



State Systemic Improvement Plan

Phase III - Year 2

March 26, 2018

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Introduction of Nebraska and the Phase III-Year 2 Submission

Nebraska is a unique state. From its fierce sense of individual and community ownership to its Unicameral Legislature, from its bedrock family and community and local values to its statewide pride in who Nebraskans are, Nebraska is unique.

Nebraska's ESUs are intermediate education agencies mandated by state statute in 1965 to provide professional development for educators as part of state defined core services. ESUs are service-oriented, non-regulatory agencies designed to achieve a better balance of educational opportunities for students regardless of the population, financial differences, or geographic limitations of school districts. The ESUs are uniquely situated to assist the Office of Special Education in implementing the SSIP.

Nebraskans place the highest values on its families and its communities. "Family and community first" ensures protection for those values Nebraskans treasure. It ensures that the institutions Nebraska creates and the government services Nebraskans provide, protect, support and strengthen families and communities. With this strong sense of community in mind, Nebraskans are very involved with and protective of local control for their schools. Within the state, there are 244 districts.

As Nebraska has worked at building a comprehensive MTSS System that provides for increasingly intensive services in academics and behavior, stakeholder involvement has been key. Nebraska continues with an ever evolving MTSS plan for increasing the use of Evidence Based Practices that Nebraska believes will result in better outcomes for Nebraska students. By creating a comprehensive MTSS system based on the provision of differentiated supports, Nebraska believes all parties will receive the levels of assistance needed to improve the outcomes of students with disabilities.

Nebraska has been actively involving stakeholders in the development and revision of the SSIP throughout all three Phases of development. During Phase I, our stakeholders helped to identify the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) as well as the coherent improvement strategy. While developing Phase II, Nebraska met multiple times with varying groups of stakeholders in order to identify a cohort that would be geographically and demographically representative of our state. None of the proposed cohort configurations met the criteria desired by some of the most vocal stakeholders, and it was overwhelmingly recommended that all third grade children in the state be included in the SIMR. Furthermore, stakeholder feedback indicated a strong desire to then disaggregate statewide third grade data by the type of MTSS evidence-based practice being implemented in each district. This type of data analysis will allow Nebraska to see overall progress toward the SIMR as well as incorporate the evidence-based practices that were identified as being part of the proposed cohort in Phase II.

Using the outline provided by OSEP, the following narrative describes Nebraska's SSIP Phase III Year 2 work and progress.

Summary of Phase III Year 2

Theory of action or logic model for the SSIP, including the SIMR

During Year 1 of Phase III, Nebraska's Theory of Action, Logic Model, and State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR) were changed based on stakeholder input and data analysis. As Nebraska worked on implementing the activities indicated in the Phase III Year 1 submission and continued to involve stakeholders, it was determined that no additional changes were needed to the Theory of Action, Logic Model, and State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR).

Nebraska's Theory of Action

	Strands for Action for NDE.....	If.....	Then.....		
			District	Teacher	Student
Increasing use of EBP	#1 - Require each Nebraska district to develop a Targeted Improvement Plan aligned with data-identified needs, and deeply implement student-centered, evidence-based practices	NDE continues collaboration with districts, Office of Special Education staff review and monitor the TIPs to support work with all districts, and MAP audits a % of TIPs to ensure that evidence based strategies are identified and implemented with fidelity....	Resources and supports can be leveraged to support districts in deeply implementing evidence-based strategies as identified in their improvement plans with fidelity	Will use evidence-based strategies with deep implementation	Will demonstrate increased reading proficiency as measured by the state assessment (NeSA)
Develop a framework for MTSS implementation	#2 - Develop an MTSS framework that merges the current Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and the Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) to support districts that have selected improving reading proficiency of students with disabilities at the 3 rd grade level and have volunteered to participate with the statewide trainers.	NDE provides leadership and continues to support improved outcomes through multiple initiatives...	Districts identifying improved reading performance will have access to supports provided through Nebraska's coherent improvement strategies	Will use evidence-based strategies with deep implementation	Will demonstrate increased reading proficiency as measured by the state assessment (NeSA)
Alignment of State Infrastructure	#3 - Align the state infrastructure to ensure districts receive necessary supports to deeply implement evidence-based reading strategies to support all learners	Special Education activities are aligned with Nebraska's state goals and the continuous improvement process (AQuESTT)...	Expectations for improvement will be consistent across all state programs and will ultimately provide a common message to all school districts in support of deep implementation of EBPs	Will use evidence-based strategies with deep implementation	Will demonstrate increased reading proficiency as measured by the state assessment (NeSA)

Based on the implementation of the activities detailed within Phase III Year 1 of the SSIP, the Department of Education Office of Special Education along with stakeholder feedback, determined that no changes were needed to Nebraska's Logic Model found on page 6.

Nebraska's Logic Model

<u>Inputs</u>	<u>Improvement Strategies</u>	<u>Short-Term Outcomes</u>	<u>Medium-Term Outcomes</u>	<u>Long-Term Outcomes</u>
NDE Special Education (Leadership, Office of Special Education staff and SSIP team) State Educational Agency Learning Collaborative UNL RtI Consortium SPDG PBIS (Management team, coaches) Evaluation team for SPDG, RtI, and SSIP Stakeholders: LEAs, Special Education Advisory Council, Nebraska Association of Special Education Supervisors	Strategy 1: Increase the use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) by providing support for district Targeted Improvement Plans (TIPs) including data analysis, selection of EBPs, and implementation of EBPs to fidelity	1a. NDE staff will demonstrate the knowledge and skill necessary to provide support to LEAs 1b. District teams will align TIPs with district data.	1c. Districts will select EBPs with high likelihood of improving outcomes for students with disabilities.	1d. Districts will implement EBPs with high levels of fidelity.
	Strategy 2: Develop and implement a comprehensive MTSS framework to provide behavioral and academic supports for all students.	2a. In order to build upon existing infrastructure, districts will continue to receive training and support through the RtI Consortium and NEPBIS. 2b. In collaboration with stakeholder input, a comprehensive MTSS framework will be developed.	2c. A training, coaching and TA resource center will be developed to support the MTSS framework.	2d. LEAs will implement the MTSS framework with fidelity.
	Strategy 3: Align resources and programs within the state infrastructure to support implementation of SSIP activities.	3a. NDE special education staff will collaborate with other NDE team to align the SSIP with ESSA and AQuESTT.	3b. Gaps in infrastructure will be identified and addressed using stakeholder workgroups, strategic planning work and coordination with the ESUs. 3c. Establish a Grant/Financial support process designed to provide assistance to Districts.	3d. Training and information will be provided and dissemination in a consistent and cohesive manner.
Student Outcomes <u>SIMR:</u> Increase reading proficiency for students with disabilities at the 3rd grade level as measured by the statewide reading assessment. <u>Growth Goal (K-3):</u> Decrease the number of students determined at-risk for reading failure beginning in Kindergarten. Maintain/ Increase the rate of growth for students on IEPs in order for them to be grade level readers.				

SIMR

As identified in Phase III, the SIMR was selected based on its alignment with Part B Indicator 3C of the SPP as well as its close ties to the Nebraska State Board of Education statewide initiative for continuous improvement.

As a result of data analysis and feedback from our multiple stakeholder groups, Nebraska's SIMR is to increase the reading proficiency for students with disabilities at the 3rd grade level as measured by the statewide reading assessment. The SIMR allows Nebraska to monitor the reading proficiency of all 6,843 third grade students with disabilities and allows for the Office of Special Education to further disaggregate the data according to the various strategies being implemented.

Although Nebraska is looking at data from the entire state, due to the sparse population, the large geographic area of the state, and the close relationship the Office of Special Education shares with the local education

agencies and strong stakeholder involvement, the SEA felt it was critical to continue to examine reading proficiency statewide. The office will continue to conduct an analysis of 3rd grade reading proficiency as well as look at trend data for districts who have implemented one of the initiatives targeted. Those initiatives include districts that:

- Identified reading as a focus area for their Targeted Improvement Plan;
- Work with the UNL RtI Consortium;
- Work with the Nebraska Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (NEPBIS); and/or
- Work with both the UNL RtI Consortium and NEPBIS.

SIMR Phase III

Increase reading proficiency for students with disabilities at the 3rd grade level as measured by the statewide reading assessment.

3rd Grade Reading Proficiency for Students with Disabilities - Statewide					
School Year	<u>2011-12</u>	<u>2012-13</u>	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2015-16</u>
Percentage	56.60%	57.20%	60.63%	64.85%	64.69%

SSIP 2013 – 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	New Assessment	2016	2017	2018
Target	59.86%	61.86%		63.86%	65.86%	67.86%
Progress	Met Target 64.85%	Met Target 64.69%		Not Met 30.32%		

Baseline and Targets

Targets are set based on a trajectory of growth within a five year period. Proficiency scores were looked at from a five year previous trajectory to give a predictive measure over the next five years. Although the SIMR includes all students with disabilities, the targets have not changed since they were established in Phase II. With the implementation of the new statewide English - Language Arts assessment in 2016-17 that replaced the current Nebraska Education State Assessment for reading, there was a significant drop in proficiency scores for all students, at all grade levels including students with disabilities at the third grade level. Although the drop in proficiency rates was anticipated, the State will continue to monitor proficiency levels and data trends. The State will wait to adjust targets until a baseline can be set with the new English-Language Arts assessment with the new vendor that will be implemented Spring of 2018.

Coherent improvement strategies or principal activities employed during the year (April 2017 - March 2018), including infrastructure improvement strategies

As shown in Nebraska's Logic Model which can be found on page 6, the Office of Special Education has three improvement strategies that are being evaluated. The three strategies include:

1. Increase the use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) by providing support for district Targeted Improvement Plans (TIPs) including data analysis, selection of EBPs, and implementation of EBPs to fidelity.
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive MTSS framework to provide behavioral and academic supports for all students.
3. Align resources and programs within the state to support implementation of SSIP activities.

Strategy 2 contains the following three main components.

- a. RtI Consortium;
- b. PBIS; and
- c. Implementation of the new comprehensive MTSS framework.

Strategy 1 (Increase use of EBPs): The principal activities employed during the 2017-18 school year were as follows:

- Office of Special Education staff reviewed of all district TIPs.
- Feedback regarding TIP submission provided to districts by the Office of Special Education staff.
- Development of TIP Phase III materials including guiding questions and examples.
- Review of 20% of the TIPs submitted to identify trends and needs for additional professional development and technical assistance.

Strategy 2 (MTSS Framework): The principal activities employed during the 2017-18 school year were as follows.

- Provided multiple trainings that included building and refining, topical, and coaching training.
- Provided technical assistance to districts regarding data analysis at the systems and intervention level.
- Provided a statewide MTSS conference with national speakers.
- Development of an MTSS builder's group to respond to the feedback and recommendations among our stakeholders to guide development of a comprehensive MTSS framework.
- Development and beta testing of a self-assessment for districts to use to determine areas of support needed in implementing an MTSS framework.

Strategy 3 (Systems Alignment): The principal activities employed during the 2017-18 school year were as follows.

- Monthly meetings with multiple NDE offices for the Data Collaborative (Learning Collaborative) occurred.
- Development of the Committee for Coordination of Systemic Improvement including multiple NDE offices and members from ESUs
- Attendance at the Cross State Learning Collaborative Fall Convening and State Leads Meetings.
- Continued review and initial development of Office of Special Education internal procedures.

Specific evidence-based practices that have been implemented to date

Phase III Year 1 of the SSIP submission contained four short-term activities to be completed during the 2016-2017 school year. The following information describes the extent to which these activities were completed in Phase III Year 2 of the SSIP. In the Progress column, "*Ongoing*" delineates activities that are continual and do not have a specific due date, whereas "*In progress*" delineates activities that have a specific completion date.

Short-Term Activities Described Phase III Year 1 Implemented in Phase III Year 2		
<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Progress</u>
Increase use of EBPs	1. At least 50% of all Nebraska districts will have a TIP that includes an implementation and evaluation plan for the strategy selected.	Met
MTSS Framework	2. Develop SEA supported MTSS Framework	Met
MTSS Framework	3. Implementation Planning including training, materials, modules, progress monitoring, and fidelity measures.	Ongoing
MTSS Framework	4. Develop a statewide needs assessment to determine areas of need for statewide regional professional development around the MTSS Framework.	Met
MTSS Framework	5. Develop readiness checklists for districts to evaluate level of implementation readiness.	Met

MTSS Framework	6. Select pilot sites for implementation of MTSS framework.	Met
MTSS Framework	7. Develop Coaching Model for System Level Coaching of MTSS State Support	In progress
MTSS Framework	8. Develop resources to be used within technical assistance.	In progress
MTSS Framework	9. Develop a publicity plan including: Market the new model, new video, vendor partner and integrated website.	In progress
MTSS Framework	10. Build upon Tier II and Tier III training in both academic and behavior.	Postponed
Systems Alignment	11. Create RDA focused conference or training to include all areas of Targeted Improvement Plans and MTSS.	Met
Systems Alignment	12. Continue fiscal support to Targeted Improvement Plans with activities linked to outcomes.	Met

Short-Term Activity 1: As identified in Phase III Year 1 of the SSIP, one of the short-term goals required half of the districts to submit a Targeted Improvement Plan that contained an implementation plan and an evaluation plan for the strategy selected. Disaggregated data regarding TIPs can be found in the “Description of Key Measures” beginning on page 20. Through the review of the plans submitted, it was discovered that districts struggled with understanding the difference between outcome measures and implementation measures. As a result the State is planning to implement training in this area to further support districts.

Short-Term Activity 2: During 2016-17, the state developed an MTSS Framework by conducting stakeholder meetings to create buy-in at the local level and obtain commitment from ESUs, and districts. The stakeholders along with personnel from the Department of Education have developed the MTSS Framework to include non-negotiable components that districts will be required to implement but allow districts to use features of what they are already implementing with the MTSS Frameworks they developed independently.

Short-Term Activity 3: During the 2016-17 school year, a “builder’s group” was developed to continue planning for the implementation of the newly developed MTSS Framework. The “builder’s group” contained stakeholders from various offices within the Department of Education as well as stakeholders from ESUs and districts across the state who were interested in assisting with the development of training, materials, modules, progress monitoring and fidelity measures.

Short-Term Activity 4: In August of 2017, the Nebraska Department of Education held its first statewide MTSS Conference. After the Conference, participants received a link to a needs assessment to help the Office of Special Education determine areas of need for statewide regional professional development around the MTSS Framework. Information regarding the results of the statewide needs assessment can be found in *Key Measure 4: Statewide MTSS Conference* beginning on page 27.

Short-Term Activity 5: In response to the need to develop a readiness checklist to evaluate the level of implementation readiness, the Office of Special Education, in conjunction with a group of stakeholders, created an MTSS self-assessment to determine areas of need for statewide regional professional development. There are 6 districts and 7 Educational Service Units (ESUs) who have volunteered to beta test the self-assessment during the spring of 2018. Information regarding the self-assessment and beta testing can be found in *Data sources for each key measure, Strategy 2c (MTSS Framework)* on page 22 and *Description of baseline for key measures, Strategy 2c: MTSS Framework - Implementing Comprehensive Framework* on beginning on page 25.

Short-Term Activity 6: In Phase III Year 1 of the SSIP, NDE determined that it would select pilot sites for implementation of MTSS framework. As work was completed with the MTSS self-assessment, several

districts and ESUs volunteered to be part of the beta testing to become the pilot sites. These ESUs and districts participated as stakeholders who helped develop and provide feedback on the MTSS self-assessment.

Short-term Activity 7: As Nebraska moves toward the development of a coaching system for MTSS, consulting supports were put in place to help districts move from the self-assessment to the development of individual district support systems. Although several MTSS Consulting models already exist, an optional prototype is being developed with two districts. The model currently consists of 4 day sessions allowing time for the districts to build and develop a unique system to support the implementation of the MTSS Framework. The consulting will tie closely to priorities outlined in the districts' self-assessment and will focus on the essential elements of MTSS.

Short-Term Activity 8: The development of resources to be provided as technical assistance for districts has been defined as:

- a. Resources specific to implementation of the MTSS Framework; and
- b. Targeted assistance for the implementation of the Targeted Improvement Plan.

The Office of Special Education worked with the Accountability and School Improvement Office to develop and provide trainings that include MTSS as part of the general school improvement process. There are currently a number of trainings specific to the implementation of the Targeted Improvement Plan which include, but are not limited to, training regarding the difference between outcome and implementation measures, the definition of "evidence-based", and trainings targeting changes to the Targeted Improvement Plan which are discussed in detail on page 21. It is anticipated that these trainings will be available in the fall of 2018.

Short-Term Activity 9: During the 2017-18 school year, the Office of Special Education implemented an MTSS newsletter to keep all stakeholders informed of the progress of the MTSS Builders Group, highlight the priorities of the MTSS Builders Group, as well as provide resources for districts to use as they continue to build, develop, and refine their MTSS processes based on the Framework. The MTSS Builder's Group has developed a framework for an MTSS Website that will be used for resource storage and communication. The website has been mapped according to input from stakeholders. The Office of Special Education has located and contracted with a group who will create and host the site based on the map developed by stakeholders. It is anticipated that website will be released to the public by mid-June of 2018.

Short -Term Activity 10: Although districts have expressed a need to build upon Tier II and Tier III trainings in both academics and behavior, data collected by the Department of Education determined that districts lacked a firm foundation on which to implement Tier II and Tier III interventions. As a result, efforts have been made to ensure districts have the training and support needed in implementing the MTSS Framework beginning with Tier I. The supports provided include the MTSS Conference (See Short-Term Activity 11), the development of the MTSS self-assessment (See Short-Term Activity 5), and the development of trainings to support Tier I (see Short-Term Activities 7 and 8). Once districts show that Tier I is being implemented with fidelity, the Office of Special Education will resume building upon Tier II and Tier III trainings.

Short-Term Activity 11: Every fall, the Office of Special Education holds a Results Driven Accountability Conference for teachers, administrators, and related service personnel. The purpose of the conference has been to inform districts of the priorities for the Office and provide training to assist districts. With the Department's focus on MTSS, NDE hosted the first MTSS Conference for the state in August of 2017. NDE contracted with the Data Based Consulting Group to bring in nationally known speakers. Although the intention was to open the conference up to other states, the overwhelming demand for the conference by participants from Nebraska precluded NDE from opening the conference to other states. Pre and post conference survey can be found on pages 27 and 28.

Short-Term Activity 12: The Office of Special Education provides fiscal support to districts to support the development and implementation of the Targeted Improvement Plans (TIPs). Feedback from stakeholders encouraged the Office to allow for a multi-year project with funding available for three years. Based on stakeholder input, the Office of Special Education has altered how funding will be allocated to support districts with the implementation of the TIPs. The Office of Special Education created a system that

encourages ESUs to further support NDE by ensuring districts have access to trainings for the implementation of MTSS and specific components of the TIP. This shift to a three year project, allows districts and ESUs to focus and provide continuity of training and support based upon the data collected from the TIPs reviewed in the fall of 2017.

Brief overview of the year's evaluation activities, measures, and outcomes

Nebraska's evaluation activities, measures and outcomes in 2016-17 were documented in Phase III Year 1 under "Planned evaluation activities including data collection, measures, and expected outcomes" on pages 38-39 and is aligned with the three strategies identified within the Logic Model as described in Nebraska's Logic Model on page 6. The three strategies include:

1. Increase the use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) by providing support for district Targeted Improvement Plans (TIPs) including data analysis, selection of EBPs, and implementation of EBPs to fidelity.
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive MTSS framework to provide behavioral and academic supports for all students.
3. Align resources and programs within the state to support implementation of SSIP activities.

The tables below specify the evaluation activities completed in Phase III Year 2 of the SSIP. In the Outcomes column, "*Ongoing*" delineates activities that are continual and do not have a specific due date, whereas "*In process*" delineates activities that have a specific completion date.

Strategy 1: Increase Use of Evidence Based Practices			
<u>Evaluation General Activity</u>	<u>Evaluation Specific Activities</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
Monitor improvement of outcomes in districts	Office of Special Education staff conduct review of district TIPs	TIP Review Tool	*Met
	Office of Special Education staff feedback to districts	Completion of the review tool	*Met
Monitor increased use of EBPs	Review of 20% of the TIPs submitted	TIP Review Tool for SSIP Evaluation	*Met

* Specifics regarding the outcomes for Strategy 1 can be found on pages 20-22.

Strategy 2: MTSS Framework			
<u>Evaluation General Activity</u>	<u>Evaluation Specific Activities</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
Monitor Implementation of MTSS Framework	MTSS Training and technical assistance	Attendance Survey evaluations	*Ongoing
August 2017 MTSS Conference	Conference pre/post surveys	Survey evaluations	*Met
Development of 2017-18 MTSS Self-Assessment	District-use surveys	Edits required to improve district implementation of the assessment	*In process
Initial 2017-18 District Consulting	Feedback survey for participants	Effectiveness of the consultant process	*In process

* Specifics regarding the outcomes for Strategy 2 can be found on pages 22-27.

Strategy 3: Systems Alignment			
<u>Evaluation General Activity</u>	<u>Evaluation Activity</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
Monitor Systems Alignment	Continued collaboration with multiple offices within the Department	Meeting minutes and agendas	*Met
	Needs assessments and surveys from districts	Review of responses collected from needs assessment and surveys	*Met
	Perceptual data gathered from members from the Office of Special Education	Leading by Convening Rubrics and information collected from activities	*Ongoing

*Specifics regarding outcomes for Strategy 3 can be found on pages 27-28.

State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)		
<u>Evaluation Activity</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
Monitor progress with SIMR	Percent of students with disabilities scoring at a proficient level statewide	*Not met- New assessment, scores not comparable to previous data
	Percent of students with disabilities scoring at a proficient level within districts that chose reading as a focus for improvement in the Targeted Improvement Plan	
	Percent of students with disabilities scoring at a proficient level within districts that participate in the UNL RtI consortium	
	Percent of students with disabilities scoring at a proficient level within districts that participate in the PBIS project	
	Percent of students with disabilities scoring at a proficient level within districts that participate in both the UNL RtI Consortium and the PBIS Project	
Monitor growth goals	Rate of growth	*Under development

* Specifics regarding outcomes for the SIMR can be found on pages 13, and 29-30.

Highlights of changes to implementation and improvement strategies

The change with the most impact appears to be the state assessment used to measure progress toward our State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR). Student scores on the Nebraska's State Assessment (NeSA) in the spring of 2017 are significantly different due to a change in the summative assessment utilized. Therefore, scores from the testing done in the spring of 2017 cannot be compared to scores from the testing done in previous years due to the shift in assessments. Although anticipated, assessment scores for English-Language Arts dropped significantly for both general and special education students which impacted progress toward our SIMR.

For the spring of 2018 testing, the Nebraska Department of Education has again changed the assessment and added a change in vendor. It is the intent that the change in assessment and vendors will allow Nebraska to move to a more balanced assessment system and allow for more immediate results to inform instruction. It will again be a change that will prevent scores from 2017-2018 school year to be compared to the 2016-2017 scores. Despite the changes to the assessment and to a different vendor to provide critical data to inform

instruction in a timelier manner, the Office of Special Education will continue to analyze the data available to monitor any trends.

Another change was the ability to use MAP data to measure the growth goal toward the SIMR. When the Nebraska Department of Education changed vendors for the summative assessment in English and Language Arts, it was able to provide formative assessments to districts (MAP). The Office of Special Education and the NDE Office of Data, Research and Evaluation are in the process of overlaying demographic information onto the formative assessment information to more accurately measure growth for students who are at risk or identified as having a disability. Although the assessment vendor has been providing formative assessment data on a bi-weekly basis, the format in which it is submitted does not work with the NDE system that contains the demographic data. The NDE Office of Data, Research and Evaluation are in communication with the vendor and continue to work on the conversion of the data from one system into another permitting the Office of Special Education to access the formative assessment data. NDE looks forward to gaining full access of this data to apply toward the SIMR using intermediary measures and anticipate having this data for submission of the SSIP in the future.

Although districts have expressed a need to build upon Tier II and Tier III trainings in both academics and behavior, data collected by the Department of Education determined that districts lacked a firm foundation on which to implement Tier II and Tier III interventions. As a result, efforts have been made to ensure districts have the training and support needed in implementing the MTSS Framework beginning with Tier I. The supports provided include the MTSS Conference (See Short-Term Activity 11 on page 10), the development of the MTSS self-assessment (See Short-Term Activity 5 on page 9), and the development of trainings to support Tier I (see Short-Term Activities 7 and 8 on page 10).

Summary

- Change of the statewide assessment does not allow the state to compare reading scores across years.
- The Office of Special Education is in the process of using local formative assessment data for intermediate measures toward progress on the SIMR.
- Seven (7) of the 12 short-term activities from Phase III-Year 1 contained within strategies 1, 2, and 3 have been met with the remaining activities being on-going, in process, or under development.

Progress in Implementing the SSIP

Description of the State's implementation progress

The Office of Special Education has made significant progress in implementing the activities that were detailed within Phase I, II, and III Year 1 of the SSIP. Nebraska's progress with implementation as well as modifications are described within this section.

Description of extent to which the State has carried out its planned activities with fidelity - what has been accomplished, what milestones have been met, and whether intended timeline has been followed

Progress on Strategy 1: Increase Use of EBPs

Within Phase I of the TIP process, districts were asked to conduct a detailed data analysis which identified a "focus of improvement" (the SIMR for the local education agencies). After a focus was identified, districts then selected evidence-based strategies that would best support achieving improved outcomes for students with disabilities. Nebraska districts were asked to complete Phase II of the TIP process by August 1, 2017. For Phase II, districts were asked to develop an implementation and evaluation plan for the strategy selected within Phase I.

Progress on Strategy 2a: MTSS Framework

Current Progress on Implementation of UNL RtI Implementation Support Team (IST) Supports:

During the 2016-2017 school year, the UNL RtI IST, a State Grant Funded project, provided 48 professional development training sessions with teams from 50 districts. Trainings included the following:

- Initial building and refining of MTSS-reading supports;
- Selection of evidence programs/practices and assessments;
- Leadership for MTSS-reading;
- Collection and use of observation fidelity data for instruction and interventions;
- Development and application of decision rules for guiding intervention decisions;
- Coaching supports for instruction and intervention;
- Intensifying interventions; and
- Problem solving for individual students.

The average fidelity on the *RtI Training Fidelity Observation Checks* was 98% on coverage of training content and an average of 4.9 (on a scale of 1-5) on content delivery items across all trainings. The median rating on all items of the *Training Perceptions Survey* across all trainings was 4.5 on a scale of 1 [strongly disagree] to 5 [strongly agree]. Participants agreed or strongly agreed on items related to the trainings being useful and informative, learning something new, and planning to use the information from the sessions. The IST continuously reviews the survey data to inform updates to training materials, content, and delivery based on participant feedback.

The IST provided approximately 190 Technical Assistance sessions for participating districts/schools. The average adherence to *Technical Assistance protocols* as self-reported by IST Technical Assistance (TA) providers was 91% (range of 84-97%) across all TA visits. The most frequently reported reason provided when there was not adherence to the TA protocols involved a need to shift focus during a TA visit as school teams reprioritized needs or recognized a prerequisite step they needed to backup to address.

At this point in the 2017-2018 school year (March, 2018), the UNL RtI Implementation Support Team (IST) has provided 44 professional training sessions with teams from 48 districts. Trainings included the following:

- Building and refining of MTSS-reading core and intervention supports;
- Explicit instructional practices, selection of evidence-based practices;
- Collection and use of observation fidelity data for instruction and interventions;
- Development and application of decision rules for guiding intervention decisions;
- Coaching supports for instruction and intervention;
- Intensifying intervention supports; and
- Problem solving for individual students.

The IST provides ongoing technical assistance between training sessions based on the needs of the district/school. TA included activities such as: conducting shadow observations, assisting with selection of evidence-based practices, development of fidelity tools, collection and use of fidelity data, analyzing student and instructional data for decision making, applying intervention decision rules, planning for intensification of interventions, and evaluating the RtI-reading process.

TA activities are designed using a gradual release of responsibility with the TA provider providing more intensive initial support and fading support over time. To date (through March 1, 2018), the IST has provided 137 Technical Assistance sessions for participating districts/schools.

For the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years, with the financial assistance provided by a State Grant, the IST also provided support through partnerships with 2 Educational Service Units (ESUs). During 2016-17 the UNL RtI Reading Consortium began supporting ESUs with the implementation and training of MTSS. One partnership focuses on working with ESU personnel to provide training and technical assistance for schools teams in building and refining their core and intervention supports for academics and training and TA for school administrators and school-identified coaches to support teachers implementing Explicit Instruction practices. The other partnership focuses on working with ESU personnel to provide training and technical assistance for school teams working to refine their intervention instruction and data-based decision making

practices. Finally, 26 individuals across 17 districts were identified to provide in-district coaching. The UNL RtI IST is providing a series of trainings and follow-up support for coaches that includes:

- Content related to effective coaching meetings;
- Dealing with resistance; and
- Use of a variety of coaching strategies to employ based on the needs of those whom they are coaching.

Follow up support includes providing models of coaching support and observing coaches and providing coaching and feedback.

Summary of Involvement with UNL RtI Consortium		
	<u>2016-2017 School Year</u>	<u>*2017-2018 School Year</u>
# of Training Sessions Held	48	44
# of Districts Involved	50	48
# of TA Sessions	190	137

*Data through March 2018. Additional trainings and TA Sessions are planned for the remainder of the 2017-18 School Year.

Progress on Strategy 2b: MTSS Framework

Current Progress on Schools Participating in the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG):

Multiple activities and opportunities were provided over the reporting period for schools to attend PBiS trainings, receive technical assistance, connect with other PBiS schools, and to become engaged with NEPBiS model through funding provided by the SPDG. In addition, the following supports were provided:

- External coaching provided to teams (occurred four times during the year);
- PBiS Leadership Development Institute (LDI);
- Specific, leveled PBiS team trainings;
- FAST Track training for principals;
- PBiS regional meetings; and
- PBiS Administrators' Academies.

In total, 89 schools participated in the SPDG grant activities in the summer of 2017 and are enrolled to continue through 2017-18 school year.

Progress on Strategy 2c: MTSS Framework

Current Progress on Implementing the New Comprehensive Framework

As the Office of Special Education continues its efforts in establishing a Comprehensive MTSS Framework for districts to implement, it has developed a structure that allows for stakeholder input and guidance at multiple levels, including a core team, key advisors and participants, and a feedback and dissemination network as recommended through the Leading by Convening materials. A description of the progress toward implementing the new comprehensive framework can be found in the following sections:

- *Specific evidence-based practices that have been implemented to date* on pages 8 and 9.
- *Short-term Activities #2-10* on pages 9 and 10.

The role stakeholders have played in the implementation of the MTSS Framework can be found in *Stakeholder Involvement in SSIP Implementation* portion of the Phase III-Year 2 SSIP under the heading "How Stakeholders have been informed of the ongoing implementation of the SSIP" beginning on page 18.

Progress on Strategy 3: Systems Alignment

Multiple steps were made in the alignment of the SSIP with other initiatives. As has been noted, the Office of Special Education continues to collaborate with other departments at NDE. Additionally, the Office of Special Education has been increasingly intentional in collaborating both with local directors and the Nebraska Association of Special Education Supervisors (NASES) in order to address issues and to efficiently use resources to improve programming and implementation of evidence-based practices.

During the development of Phase II of the SSIP, NDE Office of Special Education established a committee (Learning Collaborative) including individuals from various offices within the department to collaborate and align initiatives. Although this Learning Collaborative continues to undergo changes, it continues to have representation from multiple offices including:

- Office of Special Education;
- Office of Accreditation and School Improvement;
- Office of Accountability/AQuESTT;
- Office of Teaching and Learning;
- Data, Research, and Evaluation Office;
- Office of Federal Programs and Nutrition;
- University of Nebraska in Lincoln (UNL);
- University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC);
- Educational Service Units; and
- Results Driven Accountability (RDA) Stakeholders.

During the course of the 2017-18 school year, the Learning Collaborative transformed into what is now known as the Committee for the Coordination of Systemic Improvement (CCSI). The CCSI members have participated in monthly meetings as well as invited to trainings, virtual meetings, and webinars provided by the National Center of Systemic Improvement (NCSI). The focus of this Committee has been on:

- Alignment of state infrastructure;
- Creation of a single unified improvement plan that accommodates key components of the multiple plans required by the Department and is aligned with Nebraska's accountability system (AQuESTT) to allow districts to focus on implementation of improvement activities rather than the creation of multiple plans; and
- Development of a comprehensive needs assessment that will guide districts in the development of their unified plan as required by ESSA.

In order to kick off and unify districts around MTSS implementation, Nebraska organized and presented the first MTSS Conference in the state. The conference was conducted by a group of national presenters from DBC Consulting. When planning for the conference, the Department had set attendance at 300, anticipating that 200 participants would attend from Nebraska. Registration exceeded NDE's planning and as a result was limited to the 400 participant capacity of the facility. Information collected from participants will be used to plan for future trainings. It is anticipated this conference will become an annual event focusing on the components of MTSS identified in the comprehensive framework.

Along with the high level of collaboration among the various offices within the Department, the Office of Special Education is continuing the work of restructuring and strengthening the teaming process. Activities specific to the work within the Office of Special Education include:

- Reviewing submitted Targeted Improvement Plans (TIPs);
- Undergoing a book study;
- Defining the roles and responsibilities required within the office; and
- Aligning the work accomplished in the Office of the Special Education with the State Board's Strategic Plan

Intended outputs/outcomes that have been accomplished as a result of the implementation activities.

Strategy 1: Increase Use of EBPs

All of Nebraska's 244 districts submitted a Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP). The focus of Phase II of the TIP included the development of an implementation plan for the strategy selected and an evaluation plan that included both outcome and implementation measures. The Office of Special Education developed teams consisting of two to three Office of Special Education staff to complete an analysis of the TIPs submitted using the Phase II TIP Review Tool. Information gathered from the review tool was used to provide comments to districts regarding the strengths and areas of improvement for the plan. Feedback provided was intended to

guide districts through the continuous improvement process and to build a strong foundation from which a unique individualized school improvement plan may be implemented to improve the outcomes for students with disabilities.

A summary of what was discovered during the preliminary TIP review can be found on pages 20-22. TIPs submitted August 1, 2017:

- Included the necessary information to set the foundation for continuous school improvement;
- Demonstrated alignment between general school improvement, improvement activities for specifically for special education as well as other initiatives within the district; and
- Documented detailed implementation plans.

Areas of concern found during the review analysis, identified districts needed:

- Support with understanding the difference between outcome and implementation data;
- Instruction in the use of outcome and implementation data; and
- Tools and/or methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development provided.

In addition to the preliminary TIP review of Nebraska's 244 districts, a random stratified sampling of 20% of the TIPs submitted was also conducted. The 20% random sampling of district TIPs was initiated to identify training needs for the Office of Special Education and districts.

Activity	% Completion	Timeline Met
TIP submission	100%	95.08% 4.91% late submissions
NDE review with district feedback	100%	100%
Additional Review of 20% of TIPs	100%	100%

The review of 20% of the TIPs revealed that districts needed:

- A clear definition of what the State considers an evidence-based practice; and
- Support in understanding the difference between an instructional or improvement framework and evidence-based strategies used with students

Strategy 2a: MTSS Framework - UNL RtI Consortium

Outputs/outcomes that have been accomplished as a result of the implementation activities in relation to the activities with the UNL RtI Consortium can be found in the "Description of the State's SSIP Implementation progress" beginning on page 13.

Strategy 2b: MTSS Framework - NEPBIS

NEPBIS provided training and technical assistance around key components of PBiS and the NEPBIS Model through three training modules; Universal and Classroom - Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III. Training and technical assistance on School-wide Information System (SWIS), the data collection mechanism used for PBiS was also provided to 9 schools that were determined to be at the second level stage of readiness. Within this training, schools were to complete school-wide flow charts and definitions to aide in cohesive data collection around behavior. NEPBIS also provides two different types of coaching model trainings. The first, external coaching is provided to the contracted "systems" level coaches for the NEPBIS project. Beginning in the summer of 2017, seven external coaches provided supports to teams. Additionally two external coaches were hired to work with districts in the Western part of the state. Currently a total of 9 coaches are providing supports to teams. Specific data regarding implementation of NEPBIS can be found in *Strategy 2b: MTSS Framework - NEPBIS* beginning on page 24.

Strategy 2c: MTSS Framework - Implementing Comprehensive Framework

Through the continued work on the comprehensive MTSS Framework, the Office of Special Education has been able to involve stakeholders at multiple levels by establishing;

- A core team;

- A group of key advisors and participants; and
- Feedback and dissemination networks.

Specific details regarding how the Office of Special Education is involving stakeholders in the development of the Framework, the MTSS self-assessment, and the website to house resources and provide communication can be found in *Stakeholder involvement in SSIP Implementation* beginning on page 18.

Strategy 3: Systems Alignment

Intended outcomes that have been accomplished as a result of the implementation of the systems alignment work include multiple areas.

Area 1: Increased meaningful stakeholder feedback to assist in the overall implementation of the SSIP. During 2016 and 2017, NDE staff participated in trainings/meetings provided by OSEP and the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) that focused on creating meaningful engagement of stakeholders as well as levels of stakeholder participation.

Using the book, *Leading by Convening*, Nebraska undertook a more interactive and intentional focus regarding stakeholder involvement. This included the development of a virtual record keeping system which tracks discussions during meetings as well as allows for continuous stakeholder feedback.

Area 2: Engagement with multiple OSEP funded Technical Assistance Centers including:

- National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI);
- Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting (CIFR);
- Center for IDEA Integration of Data (CIID);
- Signetwork; and
- IDEA Data Center (IDC).

With the support of the TA centers, the Office of Special Education has begun to refine and develop new policies and procedures surrounding the existing programmatic, compliance, and fiscal responsibilities of the Office. With the assistance of NCSI, Nebraska initiated and continues peer to peer discussions with the state staff from Georgia to gain insight regarding the development of a single unified improvement plan for districts. Nebraska has also attended the Cross State Learning Collaborative Fall Convening and participated in both affinity groups established by NCSI to assist in the systems alignment work.

Area 3: Team building focused on detailing the changing roles/responsibilities continues to be conducted by the Office of Special Education including aligning this work to the State Board's Strategic Plan. The Office of Special Education also began utilizing rubrics and surveys within the *Leading by Convening* materials. This process established baseline measures for the systems alignment work including:

- System Change in NE: Your Perspective;
- Grounding Assumptions; and
- Coalescing Around the Issues.

Stakeholder involvement in SSIP implementation

The Office of Special Education has made significant changes to meaningfully engage stakeholders. The details regarding how stakeholders have been involved in the implementation of the SSIP is described in this section.

How stakeholders have been informed of the ongoing implementation of the SSIP

During the course of the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years, multiple meetings were held with the MTSS workgroup which resulted in the creation of the MTSS Builder's Group. Due to the existence of various stakeholder groups, a description was developed for each group. This information is disseminated via the

MTSS Newsletter to share what groups are in existence, what they are working on, and what has been accomplished. A description of the various stakeholder groups is as follows:

- RDA Stakeholders (individuals who form the feedback and dissemination networks): assist the Office of Special Education with analyzing data and providing information about next steps based on the data reviewed;
- MTSS Stakeholders (individuals who form groups of key advisors and participants): utilize information from the RDA Stakeholder group to develop next steps for the MTSS Builder's Group
- MTSS Builder's Group (Individuals who form the core team): responsible for acting on the information from the RDA and MTSS Stakeholder groups in order to review and/or implement stakeholder input and support the build of the Nebraska MTSS framework.

How stakeholders have had a voice and been involved in decision-making regarding the ongoing implementation of the SSIP

Stakeholder involvement and voice have been integral in the development of the SSIP in Nebraska. Throughout the Phase III-Year 1 document, several instances of modification and improvement to the SSIP plan have been initiated due to the input of stakeholders. Early on in the development of the SSIP, stakeholders made it clear that the Nebraska MTSS framework needed to be sensitive to and inclusive of already established district frameworks while providing a foundation for districts who had not yet established a framework. Examples of how stakeholders had a voice include:

- Developing a framework for a new MTSS website including ideas for content to include;
- Providing feedback on the self-assessment to reduce redundancy and make the tool more user friendly; and
- Developing a technical assistance document for MTSS.

Summary of Progress in Implementing the SSIP

- Strategy 1 (Increase Use of EBPs): All 244 of Nebraska's school districts submitted a Phase II Targeted Improvement Plan and received specific feedback to assist districts in the continuous improvement process.
- Strategy 2 (MTSS Framework): Ongoing partnerships with the UNL RtI Consortium, NEPBIS, and the development of a comprehensive MTSS framework, including the development of an MTSS Self-Assessment, beta testing of the self-assessment, and initial development of an MTSS website.
- Strategy 3 (Systems Alignment): Multiple changes have occurred within the internal infrastructure of both the Office of Special Education and the Nebraska Department of Education. This process continues to be an ongoing endeavor.

Data on Implementation and Outcomes

How the State monitored and measured outputs/outcomes to assess the effectiveness of the implementation plan

Nebraska used multiple measures to monitor and determine progress on outputs/outcomes to determine the effectiveness of the implementation plan.

How evaluation measures align with the theory of action

The evaluation measures provide both quantitative and qualitative data to examine the progress and effectiveness of the theory of action. Each of the measures for the short-term and medium-term outcomes are benchmarks to indicate progress towards the long-term and impact outcomes. If the goals of the short-term and medium term outcomes are met, the theory would be that long-term goals of increased capacity and fidelity of implementation of evidence-based practices will be met. When those goals are met, the impact on the SIMR should be evident.

Data sources for each key measure

Strategy 1 (Increase use of EBPs): There were two key measures. The first key measure was submission of the TIP. The second key measure was the review of 20% of the TIPs submitted. The data source for the first key measure for strategy 1 was the Phase II Review Tool. The data source for the second key measure was the TIP Review for SSIP Submission.

Strategy 2a-c (MTSS Framework): Data were collected as part of the two current initiatives: UNL RtI Consortium and NEPBIS (SPDG) and the development of the MTSS Framework. Data sources include the fidelity measures, surveys and observations that were all part of the evaluation process for the two current initiatives. Progress toward the development of the MTSS Framework are qualitative and captured through agendas, and notes from the various stakeholder groups.

In development of the MTSS self-assessment tool, it was decided that districts would maintain the quantitative data regarding where districts placed themselves. NDE will use the qualitative data and feedback from the implementation of the beta testing to inform the improvements and modifications necessary for finalization of the self-assessment tool.

Strategy 3 (Systems Alignment): Key measures included:

- The establishment of a Learning Collaborative involving multiple offices within the Department of Education;
- Surveys with the Office of Special Education staff;
- Leading by Convening activities conducted with the Office of Special Education staff; and
- Pre and post surveys from the MTSS conference.

The data sources for the measures are:

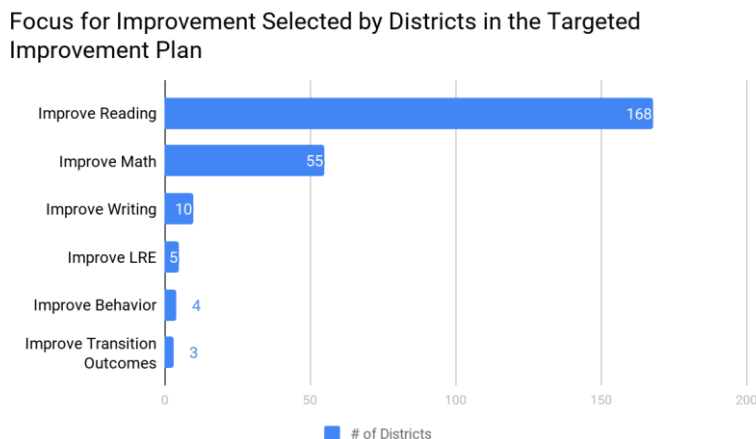
- The meeting minutes and agendas from the Learning Collaborative meetings;
- Survey results that were conducted with the Office of Special Education staff;
- Artifacts created during the Leading by Convening Activities; and
- The survey results from before and after the MTSS conference.

Description of baseline for key measures

Strategy 1: Increase Use of EBPs

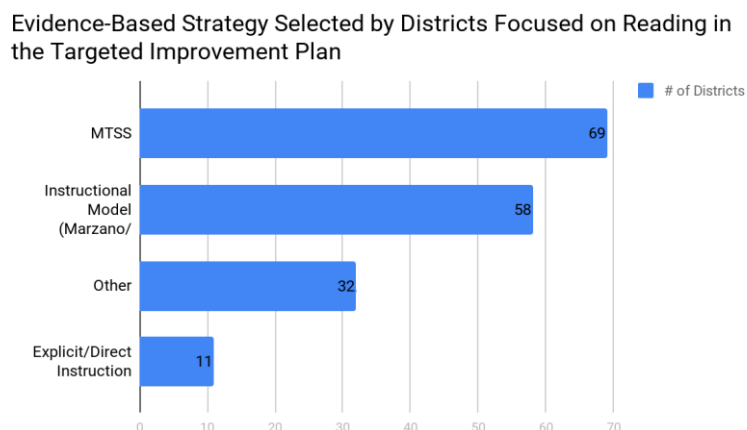
Key Measure 1: The preliminary review of the Targeted Improvement Plans (TIP) show that 95.08% of the districts submitted the TIP by August 1, 2017. The remaining districts that constituted 4.92%, completed their submission by mid-August. When Office of Special Education staff completed the TIP Review Tool to provide feedback to districts, based on data analysis, 168 districts chose reading as a focus for improvement (see Figure 1) which is an additional three districts who selected reading as a focus from the previous year.

Figure 1



For the districts who selected reading as a focus for improvement, 69 districts selected MTSS as the evidence-based strategy (see Figure 2) and 58 districts selected a specific instructional model (Marzano or Danielson). Thirty-two districts selected “other” as their strategy. Districts who selected “other”, listed multiple strategies to be implemented. These strategies included specific reading interventions such as Reading Mastery, Guided Reading, Reading Naturally, and Corrective Reading.

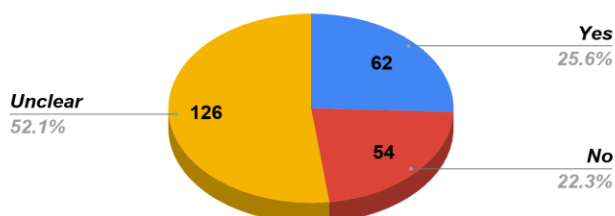
Figure 2



With districts at various levels of TIP implementation, the figure below shows baseline data of the number of districts already demonstrating progress towards the targets set during Phase I of development of the TIP (See Figure 3). As a result of the TIP due date being prior to the release of the statewide assessment scores, the number of districts using improvement in scores on the statewide assessment, 52.1% of districts did not have data available to demonstrate progress toward the targets set. Some of Nebraska’s districts (25.6%) were using measures other than the statewide assessment and have already demonstrated progress towards the targets set. In some cases (22.3%), districts had changed the focus for improvement or had just established baseline thus progress toward target had not been met.

Figure 3

Districts Reporting Progress Toward Target



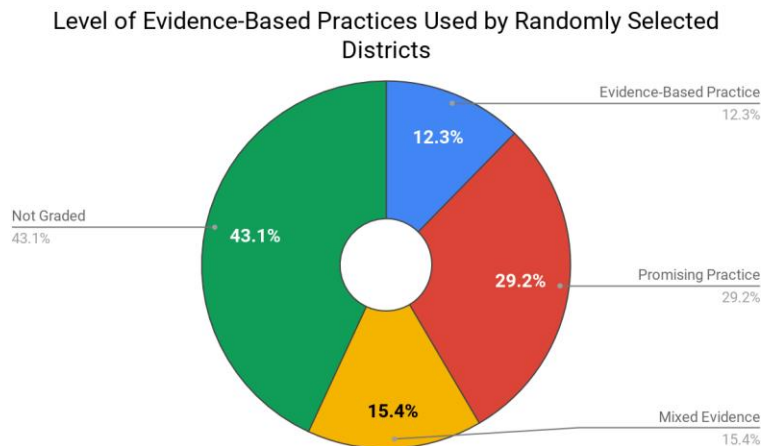
The Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) has grown and evolved since it began. With the submission that was due August 1, 2017, districts were expected to develop an implementation and evaluation plan for the strategy that was selected. In the review of the TIP submissions, the following areas were identified in which additional training needs to occur with districts:

- Understanding and differentiating between outcome and implementation data
- Methods to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development
- Understanding the difference between an instructional/improvement framework and an evidence-based strategy
- Defining what an evidence-based practice is based on the categories of evidence provided by ESSA
- Determining key pieces of the strategies being implemented and how to evaluate those strategies are being implemented with fidelity

Key Measure 2: Based on a 20% stratified random selection of TIPs reviewed, 91.48% of the districts supported their focus for improvement with data and based the focus for improvement on a results indicator. 85.10% of the districts reviewed had identified at least one evidence-based strategy.

The 20% review provided an overview of the evidence-based practices (EBP) used by the districts. Since the SSIP focuses on meeting state targets for third grade reading, emphasis was placed on EBP related to reading. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) criteria for EBP were used. Results of the 20% review can be found in Figure 4. This graph shows that 12.3% of the districts reviewed are using EBP as defined by CEC; 29.2% are using Promising Practices, and 15.4% are using practices with mixed evidence.

Figure 4



Strategy 2a: MTSS Framework

RTI Reading Consortium

Due to the multiple measures used to track the progress made with strategy 2a, a chart was created to detail the specific activities that were implemented during the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school year, the key measures for those activities, and the baseline data that was collected.

Strategy 2a: MTSS Framework - RTI Reading Consortium		
Activities	Key Measures	Baseline
Provide training and technical assistance around key components of building and refining the MTSS framework (e.g., teaming, systems-level data analysis, effective core instruction, selecting and planning for implementation of evidence-based interventions, decision rules, individual student problem solving, evaluation and continuously improving the district's MTSS process)	<p>Document fidelity of delivery of training sessions</p> <p>Participants rate quality, relevance, and usefulness of training sessions</p> <p>District/building teams rate the effectiveness of TA/coaching</p> <p>Document existence of district/school written MTSS procedures that includes a process for using data for making decisions regarding reading supports (including process for intensification)</p>	Provided MTSS-reading training and TA for 48 districts (2017-18)

Provide training for district-identified, practice-level coaches to support teachers' and interventionists' implementation of evidence-based reading strategies as requested by the districts participating.	Document fidelity of coach training Participants rate the quality, relevance, and usefulness of training sessions	Provided multi-session training data-based coaching series for 62 educators (2017-18)
Implementation of coaching process to support teachers with implementation of evidence-based reading strategies	Document coaching supports provided for teachers and interventionists Document fidelity of coaching supports using coach performance assessment	Coaches from 17 districts are using data-based coaching model to provide support for teachers and interventionists (2017-18) Coaches from 7 districts used data-based coaching model to provide support for teachers and interventionists (2016-17)
Collection of student data to guide decision making across multiple levels (e.g., universal screening data at least 2 times per year, ongoing progress monitoring data (general outcome measures and in-program measures) for students receiving intervention supports, diagnostic data, and outcome data) using technically adequate assessments for their intended purposes	Document district process for and collection of universal screening data Document district process for and collection of progress monitoring data for students receiving intervention Collect and report universal screening data at least 2 times per year Collect and report general outcome measures and in-program measures for students receiving intervention supports	48/48 districts are collecting screening data and 48/48 districts are collecting progress monitoring data (2017-18) 50/50 districts collected screening data and 47/50 districts collected progress monitoring data (2016-17)
Implementation of data-based decision making process at the student and systems level to guide core instruction and intervention decisions (e.g., fade, discontinue, continue, intensify intervention)	Document meetings to review student progress and intervention delivery data Document fidelity of use of pre-established decision rules to determine next steps with student intervention based on progress monitoring data and intervention delivery data Review of fidelity of progress monitoring procedures using progress monitoring guidelines	48/48 districts are analyzing data at a systems level to examine core supports and 48/48 districts implemented data-based decision making processes at the intervention level (2017-18) 48/50 districts analyzed data at a systems level to examine core supports and 37/50 districts implemented data-based decision making processes at the intervention level (2016-17)

Systematic intensification of interventions for students who continue to struggle after receiving initial intervention with evidence-based practices	Document plans for intensifying intervention when data indicate a need; review of strategies for intensification to ensure evidence base Document fidelity to use of intensified intervention plans	39/48 districts are working on refining their processes for intensification of intervention and Individual Student Problem Solving (2017-18) 20/50 districts worked on refining their processes for intensification of intervention and Individual Student Problem Solving (2016-17)
Plan alignment of MTSS and PBIS including developing an integration team and advisory committee.	Logic model developed and approved by NDE	Logic Model was completed by integration team and approved by advisory committee.

Strategy 2b: MTSS Framework *NEPBIS*

Due to the multiple measures used to track the progress made with strategy 2b, a chart was created to detail the specific activities that were implemented during the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school year, the key measures for those activities, and the baseline data that was collected.

Strategy 2b: MTSS Framework - NEPBIS		
<u>Activities</u>	<u>Key Measures</u>	<u>Baseline</u>
Provide training and technical assistance around key components of PBIS and the NEPBIS Model (e.g., universal training -Tier I, classroom level training - Tier I, Tier II training, Tier III training).	Document fidelity of delivery of training sessions Participants rate quality, relevance, and usefulness of training sessions District/building teams rate the effectiveness of TA Document existence of district/school PBIS Process	Provided a 3 day training series for universal - Tier I and Tier II and a 2 day training series for Tier III. Tiered Fidelity Inventory showed that Tier I practices are being implemented by team with 88% fidelity, Tier II 69% fidelity and Tier III 68% fidelity (2017-18 fall data). 2016-17 Self-Assessment Survey - 62% of the NEPBIS trained schools met the target of implementing Universal PBIS with 80% fidelity. 2016-17 Benchmarks of Quality (BOQ) had 83% of Level II and III teams above threshold on 8/10 elements. Provided technical assistance for 89 schools (2016-17).
Provide training and technical assistance on School wide Information System (SWIS) - data collection mechanism used for PBIS.	Document training and implementation of SWIS. Documentation of school wide flow charts and definitions.	Nine schools trained and implementing SWIS.(2017-18) 9/ 9 had documentation of school wide flowcharts and definitions (2017-18).

Provide training and technical assistance for external coaching through NEPBIS Model as well as internal coaching for district-identified, practice level coaches to support PBiS implementation.	<p>Document fidelity of coach training(s)</p> <p>Document fidelity of external coaching supports using coach performance assessment</p> <p>Document existence of internal coach role within schools/districts</p>	<p>Provided training to external coaches with 7 of 7 attending all trainings.</p> <p>Provided external coaching performance assessment with 98% exceeding the goal for coaching evaluations (2016-17) based on 51 school responses.</p>
Provide training and technical assistance to schools to have teams attend the NEPBIS advisory meeting, the PBiS Leadership Development Institute (LDI), PBiS regional meetings and PBiS Administrators' Academies.	Document attendance and evaluation of meetings and trainings.	<p>NEPBIS advisory meeting for 2016-17 attended by 70 of the 70 schools.</p> <p>PBiS LDI attended by 70 of 70 schools (summer 2017).</p> <p>Seven PBiS Administrators' Academies were held for 62 participants (2017-18).</p> <p>PBiS regional meetings (2017-18) attended by 89 schools.</p>
Level II to Level III Readiness Assessment	<p>Level III Readiness Checklist</p> <p>School wide Evaluation Tool completed by external evaluator</p>	<p>Level III Readiness Checklist completed by 8 out of 8 schools.</p> <p>School wide Evaluation Tool completed on 8 of 8 schools. 8/8 schools scored above 90% on total implementation. Total implementation for these schools was 94%.</p>
Plan alignment of MTSS and PBiS including developing and integration team and advisory committee.	Logic model developed and approved by NDE	Logic Model was completed by integration team and approved by advisory committee.

Strategy 2c: MTSS Framework

Implementing Comprehensive Framework

Due to the multiple measures used to track the progress made with strategy 2c, a chart was created to detail the specific activities that were implemented during the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school year, the key measures for those activities, and the baseline data that was collected.

Strategy 2c: MTSS Framework - Implementing Comprehensive Framework		
<u>Activities</u>	<u>Key Measures</u>	<u>Baseline</u>
Needs Assessment Survey	Results from survey	See Needs Assessment Survey results below "Strategy 2c: MTSS Framework - Implementing Comprehensive Framework" on page 26.

Monitor Implementation of MTSS Framework	Attendance at self-assessments Survey	Currently 6 districts completed the self-assessment with the RDA consultant. There are potentially another 6 districts that will be completing the process. Results from the surveys have been positive. Some areas of redundancy have been identified that will be addressed prior to releasing the self-assessment for all to use.
August 2017 MTSS Conference	Pre-conference Survey Post-conference Survey	See summary of Pre-Conference survey results beginning on page 27. See summary of Post-conference survey results beginning on page 28.
Development of 2017-18 MTSS Self-Assessment	Edits required to improve district implementation of the assessment	See above information regarding “Baseline” for Activity “Monitor Implementation of MTSS Framework”
Initial 2017-18 District Consulting	Effectiveness of the consultant process	Results still being collected spring of 2018.

Results from Needs Assessment Survey conducted spring 2017 indicate:

- MTSS Framework is more established at the elementary level than at the middle or high school level.
- The area of highest needs were in Tier III and Tier II math and behavior interventions respectively.

Strategy 3 (Systems Alignment)

Key Measure 1: The Learning Collaborative transformed into a new committee known as the Committee for the Coordination of Systemic Improvement (CCSI). The goals of this committee include creating:

- A comprehensive continuous improvement process, aligned with AQuESTT, Nebraska’s Frameworks, and AdvancED, that addresses requirements and needs of all programs;
- A multi-tiered system of support that builds capacity for a culture of continuous school improvement by monitoring for fidelity of implementation (including the use of a comprehensive needs assessment); and
- A system that builds a culture that ensures data-driven, evidence-based, student-centered decision making and professional learning.

The committee has gained the support of the NDE Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner who have requested the CCSI to form an executive group responsible for reporting progress back to the Commissioner on a frequent basis. CCSI has also established a timeline of activities to ensure the goals specified above are accomplished.

Key Measure 2: Joanne Cashman from NASDSE/NCSI, was brought in by the Office of Special Education to assist with team building and detailing roles/responsibilities in conjunction with the State Board Strategic Plan. Prior to meeting with the staff, a perceptual survey was conducted focusing on systems change. Seventeen of the twenty staff responded and the results are as follows:

- A portion of questions focused on understanding of rebalancing compliance with performance outcomes within state agencies, as well as the impact that the shift will have on individual roles. There was a high level of correlation between the teams understanding the importance of the shift and the extent the shift would impact practice.
- An additional section focused on the understanding of: a) how practice change will impact individual roles; b) how motivated people are to change their practice; c) the understanding of how roles are interdependent; and d) team members working together on projects. Data analysis indicated a noted difference between the importance team members placed on those activities and the perceived extent to which the activities were utilized in practice.

Key Measure 3: The Office of Special Education leadership team committed a full day in the spring of 2017 for staff to meet together and focus on core office values and next steps needed to implement an effective, cohesive team. Using the structure developed in Leading by Convening, the Office invited Joanne Cashman from NASDSE/NCSI to guide the Special Education staff through the process of examining how to effectively respond to change and develop/recognize common ground issues. The Office of Special Education conducted multiple activities from Leading by Convening and concluded the following:

- Defining our Core: The value of proposition
 - “If we foster good communication to break down silos (new and old), then we will feel more connected to our purpose.”
 - “If we individually understand our roles within the Special Education mission statement, then we are able to communicate and collaborate with all stakeholders.”
- Weighing In
 - “Having concrete conversations on the ‘why’s’ of what we do, and create solutions for areas that are lacking.”
 - “Hold to the Office’s stated values and identify what is not being demonstrated or utilized regularly.”
- Grounding Assumptions
 - “The human side of change - we sometimes don’t know each other, and it is easy to misunderstand, miscommunicate, and make judgements.”
 - “There will be growth, and we will come out of challenges stronger.”

Key Measure 4: Statewide MTSS Conference

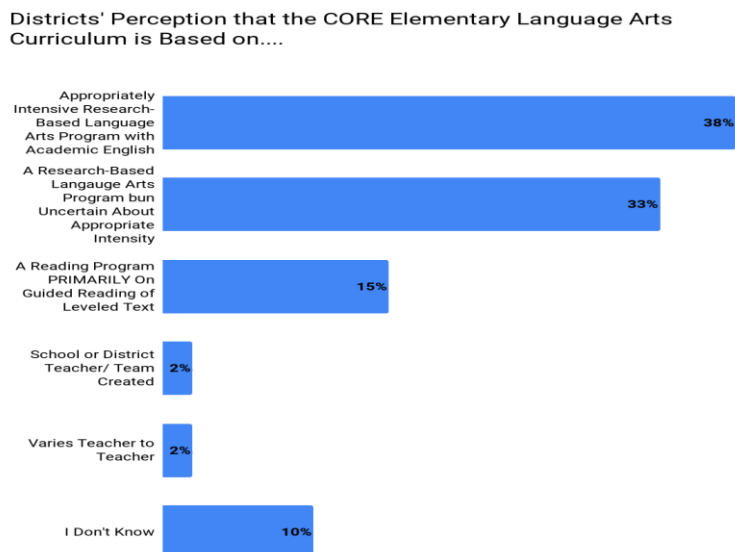
NDE’s August 2017 MTSS Statewide Conference presented the Office of Special Education with an opportunity to gather pre and post data regarding district current practice and understanding of the MTSS Framework. Analysis of the pre and post data has informed the Office’s decisions and professional development supports for the 2017-18 school year.

As stated earlier, the pre-conference survey reinforced the results of the Needs Assessment that was conducted in the spring of 2017, and demonstrated that the MTSS process is more widely implemented at the elementary level than middle school or high school (see table below).

District’s Level of Implementation of MTSS			
	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Full Implementation	31%	7%	3%
Initial Implementation (Some elements in Place)	45%	29%	21%
Installation	4%	7%	4%
Foundation Building/Exploration	16%	40%	37%
Widespread Passivity	5%	17%	34%

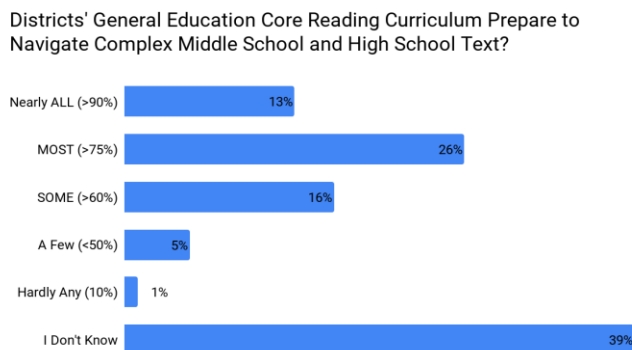
Pre-conference survey data indicated the need for district training on the identification and effect of core reading curriculum as a base for supporting the MTSS framework (see Figure 5). Currently 33% of those who participated in the survey feel that the language arts programs used have an appropriately intensive research base, but are uncertain about whether the programs have appropriate intensity.

Figure 5



Further analysis indicated a deficit in the ability of current reading curricula to adequately prepare students for applying reading instruction at the middle school and high school level (see Figure 6) with 39% of respondents not knowing if the general education core reading curriculum prepares students to navigate complex middle school and high school texts.

Figure 6



Nebraska's Office of Teaching and Learning is participating in CCSSO's Instructional Materials and Professional Development group, which is examining the implementation of high quality instructional materials, and will provide additional guidance to the Office of Special Education that will be shared with districts in the future.

Post-conference survey data indicated specific topics that districts identified as a need for future training. There were 20 potential topics listed that participants could rate regarding the level of need. Based on the number of responses there was minimal variance (131 responses to 140 responses) amongst the priority placed on all 20 topic areas which reinforces the perception that there is a significant training need in all areas. Additional data collected on the survey indicated a significant preference for quarterly, half-day, district-wide trainings (see Figure 7).

Figure 7

Preferences about Future Trainings		
Frequency of Training	Quarterly	45.65%
Length of Training	½ Day	54.07%
Mode of Training	District-wide	54.74%

SIMR Summary Data

As stated in the Summary section of the Phase III-Year 1 submission, Nebraska's SIMR states:

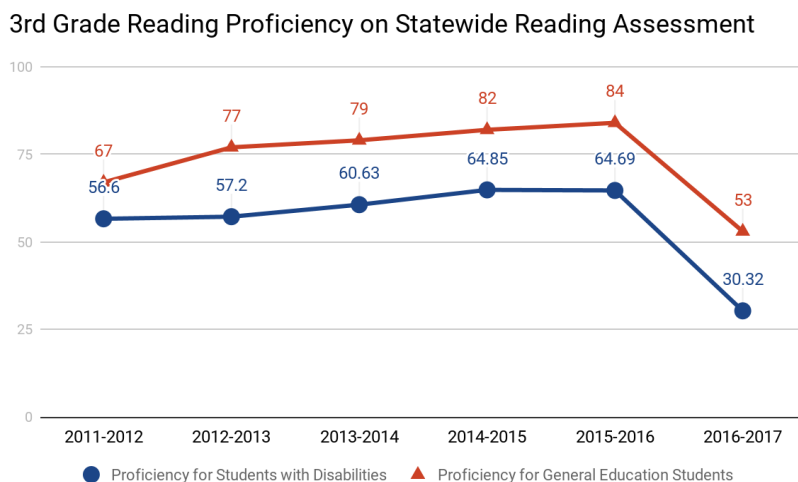
Increase reading proficiency for students with disabilities at the 3rd grade level as measured by the statewide reading assessment.

Although Nebraska is monitoring reading improvement for all third grade students with disabilities rather than a cohort, the targets have remained the same. Nebraska set the following targets during Phase II for third grade reading for students with disabilities as measured by the statewide reading assessment as shown in the table below.

SIMR Targets						
FFY	2014	2015	New Assessment	2016	2017	2018
Target	59.86%	61.86%		63.86%	65.86%	67.86%
Progress	Met Target 64.85%	Met Target 64.69%		Not Met 30.32%		

Reviewing data from 2011- 12 School year through the 2015-16 school year, Nebraska third grade students with disabilities increased with reading proficiency as measured by the statewide reading assessment but declined dramatically for all students with the implementation of a new statewide English Language Arts assessment as shown in Figure 8 below . During the 2016-17 school year, the statewide reading assessment changed to a combined English Language Arts (ELA) test that aligned to the new College and Career Ready standards. With the new rigorous standards of the statewide assessment, all students, including students with disabilities, proficiency dropped (See Figure 8).

Figure 8



As Nebraska has chosen to implement various strategies, Figure 9 shows the impact each of the strategies has on the reading proficiency of third grade students with disabilities. It is important to note that comparisons cannot be made between initiatives due to the overlap of student and district participation within the initiatives listed.

Figure 9

Baseline Group Comparisons for the 2015-16 School Year				Group Comparisons for the 2016-17 School Year		
Group	% Proficient	# of Districts	# of Students	% Proficient	# of Districts	# of Students
Statewide	64.69%	245	3,801	30.32%	244	4,033
Reading TIP	66.57%	165	2,097	30.7%	109	1,451
UNL RtI Consortium	65.91%	58	657	39.8%	31	211
PBiS	69.44%	22	373	33.7%	15	291
UNL RtI & PBiS	67.49%	80	935	30.3%	11	185

Data collection procedures and associated timelines

Nebraska has utilized multiple data collection procedures in order to address each identified strategy. Descriptions of these procedures and the associated timelines are presented in the following tables.

Strategy 1: Increase Use of EBPs Data Collection Procedures and Timelines			
Key Measure	Data Source	Procedure	Timeline
Qualitative data obtained from NDE Office of Special Education staff	TIP Review Tool	The TIP Review Tool is utilized by Office of Special Education to provide feedback to the districts.	Office of Special Education staff annually complete the TIP Review Tool during the winter.
Qualitative data obtained from Office of Special Education staff feedback to districts	TIP Review Tool	The outcome of the completed TIP Review Tool is shared with each district by the Office of Special Education staff.	Office of Special Education staff review the outcome of the annually completed TIP Review Tool with each district during the winter/spring.
Review of 20% of the district TIPs submitted	TIP Review Tool for SSIP Evaluation	Westat reviews a randomized stratified sample of 20% of the TIPs. Data results from the review are analyzed to provide guidance for needed professional development in both districts and the Office of Special Education.	Westat conducts an annual review of 20% of the TIPs following the review conducted by Office of Special Education staff.

Strategy 2: MTSS Framework Data Collection Procedures and Timelines			
<u>Key Measure</u>	<u>Data Source</u>	<u>Procedure</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
MTSS Training and technical assistance	Notes from observations of trainings conducted Survey evaluations from coaching and trainings conducted	Observations conducted by project staff Training surveys are administered after each training	Ongoing - completed during each training provided Coaching surveys conducted annually
Revisions to the MTSS Self-Assessment	Qualitative data collected from pilot districts	When completing the Self-Assessment, district will respond to survey to provide qualitative data and feedback. Necessary changes will be made to the self-assessment document.	Summer of 2018 Ongoing as needed

Strategy 3: Systems Alignment Data Collection Procedures and Timelines			
<u>Key Measure</u>	<u>Data Source</u>	<u>Procedure</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
Establishment of Learning Collaborative	Documentation of meetings jointly attended and/or presented Attendance of meeting participation from varying internal and external offices (NDE, ESUs, and Vocational Rehab.)	Keeping minutes of joint meetings Keeping agendas of conferences attended by multiple offices	Ongoing (began Fall 2015)
Surveys Conducted with the Office of Special Education Staff	Responses collected from surveys	Survey sent 1 week before Leading by Convening Activities	Annually
Leading by Convening Activities conducted with Office of Special Education Staff	Meeting minutes and products from Leading by Convening Meetings	Keeping minutes and products from Leading by Convening Meetings	Annually
Pre/Post Surveys from the MTSS Conference	Responses collected from surveys	Surveys sent to all registrants and participants who attend the MTSS Conference	Pre-Conference Survey sent out a week before the MTSS Conference Post-Conference Survey sent out a month after the MTSS Conference
Alignment of SSIP with Nebraska's State Board of Education Strategic Plan	SSIP Nebraska's State Board of Education Strategic Plan	Crosswalk between the SSIP and the Strategic Plan	Ongoing (began Spring 2016)

SIMR Data Collection Procedures and Timelines			
Key Measure	Data Source	Procedure	Timeline
Nebraska 3rd grade statewide reading proficiency for students with disabilities	Statewide Reading Assessment (NeSA) - 2016-17 Nebraska Student Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) - beginning 2017-18	All students with disabilities in 3rd grade take the statewide assessment. NDE Data, Research and Evaluation Office provides reading proficiency data for the initiatives targeted (MTSS, PBiS, and Districts with Reading as TIP focus) for analysis.	Assessments completed at the district level annually in the spring with results available to the State in the winter.
Growth goal	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	MAP testing made available to all districts. NWEA provides MAP scores to NDE.	NDE continues work with NWEA to fully access district MAP data.

Sampling procedures

For the 2017-18 school year, a 20% review of the TIPs was completed using a sampling procedure. This review was conducted by Westat with the district sampling pulled by the NDE Data, Research, and Evaluation Office. The 20% sample of districts, stratified by geography (i.e., ESU) and membership size, were randomly selected using Microsoft Excel's random number generator and sorting features. Stratified random sampling, whereby random samples are drawn from each stratum or group, ensured that at least one observation from every stratum is drawn into the sample. Westat then meets with the NDE Office of Special Education staff to discuss findings and plan additional trainings districts need based on the data collected.

Planned data comparisons

As a result of data analysis and feedback from multiple stakeholder groups, the SIMR focuses on increasing reading proficiency for all students with disabilities at the third grade level. Although Nebraska is looking at data from the entire state, the Office conducts an analysis of 3rd grade reading proficiency and reviews trend data for districts implementing one of the initiatives targeted. The initiatives include districts that:

- Identify reading as a focus area for their Targeted Improvement Plan;
- Work with the UNL RtI Consortium;
- Work with the Nebraska Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (NEPBIS); and/or
- Work with both the UNL RtI Consortium and NEPBIS.

As discussed in the section on “*Coherent improvement strategies or principal activities employed during the year, including infrastructure improvement strategies*” on page 7, Nebraska has chosen to implement various strategies. The Office of Special Education will analyze reading proficiency data for districts utilizing one or more of those strategies. The data from these initiatives will continue to be reported out separately as comparisons cannot be made between initiatives due to the overlap of student and district participation within the identified initiatives.

How data management and data analysis procedures allow for assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvements

With the support and guidance of various stakeholders, Nebraska intentionally created a data management and analysis process that incorporated procedures allowing for ongoing, time sensitive, and incremental reviews of the data at all levels including student, building, district and state. The goal of data management and analysis is for the Office of Special Education to implement a timely feedback loop between collection and

implementation. This will allow for responsive changes to be implemented as successes and challenges are identified.

Details regarding when data is collected, how it is collected and when data is analyzed can be found in the tables below. To clarify the data procedures and progress, the following tables have been separated into the measurement for the SIMR as well as the three major strategies that Nebraska is implementing.

Strategy 1: Increased Use of Evidence-Based Practices Data Collection Processes			
<u>Data Collection</u>	<u>When Collected</u>	<u>How Collected</u>	<u>When Analyzed</u>
TIP Review	Annually in the winter	TIP Review Tool completed by the Office of Special Education staff	Annually in the winter
TIP Review of 20% of TIPs	Annually in the winter	TIP Review Tool for SSIP Evaluation completed by Westat	Annually in the winter

Strategy 2a: MTSS Framework - RtI Reading Consortium Data Collection Processes			
<u>Data Collection</u>	<u>When Collected</u>	<u>How Collected</u>	<u>When Analyzed</u>
RtI Training Fidelity Observation Checks	During each training provided	Observation check completed by IST staff observer	Quarterly
RtI Training Perceptions Survey	After each training provided	Survey completed by participants and collected by IST staff prior to dismissal from training	Quarterly
RtI Technical Assistance protocols	After each TA session in a district/building	Self-report by IST staff	Quarterly
Implementation Rubric	Annually in spring	Completed by IST staff for each district Completed by leadership teams during spring evaluation sessions	Quarterly
Student Performance (DIBELS, AIMSweb)	On-going	Students assessed in the fall and spring. At-risk students assessed more frequently as each district's data decision making rules dictate	Quarterly

Strategy 2b: MTSS Framework - NEPBIS Data Collection Processes			
<u>Data Collection</u>	<u>When Collected</u>	<u>How Collected</u>	<u>When Analyzed</u>
NEPBIS Self-Assessment Survey	Annually in spring	PBiSApps.org	Quarterly
NEPBIS Benchmarks of Quality	Annually in spring	Leadership teams within schools during PBiS meetings	Quarterly
NEPBIS School Evaluation Tool	Annually in spring for schools requesting	SPDG funded External PBiS evaluator	Quarterly
NEPBIS Team Implementation Checklists	Completed annually in fall and winter	Completed by all school staff and collected by school leadership team	Quarterly
Student performance (SWIS)	By incident	SWIS	Quarterly

Strategy 2c: MTSS Framework Data Collection Processes			
<u>Data Collection</u>	<u>When Collected</u>	<u>How Collected</u>	<u>When Analyzed</u>
Google Doc	During stakeholder meetings following release of website	Electronically	Fall 2018
Coaching perception survey	After each training provided	Survey completed by participants and collected by staff prior to dismissal from training	Following each training
Pre-Post Conference Surveys	Before and After MTSS Conference	Electronically	Pre/Post Conference data analyzed fall/winter of 2017

Strategy 3: Systems Alignment Data Collection Processes			
<u>Data Collection</u>	<u>When Collected</u>	<u>How Collected</u>	<u>When Analyzed</u>
Google Doc	During each stakeholder meeting	Electronically	Following each meeting
Needs assessment	Varies	Electronically through Google Forms	As needed
Pre-Post Conference Surveys	Before and After MTSS Conference	Electronically	Pre/Post Conference data analyzed fall/winter of 2017

SIMR Data Collection Processes			
<u>Data Collection</u>	<u>When Collected</u>	<u>How Collected</u>	<u>When Analyzed</u>
Statewide Reading Assessment	Annually in the spring	State assessment given to every student in the state beginning at 3rd grade	Annually in the winter
NWEA MAP Reading	Varies by district	NWEA provides data file to NDE every two weeks per MOU agreement	Quarterly

Data analysis indicates that at this phase of implementation, Nebraska is collecting the necessary data and appears to be on target for meeting a majority of the outcomes detailed within Phase III - Year 1 of the SSIP. Due to issues encountered with interim measures described on page 12, the Office of Special Education has not been able to analyze MAP reading data. It is anticipated this data will be available for use during the 2018-19 school year.

How the State has demonstrated progress and made modifications to the SSIP as necessary

The Office of Special Education has demonstrated progress and made modifications to the SSIP in multiple ways. Those methods and modifications are described in this section.

How has the State reviewed key data that provide evidence regarding progress toward achieving intended improvements to infrastructure and the SIMR

Nebraska is implementing three strategies designed to impact reading proficiency at multiple levels (student, district, region, state). Each strategy has key data being collected and analyzed to ensure progress is made toward achieving outcomes. The chart below displays the three strategies implemented along with the key measures.

Strategy 1: Increase Use of EBPs		
<u>Key Measure</u>	<u>How Progress is Demonstrated</u>	<u>Changes Made As Necessary</u>
Review Tool	Data review from TIPs submission to identify supports and training districts need with the continuous improvement process.	Creation of Phase III TIP Technical Assistance document. Reformatting how the TIP is submitted Alteration of TIP submission from August 1 to December 1 in response to stakeholder feedback.
TIP Review Tool	Data from TIPs Reviews completed by the NDE Office of Special Education staff in conjunction with stakeholder feedback	Development of procedures for NDE Office of Special Education staff to provide feedback to districts regarding TIPs

TIP Review Tool for the SSIP Evaluation	Share results of 20% TIP Review with stakeholders and districts to determine strengths/weaknesses with the process. The review also assisted with determining training needs to further align fiscal and programmatic resources.	Trainings to be developed around evidence-based practices and process for conducting ongoing data analysis at the local and regional level
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Strategy 2: MTSS Framework		
<u>Key Measure</u>	<u>How Progress is Demonstrated</u>	<u>Changes Made As Necessary</u>
Training observations Survey evaluations	Data collected from observations made during training are reviewed by the project staff to target additional support needed by project staff. Survey data from training attendees is reviewed by project staff to inform and direct future trainings.	Data shows that project staff are implementing trainings as required. No changes needed at this time, but data will continue to be analyzed. Phases of training with the Rtl Consortium are determined based on feedback from surveys.
Perceptual survey of the MTSS Self-Assessment	Districts report	Self-Assessment, originally in paper pencil format was converted to an electronic format to provide immediate feedback to users. Reduced redundancy of items included in the assessment.

Using the Self-Assessment Survey and based on the overall Implementation Average, 62% of the NEPBIS trained schools implemented Universal PBIS with fidelity during the 2016-17 school year. Schools included in this analysis are the 52 schools who participated for the entire reporting period. New schools added in June 2017 would not have completed the Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) within the time period. Criteria were set at 80% of items needing to be in place, which was based on the University of Oregon recommendations for indications of fidelity.

Implementation is measured using several tools including the Self-Assessment Survey, Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) tool and the Team Implementation Checklists. In addition, teams wanting to move to PBIS Levels II and III must have the School Evaluation Tool (SET) completed by an external coach or the external evaluation team. Using the BoQ, teams continued to meet the SPDG goal set for fidelity of implementation with 83% of teams meeting the 80% criteria. However, in 2015-16, 80% of teams met the 80% fidelity criteria benchmark on the SAS and during the 2016-17 school year that percentage has decreased to 62%. Explanation of Slippage: As the 2016 year marked the final year in this grant cycle, teams were introduced to the Tiered Fidelity Inventory to begin the implementation process of the 2017 grant cycle. One hypothesis is that it was confusing to teams to transition back and forth between the tools and the coaching supports in place did not support this transition. Eight schools wanting to move from Level II to Level III had the SET completed by the external evaluation team. All 8 schools (100%) met the fidelity of implementation criteria and scored above 90% on total implementation. All schools moved to Level III in the PBIS framework.

Strategy 3: Systems Alignment		
Key Measure	How Progress is Demonstrated	Changes Made As Necessary
Meeting minutes and agendas	Review of participation of various office staff (NDE and ESU) participating in attending joint meetings and sharing data.	Infrastructure change is a slow and complex process. Office of Special Education staff will continue to invite and engage offices to participate and attend outside meetings as requested.
Review of responses collected from surveys and activities	Results found beginning on pages 26 and 27.	Data from the surveys and activities is being used to develop future internal trainings.
Crosswalk between the SSIP and the Strategic Plan	The Office of Special Education alignment with NDE's Strategic plan is still in development.	Data and feedback from the crosswalk activity is currently under evaluation.

Evidence of change to baseline data for key measures

Although Nebraska is looking at data from the entire state, due to the sparse population, the large geographic area of the state, and the close relationship the Office of Special Education shares with the local education agencies and strong stakeholder involvement, the Office felt it was critical to continue to examine reading proficiency statewide. The office will continue to conduct an analysis of 3rd grade reading proficiency as well as look at trend data for districts who have implemented one of the initiatives targeted. Those initiatives include districts that:

- Identified reading as a focus area for their Targeted Improvement Plan;
- Work with the UNL RtI Consortium;
- Work with the Nebraska Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (NEPBiS); and/or
- Work with both the UNL RtI Consortium and NEPBiS.

How data support changes that have been made to implementation and improvement strategies

During the development of the SSIP Phase III - Year 1, the Office of Special Education in cooperation with NASES conducted a needs assessment that indicated districts require assistance with implementing Tier II and Tier III supports for students. However, pre-conference data showed that 29% of the elementary districts were in the initial implementation stage and a majority of middle school and high school buildings were at the foundation building and exploration stage of implementation of MTSS (see data on page 27-28). Additionally In the area of reading, a majority of districts did not know whether the general education reading curriculum prepared students to navigate complex middle school and high school text. As a result of this data, the Office of Special Education in conjunction with stakeholders decided to postpone providing Tier II and Tier III supports until a firm foundation for MTSS could be established.

With the requirement for districts to engage in a continuous improvement process through the development of a Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP), stakeholders have expressed concern with the report due on August 1. Stakeholders felt that the August due date required them to have the TIP ready for submission before summer break began and was developed after schools decided on professional development activities for the following school year. The Office of Special Education in conjunction with stakeholders moved the submission date for the TIP to December 1, rather than August 1. Districts will be responsible for reporting their progress of implementation of the evidence-based strategy selected December 1, 2018. The Office of Special Education has included components to the secure district website which will permit a more streamlined submission process for Districts as well as NDE review. The district reporting date change will impact the date of NDE staff reviews which may impede the ability to include this data in the 2019 SSIP submission.

Based on the data from the most recent review of the TIPs, the Office of Special Education has identified trainings needed to better support districts. A list of trainings that districts need can be found on page 21.

How data are informing next steps in the SSIP implementation

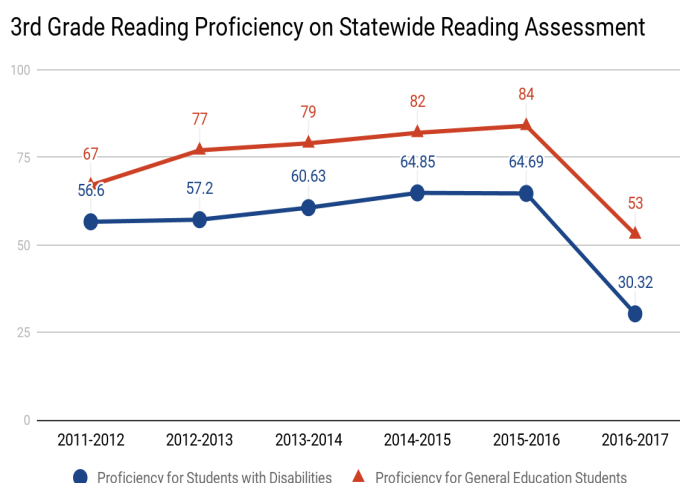
Multiple data sources have converged to inform the next steps of the SSIP implementation. Data from stakeholder groups, needs assessments, surveys and the TIPs review support the need to continue with some planned steps and also to make some modifications to other next steps. From the data, the SSIP management team has determined that more training and resources need to be developed and disseminated in the areas of evidence-based practices, data analysis and core components of MTSS. In addition, the SSIP implementation will continue to move forward in supporting districts with writing TIPs and helping to support the implementation of the those plans and with increasing the alignment of the SSIP with other initiatives and programs within both NDE and regions.

How data support planned modifications to intended outcomes (including the SIMR) - rationale or justification for the changes or how data support that the SSIP is on the right path

Although Nebraska is looking at data from the entire state, due to the sparse population, the large geographic area of the state, and the close relationship the Office of Special Education shares with the local education agencies and strong stakeholder involvement, the Office felt it was critical to continue to examine reading proficiency statewide. The office will continue to conduct an analysis of 3rd grade reading proficiency as well as look at trend data for districts who have implemented one of the initiatives targeted. Those initiatives include districts that:

- Identified reading as a focus area for their Targeted Improvement Plan;
- Work with the UNL RtI Consortium;
- Work with the Nebraska Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (NEPBIS); and/or
- Work with both the UNL RtI Consortium and NEPBIS.

The Office of Special Education and stakeholders have determined the SIMR is appropriate and continues to be the focus of improvement for the state. However, it is clear with the changes in state assessments used to measure the reading proficiency of students, that scores from 2016 cannot be compared to scores from 2017. Due to another change that occurred with the vendor used for the statewide assessment, Nebraska also anticipates that scores obtained in 2017 will not be comparable to scores that will be obtained in 2018. Consequently, NDE looked to the use of an alternative measure, NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). MAP is used as a formative assessment within Nebraska schools and provides robust measures of progress toward proficiency. The issues that NDE has had with using MAP data can be found on page 12 within the *Highlights of changes to implementation and improvement strategies*.



Stakeholder involvement in the SSIP evaluation

The Office of Special Education has made significant changes to meaningfully engage stakeholders. The details regarding how stakeholders have been involved in the evaluation of the SSIP is described in this section.

How stakeholders have been informed of the ongoing evaluation of the SSIP

Results Driven Accountability (RDA) work and evaluation has been and continues to be a topic on agendas with stakeholders. With RDA and evaluation of the SSIP a priority for engagement with stakeholders, all meetings have included a review of the data collected to date and a discussion of future action that should be taken in response to what the data has shown. Specifics regarding how stakeholders have been involved can be found in the section *Stakeholder involvement in SSIP Implementation* beginning on page 18.

The evaluation components have been discussed with multiple stakeholders including staff from the Office of Special Education, district and ESU staff, community members and leadership groups such as Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and Nebraska Association of Special Education Supervisors (NASES).

How stakeholders have had a voice and been involved in decision-making regarding the ongoing evaluation of the SSIP

Stakeholders are key participants throughout the entire SSIP process particularly with the implementation of the MTSS Framework. For MTSS, Nebraska stakeholders have provided feedback on the MTSS self-assessment and analyzed feedback each time a pilot district took the self-assessment to determine what changes were needed to the self-assessment before releasing for all districts to use. Stakeholders at all levels of involvement have the opportunity to review data from the MTSS conference, self-assessment, and TIPs which provide input into next steps.

Summary of Evaluation

- District Targeted Improvement Plans were submitted in a timely manner and contained an implementation and evaluation plan.
- 168 Nebraska districts have chosen reading as a focus for improvement and of those districts, 69 have chosen MTSS as the evidence-based strategy to be used.
- An MTSS self-assessment has been developed.
- Work to align the internal infrastructure continues and is ongoing.
- The reading state assessment was changed during in the spring of 2017 to focus on Career and College ready standards and a new vendor was hired for the 2018 statewide assessments.
- NDE is still in the process of overlaying demographic data onto the MAP data for use to determine progress toward the SIMR.

Data Quality Issues

Data limitations that affected reports of progress in implementing the SSIP and achieving the SIMR due to quality of the evaluation data

Nebraska has identified few data limitations affecting reports of progress in the implementation of the SSIP and achievement of the SIMR. During the 2016-17 school year, the state developed interim data measures for the SIMR. The State began obtaining MOUs between the districts and NWEA to obtain MAP data that is planned to be used to monitor reading proficiency prior to the 3rd grade statewide reading assessment to better analyze the extent to which the strategies implemented have had an effect. MAP data will also be used to measure progress toward the Growth Goals that were established when the SIMR was updated for Phase III. Data limitations regarding access to interim measures are described on page 12 in "Highlights of changes to implementation and improvement strategies."

Concern or limitations related to the quality or quantity of the data used to report progress or results

Strategy 1: Increase Use of EBPs

Providing support to districts with the development, implementation, and evaluation of the TIP has presented resource issues at the state level. The role of the staff within the Office of Special Education has taken on additional responsibilities with providing technical assistance to districts. The Office of Special Education staff are at varying levels of comfort and expertise with guiding districts through completing a detailed data analysis, identification of evidence-based practices, and implementing strategies identified to fidelity. As a result, the Office of Special Education leadership is working to provide additional training to the NDE Office of Special Education staff in these specific areas.

Stakeholders provided the Office of Special Education concerns regarding the due date of the Targeted Improvement Plans (TIPs). As a result, the Office of Special Education allowed stakeholders to provide alternative dates and determine when the next TIP should be due. NDE along with stakeholders determined that the TIP would be due in December, rather than August which would allow districts to use the information within the TIPs to guide the district professional development plans which are typically built early in the spring. NDE's concern with the December due date is the time needed to review submissions and determine next steps in time for the April 2019 submission of the SSIP.

An additional change to the TIP is the formatting of how the TIP will be submitted. With the last submission, districts used a template provided by the Office of Special Education. Although the template guided districts through the development of implementation and evaluation plans, it was difficult for NDE staff to review the plans. As a result, the Office of Special Education has rebuilt a secure district website that emphasizes the key components of the continuous improvement process and built in features that will simplify the review process.

Finally, in reviewing the TIPs, the Office of Special Education determined specific areas in which districts require additional support. Trainings that have been targeted for development are discussed on page 21.

Strategy 2: MTSS Framework

As the SSIP is in the early years of implementation, NDE is continuing to build communication between our contracted providers (UNL RtI Consortium and NEPBIS). Establishing timelines that (a) allow for the flow of data between the projects and the reporting requirements for the SSIP; and (b) the implementation of the individual project's direct services and the SSIP implementation have been a challenge. As Nebraska continues to implement the strategies within the SSIP, the following changes are proposed when data is collected and analyzed for MTSS. Specifically, interim measures to assess reading proficiency (DIBELS and AIMSweb) collected and analyzed by the UNL RtI Reading Consortium on an annual basis will be shared with and reported to the Office of Special Education.

Currently, there are no concerns with the data collection, validity, or reliability for the purposes of reporting progress or results in regards to the implementation of the MTSS Framework strategy. Continued discussions are planned with the intent to improve the flow of data between the phases of the project implementation and the SSIP.

Strategy 3: Systems Alignment

Measures for changes in the infrastructure have begun. Issues regarding data quality and concerns for changes to infrastructure may be revealed as this area of measurement continues to evolve. The Office of Special Education is using *Leading by Convening* rubrics to document work across programs within the department to measure changes in infrastructure.

SIMR:

Currently, Nebraska has multiple checks and balances to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected. The current statewide data collection does not permit real-time viewing of data and has limits based on collection fields. During the 2016-17 school year, Nebraska has changed the statewide reading assessment to an overall English Language assessment using Career and College Ready standards. Due to the

change in the assessment, scores from the 2017 assessment cycle cannot be compared to the scores from 2016. In addition, Nebraska changed the vendor providing the statewide assessments in 2018 which will impact the ability of the Office of Special Education to compare reading proficiency results for students with disabilities in an equitable manner. Another consideration with the measurement of the SIMR is that the statewide measure of reading proficiency begins at the 3rd grade level. To assist with assessing the state's progress at meeting the SIMR targets, Nebraska instituted two growth goals which will be measured using MAP data on a quarterly basis.

1. Decrease the number of students determined at-risk for reading failure beginning in Kindergarten; and
2. Maintain/Increase the rate of growth for students with disabilities who have IEPs to be grade level readers.

Data limitations regarding access to interim measures are described on page 12 in "*Highlights of changes to implementation and improvement strategies*." The Office of Special Education plans to use NWEA MAP data as the measure for the above stated growth goals.

Implications for assessing progress or results

Nebraska's continuous improvement loop, requires consistent data reviews to ensure progress is made in both the implementation of the SSIP activities and the SIMR.

Nebraska's review process has focused on the following areas:

- Stakeholder input that provides guidance with data collection, strategy implementation and overall SSIP evaluation.
- Changes with the statewide reading assessment impact the state's ability to compare longitudinally reading proficiency data.
- MOUs allow for NDE to directly receive NWEA MAP data.
- Identify the types of tests administered at the district level paying particular attention to the grade levels in which reading assessments are administered and frequency of the test administrations.
- Measures for changes in the infrastructure began. Issues regarding data quality and concerns for changes to infrastructure will be monitored as measurement continues.

Plans for improving data quality

Nebraska's plan for continuous improvement regarding data quality is focused on the areas of: (a) data mapping with the assistance of NCSI, IDC, and CIID; (b) monitoring of timelines with the projects (UNL RtI and NEPBIS); and (c) development of PLC website to increase communication between the Office of Special Education staff.

Nebraska has chosen to participate in technical assistance provided by NCSI, IDC, and CIID, in the area of data for monitoring, programmatic, and fiscal mapping. To begin the process of data mapping for Part B, Nebraska chose the areas of a) Child Count, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE); b) Exiting data (students 14 and older); and c) MOE/CEIS. Although it is recognized that the data mapping process requires a great deal of time and staff, Nebraska is finding the process assists with staff familiarization of data, allows for the early identification of collection issues, and creates a structure to support sustainability. Due to the benefits identified, Nebraska will continue the data mapping for all collection areas.

Nebraska continues to work at improving communication and flow of data between NDE and the 2 statewide projects being used to implement MTSS (UNL RtI Consortium and NEPBIS). NDE implemented a plan that includes quarterly reporting with meetings and structured timelines for inputs from both projects. NDE continues to build communication between our contracted providers.

Summary for Data Quality Issues

- Strategy 1: Increase Use of EBPs: Although there are no concerns with the data collection, validity, or reliability for the purposes of reporting progress or results the change in the due date for TIP submissions may impact reporting in the future.

- Strategy 2: MTSS Framework: Improve the flow of data between the phases of the project implementation and the SSIP
- Strategy 3: Systems Alignment: Baselines for changes in the infrastructure were established using surveys and activities from *Leading by Convening*.
- SIMR
 - Change in the statewide reading assessment
 - Potential issue with use of longitudinal statewide data
 - Potential use of NWEA MAP reading scores for growth goals

Progress Toward Achieving Intended Improvements

Assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvements

The assessment of progress toward achieving intended improvements is described in the following section.

Infrastructure changes that support SSIP initiatives, including how system changes support achievement of the SIMR, sustainability, and scale-up

For strategy 1 (Increase Use of EBPs), the Office of Special Education collaborated with NASES on a survey regarding the use of evidence-based practices currently in use in Nebraska. From stakeholder feedback and survey results, the Office of Special Education created a TIP Phase III Technical Assistance document to clearly communicate the expectations for the next submission in the continuous improvement process.

The Office of Special Education has also developed a new funding structure to support the implementation of evidence-based practices at the local level. In an effort to provide scale-up and sustainability, the Office of Special Education has committed to financially supporting districts in the implementation and evaluation of Targeted Improvement Plans. Funds must be used to assist with providing trainings to district staff as determined by the Office of Special Education based on an analysis of the TIP review data. Projects must support districts with building/continuing/sustaining an MTSS framework. Financial resources are being made available beginning with the 2018-19 school year. Projects encourage agencies to leverage resources and align efforts to serve students with disabilities through continuous school improvement. Projects are intended to increase the capacity of districts to deeply implement evidence-based practices designed to improve outcomes of students with disabilities. Project activities must address unique district strengths and needs.

For strategy 2 (MTSS Framework), Nebraska shifted to a more comprehensive and differentiated framework for MTSS implementation that is inclusive of multiple levels supporting the statewide implementation of MTSS. With the assistance of stakeholders, the Office of Special Education developed and began beta testing an MTSS self-assessment that will assist districts in identifying needs and strengths which will provide sustainability and scale-up of the MTSS framework. The development of an MTSS website that includes resources and information will be released in the summer of 2018 and will also allow for the scale-up and sustainability of MTSS.

For strategy 3 (Systems Alignment), the Learning Collaborative transformed into a new committee known as the Committee for the Coordination of Systemic Improvement (CCSI). This committee continues to work at developing a continuous improvement process. For additional information refer to *Strategy 3 (Systems Alignment)* on page 26.

In the areas of monitoring, programmatic and fiscal mapping, Nebraska continues to participate in technical assistance provided by NCSI, IDC, and CIID. Nebraska is finding the process beneficial and assists with staff familiarization of data, allowing for early identification of collection issues which will lead to increased data quality, and creates a structure to support sustainability.

Evidence that SSIP's evidence-based practices are being carried out with fidelity and having the desired effects

Strategy 1 (Increase Use of EBPs): All 244 districts submitted a Targeted Improvement Plan that included each of the required areas. As the TIP is designed to contain multiple phases, the review of outcomes for progress will change as each phase is submitted by districts. For example, when Phase II of TIPs were submitted in the fall of 2017, each district specified fidelity measures. For Phase III, fidelity data will be submitted to the Office of Special Education as part of the overall TIP process December 2018. Information from TIP reviews assists in the development of internal and external trainings needed to ensure there is an increase in the use of evidence-based practices and EBPs lead to the improvement of outcomes for students with disabilities.

Strategy 2a (MTSS Framework):

RtI Reading Consortium

The UNL RtI-reading Implementation Support Team (IST) utilizes a variety of tools to collect implementation data within the context of continuous improvement. To monitor fidelity of RtI training supports provided by the team, observational data on delivery and coverage of content for professional learning opportunities is collected, as well as participant sign-in sheets and perception surveys. Data from the observations and perception surveys are used to inform professional learning foci for the IST members and to update and improve training content and materials.

- ***RtI Training sign-in sheets*** – a registrant list was used for each training to track the number of training sessions provided and participants and school teams who attended each training session.
- ***RtI Training Fidelity Observation Checks*** – During each training session, a member of the UNL IST observes the other IST presenter(s) and records fidelity to use of effective professional learning delivery methods and coverage of training content.
- ***RtI Training Perception Surveys*** – After each training session, participants received a link to an electronic survey to provide feedback on the usefulness and applicability of training content and activities to their district/school settings, beliefs about RtI and suggestions for improvement and additional training needs.

The IST monitors fidelity to provision of technical assistance supports through the use of TA calendars and TA protocols.

- ***Technical Assistance Calendars*** – IST members keep detailed calendars of training and Technical Assistance activities provided for schools/districts
- ***Technical Assistance protocol adherence*** – IST members use common protocols for provision of TA with schools/districts; TA providers complete self-checks of adherence to TA protocols

District- and school-level teams use a variety of tools to monitor implementation of MTSS-reading within a continuous improvement context. All district- and school-teams complete the MTSS-Academic Implementation Rubric each spring to evaluate their implementation and plan for continued implementation the following school year.

- ***Implementation Rubric*** – Completed by teams from all schools. Teams rate their implementation of items related to teaming and leadership for MTSS-academic supports, use of evidence-based core and intervention programs/practices, professional development and coaching, assessment and data-based decision making practices, and individual student problem solving. Observation data, surveys, student data, written action plans and implementation plans, and other permanent products are sources of information used to complete the Implementation Rubric.

Strategy 2b (MTSS Framework):

Nebraska PBIS

The Nebraska PBIS (NEPBIS) system uses several fidelity tools with teams to collect implementation and outcome data across the participating schools. Schools are asked to complete the tools at least annually.

The ***School-wide Information System (SWIS)*** which is required of all PBIS schools, is a web-based information system designed to help school personnel use office discipline referral (ODR) data to design school-wide and individual student interventions. *SWIS* gives school personnel the capability to evaluate

classroom management, individual student behavior, the behavior of groups of students, settings of behavior and times of day eliciting the most frequent student behaviors. *SWIS* data allow PBiS teams to shape school-wide environments to maximize students' academic and social learning opportunities.

The School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET): *The School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET)* is an external fidelity of implementation assessment (Horner, Todd, Lewis-Palmer, Irvin, Sugai & Boland, 2004) and will be completed for a sample of PBiS schools annually. The *SET* is designed to assess and evaluate the critical features of school-wide PBiS across each school year. The external evaluation team will complete the *SETs* on the schools selected. Schools required to have *SET* completed are those schools looking to move up to a level 3 and all level 3 schools within the NEPBIS framework.

The School-wide PBiS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) (Algozzine, Barrett, Eber, George, Horner, Lewis, Putnam, Swain-Bradway, McIntosh, & Sugai, 2014) is a valid and reliable tool allowing teams to assess core features in Tiers I, II and III. The *TFI* has four purposes: 1) initial assessment; 2) implementation guide for each of the three tiers; 3) as an index of sustained SWPBIS implementation and 4) as a metric to identify school meeting criteria and needing recognition with a state system. NEPBIS schools will complete the entire assessment as baseline the first year of the new SPDG grant. After baseline, teams will complete the *TFI* on as many tiers as they are implementing and will do so at least annually.

Strategy 3 (Systems Alignment): The Learning Collaborative which has transformed into CCSI continues to meet frequently and is committed to supporting the SSIP efforts. The Office of Special Education continues to be involved in each department initiative and is committed to membership in each. The Office of Special Education has also identified individuals from outside the agency to also serve within membership to promote collaboration and continued successes when barriers arise.

Outcomes regarding progress toward short-term and long-term objectives that are necessary steps toward achieving the SIMR

Strategy 1 (Increase Use of EBP):

The 20% stratified random selection of TIPS reviewed identified supports needed for improvement and evidence-based strategies. For additional information refer to *Key Measure 2* on page 22.

Strategy 2 (MTSS Framework):

UNL RtI Consortium:

The average fidelity on the *RtI Training Fidelity Observation Checks* was 98% on coverage of training content and an average of 4.9 (on a scale of 1-5) on content delivery items across all trainings. The median rating on all items of the *Training Perceptions Survey* across all trainings was 4.5 on a scale of 1 [strongly disagree] to 5 [strongly agree]. Participants agreed or strongly agreed on items related to the trainings being useful and informative, learning something new, and planning to use the information from the sessions. The IST continuously reviews the survey data to inform updates to training materials, content, and delivery based on participant feedback

The IST provided approximately 190 Technical Assistance sessions for participating districts/schools. The average adherence to *Technical Assistance protocols* as self-reported by IST Technical Assistance (TA) providers was 91% (range of 84-97%) across all TA visits. The most frequently reported reason provided when there was not adherence to the TA protocols involved a need to shift focus during a TA visit as school teams reprioritized needs or recognized a prerequisite step they needed to backup to address.

NEPBIS:

From the NEPBIS/SPDG evaluation, 75% of schools are implementing PBiS practices with fidelity. External evaluation team members completed *SETs* for a sampling of schools identified by the SPDG grant. For these schools, 100% met the identified target for fidelity. Schools who have been participating in NEPBIS have an average proficiency rate of 70.79% on the statewide reading assessment for 3rd grade students with disabilities.

Strategy 3 (Systems Alignment): The Office of Special Education continues to use professional learning communities within the team to collaborate and develop task specific products to provide technical assistance to local districts and Educational Service Units. The SSIP Professional Learning Community specifically works within three areas to develop collaboration amongst the ESSA, AQuESTT (Nebraska's student accountability system), and grant funded projects designed to support special education student outcomes. Members from the SSIP PLC are part of the CCSI (see *Progress on Strategy 3: Systems Alignment* on beginning on page 15).

Measurable improvement in the SIMR in relation to the targets

During the 2016-17 school year, a new statewide reading assessment was used to assess English Language Arts (ELA). The new (ELA) assessment assessed new College and Career Ready standards. In addition to new assessment aligned to new standards, the Department of Education decided to hire a new vendor to administer the 2018 statewide assessments. As a result of these changes, and the impact these changes have on reading proficiency scores, the Office of Special Education will wait to make adjustments in the SIMR targets until new baselines can be established.

Summary

Strategy 1: Increase Use of EBPs

- TIP Review completed on all TIPs as well as 20% sample reviewed for inclusion of implementation and evaluation plan
- Development of TIP Phase III technical assistance document and new online secure district website submission
- Creation of a funding process to support trainings identified by the Office of Special Education based on the TIP reviews
- Development of multi-year project that will align with the phases of the TIP

Strategy 2: MTSS Framework

- NDE hosted the first annual MTSS Framework Conference
- Review of statewide needs assessment and pre/post conference data which supports postponement of activities with Tier II and III to focus on Tier I implementation
- Establishment of multiple stakeholder groups to facilitate implementation of needs identified by stakeholders
- Development of district level MTSS self-assessment to facilitate analysis of current readiness of implementation
- MTSS self-assessment beta testing with pilot districts
- Consulting framework developed to assist districts with self-analysis for implementation of MTSS
- Development of an MTSS newsletter and website
- Creation of a technical assistance document is under development for MTSS and RtI

Strategy 3: Systems Alignment

- Restructuring of the Office of Special Education personnel roles and responsibilities aligning with the State Board's Strategic plan
- Strategic planning across the Department continues
- Mapping of data to document policies and procedures of all data collections continues

SIMR

- Completion of MOUs between the Department and districts to access NWEA MAP reading scores for use of interim measures to show progress toward SIMR targets
- Continued work to overlay demographic data with MAP data to provide progress monitoring of SIMR
- Use of a new statewide reading assessment aligned to College and Career Ready standards
- Hiring of new vendor for the 2018 statewide reading assessment

Plans for Next Year

Additional activities to be implemented next year, with timeline

As the Office of Special Education has implemented the activities that were detailed within the Phase III-Year 1 of the SSIP and engaged in strategic conversations with stakeholders regarding implementation data, timelines for the activities originally planned changed and additional activities planned. A description of what the Office of Special Education will be implementing over the next year for the SSIP-Year 3 can be found below.

<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
Increase Use of EBP	At least half of all Nebraska districts will report improvement in the indicator are selected	December 2018
MTSS Framework	Distribution of MTSS materials through the newly developed website including the self-assessment, training modules, progress monitoring tools, fidelity measures	Winter 2018
MTSS Framework	Development of crosswalk between AQuESTT and MTSS	Fall 2018
MTSS Framework	Implementation of the second annual MTSS Conference	Fall 2018
Systems Alignment	Development of comprehensive needs assessment to align with ESSA requirements	Winter 2018
Systems Alignment	Development of continuous improvement tool aligned with AQuESTT, ESSA, and Department Office needs	Winter 2018
Systems Alignment	Continue fiscal support to Targeted Improvement Plans with activities linked to outcomes	Annually

Planned evaluation activities including data collection, measures, and expected outcomes

Currently, the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Special Education has multiple evaluation activities planned including data collection, measures and expected outcomes. Those pending evaluation activities are described in the table below.

<u>Evaluation Activities</u>	<u>Data Collection</u>	<u>Measures</u>	<u>Expected Outcomes</u>
Monitor progress with SIMR	Annual Statewide reading assessment	Percent of students with disabilities scoring at a proficient level	Meet targets set within the SIMR
Monitor growth goals	NWEA MAP reading assessment - analyzed on a quarterly basis	Rate of growth	Students with disabilities will maintain or increase the necessary rate of growth to achieve grade level reading skills

Monitor improvement of outcomes in districts	TIP Review	Report of progress toward targets	Half of districts who submitted TIP will show improvement in focus area selected Reading proficiency data for students with disabilities in districts that chose reading as a focus for improvement will increase
Monitor increased use of EBPs	TIP Review for SSIP Evaluation	Pull of 20% of TIPs submitted	Half of districts who submitted TIP will show improvement in focus area selected
Monitor implementation of MTSS Framework	Google Doc	Survey of Stakeholders regarding functionality of new website	Districts report using website materials NDE adds/deletes/changes content based on stakeholder feedback
Monitor implementation of MTSS Framework	Crosswalk document	Identification of alignment between AQuESTT and MTSS	Gaps identified during crosswalk will be addressed to create alignment and close gaps
Monitor implementation of MTSS Framework	Pre/Post Conference Surveys	Perceptual data gathered from surveys	Tier I MTSS implementation with increased fidelity
Monitor Systems Alignment	Needs Assessment	Completion of Needs Assessment	Comprehensive needs assessment aligned with ESSA requirements that is ready for district use
Monitor Systems Alignment	Google Doc	Survey of Stakeholders regarding continuous improvement tool	Continuous improvement tool aligned with AQuESTT, ESSA, and all Department Office needs
Monitor Systems Alignment	Final Report	Implementation of required activities	District staff receive trainings needed to implement TIPs and outcomes improve for students with disabilities

Anticipated barriers and steps to address those barriers

With the assistance of stakeholders, areas of focus that closely align with the activities within the SSIP were identified. The strategic planning process and the implementation of the activities within the SSIP identified anticipated barriers and some steps that can be taken to address those barriers. The information can be found in the table below.

Area of Focus	Anticipated Barriers	Steps to Address Barriers
Systems Alignment	<p>Providing regional/reactionary technical assistance (TA) on compliance/regulatory special education issues</p> <p>Primarily oriented around subject area or silos</p> <p>Regulatory compliance-based professional development is offered minimally</p>	<p>Restructure the Office of Special Education staff roles/infrastructure to provide differentiated supports to districts</p> <p>Connecting, convening and partnering within NDE teams as well as other state/private agencies, school, and families</p> <p>Provide ongoing professional development based on assessed needs to both internal staff and external partners</p> <p>Broader staff expertise, including both content knowledge and breadth of experiences</p>

Area of Focus	Anticipated Barriers	Steps to Address Barriers
Data and Systems	<p>Limited internal/publicly accessible data</p> <p>Focus on accountability and compliance</p> <p>Unclear/undocumented policies for data collection and usage</p>	<p>Move to an understanding of the data that is currently collected</p> <p>Documented policies and procedures for data collection and usage</p> <p>Use valid and reliable data to make informed decisions and programmatic improvements</p>

Area of Focus	Anticipated Barriers	Steps to Address Barriers
MTSS	<p>Lack of common language to describe components of MTSS due to lack of understanding of the Framework</p> <p>‘Siloed’ staff responsibilities based on individual regional response</p> <p>Limited staff knowledge/guidance and implementation planning</p>	<p>Development of MTSS website providing resources and examples of practice in use and how they fit into the MTSS framework</p> <p>Collaborative supports, focused on regional and individual educational needs</p> <p>Comprehensive professional development targeted on both academic and behavioral systems</p> <p>Establish a statewide technical assistance resource center</p>

Area of Focus	Anticipated Barriers	Steps to Address Barriers
Communication	<p>Sporadic and limited communication with specific populations on an “as-needed” basis (external)</p> <p>Sporadic and inconsistent communication with Office of Special Education Team on an “as-needed” basis (internal)</p> <p>Cumbersome, non-user friendly website</p>	<p>Clear and consistent communication across all stakeholders to engage in continuous improvement</p> <p>Transparent and consistent communication on a regular basis within the Office of Special Education Team</p> <p>A user-friendly, intuitive web environment</p>

Additional Barriers:

During the development of Phase III-Year 1, the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Special Education established a committee (Learning Collaborative) including individuals from various offices within the department to collaborate and align initiatives. The original committee included representation from the Office of Special Education, Accreditation and School Improvement, and the University of Nebraska in Lincoln (UNL). As work progressed, the team was expanded to include additional representatives from other areas including Teaching & Learning, Federal Programs and Nutrition, and evaluators from The Nebraska Academy for Methodology, Analytics and Psychometrics (MAP). The work of the Learning Collaborative led to additional collaborations and has allowed Nebraska to take multiple steps to further align and leverage the Part B SSIP with other initiatives within our state. Those initiatives include collaborations with the following:

- Literacy Cadre – Using Evidence-Based Practices to Improve Reading;
- Data Cadre – Using Data for Continuous School Improvement;
- AQuESTT - Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow;
- 10 Year Strategic Planning Committee;
- MTSS;

- PBiS; and
- Pyramid Model.

The barriers around the Learning Collaborative and continued work within each initiative that will lead to the outcomes desired within the SSIP are those that all state agencies experience. Shifts in priorities within the department have led to many of the initiatives not having sustained work produced. There have also been shifts in personnel that have led to initiatives not being continued or delays in the work. The Office of Special Education continues to be involved in each initiative and is committed to membership in each. The Office of Special Education has also identified individuals from outside the agency to also serve within membership to promote collaboration and continued successes when these barriers arise. Through continued interoffice collaboration, NDE hopes to (a) reduce the duplication of work; (b) increase prudent and efficient use of fiscal and human resources; and (c) ensure districts receive the support needed to improve the outcomes of students with disabilities.

The State describes any needs for additional support and/or technical assistance

- Continued support and technical assistance from the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) with systems alignment and infrastructure development.
- Continued support and technical assistance from the IDEA Data Center (IDC) with monitoring and implementation support of the evaluation plan.
- Continued recognition from OSEP of the importance of breaking down silos and the need for continued cross-departmental collaboration.
- Continued technical assistance/guidance calls to communicate emerging national issues affecting SSIP implementation.
- OSEP funding and support to have staff to collaborate and problem solve regarding SSIP implementation issues.
- Sustained continuity of support and leadership from OSEP.