is conducting further data analysis, including fidelity of implementation of the MTSS model, to inform the slippage in Regions 2 and 3.

Since the initiation of the SSIP in FFY 2015, significant progress is noted in the SSIP schools. In FFY 2015, 17.1 percent of students with learning disabilities in grades 3-5 scored at a proficiency level of 2 and above on the NYS ELA Assessment as compared to 30.7 percent in FFY 2018, representing a 13.6 percent increase over that period.

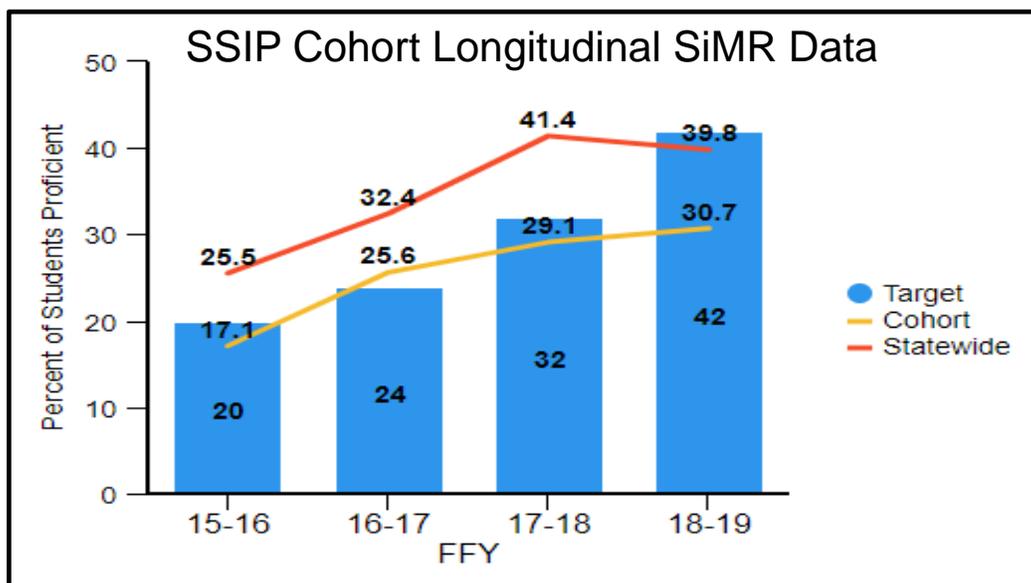


Figure 2. SSIP Cohort Longitudinal SiMR Data

Although the SSIP cohort did not achieve the FFY 2018 target, OSE utilized several mechanisms to demonstrate impact of the SSIP efforts on student outcomes. Among some of the improvements noted in one or more of the cohort schools for students with learning disabilities are literacy benchmark

improvements, increase in appropriate behaviors, increase in percentage of instruction in the general education classroom, and increase in attendance rates.

B. Logic Model, Theory of Action, and Evaluation

Logic Model and Theory of Action

NYSED's Logic Model and Theory of Action (TOA) have not changed since the last reporting cycle despite the restructuring. As has always been the case, all SSIP work is focused on improving outcomes for students with learning disabilities by working to improve systems and instruction and providing professionals with highly effective PD on evidence-based practices, implementation science, effective data use, and capacity building to sustain the MTSS framework with fidelity. (see Appendix A SSIP Logic Model and Appendix B SSIP Theory of Action).

Evaluation

The purpose of the SSIP Evaluation is to collect and report data at all levels (State, regional, local) of NYSED's SSIP project to inform ongoing program implementation and to assess outcomes. This includes collecting information on the activities of the Partnership specialists working in TZ schools and the activities and perspectives of those participating schools and districts, with the goal of providing a description of MTSS as it's being implemented (see Appendix E SSIP Phase III – Year 4 Evaluation Plan).

During the FFY 2018 evaluation process, the SSIP logic model and TOA were reviewed first. The five evaluation questions in Table 3 below were then developed to guide the data collection efforts for this project. Data sources with source title, method, timing, and frequency were defined for each question.

Table 3. SSIP Evaluation Questions and Data Sources

Evaluation Question	Data Sources
1. For students classified as students with learning disabilities in SSIP schools (grades 3-5), to what extent are proficiency scores and supporting activities showing improved literacy outcomes? [<i>Outcome</i>]	<p>Source Title: <i>New York State English Language Arts Assessment</i> Method: Administered by schools starting in grade 3 Timing: Spring Frequency: Annually</p> <p>Source Title: <i>SSIP Data Reporting Template</i> Method: Data queries by schools to populate template with aggregated and disaggregated counts Timing: Varies by specific outcome Frequency: Beginning of school year, February, and end of school year</p>
2. To what extent are the components of support plans being implemented, and implemented well? [<i>Outcome</i>]	<p>Source Title: <i>Support Plan Review</i> Method: Document review of support plans for each SSIP school Timing: Following winter resource planning meeting, to inform our support for teams moving into the spring Frequency: To be determined</p>
3. To what extent have school-wide systems level, classroom practice level, and the student level been positively impacted by MTSS implementation? [<i>Process, Outcome</i>]	<p>Source Title: <i>MTSS Survey</i> Method: Survey of Regional Teams and summaries of SSIP work by Specialist Timing: January Frequency: To be determined</p>
4. To what extent are SSIP schools able to implement the NYSED MTSS Model with fidelity? [<i>Process</i>]	<p>Source Title: <i>MTSS Self-Assessment</i> Method: Regional Teams work with the school based MTSS Leadership Team in a facilitated discussion Timing: Beginning and end of school year Frequency: To be determined</p>
5. What infrastructure is in place to support the implementation and sustainability of MTSS in the schools? [<i>Process, Outcome</i>]	<p>Source Title: <i>MTSS Survey</i> Method: Survey of Regional Teams and summaries of SSIP work by Specialist Timing: January Frequency: To be determined</p>

As part of the Partnership's continuous improvement process, the evaluator will review and analyze data for FFY 2018 as compared to FFY 2017 to determine if adjustments to core SSIP documents (Logic Model, TOA, Evaluation Plan) are needed for the upcoming academic year.

III. Progress Toward Achieving Intended Improvements

A. Infrastructure Improvements and Impact on SSIP

Infrastructure Improvements and impact on SSIP are directly aligned to the SSIP TOA.

- **Collaboration and Governance**

- Engages Stakeholders
 - Multiple stakeholder engagement activities have taken place during FFY 2018 surrounding SSIP activities (See Section II. D and Section III C for details).
- Aligns TA resources / Training and TA
 - OSE funds five TAPs from IHEs with content expertise that aligns with OSE priority areas (Academics, Behavior, Data, Equity, and Transition). These partners ensure that specialists are provided with high-quality, highly effective PD and coaching to enable them to support MTSS implementation and school improvement.
- Engages Families and Community Members
 - Under the Partnership, the role of the FACE Centers has evolved from simply supporting families and communities to a focus on building capacity of educational organizations to build relationships and support families, as well as to develop relationships with their communities. This is a crucial component that has been missing in the SSIP work until now. "Family engagement is one of the most powerful predictors of a child's development and academic success. When schools, families and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more". (Henderson T. A., & Mapp, L. K., (2002) A New Wave of Evidence).
- Establish MTSS School-Level Teams
 - Under previous structures, MTSS efforts in MTSS schools were supported primarily by one or two specialists. The Partnership has established multi-disciplinary teams that are deployed to SSIP schools based on MTSS implementation needs.
 - Each SSIP school has either an integrated MTSS implementation team or separate MTSS-B (behavior) and MTSS-A (academics) teams that meet regularly to collaborate.

- **Support for Struggling Schools**

- The TAPs will provide additional analysis and problem solving to increase targeted support and resources tailored to specific needs.
- Building on the successes of the TZ visits, opportunities will be provided for SSIP districts and schools to come together and develop communities of practice surrounding MTSS implementation.
- Development of the NYSED MTSS framework will include cultural and linguistic practices.

- **Evaluation**

- A new outside evaluator is in place who has assumed responsibility for the SSIP evaluation component and has utilized the evaluation questions established by predecessor.
- Evaluation continues to focus on student outcomes, support plans, and the MTSS Self-Assessment, as well as the development of a structured interview to inform PD needs, and the development of a district-level MTSS implementation plan.

B. Coherent Improvement Strategies Update

The NYSED SSIP Phase III Improvement Plan, developed in 2018 (see Appendix C OSE Educational Partnership Organizational Structure), provides OSE with guidance as it continues its

implementation of MTSS. This improvement plan directly aligns with the TOA and Logic Model and forms the basis of the NYSED SSIP Phase III – Year 4 Evaluation Plan (see Appendix E SSIP Phase III – Year 4 Evaluation Plan). The SSIP Phase III Improvement Plan is organized by five improvement strategies that comprise the SSIP (see Appendix D SSIP Phase III Improvement Plan):

- **Improvement Strategy I:** Organizational Capacity Building
- **Improvement Strategy II:** Program and Resource Development
- **Improvement Strategy III:** Professional Development, TA and Coaching
- **Improvement Strategy IV:** Needs Assessment, Improvement Planning and Monitoring
- **Improvement Strategy V:** State Education Agency (SEA) and Local Education Agency (LEA) Partnership and Community Engagement

Improvement Strategy I: Organizational Capacity Building

(Aligned to TOA Strand of Action -Collaboration and Governance, Leadership)

Completed - Revisions to Cascade of Teams due to Restructuring

The Partnership includes new structures that were developed to provide oversight, management, and implementation of MTSS. Using structures established through the SSIP and as recommended by the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) and State Implementation and Scaling up Evidenced Based Practices (SISEP), a new cascade of teams was developed to lead, direct, oversee, and implement the Partnership (see Figure 1 for Cascade and Appendix F Partnership Cascade Comparison and Descriptions).

Completed – Clearly Articulated Vision, Mission and Values

When developing the Partnership, OSE significantly changed, systematically, how support would be provided to the field. To articulate the new way of doing business, OSE defined how the Partnership differentiates itself from the previous network. Through stakeholder engagement the following mission statement was developed:

The OSE Educational Partnership will support and empower educational organizations and families to improve equity, access, opportunities and outcomes for all students with disabilities.

To guide the work of all involved in the Partnership, the PIT adopted NYSED’s SSIP MTSS model (see Appendix G NYSED’s SSIP MTSS Model), values and guiding principles to ensure a common understanding, as well as to provide guidance for all program decisions, and to promote consistency, integrity, and sustainability.

1. An Unwavering Focus on Student Growth

All educational decision-making is driven by ambitious student performance goals.

2. Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness and Equity

All students succeed when they have access to what they need when they need it. Districts and schools are organized in a way that recognizes, respects and reflects the strengths of each student’s culture, social identity and community.

3. Engaged Stakeholders

The voices of the student, family, community, and school personnel (i.e. all faculty and staff) are actively solicited and used in decision making. All stakeholders are responsible and accountable for the decisions made.

4. **A Whole-Child/Whole-School Approach**

Educators focus on supporting each student’s cognitive, academic, physical, behavioral, and social emotional development through systems of support that are aligned and integrated. All school personnel aim to educate and support children to be healthy, safe, engaged, and challenged, and receive ongoing PD to enable them to do this.

5. **Proactive Data-Based Problem-Solving**

Prevention is more effective than intervention. Teachers and school leaders believe that success and failure in student learning is about the actions of teachers and school leaders. They adjust practices and policies to create strong conditions for student success by relying on data-based decision-making and the use of evidence-based practices.

6. **Continuous Quality Improvement**

All support provides a structure that facilitates continuous quality improvement, systems change, and sustainability of those efforts.

7. **Full Access for All Students**

MTSS is for all students. All students have access to and participate in the general education curriculum to meet State Learning Standards. Not every student who receives intensive supports is identified as a student with a disability, and not every student identified with a disability needs intensive supports.

These are the threads that are braided together to inform all aspects of the Partnership and keep the network on a collaborative path.

Completed – Specialized Workgroup to assimilate SSIP work into Partnership and to inform the design of the Statewide MTSS model

Partnership Implementation Team (PIT) (TAPs, OSE, FACE Center representation, SCF)

The work of the SSIP (MTSS implementation) has been a thread in every conversation during the design and implementation of the OSE Partnership. To ensure that MTSS is a lens through which the work of the Partnership is focused, the PIT decided to merge the SIDT with the newly established MTSS workgroup. This workgroup consists of content experts from the TAPs for Academics, Behavior, Data, and Equity who bring their expertise to study the current state of MTSS within the SSIP schools, as well as use the learnings from FFY 2018 to determine how MTSS implementation works, when, for whom and under what sets of circumstances. This information will be used to develop a clear and explicit plan for development and implementation of a Statewide framework for MTSS.

Completed – Created three Regional Teams to support MTSS implementation at SSIP schools.

Regional Teams under the Partnership will provide SSIP schools with a multidisciplinary team based on the individual needs of the district and school. Regional Team members will have the most up to date research-based and evidence-based practices (EBPs), tools, and resources from the five TAPs. Additionally, they will provide information and training in the areas of literacy, behavior, transition, and equity for students from early childhood through high school.

Completed – Development of continuous improvement plans to assist Regional Teams and School teams build capacity.

Each Regional Team developed, in collaboration with their SSIP school implementation team, a strategic plan or Support Plan. The Support Plan is used for planning work and activity tracking. For the SSIP schools, teams utilized a data collection workbook which outlined specific SSIP related goals with data points and a schedule to drive work and to ensure goals stated in evaluation plan were met.

Improvement Strategy II: Program and Resource Development

(Aligned to TOA Strand of Action – Collaboration and Governance)

Continuous – Identify and define Capstone EBPs to support Universal (Tier 1), Supplemental (Tier 2), and Intensive Interventions for Literacy and Behavior

MTSS is a framework or a “way of doing business” which utilizes high quality evidence-based instruction, intervention, and assessment practices to ensure that every student receives the appropriate level of support to be successful. It helps districts and schools to organize resources through the alignment of academic standards and behavioral expectations, implemented with fidelity and sustained over time, in order to accelerate the performance of every student to achieve and/or exceed proficiency (www.cde.state.co.us/mtss/whatismtss). The following is a menu of interventions being used by the Partnership to support SSIP schools:

Universal (Tier 1) EBPs include, but are not limited to:

- SDI
- Universal Design for Learning
- Formative Assessments to Evaluate Effectiveness of Instruction and Supports
- Peer Review/feedback
- Explicitly Stated Positive Behavior Expectations

Supplemental (Tier 2) EBP in use within the TZ include, but are not limited to:

- Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI)
- Self-Regulation Strategies
- Self-monitoring Strategies
- Check in – Check out (CICO)
- Flexible Groupings Based Upon Screenings/Progress Monitoring
- Immediate affirmative and corrective feedback
- Regular progress monitoring

Intensive (Tier 3) EBP in use within the TZ include, but are not limited to:

- Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA)
- Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIP)

In Development – Web-based MTSS Resource Library to store and share resources.

Within the Partnership, a primary role of the TAP for Data is to create an evaluation program and online DMS to ensure that data-based decision-making is facilitated at all levels of implementation. The Partnership DMS will not only maintain data for the SSIP but will also have a mechanism to establish a library of trainings, tools, and resources for all Partnership staff implementing MTSS (see Appendix H Partnership DMS Details).

Improvement Strategy III: PD, TA and Coaching

(Aligned to TOA Strand of Action – Training and TA, and Support for Struggling Schools)

In Progress – Developed a well-defined model of Professional Learning that includes Professional Development, Coaching, and Technical Assistance

To ensure the production of high-quality materials that are based on adult learning principles, and delivery of consistent messages and practices, a Curriculum and Materials Development Workgroup has been established. This group's role and responsibility is to make recommendations to the PIT on the policies, procedures, and protocols for high-quality PD, coaching, and TA. Additionally, this workgroup oversees the development and review of PD materials and assists in assigning members to develop and review materials within sub-workgroups.

To date, this workgroup has completed the following:

- Defined clearly and explicitly the meaning of professional learning (PD, coaching, and TA)
- Defined clearly and explicitly what is meant by “high quality” and produced criteria/indicators for developers to ensure the creation of high-quality professional learning
- Adopted the NIRN Coaching Practice Profile
- Identified and adopted research-based fidelity tools and resources to be used when coaching and providing TA
- Established processes and protocols as identified by the TAPs to evaluate effectiveness and impact of professional learning
- Established a process/review schedule for all released professional learning materials to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness

Ongoing – Provision of ongoing professional development for Regional Teams as they work with SSIP Schools.

Under the constructs of the Partnership there are two levels of PD and TA:

- TAPs to the Partnership Regional Teams, and
- Regional Teams to educational organizations and parents and families.

To date, there have been three types of professional learning provided virtually to RPCs and FACE Centers within the TZ and across NYS:

1. **Training** – These are formal presentations, generally ninety minutes long. These training activities are assigned facilitators/hosts. The training is recorded, live closed captions are available, the audience is muted unless the presenter asks specifically for open microphone, and materials and the archive link will be made available on the DMS website. Additionally, Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) credit is available. These trainings are evaluated by participant surveys.
2. **Hangouts** – These are informal, one-hour events. There are assigned facilitators/hosts and audience participation is encouraged. However, live closed captions are not available. These may include breakout discussion groups. These events are not recorded, not archived, and no CTLE credit is available. Hangouts are evaluated by participant surveys.
3. **DMS webinars** – These are formal presentations, sixty or ninety minutes long. These webinars are facilitated by the TAP for Data to provide stakeholders with updates and training on the DMS features and tools. These webinars are evaluated by participant surveys.

Table 4 (*Professional Learning to RPCs and FACE Centers*) below illustrates the breadth and depth of professional learning delivered to date. This includes the date, title of session, TAP presenter(s) and number of attendees for each professional learning activity (see Appendix I Partnership Professional Learning Details). At the completion of each listed session, a single evaluation survey was conducted that asks participants about delivery, knowledge gained, how content applies to their work, and any future training needs. The results are used as a continuous improvement effort to inform the presenter(s) of the effectiveness of the event.

Table 4. Professional Learning Delivered to RPCs and FACE Centers in FFY 2018

Training		
Date	Title	Participants
11/15/2019	Completing a Support Plan Part 1 – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, and Timely (S.M.A.R.T.) Goals and Goal Attainment Scaling (TAPs for Data, Transition, and Behavior)	140
11/26/2019	Completing a Support Plan Part 2 – Overview of the Comprehensive Organizational Assessment (COA) (TAP for Data)	124
12/6/2019	Managing Organizational Change and the OSE Partnership (TAPs for Data, Academics, and Behavior)	144
12/6/2019	Follow-up webinar on: Completing a Support Plan (Part 1): S.M.A.R.T. Goals and Goal Attainment Scaling (TAPs for Data, Transition, Equity, and Behavior)	85
2/26/2020	Introduction to TAP for Transition (TAP for Transition)	91
Hangouts		
Date	Title	Participants
11/15/2019	Updates on Evidence-Based Practices and Predictors (TAP for Transition)	99
11/26/2019	Self-determination and Transition (TAP for Transition)	62
12/13/2019	Follow up to Completing a Support Plan 2 and Managing Systems Change (TAP for Data)	84
2/12/2020	Transition in the IEP and Indicator 13 Vetted Training Packages (TAP for Transition)	68
2/13/2020	Partnership FAQs (TAP for Data)	50
2/26/2020	Completing a Support Plan Part 3: Case Studies (TAP for Data)	98
DMS Webinars		
Date	Title	Participants
12/20/2019	OSE Educational Partnership DMS Launch (TAP for Data)	114
2/21/2020	DMS Liaisons Training (TAP for Data)	59

☑ *Ongoing – Provision of continuous targeted technical assistance and coaching for SSIP School implementation Teams*

Support to Educational Organizations in TZ and Across NYS

A comprehensive, multidisciplinary Regional Team, comprised of specialists from an RPC, an EC FACE Center, and a SA FACE Center, are deployed to provide educational organizations, within their region, with tiered levels of support based upon individual organizational needs. The PD and TA provided by the Partnership is focused on systems change through the provision of more efficient and streamlined services to support implementation of the federal IDEA and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to aid schools in improving equity, access and opportunities for all students.

Utilizing this tiered approach, Regional Teams provide a combination of discipline-specific regional offerings, targeted skills and support groups, and intensive support. See below for more information on each.

- a) **Regional Offerings:** Available to any interested party (i.e., families, school/district staff, community groups, etc.).
 - Regional offerings are resources or events that provide background information, set a foundation for future learning and/or support districts in the exploration and adoption of useable innovations and evidence-based practices. They include in-person trainings, downloadable materials and trainings, recorded webinars, and posted materials.
- b) **Targeted Skills/Support Groups:** PD and TA to groups around a common topic (participants can include families, school/district staff, community groups, etc.).
 - Targeted skills groups support districts in further developing a targeted area through a cohort model. They are small group, in-person and/or virtual meetings to build awareness, learn or develop new skills and problem solve around a specific topic. There are prerequisites to invitation to these groups.
- c) **Intensive Support:** Build capacity to promote meaningful family involvement within the educational system with priority educational organizations.
 - Intensive support is directed systems change work utilizing a team approach through targeted professional development and technical assistance. It includes a combination of regional learning, targeted skills groups, and embedded team technical assistance as needs indicate. Regional Teams interface with priority educational organizations to discuss needs, strategize possible approaches, support options, and develop a plan for intervention.

PD topics provided to schools within the TZ include, but are not limited to:

Instruction

- *EDI*
- *SDI*
- *Identifying and Intensifying Intervention: What to Do and How to Do it*
- *National Reading Panel: Implications for Instruction*

Behavior

- *Function Based Thinking in Preschool*
- *Classroom Management Training*
- *FBA/BIP/Progress Monitoring*
- *Tier 2 - Tiered Fidelity (TFI) Inventory Aligned*

Equity

- *Culturally Responsive Sustained Resources*

Family Engagement

- *Family Engagement – Communication and Culture*

Improvement Strategy IV: Needs Assessment, Improvement Planning and Monitoring
(Aligned to TOA Strands of Action – Collaboration and Governance, and Evaluation)

Ongoing – Monitoring for effectiveness

As the current fidelity tool (the SSIP MTSS School-level Self-Assessment) has not been measured to ensure validity and reliability, the MTSS workgroup is conducting a literature/research review to identify research-based fidelity tools in the areas of reading and behavior. The workgroup is exploring Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLISI) Reading TFI as well as the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) TFI and Benchmarks of Quality (BOQ) as methods for measuring fidelity of implementation.

Collaboration and communication are critical to the success of the work of the SSIP. Therefore, Associates from the PDSS unit, who are responsible for the programmatic aspects and implementation of the project, and Associates from SEQA units who monitor educational organizations across the State act as liaisons to specific regions of the State to ensure practice to policy feedback loops. These liaisons meet regularly with each other and the Regional Teams who are directly supporting the schools in the TZ. Additionally, staff from the PDSS unit meet monthly with other units in OSE to share information, as well as to answer any specific questions regarding the workings of the Partnership.

Ongoing – Collect Comprehensive Baseline Data at the Site Level and Update Improvement Plans, use data to assess needs, plan, and monitor progress.

As a result of stakeholder engagement (See Section III.C – Stakeholder Engagement in Implementation), it was determined that consistent data points as well as consistent collection tools were necessary to further show growth to impact the SiMR. To operationalize this, the SIDT identified specific measurable goals, specific data to collect, research-based tools to collect, method of disaggregation, as well as a timeline for collection. Based on these recommendations, a data collection workbook was developed. The workbook provides Regional Teams with specific data points, consistent collection methods, and recommended research-based tools to capture all data related to SSIP specific goals. To ensure reliability and validity of recommended tools, expectations were set by OSE that the tools specialists utilized were not to be altered in any way, but how specialists facilitated the data collection was determined by each Regional Team. TZ Regional Teams were provided with clear deadlines in which to submit data (see Section IV B Collection System – Data Limitations for challenges and barriers).

Improvement Strategy V: State Education Agency (SEA) - Local Education Agency (LEA) Partnership and Community Engagement
(Aligned to TOA Strand of Action – Collaboration and Governance, and Leadership)

Ongoing – Develop Communities of Practice

As stated earlier in the report, one model of professional learning is targeted skills/support groups to support districts in further developing a targeted area through a cohort model. In some regions, Regional Teams are establishing groups across the SSIP districts, while others are bringing groups together within the district. Topics of this work include:

- Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) Coaching and support
- Data informed Problem Solving (MTSS)
- EDI/SDI Coaching
- Book Studies for Cultural Responsiveness
- Teaching Assistance/Paraprofessional roles and responsibilities

C. Fidelity Measures

NYSED’s SSIP MTSS Model and MTSS School-level Self-assessment - Fidelity

The NYSED SSIP School-Level MTSS Self-Assessment (self-assessment) was designed with two purposes: 1) to assist individual schools in evaluating their current level of tiered systems of support (academic, behavioral, and social-emotional) and implementation; and 2) to formulate an MTSS Implementation Action Plan that will address core component indicators that require improvement or development.

The NYSED’s SSIP MTSS Model consists of five core components with operational descriptions or criteria to provide implementers with guidelines to implement the model with fidelity (see Appendix G NYSED’s SSIP MTSS Model).

The Self-Assessment is aligned to the SSIP MTSS Model and addresses the five core components as indicated below:

1. Team Approach
2. Leadership Support
3. Engaged Stakeholders
4. Continuum of Instruction and Intervention
5. Data Driven Problem Solving

Each core component has a composite score based on how each defining feature is scored. The MTSS School-Level Self-Assessment uses the following scale (see Organization and Scoring section in Appendix J SSIP School-Level MTSS Self-Assessment):

- 3 – all criteria are currently in place
- 2 – 50 percent to 99percent of criteria are currently in place
- 1 – 1 percent to 49 percent of criteria are currently in place
- 0 – no criteria are in place

To date, there have been two administrations of the tool (Fall 2018 and Spring 2019) to indicate impact of support (PD, coaching, and TA) on the MTSS implementation. Table 1 and Figure 2 clearly shows that from initial efforts, growth is occurring in each of the core component categories. The smallest growth was in Team Approach and the largest growth was in Engaged Stakeholders.

Table 5. Average scores on each MTSS Self-assessment Domain for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 for all Transformation Zone schools

MTSS Self-Assessment Domains	Fall 2018	Spring 2019
I. Team Approach	1.3	1.5
II. Leadership Support	0.5	0.9
III. Engaged Stakeholders	0.4	1.0
IV. Continuum of Instruction and Intervention	1.4	1.7
V. Data Driven Problem Solving	1.0	1.3

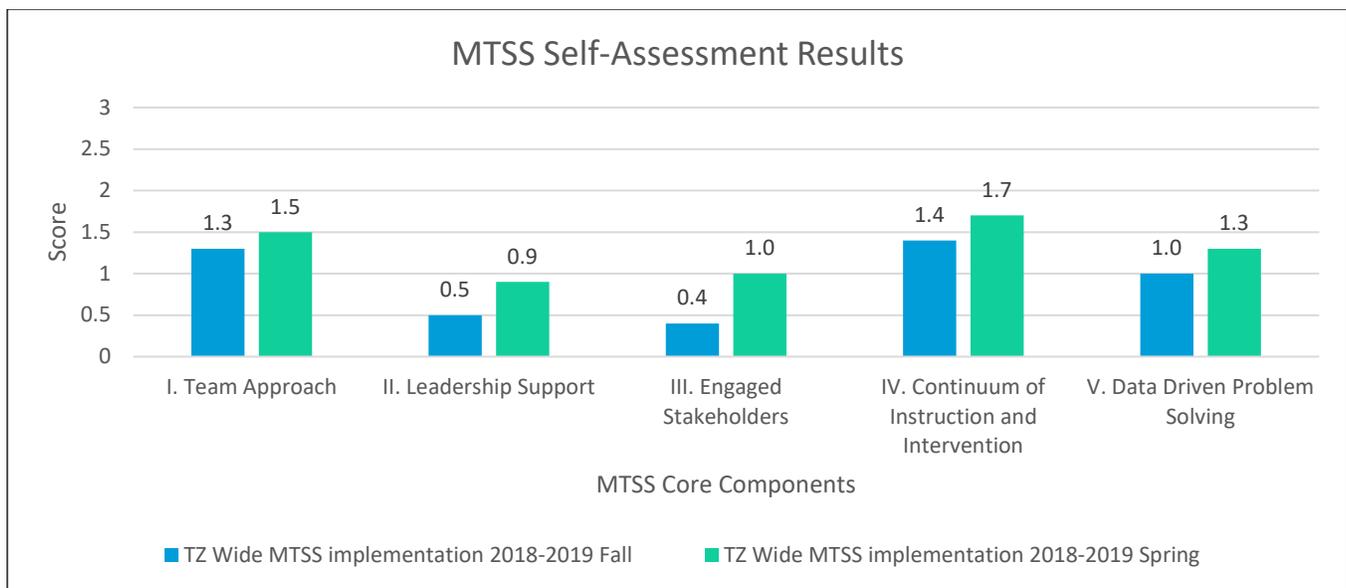


Figure 3. Average scores on each MTSS Self-assessment Domain for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 for all Transformation Zone schools

Data Collection Schedule

OSE is currently developing the DMS for student-level data, which will become operational in May 2020. Student-level data collection for the SSIP has been a collaborative venture. The school-level implementation teams, with guidance and support from RPC Regional Team members, collect, aggregate and disaggregate academic (literacy focused) and behavior data (e.g., attendance, referrals, and suspension) used for data-based problem solving in making instructional decisions for all students. This data is reported quarterly to OSE by the Regional Team members working in the SSIP schools. Results from the fall and winter collections can be found in section III (Data on Implementation and Outcomes) of this report.

D. Barriers to Implementation

During initial implementation, some issues came to light during stakeholder engagement activities (PIT, RLT) and feedback from OSE’s contracted partners (e.g., TAPs, RPC, FACE Centers) during the installment of the Partnership that have informed continuous improvement efforts in the work of the SSIP.

- Contracts for the majority of the previous networks ended June 30, 2019, which temporarily suspended implementation support to current SSIP schools until the new contracts were established in October 2019.
 - **Solution:** Contract awardees hired staff with established relationships with SSIP sites and could build on work conducted during FFY 2018.
- Multiple Initiatives in place with other State agencies and between NYSED offices
 - **Solution:** Conscious efforts being made across NYSED to ensure cross-office alignment and collaboration.
- Turnover of district and school leadership in some SSIP schools.
 - **Solution:** Using a multi-disciplinary team to assist in implementation efforts, specialists will ensure sustainability capacity activities are in place to ensure consistency and fidelity as MTSS implementation continues.

- Consistent understanding and implementation of the MTSS Model
 - **Solution:** alignment of mission, values and principles from SSIP MTSS model and Partnership to establish common understanding.

E. Stakeholder Engagement in Implementation

Across the life span of the SSIP, OSEP has strongly indicated the need for states to engage with stakeholders for input on changes or revisions to the SSIP and how to drive improvement in student outcomes. In FFY 2018, OSE brought together various stakeholder groups to assess the impact and effectiveness of SSIP activities and MTSS implementation and offer recommendations. These stakeholder engagements have resulted in revisions to the implementation of the SSIP this past year.

Transformation Zone Visits

In the Spring of 2019 (March 21, May 9, and May 17), OSE staff traveled to each region of the TZ to meet with SSIP districts and schools to learn first-hand about the accomplishments and challenges the schools faced as they implement MTSS. One of the challenges expressed was the issue of multiple initiatives and the burden it places on districts. An accomplishment expressed by another school was the administrative buy-in at the highest level of the district.

These visits enabled OSE to gather stakeholder feedback on the MTSS implementation process and consider any necessary revisions to the work moving forward. School leaders expressed that implementing MTSS had shifted school culture, reenergized teachers, impacted instruction, aligned State learning standards to individualized education program (IEP) goals, enabled greater data-based decisions to guide instruction, and increased student learning (see Appendix K Transformation Zone Visits Summary). As a result of the information garnered from these visits, the following changes have occurred:

- OSE is increasing its collaboration with NYSED’s Office of Accountability to address the issue of multiple initiatives.
- There is now a focus on involvement at the district level, which includes active participation and buy-in from district leadership.

2020 Winter Regional Level Team (RLT) Meetings (January 22, 2020 through February 19, 2020)

NYSED’s commitment to improving academic outcomes for all students across the State has resulted in a commitment to the development of a Statewide MTSS framework. To garner feedback to inform this initiative, OSE asked those who support district and school implementation efforts of various MTSS frameworks (RtI, PBIS, MTSS-A, MTSS-B) about their readiness to support educational organizations in MTSS implementation. OSE enlisted the TAPs for Equity, Academics and Behavior to collaboratively develop an online survey to be completed by the Partnership RLTs. The survey contained questions on the five domains of the SSIP MTSS model: leadership, tiers of differentiated instruction and support, data-based decision-making, teams, and stakeholder engagement. The respondents used a 5-point Likert-type scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) to indicate their readiness to support and guide MTSS implementation activities.

During each RLT meeting in regions outside of the TZ, TAP associates provided Partnership participants with a foundational presentation on MTSS to ground participants in a common understanding and vocabulary. During RLT meetings in the TZ regions, the RPCs were asked to provide an update on

each SSIP school in their region. Following the presentation, RLT members (see Figure 2. The OSE Educational Partnership Organizational Structure), were asked to complete the online survey. Respondents were asked 56 questions about readiness to support educational organizations and their constituencies in MTSS implementation across the domains of leadership support, continuum of instruction and intervention, engaged stakeholders, data-driven practices at the student-level, data-driven practices at the systems-level, and team approach, which were the same areas assessed with the MTSS Self-Assessment. A total of 204 surveys were received from all Partnership staff across all regions of the State. The results of the survey will be used to inform the proposed Statewide MTSS model.

Results:

During the winter RLT meetings, Partnership staff reflected and reported on their own capacity to support the educational organizations within their respective regions in implementing various aspects of MTSS.

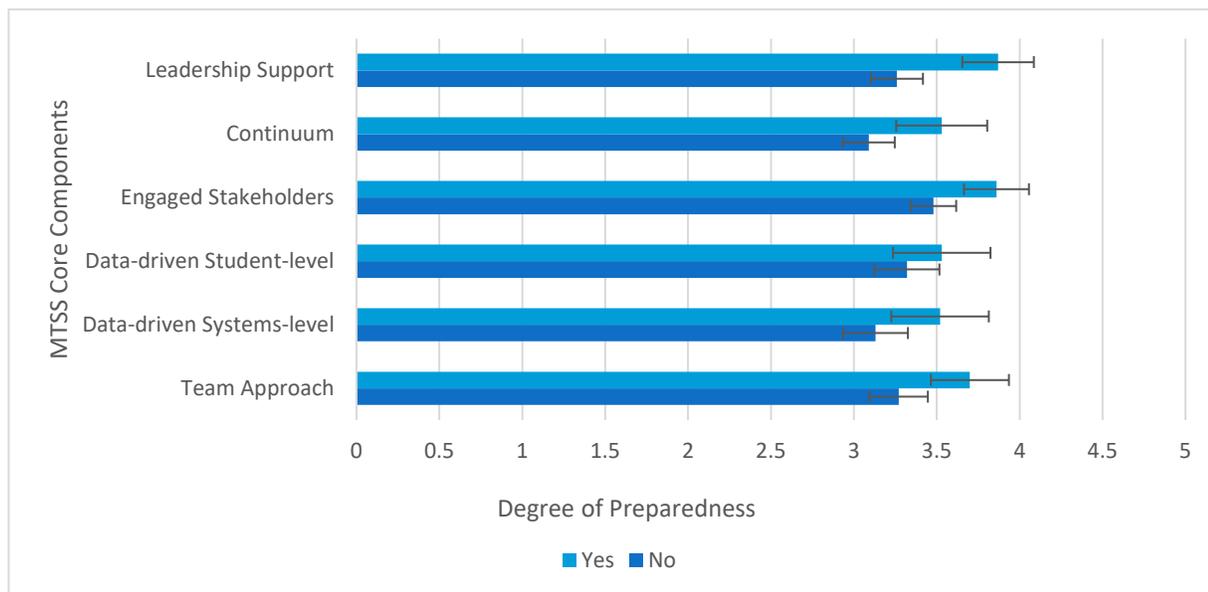


Figure 4. Readiness to Support Educational Organizations Across Domains and by Experience in SSIP Schools. Continuum refers to continuum of instruction and interventions. ‘Yes’ refers to respondents with SSIP school experience, and ‘No’ refers to respondents without experience.

These themes along with the responses on the close-ended questions above will be used to inform PD plans for the entire Partnership. All of the responses mentioned thus far focused on needs for training and coaching.

Family Engagement Survey

"Family engagement is one of the most powerful predictors of a child's development and academic success. When schools, families and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more". (Henderson T. A., & Mapp, L. K., (2002) A New Wave of Evidence). This is one of the core components of the NYSED SSIP MTSS model: "for MTSS to be implemented with fidelity, family and community engagement should be established and maintained in a meaningful and culturally respectful way that is responsive to the needs of all students and families" (see Appendix G NYSED’s SSIP MTSS Model, pg. 15).

While currently in the process of developing a Statewide MTSS framework, OSE is eager to learn about parents' and families' understanding and perceptions of MTSS. An electronic survey was developed and shared with families by the FACE Centers.

Results:

Multiple avenues were utilized to disseminate the survey to families across the State. Using Google, the survey was sent electronically to various listservs that were established by the FACE Centers. In addition, the survey could be printed to enable families with limited access to technology to participate.

A total of 535 families, across the State, responded to the survey. The survey was intended to reach families with students across all grade levels. The largest group of families ($n = 49$), when asked what grade level their child was enrolled in, indicated 'Other' rather than a specific grade. The second and third largest groups were for Grade 2 ($n = 47$) and Grade 11 ($n = 43$), with the smallest group for Grade 3 ($n = 34$).

Families were asked about the type of supports (e.g., RtI, PBIS, MTSS) available in their child's school. When responses were grouped by school-level (elementary: K-6, middle: 6-8, and high school: 9-12), families responded 'not sure' more than half the time, except in elementary school; half responded they were unsure of support systems available for their child, 25 percent were aware of Response to Intervention (RTI), 18.9 percent were aware of PBIS, and 6.1 percent were aware of MTSS. These results clearly indicate that communication surrounding tiered supports is lacking and could be an indicator of capacity for schools to better engage with families.

Aside from scheduled meetings and events, and awareness of support programs, schools connect with students and their families in many ways. To better understand families' impressions of how schools support their children, the survey asked a series of questions regarding how schools are connecting with families. The most common response was 'Sometimes' on five questions about inclusion on decision-making, understanding material, the child being supported, helping students deal with emotions, and receiving helpful information.

The results of the survey will be used to inform the development of the Statewide MTSS framework and a needs assessment for EC/SA FACE Center PD Specialists as they increase their work in SSIP districts and schools.

IV. Data on Implementation and Outcomes

Implementation is not a single event. "Implementation is "a specified set of activities designed to put into practice an activity or program of known dimensions. (Bierman et al., 2002)" These activities occur over time in stages that overlap and that are revisited as necessary dimensions (NIRN <https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/module-1/implementation-stages>). Research shows that implementing a well-constructed, well-defined, well-researched program can be expected to take two to four years (Bierman et al., 2002; Fixsen, Blase, Timbers, & Wolf, 2001; Panzano & Roth, 2006; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982; Solberg, Hroscikoski, Sperl-Hillen, O'Conner, & Crabtree, 2004)". The implementation of MTSS requires substantial changes in educators' practices, and evidence of these changes are illustrated in the data presented below.

A. SSIP District and School Implementation Efforts, Results, and Impact

As indicated earlier in this report, multiple measures were utilized to determine impact of support provided to SSIP schools as well as effect of implementation activities. The data included below provides a more granular view of the impact/effect of the implementation efforts within the TZ.

Assessing impact will enable Regional Teams and implementers to determine how well their efforts affect students. This, in turn, will assist OSE in adjusting the MTSS Model and create a better implementation plan for consideration for scale-up.

Literacy:

Literacy benchmark assessments were completed in the SSIP schools for students in grades 3 through 5 across the TZ in Fall of 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019 and Winter 2020. The specific tool to collect benchmark data varied by school, but all schools were able to categorize scores into two categories: 'At or Above Grade Level' (\geq Grade) and 'Below Grade Level' ($<$ Grade). The schools were able to further disaggregate counts and percentages of students in each category into groups (students who are not classified as having a disability, students with disabilities, and students with learning disabilities). Every student who was counted as a student with learning disabilities was also counted in the larger students with disabilities group. The number of students varied widely across the schools in the TZ, so the descriptive statistics are reported in percentages. The percentages sum to 100 percent across the two categories (at or above grade level, below grade level) for a single time point, like Fall 2018 or Winter 2020, in each row of the table.

Table 6. Percentages of literacy benchmark scores at or above (\geq) grade level or below ($<$) grade level over time for students in grades 3-5 across the Transformation Zone

	\geq Grade Level Fall 2018	\geq Grade Level Spring 2019	\geq Grade Level Fall 2019	\geq Grade Level Winter 2020	$<$ Grade Level Fall 2018	$<$ Grade Level Spring 2019	$<$ Grade Level Fall 2019	$<$ Grade Level Winter 2020
Students not Classified	42.07%	44.26%	54.52%	44.90%	57.93%	55.74%	45.48%	55.10%
Students with Disabilities	11.79%	12.52%	13.07%	15.89%	88.21%	87.48%	86.93%	84.11%
Students with Learning Disabilities	5.04%	8.82%	10.78%	6.29%	94.96%	91.18%	89.22%	93.71%

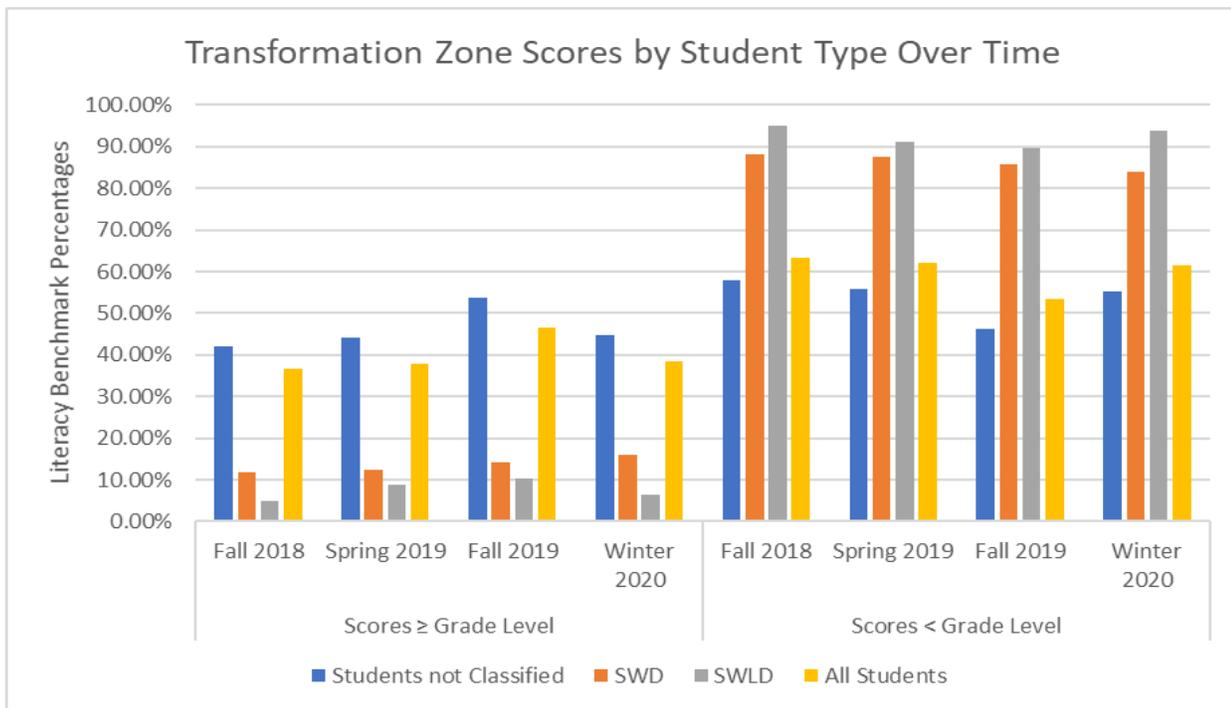


Figure 5. Percentages of literacy benchmark scores at or above (≥) grade level or below (<) grade level over time for students in grades 3-5 across the Transformation Zone

Across the TZ, percentages of scores at or above grade level were highest for students not classified with a disability. As shown in Table 4 and Figure 5 above, score percentages at or above grade levels were higher in the Fall 2019 than the previous school year; Winter 2020 percentages were higher across groups when compared to Fall 2018. The percentages of scores below grade level ranged from 84.11 percent to 88.21 percent for students with disabilities. For the smaller cohort of students with learning disabilities, scores were mostly below grade level at each time point. In the 2018-19 school year, percentages of students with learning disabilities scoring below grade level were higher in the Fall at 94.96 percent; the percentage of scores below grade level decreased to 89.22 percent in Fall 2019 and then increased again to 93.71 percent in Winter 2020. Most interesting is that the pattern of percentages over time were similar for students not classified with disabilities and students with learning disabilities (see Appendix L TZ Literacy Benchmarking Results).

Impact on Students and Practices (see Appendix M MTSS Implementation Impact):

As compared to baseline taken in Fall of FFY 2017:

- 7 out of 10 SSIP districts reported growth in reading, as measured by various benchmarking assessment (i.e., STAR, AIMSweb, Fountas and Pinnell, NWEA)
- 5 out of 10 SSIP districts reported an increase in appropriate behaviors, as measured by:
 - Students Achieving Expectations Tool (SAET);
 - a decrease in the average number of office discipline referrals per day for students with learning disabilities;
 - a decrease in suspensions;
 - an increase of BOQ scores; and
 - a decrease in restraints and critical incidents.
- 3 out of 10 SSIP districts reported improved practices, such as increase in:
 - peer feedback;
 - student monitoring of their own learning objectives;

- students engaged in differentiated tasks;
- students engaged in tiered learning tasks; and
- behavioral expectations taught and in explicit instruction as measured by classroom walk-throughs.
- 4 out of 10 SSIP districts reported an increase in the percent of students with learning disabilities receiving instruction 80 percent or more of the time in general education classrooms.
- 2 out of 10 SSIP districts reported increased attendance rates for students with learning disabilities

Across the TZ, more students scored at or above grade level on literacy benchmark tests in the 2019-20 school year as compared to the 2018-19 school year (see figure 5). An increase in appropriate behaviors was observed as shown by a decrease in office discipline referrals, suspensions, critical incidents, and restraint use. Positive learning behaviors also increased in the classroom and half of the districts reported higher rates of inclusion. Improvements in student outcomes paired with improvements observed in the MTSS Self-Assessment results indicate that progress is being made in the MTSS implementation projects in each school.

B. Stakeholder Engagement in Evaluation

MTSS Implementation Analysis – May 2019

The foundation of OSE's SSIP project is to utilize a continuous improvement process (Plan/Do/Study/Act) to plan, sequence and implement improvement efforts using data to evaluate effectiveness and impact. In May 2019, the SIDT members assembled in groups by role (outside evaluators, OSE SSIP team, Regional Integrated Intervention Teams (RIITs), and districts/schools) to reflect on the initial SSIP activities and MTSS implementation within the SSIP schools. The following process was used:

- Each group studied and considered the findings presented in the SSIP Phase III, Year 3 Report to:
 - identify barriers or challenges and provide feedback on how to move implementation forward;
 - determine if the processes were implemented as intended; and
 - apply what was learned during FFY 2017 to improve the process and the outcomes.
- Members considered the results and discussion points from the article Critical Incidents in the Scale-Up of State MTSS (Charlton et al., 2018).
- Members openly reflected on experiences and discussed and explored major themes they noticed.
- Members designed a structure to help converge and synthesize the yield from the analysis into recommendations.

Outcomes and Results of Analysis

- Gaps were noted in SSIP infrastructure (e.g., governance, installing consistent and routine communication and data collection systems).
- It was challenging, but important to balance the necessity of meeting schools where they are while achieving some standardization of expectations across the TZ.
- The SIDT needed to use feedback and usability testing insights to help further operationalize the MTSS Model and workgroup recommendations (i.e., develop and improve the usability of implementation tools, fidelity checklists, and self-assessments).

- Project stakeholders, including the SIDT, needed to clarify the set of practices to be used by RIITs (define the “treatment”/ coaching and support services) to help sharpen the focus on the specific professional development and support RIIT coaches need to do their work.
- Project Stakeholders/SIDT needed to clarify the set of classroom practices (“Capstone EBPs” - in the SSIP start with EBPs in universal instruction) to be used by teachers in SSIP schools that will impact students with learning disabilities.
- Many of these activities would help strengthen project evaluability starting in FFY 2019 of the SSIP.

MTSS Implementation Analysis – July 29 - 30, 2019

Based upon the outcomes from the analysis conducted at the May meetings, the MTSS workgroup convened in July to develop the action items necessary to complete prior to the start of FFY 2018. To ensure consistency across the TZ, the following actions were conducted:

Data:

- SSIP Outcomes Goals (aligned to the SSIP evaluation plan) were identified;
 - Aligned to each goal were the following:
 1. Specific performance indicator measures for each outcome.
 2. Data collection instruments and methods, which included recommended tools to measure progress and outcomes.
 3. Required analysis that identified how data for each outcome should be aggregated/ disaggregated.
 4. Collection schedule with due dates in which data would need to be reported to OSE.
 5. Professional Development necessary to provide to SSIP districts/schools to ensure validity and reliability.
- The outcome goals and collection schedule have been prepopulated into the Partnership Resource Planning Guide which is being shared with the three regions of the TZ.

PD:

- Scope and sequence of suggested PD and activities aligned to implementation stages:
 - In FFY 2017 the SSIP MTSS implementation efforts focused on the school. Based on research and implementation science, real change occurs when there is buy-in at the district level. This ensures the infrastructure and systems necessary to implement a tiered system of support with fidelity. The group felt that the district level was where we needed to focus moving forward.
- Topics identified were:
 - District-Level Implementation Team
 - Data Systems and Structures
 - Evidence-Based Practices
 - Explicit Instruction and SDI
- Sub-workgroups were established to further develop these ideas and to identify slide decks, tools, and resources that could be used.

Partnership Expectation Document:

It was determined that a document outlining the expectations/responsibilities of district and school teams and Regional Team specialists needed to be developed to anchor the work and communicate

shared accountability. The need for this document is still necessary. The MTSS workgroup is finalizing details regarding scale up that includes, but is not limited to, steps for implementation, required training needs, length of training (hours, days, modules), delivery methods, etc. Once completed, this document will be developed and include the specific gives and gets for prospective districts and schools.

V. Data Quality Issues

A. Fidelity Measures

SSIP MTSS School-level Self-Assessment

To date there have been two administrations using this tool, and although data shows growth, the tool is cumbersome and lengthy to complete. Nevertheless, participating school leadership teams were not deterred by the number of items or administration length, and found the conversations fueled by the tool extremely useful.

As with the continuous improvement cycle, the SIDT reconvened to study the first administration, its results, as well as potential changes required. These suggestions and recommendations have been brought to and are under consideration by the Partnership MTSS workgroup. A literature review and crosswalk with other research-based fidelity tools (Reading TFI (MiBLISI) and TFI [PBIS]) is being conducted to ensure validity and reliability. Once reviewed, the group will agree to adopt well known fidelity tools and develop guidance on administration and data collection, adapt well known fidelity tools to fit OSE's MTSS model, and/or abandon the SSIP MTSS School-level Self-Assessment.

B. Collection Systems – Data Limitations

NYSED does not prescribe or require specific instruments to be implemented for collection of student-level data (i.e., screening, benchmark academic, behavior); this is a local decision. Regional Specialists were directed to leverage existing assets of each school to ensure efficiency and to not exceed capacity of district and school resources.

As mentioned earlier in this report, a data collection workbook and collection schedule were provided to Regional Teams supporting SSIP schools to ensure consistency of data points, disaggregation methods, and reliable tools. Nevertheless, many challenges arose indicating that data systems and structures are lacking across the 14 schools. Some common themes emerged:

- Even within the same district, schools are using different tools to gather and report data (AIMSweb, DIBELS, Fountas and Pinnell, etc.).
- Some schools/districts are further ahead with how they share data at a glance to drive decision making.
- Three (3) out of 14 schools in the TZ do not have universal screeners for behavior. Some specialists providing embedded support in this area need additional support regarding systems available to align to the current systems already in practice in SSIP schools.
- A district/school level PD package has been developed by the TAP for Academics to provide education professionals with information and assistance in the identification of research-based tools, how to best select and use tools, and how to use data.
- The inability to obtain disaggregated attendance, late arrival, office discipline referrals, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension data from most of the schools.

Region 2 provided the least amount of mid-year information for this report, largely due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in that area of New York State. Fall 2019 literacy benchmark data was available from District C but not for Winter 2020. Districts D and E were able to provide attendance data disaggregated by race and ethnicity but no literacy information.

C. Improvement Measures Related to Data Quality

- Installation of the DMS to provide the Partnership and its stakeholders with an electronic method for collecting data that enables ease of gathering, analysis, and reporting to enable midcourse corrections utilizing the cycle of continued improvement (see Appendix G NYSED’s SSIP MTSS Model).
- Development of MTSS professional learning modules that will assist new cohorts as they begin their implementation journey. Modules will include but are not limited to:
 - district-level implementation teams’ role and responsibility (to ensure the infrastructure and systems necessary to implement a tiered system of support with fidelity);
 - data systems and structures (to help district and school leaders establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use that can inform decisions that impact teaching and learning, and ultimately improve the outcomes for all students.);
 - evidence-based practices;
 - explicit instruction; and
 - SDI.

VI. Sustainability and Scale-Up

A. Sustainability Considerations

Throughout the SSIP reporting cycle, OSE has been working to ensure the components of effective implementation (implementation stages, implementation drivers, and implementation teams) are in place within the TZ. All SSIP related efforts have been implemented using continuous improvement cycles (Plan/Do/Study/Act) and ongoing changes have been made to practices and the model to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. OSE has solicited, received, and responded to feedback from schools and districts regarding successes and barriers to implementation. This information was used to inform the decisions to improve the effectiveness of the model. Full implementation of the SSIP MTSS model and the development and implementation of fidelity measures are being planned and developed. Sustainability planning and activities should be considered at every stage of implementation.

The following activities will be implemented beginning with the FFY 2019 SSIP:

Engage with other Offices within NYSED to develop a Statewide MTSS Framework

MTSS should not be viewed as a special education initiative; it supports all students, including students with disabilities. It is a school-wide approach. Multiple initiatives and frameworks exist across NYSED, all with the same goal of improving student outcomes. Any possible duplication in efforts has the potential to fragment districts and schools with a multitude of initiatives, making it challenging for them to focus and sustain a long-term commitment that results in improved student outcomes. Therefore, NYSED is increasing its collaboration within its own offices to ensure that there is an alignment of efforts in districts that will benefit all students. NYSED’s initiative to develop a Statewide MTSS framework is an example of multi-disciplinary work involving the Partnership, that is breaking down previous

operational silos, streamlining initiatives, and aligning resources to provide targeted supports for students with disabilities and their families.

District Focus

To date, the implementation of the SSIP MTSS framework has primarily focused at the school level (establishing school-level implementation teams, using student level data, building instructional capacity, etc.); thus, missing the critical link to ensure structures and supports are in place to sustain the changes – district-level leadership involvement.

Districts provide the organizational structure to ensure that schools can implement an MTSS framework with fidelity and durability (McIntosh and Goodman 2016). District-level leadership teams build the infrastructure to support the implementation of the core components of MTSS. This infrastructure includes identifying and aligning key priorities, securing funding, resources, and time to implement those priorities, developing training and coaching structures to support personnel with implementation, and gathering data to evaluate the implementation and impact on the key priorities. District leadership provides vision, resources and support to schools. District-level involvement and commitment to MTSS can facilitate a school's implementation efforts and improve outcomes when districts provide financial support, engage in joint problem solving, and support long-term systems change (Handler et al., 2007).

To initiate this process, the Partnership MTSS workgroup will establish the critical resources and information required to participate in MTSS implementation at the district level. This will include an explicit roadmap of implementation with expectations for the allocation of district-wide leadership and resources.

Systemic Practice Shifts – to form a coherent, consistent approach

District leaders provide direction and vision for the practices and allocation of resources to enable the capacity and competency drivers to be in place. They can assist with:

- firming implementation drivers and aligning initiatives across siloed departments;
- maintaining priority of MTSS implementation and using resources efficiently; and
- leveraging support from region, state or other districts.

Applying elements of implementation science to building an infrastructure is foundational to MTSS implementation. Processes, protocols, and procedures need to be defined and refined within this framework. It is crucial for leaders to know the essential components of MTSS and implementation drivers, in addition to the school improvement process. With support from regional specialists, educational leaders can learn how to integrate MTSS in their school improvement process and how their leadership roles and decisions impact the implementation of sustainable systems.

Starting in FFY 2019, the RPC Systems Change Facilitators (SCFs) will support and provide guidance, including coaching to, district leaders to support their schools as they implement MTSS. SCFs will assist participating districts in development of a District Implementation Team. The goal is not to establish a new team, but to repurpose/restructure a current team. Members may include: one member of the executive leadership (e.g., superintendent, cabinet level administrator); a community agency representative; a teacher union representative; a family representative; a school level administrator; and at least one liaison to each school MTSS team.

Using implementation best practices for systemic change, SCF facilitates discussions and activities to guide districts in building capacity in mutually selected schools so that educators can make full use of effective MTSS practices with fidelity. These activities include but are not limited to:

- Establishes alignment and consistency of all aspects of the SSIP MTSS model across the district,

- Prioritizes goals and actions for the district.
- Ensures all aspects of the SSIP MTSS model are implemented with fidelity and are operating efficiently and effectively across the district.
- Ensures continual district wide improvement and sustainability within the implementation of the SSIP MTSS framework.

Communities of Practice - Professional collaboration

Through analysis of data, Partnership Regional Teams bring educational organizations with common needs/issues together to problem solve and share ideas and promising practices. The targeted skills/support groups enable participants to focus on a single, specific problem and concentrate the energies of all participants to resolve the problem in a cyclical process that creates immediate and actionable results. In FFY 2018, SSIP schools, within their specific TZ region, came together to celebrate successes, share challenges, and work together to problem solve regional barriers. The Regional Teams within the TZ will not only bring SSIP districts together, but school teams or sub-teams to problem solve, share expertise, and materials to build instructional capacity (EBPs).

In FFY 2019, targeted skills groups will be operating in each region that will provide support for schools engaging in MTSS implementation.

Promote Culturally Responsive Partnerships with Families

Regional Teams work to build the capacity of educational organizations to engage and partner with families in culturally responsive ways and support the development of community-wide family engagement approaches, the development of common resources (e.g., online resource information), and community-wide campaigns to support young children.

In FFY 2019, the TAP for Equity will assist in providing culturally responsive resources to the Partnership that were previously not available. FACE Centers will engage directly with educational organizations to build cultural competence when engaging with families and communities.

B. Scale-Up Considerations

Scaling Up MTSS Implementation

Currently, the SSIP MTSS framework is only being implemented in 14 schools in three regions of the State. “Students cannot benefit from education practices they do not experience. While this seems obvious (and it is), education systems have yet to develop the capacity to help all teachers learn to make good use of evidence-based practices that enhance the quality of education for all students.” (Fixsen, D., Blase, K., Horner, R., & Sugai, G. (2009)). [*Scaling-Up Evidence-Based Practices in Education*](#). Chapel Hill, NC: FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). OSE is currently strategizing how it will leverage current work in planning for the expansion and scale-up of MTSS across the State in FFY 2019.

FFY 2018 Scale-up Activities

- Stakeholders from the TZ came together to study implementation efforts and status in each SSIP school to determine strengths and gaps across implementation phases.
- SSIP MTSS model shared with newly established PIT and TAPs.

- PIT adopted mission, values and guiding principles outlined in SSIP MTSS model to align and guide work for the Partnership.
- Initial discussions occurred with other NYSED offices to conceive a statewide MTSS framework using the SSIP model as a guide to inform development.

FFY 2019 Scale-up and Sustainability Activities

- While SSIP implementation efforts have been focused on grades 3-5, some participating schools have included kindergarten through fifth grade as their cohort of classrooms. To be proactive, OSE will ensure that participating SSIP schools will include a continuum of support to include systems, practices and outcomes for students in kindergarten through grade 5.

VII. Plans for FFY 2019

A. MTSS Implementation Analysis

Develop a Structured Survey

A protocol is in development in the form of a structured survey, and its implementation (or use) will be facilitated by members of the Regional Team to measure the impact and extent that school-wide systems, classroom practices, and student outcomes have been positively impacted by MTSS implementation.

Purpose: Is what we are doing impacting student outcomes? Results will be used to inform development of MTSS implementation plan.

Objective:

The objective of the structured survey is to collect consistent and useful information about:

- design and implementation of MTSS in each school; and
- data on a minimum of 14 students with learning disabilities (one per SSIP school) where MTSS is being implemented and how MTSS impacts the student's educational experience.

Focus:

Questions will be grouped by themes from the MTSS Self-Assessment: team approach, leadership support, engaged stakeholders, continuum of instruction and intervention, and data-driven problem solving. Within each theme, questions about design and implementation of MTSS in the school will be asked first; questions about a specific student's educational experience will follow.

Source:

Structured interviews with close- and open-ended questions (approximately 14 students - one from each SSIP School) that link back to interventions (adult behaviors). Are students receiving what adults are learning to move the needle on student achievement?

Sample:

Data will be collected on each school that started MTSS implementation in the 2018-19 academic year or before. Selection criteria will be developed to identify eligible students within the SSIP schools to participate. Part of the criteria will be students with learning disabilities who receive services at Tier 3 for academics, behavior, or both. Once groups of students have been identified, students will be randomly selected from each SSIP school.

Method:

Structured survey facilitated by a member of the Regional Team

- The MTSS design and implementation questions will be asked of the School-based MTSS Leadership Team. These questions can be asked at a time separate from the interview that is focused on the student. Teachers and other staff that work directly with the student with learning disabilities who has been selected as the focus will be presented with the student-level questions. The structured interview will be conducted by a Systems Change Facilitator or a Specialist who has worked with the school. The TAP for Data will provide support on the administration of the measure.

Timing:

Once annually (Summative – impact data)

Frequency:

Spring (May/June)

B. SiMR Target for FFY 2019

On November 21, 2019, OSE staff and the NYSED Coordinator of Federal Reporting presented on the SPP and APR to the Commissioner's Advisory Panel (CAP) for Special Education Services. The Panel functions in an advisory capacity to OSE and advises the Governor, Legislature and Commissioner on unmet needs in the education of children with disabilities. Its responsibilities are prescribed by section 4403 (6) of the State Education Law in accordance with section 612 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). According to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), all states must set targets for the SPP/APR indicators through FFY 2019 (the APR reported in February 2021). Following an overview and discussion of the SPP/APR including current indicator targets and trend data, members recommended that the FFY 2018 target be extended to FFY 2019. The target for FFY 2019 will be 42 percent of students classified with learning disabilities in grades 3-5 who scored at proficiency level 2 and above on the New York State (NYS) English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment.

C. Federal Technical Assistance

There is much to consider as this SSIP reporting cycle enters its final year. NYSED has studied its actions over the course of the last five years and has learned a great deal that will influence how it intends to move forward. From this study, it has been noted that the need for support and guidance from federal technical assistance partners is key to successfully growing the work for the next cycle.

OSE continues to be introspective and reexamine its systems, policies, procedures, and practices to continue to impact student outcomes positively. Below is a list of technical assistance in FFY 2018 and needs for FFY 2019.

National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI)

- In FFY 2018, OSE has availed itself of technical assistance from NCSI in the development of the annual report to OSEP.
- As NYSED develops a Statewide framework for MTSS, it connected with other states that have successfully taken on this venture is key. To date, conversations, as facilitated by NCSI, have been held with Michigan and Kansas to share challenges, successes and barriers to help guide thinking.

- Supports have been provided for next steps in aligning other units within the Department and OSE in shaping the Statewide scale up of MTSS.
- It is currently unknown what future reporting cycles for SPP Indicator 17 (SSIP) will look like; however, OSE will look to OSEP and its federally funded TA Centers, including NCSI, to guide the next SSIP reporting cycle.
- NYSED was a member of the Language and Literacy cross-state learning collaborative and took advantage of the available resources,

IDEA Data Center (IDC)

- In FFY 2018, OSE has availed itself of TA from IDC in the development of the annual SSIP report to OSEP.

State Implementation and Scaling up of Evidence Based Practices Center (SISEP)

- During the development of the current SSIP, OSE has found it beneficial to receive targeted support from SISEP. As OSE considers scale up of MTSS, it is critical that we have guidance and support to develop criteria, dimensions of scale, selection criterion for potential new implementers and to identify indicators to assess process, outcomes, and impact of scaling up.

Conclusion:

The schools in the TZ have experienced the immense value of the MTSS framework and the impact it has on their systems, practices, and most of all, outcomes for their students. Although the SSIP MTSS implementation efforts are still evolving, NYSED and the schools in the TZ are gaining from the lessons learned and identification of key elements of transformative change processes. This information will enable NYSED to expand the scope of MTSS work in FFY 2019, to include many more schools across the State. Additionally, the Partnership and the development of a Statewide MTSS framework will empower educational organizations to meet the needs of all students around the State.

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1 / 36

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Detailed Report

Document	Rule Name	Status	Description
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	Tagged PDF	Passed	Document is tagged PDF
	Logical Reading Order	Passed manually	Document structure provides a logical reading order
	Primary language	Passed	Text language is specified
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Page Content	Rule Name	Status	Description
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	Tagged annotations	Passed	All annotations are tagged
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New York State Education Department

State Systemic Improvement Plan

PHASE III – YEAR 4

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1 / 36

Accessibility

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Tab order	Passed	Tab order is consistent with structure order
Character encoding	Passed	Reliable character encoding is provided
Tagged multimedia	Passed	All multimedia objects are tagged
Screen flicker	Passed	Page will not cause screen flicker
Scripts	Passed	No inaccessible scripts
Timed responses	Passed	Page does not require timed responses
Navigation links	Passed	Navigation links are not repetitive

Forms

Rule Name	Status	Description
Tagged form fields	Passed	All form fields are tagged
Field descriptions	Passed	All form fields have description

Alternate Text

Rule Name	Status	Description
Figures alternate text	Passed	Figures require alternate text
Nested alternate text	Passed	Alternate text that will never be read
Associated with content	Passed	Alternate text must be associated with some content
Hides annotation	Passed	Alternate text should not hide annotation
Other elements alternate text	Passed	Other elements that require alternate text

Tables

Rule Name	Status	Description
Rows	Passed	TR must be a child of Table, THead, TBody, or TFoot
TH and TD	Passed	TH and TD must be children of TR
Headers	Passed	Tables should have headers
Regularity	Passed	Tables must contain the same number of columns in each row and rows in each column
Summary	Skipped	Tables must have a summary

Lists

Rule Name	Status	Description
List items	Passed	LI must be a child of L
Lbl and LBody	Passed	Lbl and LBody must be children of LI

Headings

Rule Name	Status	Description
Appropriate nesting	Passed	Appropriate nesting

[Back to Top](#)

New York State Education Department

State Systemic Improvement Plan

PHASE III – YEAR 4

APRIL 1, 2020