



State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

Phase III

Part B FFY 2020-2025 SPP/APR

State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator 17

February 2025



Change Log

The State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) represents the plan for State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator 17. The SSIP is reviewed annually, updated as needed, and posted on the Texas Education Agency (TEA) [State Systemic Improvement Plan](#) webpage.

Revision History

Date	Description of Change	Purpose	Author
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2025-02-03	Updated document	FFY 2023 Submission	Donna Holmes

Notes

- Version numbers are assigned to each revision to track the document's progress.
- Previous versions of the document can be accessed by emailing spp@tea.texas.gov.
- The SSIP document is reviewed and updated at least annually.
- For questions or suggestions regarding the SSIP document, please contact spp@tea.texas.gov.

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
APR	Annual Performance Report
ARD	Admission, Review, and Dismissal
EBP	Evidence-Based Practices
ESC	Education Service Center
EL	English Learner
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
GT	Gifted and Talented
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IPI	Intensive Program of Instruction
LbC	Lead by Convening
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MEMN	Multiple Exceptionalities and Multiple Needs Network
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
PL	Performance Level
RDA	Results-Driven Accountability
READ	Reading Excellence and Academies Development
SBEC	State Board of Educator Certification
SCTN	Student-Centered Transitions Network
SECIP	Special Education Continuous Improvement Plan
SIMR	State-identified Measurable Result
SpEd	Special Education
SPP	State Performance Plan
SSIP	State Systemic Improvement Plan
SSP	Strategic Support Plan
STAAR	State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness
TA	Technical Assistance
TEKS	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
TIER	Tiered Interventions using Evidence-based Research
TSDS	Texas Student Data System
TOT	Trainer of Trainer
TCIP	Texas Continuous Improvement Process
TSLAT	Texas Statewide Leadership for Autism Training
TXLS	Texas Lesson Study
TxSSN	Texas Sensory Support Network
WHO	World Health Organization

Section 1. Summary of Phase III

Phase III of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) is summarized in this section. The section is divided into four parts. The first and second parts are an overview of the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR) and the theory of action. The third part provides an overview of annual evaluation activities and outcomes, and the last part lists improvement strategies and evidence-based practices.

State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)

The SiMR refers to “A statement of the result(s) the State intends to achieve through the implementation of the SSIP.” The Texas Education Agency (TEA) identified the following SiMR.

The State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR) is to enhance the reading proficiency rate among children with disabilities in grades 4, 8, and high school. This will be measured by aggregating the results from state assessments in grades 4 and 8, along with End of Course exams in reading achievement, to evaluate their performance against grade-level standards, inclusive of any accommodations.

The SiMR is aligned to both the federal State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) system and the state Results-Driven Accountability (RDA) system. It is aligned to SPP Indicator 3B: reading proficiency for students with IEPs in grades 4, 8, and high school (HS). SPP 3B is a performance-based indicator under the monitoring priority: Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A)). This alignment with the SPP 2020-2025 indicator measurement change was advised by stakeholders in the State and creates an opportunity to focus on infrastructure and improvement strategies aligned to results at specific benchmarking grades in reading achievement (i.e., grades 4, 8, and HS). Federal fiscal year FFY 2020 was the baseline year for this indicator.

Theory of Action

Figure 1 shows the theory of action framework. This framework illustrates the link between key action strands implemented at different geopolitical scales (i.e., state, regional, and local levels) to achieve the SiMR of increasing reading proficiency in special education for grades 4, 8, and HS.

The SSIP theory of action was initially developed in 2015 and revised in 2019 with minor edits in 2021 to better align with the four improvement strategies and amended SiMR. The improvement strategies help build capacity at the state, regional, LEA, campus, and teacher levels to increase reading proficiency for students in special education. The TEA will:

- Allocate resources to support state, regional, and local efforts for increasing reading proficiency by building capacity for evidence-based practices (EBP), resources, and professional development
- Expand reading initiatives and opportunities
- Communicate expectations, standards, and results to the public and other stakeholders
- Collaborate with institutions of higher education, regional education service centers (ESCs) and networks, other state agencies, and organizations to improve teacher quality and ensure consistency across programs and policies that may impact reading achievement.

Key Strands of Action	If TEA	Then the ESC will	Then the LEA will	Then the Campus will	Then Stakeholders will	So That
Allocate resources to support efforts toward positive student outcomes	Provides resources to promote capacity building	Provide access to professional development and technical assistance (TA) to improve reading achievement	Use resources to promote capacity building and establish policies to implement LEA wide procedures specific to reading achievement	Implement LEA policies and procedures with fidelity to support teacher-student reading instruction-learning	Have higher expectations, access resources to increase capacity and provide effective interventions and quality services for children with disabilities in the area of reading achievement measured at grades 4, 8, and HS	All children and youth with disabilities receive access to quality, evidence-based reading practices, and appropriate educational services to increase reading proficiency
Expand reading initiatives and opportunities	Expands reading initiatives	Provide resources and evidence-based information aligned to reading initiatives	Implement policies and procedures with fidelity to support reading instruction	Encourage staff to increase reading instruction knowledge and implement EBP		
Communicate expectations, standards, and reading achievement results	Communicate expectations, standards, and reading achievement results	Provide TA to low performing LEA/ campuses in reading achievement	Utilize data to conduct self-analysis and monitoring reading activities	Utilize data to conduct self-analysis, monitor teacher and student progress through progress monitoring		
Collaborate with higher education institutions, statewide agencies, and organizations to improve teacher reading initiatives, and ensure consistency across programs and polices	Engages and collaborates with other educational programs, statewide agencies, and organizations about reading achievement progress	Engage stakeholders and conduct analysis to improve and tailor service aimed at reading achievement	Clearly communicate expectations, standards, and reading achievement results to stakeholders	Engage with stakeholders to communicate expectations, create partnerships, and obtain community support for reading achievement		

Figure 1. Theory of action framework for improving statewide reading achievement.

Overview of Evaluation Activities, Measures, and Outcomes

Reading Outcomes

Reading outcomes for the SiMR are measured by aggregating the results from the English Language Arts State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) in grades 4 and 8, along with the high school STAAR English I assessment, to evaluate student performance against grade-level standards, inclusive of any accommodations. Reading proficiency is determined by scoring at grade level or above on the STAAR assessments.

Regional Education Service Center (ESC) and Special Education (SpEd) Liaisons

All ESC Special Education Liaisons work to improve outcomes for students receiving special education services through timely, targeted program support for local educational agencies (LEAs). SpEd Liaisons, Strategic Integration Liaisons (SILs), and Lead SILs all support LEA Teams through integration and alignment of Texas Education Agency (TEA) initiatives.

Regional ESCs participate in activities associated with and resulting from the State Performance Plan (SPP), the Statewide Initiatives Implementation Plan (SIIP), the TEA Review and Support Division's identified Focus Areas of Compliance, and the Special Education Continuous Improvement Process (SECIP). To ensure effective communication and information dissemination among the state, regions, and districts, each ESC designates specific staff members responsible for tracking/reporting activities related to these areas. ESCs develop and monitor three TEA approved regional goals and activities and engage in progress reporting quarterly. One of the goals of the SECIP must be aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR) to communicate expectations at both the ESC and LEA levels for improving reading outcomes for children with disabilities (CWD).

Results Driven Accountability (RDA) Framework

The RDA system is a data-driven framework developed and implemented annually for local educational agencies (LEAs) by the Division of Review and Support in coordination with other departments within the TEA. The RDA Chapter 12 in the Accountability Manual provides comprehensive technical documentation about the RDA system, including the Special Education program area, indicators, measurement requirements, data sources, and more.¹ This system is used by the TEA as one part of its annual evaluation of LEA performance and program effectiveness.

The data review and interventions applied within the RDA framework are aligned across three domains within the RDA framework:

- Domain I: indicators of academic achievement,
- Domain II: indicators of post-secondary readiness, and
- Domain III: indicators of disproportionate analysis.

Additional information regarding the specific indicators included within each RDA Domain, can be found on the [Results Driven Accountability \(RDA\)](#) web page.

Differentiated Monitoring and Support System (DMS)

To achieve continuous improvement goals, the TEA has established a Differentiated Monitoring and

¹ <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/chapter-12-2024-rda.pdf>

Support (DMS) system aligned with the monitoring system of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The TEA DMS system provides a balanced approach of compliance and performance-based accountability that describes how monitoring and support activities are customized for LEAs based on need.

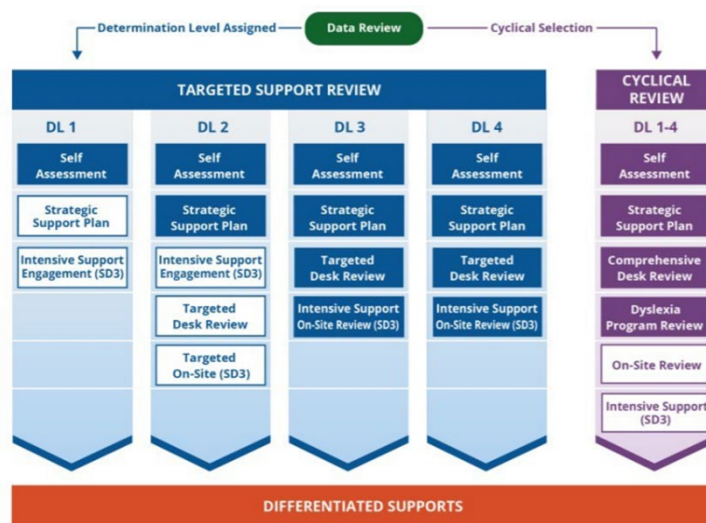


Figure 2: Differentiated Monitoring and Support System

The Differentiated Monitoring and Support system consists of two types of special education program monitoring: Cyclical reviews and Targeted reviews. Monitoring activities determine compliance related to federal requirements, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and state laws to assist LEAs in resolving specific issues or concerns that impact services and outcomes for children with disabilities. The monitoring process is intended to help LEAs continuously improve services and facilitate positive student outcomes.

All LEAs in the state of Texas will be, at a minimum, monitored every six years in a scheduled cycle. When the LEA is selected for Cyclical Review, a comprehensive desk review is conducted. The comprehensive desk review is designed to evaluate LEA performance on seven areas of compliance identified in the diagnostic framework, including state assessment.

LEAs that are identified as having an overall Determination level of 2, 3, or 4 are asked to participate in a Targeted Support Review which focuses on the identified areas that require intervention.

Additional information regarding the Differentiated Monitoring System can be found on the [Differentiated Monitoring and Support \(DMS\)](#) webpage.

Technical Assistance (TA) Networks

The TA networks execute project plans developed by TEA initiative owners and grantees. Each network reports performance toward its goals, metrics, milestones, and deliverables. Initiative owners monitor the grant performance and data collected toward achieving the network goals. TEA conducts a needs assessment to develop the scope of work and TA plan for the next year of the grantee cycle.

Improvement Strategies and Evidence-Based Practices

The improvement strategies and evidence-based practices for improving special education reading proficiency in Texas for children with disabilities (CWD) in grades 4, 8, and high school (HS) involves the Texas Education Agency (TEA), education service centers (ESCs), and local educational agencies (LEAs).

The Texas Education Agency 2023 Snapshot reports that over 5.5 million students were enrolled in more than 1,200 LEAs². These students attended over 9,000 schools and were educated and supported by more than 763,000 educator staff. Texas public school students are served in distinctly diverse school settings. LEAs range in size from less than one square mile to nearly five thousand square miles, and total student enrollment varies from the smallest LEA serving less than 25 students to the largest LEA serving over 189,000 students.

In school year (SY) 2020-21, during the COVID-19 pandemic, statewide enrollment decreased from the previous year for the first time since TEA began collecting enrollment data in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). In SY 2020-21, 5,371,586 students were enrolled in Texas public schools. Between SY 2019-20 and SY 2020-21, student enrollment decreased by 122,354 students, or 2.2 %. However, the percentage of students served in special education programs increased from 587,987 (10.7 %) in 2019-20 to 605,043 (11.3 %) in 2020-21. In SY 2021-22, 635,097 (11.7%) students received special education services. This number rose to 702,785 (12.7%) in SY 2022-23, and further increased to 774,489 (14.0%) in SY 2023-24.

Figure 3 shows the TEA strategic plan is supported by four strategic priorities. TEA’s strategic priority, “Build a Foundation for Reading and Math,” supports the SiMR to improve reading proficiency for children in special education.

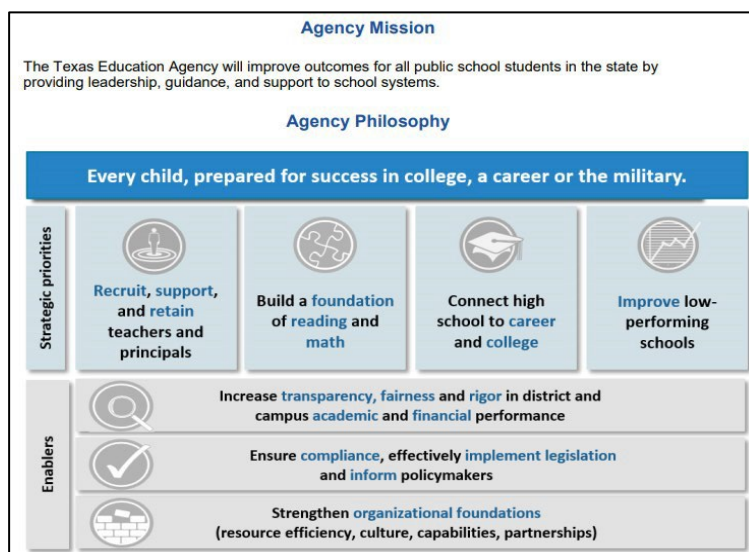


Figure 3. TEA mission, philosophy, strategic priorities, and supporting enablers.

The LEAs in Texas are organized into 20 regional ESCs (see Figure 4). ESCs support LEAs in many ways.

² https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/snapshot/snapshot_srch.html

Their mission, goals, and objectives are set forth by the TEA. The mission of the TEA is to “improve outcomes for all public school students in the state by providing leadership, guidance, and support to school systems.” State-provided financial support to ESCs is used to develop, maintain, and deliver services to LEAs for improving special education student performance in reading. The ESCs do at least four things:

- Enable LEAs to operate more efficiently and economically,
- Assist in teaching a variety of subject areas (e.g., reading),
- Address LEAs rated academically unacceptable under the state system of accreditation, and
- Promote compliance with federal and state rules and regulations.

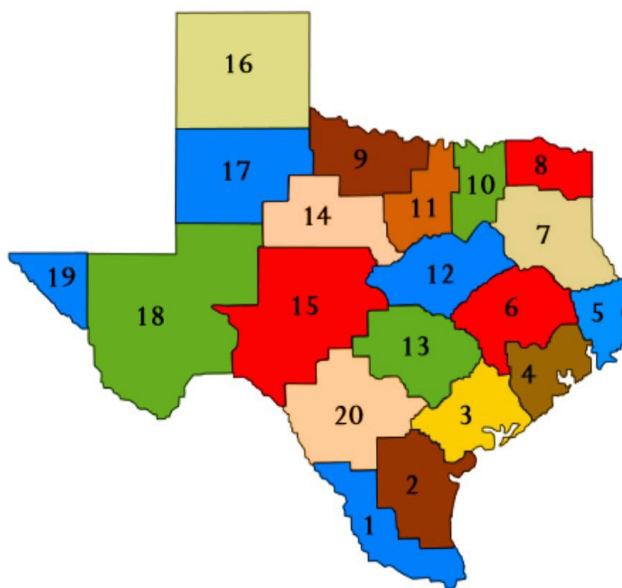


Figure 4. Twenty geographical regions and corresponding ESCs in Texas.

ESCs provide an array of services (e.g., technical assistance (TA), resources, trainings) customized to the regional context and student demographics. Some services are delivered at the ESC and in other cases the ESC representatives provide on-site TA to LEAs during the school year (e.g., school discipline, school climate, behavior supports, teacher quality, and evidenced-based practices).

Regional ESCs provide the foundation for the special education TA infrastructure by providing training and TA for parents, LEAs, and other community stakeholders to help meet the requirements, including State Performance Plan (SPP) reading targets, and purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Each ESC develops an annual regional Special Education Continuous Improvement Plan (SECIP). This plan describes regionally developed improvement activities based on multiple sources of data including state, regional, and LEA-level to identify critical areas of need. Moreover, ESCs support the dissemination of statewide information to LEAs throughout Texas.

The TEA partly uses discretionary funds from IDEA Part B to provide grants for statewide TA networks. The networks address thematic areas and include the grantee who completes required activities, network members, and TEA special education program staff. The networks utilize stakeholder or advisory groups in the design and implementation of their network activities.

TEA incorporated stakeholder feedback, data analysis results, and interviews from the 2018 Special Education Strategic Plan to reimagine the network structure. The network redesign launched on July 1, 2019, to identify and fill gaps in previous TA networks, streamline work to reduce redundancies, and form collaborative partnerships among network initiatives. The redesign moved work from siloed initiatives to an interconnected initiative network where joint meetings occur both face-to-face and virtually on an annual and quarterly basis. COVID-19 resources were also developed to support LEAs.³ However, some previous TA networks were discontinued, and their work was streamlined and rolled into new network initiatives.

Table 1
Networks Implementing Statewide Improvement Strategies

TA Network	Network Description
Child Find, Evaluation, and ARD Supports Network	Provide resources and training aligned with effective Child Find practices, evaluations, and collaborative Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee processes that lead to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for students with disabilities.
School, Family, and Community Engagement Network	Provide resources and professional development to build the capacity of educators to work collaboratively with families and community members in supporting positive outcomes for students with disabilities (e.g., SPEDTex website).
Inclusion in Texas Network	Assists LEAs to build capacity and implement instructional programs that provide access to inclusive environments and grade-level standards.
Texas Statewide Leadership for Autism Training (TSLAT)	Increase LEAs' knowledge, understanding, and implementation of evidence-based practices (e.g., training, TA, and resources) that ensure the academic, functional, and behavioral needs of students with autism are met.
Tiered Interventions using Evidence-based Research (TIER)	Develop comprehensive and coherent training and resources for evidence-based intervention practices across the State. The network strives to increase LEA and ESC capacity to develop and implement an effective, integrated, comprehensive framework for intervention that is grounded in differentiated instruction for all students' academic, behavioral, and social achievement.
Texas CAN Network	Provides statewide leadership and support to increase the capacity of LEAs and families to meet the needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities.
Texas Sensory Support Network (TxSSN)	Ensures support (e.g., communication, mobility, tactile skills, environmental adaptations, diagnosis, evaluation) to infants, toddlers, children, and youth with sensory impairments, their families, and the professionals who serve them.
Small and Rural Schools Network	Provides support to LEAs serving small and rural communities by developing infrastructures, offering programs and services that support the recruitment and retention of special education staff, and researches and deploys innovative solutions to ensure the LEAs are equipped to effectively serve students with disabilities in these communities.

³ <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/covid-19-support-special-education-0>

Student-Centered Transitions Network (SCTN)	Build a collaborative infrastructure among students, families, LEAs, and communities. The SCTN aims for all students with disabilities to be actively involved in planning, communicating, and evaluating progress toward meeting transition goals from early childhood to high school graduation and post-secondary readiness.
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The TEA increased oversight of resources produced by TA networks to ensure they meet TEA quality standards and branding requirements. Improvement strategies for reading proficiency are included in network project plans and implemented by both networks and ESCs.

Table 2 below lists statewide improvement activities that both directly and indirectly support the SiMR to improve reading proficiency for children who receive special education in grades 4, 8, and HS.

Table 2

Improvement Strategies and Activities to Promote Reading Proficiency

Improvement Strategy 1: Allocate resources to support state, regional, and local efforts toward positive student outcomes.		
Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
Increase capacity by adding additional state staff to create a TA team	Hired staff will oversee the development of TA resources, FAQs, webinars, monthly newsletters, and the state website redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In August 2023, Texas SPED Support was launched as a centralized website for all technical assistance and support needs -Continue to develop resources, conduct bi-monthly TEA/ESC Zoom meetings & LEA webinars, and publish monthly SpEd Newsletters ⁴
<p>House Bill (HB) 3 mandated the following reading practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -LEAs are entitled to receive the Dyslexia Allotment for a student identified with dyslexia under the IDEA and Section 504. -LEAs receive an additional \$970 for each student served in the mainstream classroom. -The TEA will ensure that every eligible four-year-old prekindergartner will be provided a high-quality prekindergarten as evidenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase the availability of dyslexia training for teachers, increase dyslexia therapist positions, screening/evaluation tools, progress monitoring tools, and evidence-based early intervention programs -Increase the number of students accessing the general education reading curriculum -Increase progress monitoring and data collection on early warning indicators specific to kindergarten reading readiness 	-Continue to monitor for implementation of requirements

⁴ <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/tea-special-education-webinars-and-newsletters>

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
by the PreK2 Diagnostic tool.		
<p>Under HB 3, school boards are required to adopt early childhood literacy plans. All plans are required to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -At least one LEA administrator or ESC employee from the LEA’s region to coordinate implementation and submit annual report to the board on the LEA’s progress -Annual public meeting review by the board -An annual report posted on the LEA’s website -Specific, quantifiable, annual goals for five years at each LEA campus 	<p>To improve reading proficiency, school boards must create and implement early childhood plans requiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Annual goals for aggregate student growth on 3rd grade STAAR reading -Annual targets for students in each group evaluated under closing the gaps domain -Targeted professional development for classroom teachers in K-3rd grade for campuses the board identifies as not meeting the plan’s goals—considering the needs of students in bilingual education/special language programs. -Annual targets set for students in bilingual/ESL programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue to monitor for implementation of requirements
<p>In 2015, the 84th Texas Legislature passed legislation directing the commissioner of education to develop and make available the following professional development to Texas public school teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Literacy achievement academies for teachers who provide reading instruction to students at the K-3rd grade level -Reading-to-learn academies for teachers who provide reading comprehension instruction to students at the 4th or 5th grade level 	<p>The goal of the reading academies is to grow teachers’ knowledge, understanding, and systematic use of effective, research-based, and scientifically validated reading instruction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current reading academies use a comprehensive model that includes a combination of on-line modules, in-person literacy community and learning sessions, and coaching support to promote classroom application of Reading Academies instructional practices. - In addition to the Texas Reading Academy pathway for teachers there is an administrator pathway and a bi-literacy pathway. -Both general and special education teachers participate in the Texas Reading Academies. - As of May 2024, over 134,000 educators completed Texas Reading Academies with over 12,000 enrolled.
20 regional ESCs established in	Support LEAs by disseminating	- Support LEAs by disseminating

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
the Texas Education Code (TEC) to assist LEAs in improving student performance in each region, enable LEAs to operate more efficiently and economically, and implement initiatives assigned by the legislature or commissioner	information, conducting training, and consultation for federal and state programs, and providing TA and leadership on a variety of projects and functions determined as priorities by the State.	information, providing leadership, training, coaching, and technical assistance for federal and state programs, in accordance with TEA's focus on increasing student achievement. - ESC established a reading goal aligned with the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). ESCs monitored progress towards the state reading goal & reported progress quarterly.
ESC Special Education Liaison grant renewed to facilitate LEA leadership capacity in developing and sustaining system-level change in special education programs based on each LEA's unique needs	The goal of ESC Liaisons is to provide individualized and targeted support LEA leadership teams by facilitating each teams' capacity to implement system-level change in special education programs, disseminating information, and providing leadership coaching to ensure sustainability of progress.	- Project has continued and the number of liaisons at each ESC has increased based on demand for support at the LEA level.
Amplio contracted for a digital dyslexia intervention platform. The Amplio dyslexia platform creates a mechanism for teachers to provide continuity of instruction delivering high-quality evidence-based reading intervention in both remote and brick and mortar settings. The intervention platform launched in February 2021 with words correct per minute progress monitoring system added in Fall of 2022.	Program goal: Student rate of improvement in words correct per minute (wcpm) meets or exceeds the 50th percentile grade level growth expectations using established national norms (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2017) as measured by grade level aggregate student progress for students with dyslexia whose LEAs use the State's Amplio intervention and data collection platform	Completed August 2022

Improvement Strategy 2: Expand Initiatives and Opportunities

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
Child Find, Evaluation, and ARD Supports Network Develop guidance documents and tools on comprehensive evaluation for SLD/dyslexia,	100% of ESCs and 10% of LEAs will receive training materials for evaluation personnel to utilize for identifying students with reading disabilities.	-Developed Standards Based (SB) IEP Process Training and coaching to ensure educators have the skills necessary to ensure students with disabilities

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
dysgraphia, dyscalculia, including data from multiple sources		make progress on challenging goals aligned to the general education English Language Arts curriculum.
<p>Inclusion in Texas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop and publish reading trainer of trainer (ToT) resources for addressing how disabilities affect students’ learning of reading, including resources that address dyslexia and related disabilities (e.g., science of reading) -In collaboration with national experts, develop and publish to website resources on inclusion support beyond co-teaching and supporting co-teaching partnerships focused on specially designed instruction in reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -10% of LEAs will receive training, TA and supports -Professional development for teacher training in reading within year one of the projects. -At least 90% of participants demonstrate competency in evidence-based strategies provided during a competency-based exit survey. The exit survey will be a test of understanding of content from reading professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Trainer of Trainer (ToT) resources focused on how disabilities, including dyslexia, affect reading -ToT Academics: Reading Instruction Elementary developed for ESC staff responsible for training and implementing MTSS, specifically in the area of reading.
<p>Texas Statewide Leadership for Autism Training (TSLAT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -6-hour online course: Literacy Instruction for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders -45-minute course: Autism Spectrum Disorder and Assistive Technology: Supporting Literacy in Individuals with Autism through the use of Assistive technology ⁵ 	<p>100% of educators will have access to online courses and resources to increase knowledge, understanding, and implementation of EBP in reading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy Supports – Autism Spectrum Disorder and Assistive Technology 3-hour course: Direct Instruction - Courses on Literacy Supports for Autism Spectrum Disorder and Assistive Technology
<p>Tiered Interventions using Evidence-Based Research (TIER) Network</p> <p>In 2019-20, TIER is developing a set of 10 modules (i.e., on-demand and face-to-face training modules) related to best practices for MTSS. There is a module that takes a deep dive into evidence-based reading practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -100% of ESCs will participate in the trainer-of- trainers institute -20% or more of LEAs within each region will designate at least one campus team to participate in high-quality training on the implementation of the MTSS by August 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on building capacity at the LEA level to develop and maintain MTSS. -MTSS webpage updated to include a sample notification form to provide parents with required information when their child begins receiving intervention, including reading interventions. - As of the end of the 2023-2024

⁵ https://ecampus.esc13.net/show_class_info.html?classid=38164

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
<p>Texas Sensory Support Network Literacy pilots provide training on implementing the Foundations for Literacy to teachers of PreK- K students who are identified as deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) and speech and language pathologists (SLPs) in participating Regional Day School Programs for the Deaf (RDSPDs). Video coaching will be provided for follow up support (TSBVI Early Braille Literacy).</p>	<p>85% of professionals working with students who are identified as blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, or deaf-blind implement the skills reinforced through coaching and report improved student outcomes</p>	<p>school year, 173 certified ESC staff and 272 certified LEA staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Educators have access to online courses and resources to increase knowledge, understanding, and implementation of high-quality reading instruction. -Language-Literacy Connection and What It Means for DHH Children (1-hour course) -Continue to collect data for analysis and evaluation purposes.
<p>Texas Complex Access Network Revision and update of existing ToTs into an online format with the addition of engaging user activities, including pre- and post-tests for teaching literacy to students with a significant cognitive disability</p>	<p>70% of teachers and instructional assistants who attend EBP professional development will be observed implementing at least one high yield EBP with fidelity as measured using a fidelity implementation checklist during a follow-up coaching session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Educators have access to online courses and resources to increase knowledge, understanding, and implementation of high-quality reading instruction. -UDL for Students with Complex Access Needs (3-hour course) -Connecting Communication and Instruction for Students with Complex Access Needs (6-hour course with coaching component) -Designing and Supporting Instruction (1 hour course) -Teaching Literacy to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (Five 1-hour courses with coaching component) -Continue to collect data for analysis and evaluation purposes -15% of LEAs in the state (i.e., 167) have educators who have participated in the training and received coaching to ensure fidelity of implementation of skills learned

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
<p>Texas Lesson Study (TXLS) This inquiry-based, job embedded professional development allows teachers to work collaboratively to develop, teach, and assess research-based lessons.</p>	<p>TEA aims to reach 10% of all Texas teachers by 2023, but the potential for impact includes every student in Texas</p>	<p>-Ensured support for children with disabilities was integrated into the TXLS content being delivered to LEAs. Integration efforts included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensuring special education and special programs directors were part of the district planning team -Including special education teachers in the implementation of TXLS -Incorporated Universal Design for Learning guidelines and differentiation with TXLS content -Additional content regarding importance for IEP review prior to lesson design

Improvement Strategy 3: Communicate Expectations, Standards, and Results

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
<p>HB 3 Reading Academies is a state mandate for the implementation of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Science of Reading (STR) Exam will be required for teachers seeking new certifications for PreK-6th grade -LEAs adopt a K-3 curriculum that uses systematic direct instruction, incorporates integrated reading instruments, and prioritizes highly effective teachers in K-2 -LEAs must ensure that all K-3 teachers and principals complete the Reading Academies by the end of SY 2022–2023 (HB 3 updated by 87th Texas Legislature in June 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Beginning January 1, 2021, all intern, probationary, and standard certifications will require a STR certification. -By August 2021, ensure that K-5th grade teachers in low-performing schools and schools with high percentages of students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch have had the opportunity to participate in a teacher literacy achievement or reading-to-learn academy and received access to high-quality content and instructional strategies aligned to the TEKS (per SB 925 and SB 972 (84th Texas Legislature) (TEA Strategic Plan 2017-2021 and TEA Strategic Plan 2019-2023)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educators that teach any grade level from prekindergarten through grade six must demonstrate proficiency in the science of teaching reading on the Science of Reading (STR) Exam -On-line modules, in-person sessions, and coaching provided to promote classroom application of Reading Academies practices. - As of May 2024, over 134,000 educators completed the Reading Academies with over 12,000 enrolled.
<p>2018-2019 Reading Excellence and Academies Development (READ) reading academies</p>	<p>-The goal of the reading academies is to grow teachers' knowledge, understanding, and</p>	<p>-Completed</p>

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
include both literacy achievement academies and reading to learn academies for teachers who provide literacy instruction to students in K-5	systematic use of effective, research-based, and scientifically validated reading instruction for students. -ESCs and LEAs will hire a full-time literacy coach to provide development sessions, instructional coaching to teachers, as well as training and instructional collaboration to LEA and school leader cohort participants. Literacy coaches will support the members of their cohort and could be asked to train during summer professional development.	

Improvement Strategy 4: Collaborate with institutes of higher education, other statewide agencies, and organizations to improve teacher quality initiatives, and ensure consistency across programs and policies that affect student outcomes.

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
Revised Educational Diagnostician Exam (State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) A new set of standards for educational diagnosticians was adopted in 2017 and a testing framework was developed for a new certification exam	The newly revised education diagnostic certification and test framework align with updated standards	-Completed Approved test framework posted in January 2020 & exam launched January 2021
Special Education Certification Redesign (SBEC): -Internal and external stakeholder input into the redesign of the Special Education Teacher Certification -Special education teacher certification redesign would improve upon the current, broad special education certificate by creating a deaf/blind supplemental certificate and multiple new certificates that are specialized by grade level and the degree of student support needed. ⁶	Redesign Texas special education teacher certification exams -October 2018 to January 2019 – TEA held stakeholder meetings for recommendations to strengthen Texas’ special education certification process. -April 2019 - TEA presented stakeholder feedback to the SBEC. -Summer 2019 – SBEC directed TEA to convene Educator Standards Advisory Committees to	- Completed Content validation for exams (b) Special Education 6-12, and (c) Deafblind EC-12 and prepared for launch Sept. 2025 -Continued Specific test items for the exam under review for (a) Special Education EC-6 in preparation for September 2027 launch

⁶ 19 TAC Chapter 235

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
	develop updated special education educator standards. -July 2020 - SBEC adopting three new special education certifications: Special Education EC-6, Special Education 6-12, and Deafblind EC-12 educator standards. -September 2024 (2020-2024) - Exam development for all three exams and test frameworks undergoing content validation.	

Infrastructure Improvement Strategies

The following infrastructure improvement activities are being executed to increase reading proficiency for children with disabilities in grades 4, 8, and high school (HS).

During 2018-2019, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) built infrastructure to support the state’s general supervision system by designing and developing a special education monitoring system and redesigning the former Performance Based Monitoring System (PBMAS) to the Results-Driven Accountability Framework (RDA). Subsequently, the TEA has engaged in alignment projects that will further support unification and integration of data and local educational agency (LEA) program monitoring throughout the state.

The Special Populations Monitoring, Review and Support Division within the TEA’s Office of Special Populations and Student Supports provides general supervision and monitoring of LEA implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), per its obligation under 34 CFR §300.600, Texas Education Code (TEC) §29.010, and Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §97.1005. In compliance with these provisions, the State must make annual determinations on the performance of each LEA using the four determination categories found in 34 CFR §300.603(b)(1).

The TEA’s monitoring and general supervision is intended to balance improving results and compliance for children with disabilities who receive special education, which is achieved through the following:

- State Performance Plan (SPP)
- Results-Driven Accountability Framework (RDA)
- Annual Performance Reports (APR)

The following areas of targeted support are also provided:

- Targeted technical assistance (TA)
- Effective dispute resolution processes

- Integrated monitoring activities
- Data validation
- Corrective action planning

The TEA continues its commitment to enhance the infrastructure of the special education monitoring system. Ongoing enhancements are expected to impact the ability to communicate and support LEAs in meeting required expectations, standards, and reading results. Table 3 highlights the State’s infrastructure strategies.

Table 3
Infrastructure Improvement Strategies

Activities	Outcome	FFY 2023 Progress
<p>The Intensive Supports project identifies LEAs that require intensive intervention. LEAs participate in the intensive support process, which is aimed at improving the implementation of best practices in special education and increasing LEA access to TA.</p>	<p>LEAs identified with intensive needs are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conduct diagnostic activities to identify systemic issues related to inequitable services designated as significant disproportionate (SD) -Develop a prescribed student support plan with the LEA to address the area(s) of need -Provide increased frequency and duration of support to LEAs by the Intensive Support Team and the Significant Disproportionality Grantee 	<p>Continued – Data are collected for analysis and evaluation purposes.</p>
<p>The Dyslexia Monitoring project developed a monitoring process for dyslexia, as required by Senate Bill 2570.</p>	<p>-The dyslexia monitoring process does the following: effectively audit, monitor, and periodically conduct on-site visits of LEAs to ensure compliance with SB 2570 and the program approved by the SBOE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop reasonable and appropriate remedial strategies to address LEA noncompliance and audit that parent notifications provided after K-1 screening inform parents of the program maintained by the Texas Library and Archive Commission, which provides students with access to borrowed audiobooks free of charge 	<p>Continued – Data are collected for analysis and evaluation purposes.</p>

Changes to Implementation and Improvement Strategies

The State did not implement new improvement strategies and/or revisions to existing strategies for the Federal fiscal year 2023.

Section 2. Progress on Implementing the SSIP

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) implements and tracks progress on the activities specified in the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).

Education Service Centers (ESCs)

Leveraging the ESCs remains a crucial part in the theory of action. ESCs supported local educational agencies (LEAs) by disseminating information, providing leadership, training, coaching, and technical assistance, in accordance with the TEA's focus on increasing student achievement. ESCs supported reading improvement through establishing a Special Education Continuous Improvement Plan (SECIP) reading goal aligned with the SiMR. ESCs monitored progress towards the goal and reported quarterly.

Technical Assistance (TA) Networks

The TEA continues to strengthen existing networks for consistency, quality, and to build capacity at the 20 regional ESCs for TA to LEAs. This initiative includes provisions to support, reallocate or add resources, and assist with data analysis related to the SiMR, ensuring ongoing support and improvement in reading outcomes for children with disabilities.

ESC Special Education (SpEd) Liaison Initiative

The ESC SpEd Liaison Grant Initiative continues to fund liaison positions at every ESC to serve as connectors of resources and supports to LEAs throughout the State and provide individualized and targeted support to LEA leadership teams. The number of liaisons at each ESC has increased based on demand for support at the LEA level. All ESC Special Education Liaisons work to improve outcomes of students receiving special education services through timely, targeted program support for the local educational agency (LEA). SpEd Liaisons, Strategic Integration Liaisons (SILs), and Lead SILs all support LEA Teams through integration and alignment of Texas Education Agency (TEA) initiatives.

Reading Academies

House Bill 3 (HB 3), passed by the 86th Texas Legislature in June of 2019, requires all kindergarten through third grade teachers and principals to attend a "teacher literacy achievement academy." All certified teachers who are currently teaching students in kindergarten-grade 3, and principals at campuses with K-3 students, are required to have a HB 3 Reading Academies certificate of completion on file in the [Searchable Database for TRA](#) completions by the end of the 2023-24 school year. Current Reading Academies use a comprehensive model that includes a combination of on-line modules, in-person literacy community and learning sessions, and coaching support to promote classroom application of Reading Academies instructional practices. In addition to the Texas Reading Academy pathway for teachers, there is also an administrator pathway and a bi-literacy pathway. Both general and special education teachers participate in the Texas Reading Academies.

Texas SPED Support

Texas SPED Support is a website that makes available resources and professional development for educators, administrators, and support staff who work with students receiving special education services. The website is overseen by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in collaboration with a grantee. Texas SPED Support offers a variety of resources to help with reading, including:

- **Foundational Reading Lesson Set:** A set of instructional materials for teachers to create phonics lessons for students in grades one through three. The materials include routines for all components of phonics lessons.
- **Asynchronous Literacy for ALL Training:** A free training session that covers the science of teaching reading, including how the brain learns to read, and how to remove barriers to learning.
- **Texas Dyslexia Academies:** A series of 6 courses offered synchronously at each ESC or asynchronously on Texas SPED Support and provide foundational knowledge and statutory requirements for teaching reading to students with dyslexia and related disorders.
- **Language-Literacy Connection and What it Means for DHH Children:** This asynchronous course provides ways providers can facilitate literacy related skills at early ages and encourage parent involvement.
- **Literacy Instruction for Students with Autism:** In this asynchronous course, participants first develop an understanding of the literacy needs of individuals with autism as the foundation for framing their instruction. Using video examples, specific strategies are shared for engaging individuals with autism in increasing complex text and academic content and supporting students in applying literacy skills to their social experiences.
- **Teaching Literacy to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities:** The purpose of this collection of online courses is to give teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities the information and tools needed to provide meaningful literacy instruction and experiences.
- **Literacy Supports-Autism Spectrum Disorder and Assistive Technology:** This asynchronous course focuses on understanding common literacy barriers for students with autism, features of technology that address literacy barriers, and the process for feature matching student needs and technology features.
- **TIER Progress Monitoring Tool:** This is a free progress monitoring platform to house data for students receiving reading interventions.
- **TIER academics module and TIER screening and progress monitoring trainings** help LEAs to screen and intervene with students experiencing reading difficulties as part of their overall MTSS.

Additional Implementation Progress Update

Through introduction and carry-through of Lead by Convening (LbC) frameworks, opportunities were identified, and commitments were made to build a deeper and more collaborative relationship between the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the education service centers (ESCs) as a core investment in changing outcomes and achieving the SiMR. A core group was established to use existing networks and opportunities for intentional engagement. Many of the ESCs adapted core engagement principles to achieve goals outlined in specific statewide network objectives.

Intended Outputs Due to Implementation Activities

From Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020 to FFY 2023, the data shows varying levels of progress on State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) reading assessments among children with disabilities (CWD) in grades 4, 8, and high school. In FFY 2020, a baseline proficiency rate of 10.85% was established. The following year, FFY 2021, showed significant improvement, with a proficiency rate of 15.22%, exceeding the target of 12%. In FFY 2022 and FFY 2023, there were modest increases to 15.05% and 15.83% respectively, although these rates fell short of the targets of 20% and 25%.

The TEA anticipates the implementation of initiatives and improvement activities, and other initiatives and general supervision activities will continue to help support intended outputs for achieving the SiMR.

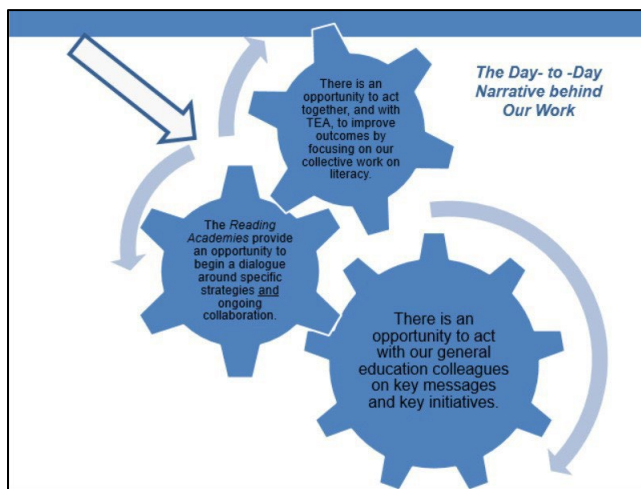


Figure 5. Identified opportunities in adaptive strategies.

Stakeholder Involvement in SSIP Implementation

On November 4, 2021, the Texas Continuous Improvement Steering Committee (TCISC) group convened and provided input on the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) targets. The stakeholders advised the TEA to re-baseline due to the proposed change in the included data set alignment utilizing grades 4, 8, and HS (EOC) for the SPP Indicator 17—SiMR for FFY 2020. Stakeholders agreed on the coherent improvement strategies implemented at the state, regional, and local levels. Current initiatives listed in the SSIP are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but they are rather initiatives believed to have the greatest impact on the SiMR. Stakeholders adhered to the belief that it is quality more than quantity that matters most, and they focused on selecting those improvement strategies believed to ensure positive outcomes. Ongoing discussions with stakeholders will help guide how well current and evolving initiatives align with the reading proficiency goal established in the SSIP.

The TEA has been intentional about examining the level of interaction and collaboration among individuals and the systems in the theory of action. In examining the initial SSIP plan, a focus on adaptive leadership in the TEA, as well as adaptive competencies in the ESCs, was a focus of prior improvement strategies. Technical strategies include evidence-based practices, and the process and protocols implemented around these practices. Adaptive approaches include building a two-way learning relationship with ESCs and stakeholder groups and leveraging elements of the infrastructure to bridge research, policy, and practice divides. Figure 6 shows the dual aspects of improvement strategies being utilized to build capacity and leverage resources through the current initiatives.

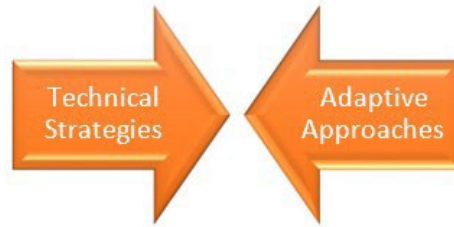


Figure 6. Dual aspects of technical strategies and adaptive approaches supporting the SiMR.

Section 3. Data on Implementation and Outcomes

Monitoring and Measuring Outputs to Assess Effectiveness

The evaluation measures and data sources include regional and statewide State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessment scores, regional Special Education Continuous Improvement Plans (SECIPs), network quarterly reports, the education service center (ESC) Special Education (SpEd) Liaison Grant, and Technical Assistance (TA) Networks.

Leveraging the 20 regional education service centers (ESCs) is an essential component of the theory of action. The alignment of the State Performance Plan Indicators (SPPIs), including SPPi 17, and accountability results extend to the responsibilities of ESCs. They must provide technical assistance (TA) and professional development to the local educational agencies (LEAs) within their respective regions. All 20 ESCs must develop a SECIP based on activities and regional/LEA data compared with state targets. In the annual SECIP submission, each ESC reports activities implemented during the reporting year, and any activities that will be changed as a result of data analysis.

Table 4 incorporates a quarterly progress reporting schedule that has been reported by some of the networks. This table includes the data sources, collection procedures, and timelines for the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).

Table 4

Data Sources for Key Measures

Data Sources	Collection Procedures	Timelines
State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR)	Procedures established by the TEA's Student Assessment Division	Student Assessment testing calendars
Education Service Center (ESC) Special Education Continuous Improvement Plan (SECIP)	-ESCs monitor progress toward the state reading goal and the additional two goals through quarterly data submissions.	Quarterly throughout the grant cycle for regional goals and each summer for SPP/RDA alignment activities
Technical Assistance (TA) Networks	Self-reported by grantee and progress toward required activities collected monthly via Qualtrics report	Networks report metric data quarterly to Initiative Lead at TEA
ESC SpEd Liaison Grant	Mandatory data towards the performance measures	Monthly and quarterly through Qualtrics

Data Sources	Collection Procedures	Timelines
	collected monthly and quarterly through Qualtrics.	

Reading assessment data are used to assess progress toward achieving the SiMR. Data are collected using a secure and robust data submission system managed by the TEA’s Information Technology (IT) division. The STAAR provides a snapshot of the degree to which students are learning the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The assessment results are integrated into the student data system (TSDS) and are used to create reports that provide information on student performance. The data are used for reporting to the U.S. Department of Education under Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), formally Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Each TA network grantee self-reports progress toward required activities monthly via a Qualtrics report and quarterly to the Initiative Lead at the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The Initiative Lead monitors participation and outputs based on attendance, feedback opportunities, and other reporting consistent with contractual and/or grant reporting requirements.

Progress and Modifications to the SSIP

The continuous improvement process employs a two-way model of active engagement. This model allows for the periodic and ongoing monitoring and fidelity checks necessary to achieve the intended reading proficiency outcomes. State leadership, along with stakeholders, have historically engaged in a model of performance based on evaluations that drive behavior in developing improvement planning initiatives aimed at addressing critical needs at the state, regional, and local educational agency (LEA) levels. Student reading proficiency data based on the State Performance Plan Indicator 3B: Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards serves as the basis for achieving the SiMR.

Stakeholder Involvement in the SSIP Evaluation

Historically, access to stakeholder input has been the cornerstone of the Texas Continuous Improvement Process (TCIP). In consideration of the SSIP and in determination of the SiMR, engagement in the TCIP’s reliance on stakeholder input was critical to establishing the SiMR. To ensure representative feedback, a geographic and ethnic diversity approach toward obtaining stakeholder feedback was utilized. Key stakeholder roles follow a recruitment plan based on a variety of input needs. Key roles include an all advisory or informal workgroup that includes parents, teachers, campus, and local educational agency (LEA) administrators. Members of involved stakeholder groups including LEA and campus administrators, special education directors, special education teachers, general education teachers, parents, higher education institutes, advocacy agencies and professional groups, ESCs, related state agencies, related service providers, evaluation personnel, and other stakeholder groups.

The Texas Continuous Improvement Steering Committee (TCISC) has been used to engage in multiple face-to-face and other meeting modalities to provide input on the intense and important work that has resulted in a comprehensive, multi-year SSIP focused on improving special education reading proficiency for grades 4, 8, and HS. The TCISC and other stakeholder engagement opportunities will continue throughout the implementation and evaluation phases of the SSIP. Additionally, specific to this indicator, feedback, and data sources within the Texas Education Agency (TEA) organization plays a key role. Cross divisional meetings and data sharing continue to be vital for data analysis, infrastructure, historical and future improvement strategies, and measurable results.

Section 4. Data Quality Issues

Data limitations can affect progress and reporting on the SiMR.

Limitations to Data Quality

Data in the SiMR differs from reading data reported in SPP Indicator 3 in that the SiMR includes only grades 3, 8, and high school (HS). Additionally, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan revised the achievement measurement of proficiency to include students with a proficiency level of “meets grade level or above” beginning in FFY 2017.

Data Quality Concerns

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the global spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) a pandemic.⁷ The Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, declared a state of disaster in Texas days later on March 13, 2020,⁸ and on March 16, 2020 Governor Abbott waived the STAAR testing requirement for Texas public schools.⁹ Then on March 19, 2020 Governor Abbott issued an executive order requiring all schools in Texas to temporarily close.¹⁰ The next day “U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced [that] students impacted by school closures due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic can bypass standardized testing for the 2019–2020 school year.”

Although the actions by the Texas governor and U.S. Secretary of Education protected the health and safety needs of students and school personnel in Texas, the implications of bypassing standardized testing for the school year (SY) 2019–2020 means that statewide reading assessment data was not collected for Spring 2020.

Improving Data Quality

Improving data quality relies on improving data analysis and reporting. The Division of Special Education Program Policy, Engagement, and Reporting (SEPPER) within the Special Education Programs Division at the TEA hired one data analyst and one intern. One of their responsibilities was conducting in-depth quantitative research on special education reading performance for grades 4, 8, and HS.

Section 5. Progress Toward Achieving Intended Improvement

Infrastructure Changes that Support SSIP Initiatives

The Texas Education Agency’s (TEA’s) continuing and planned infrastructure changes and the quality of statewide TA and resources are designed to improve the services and supports needed for increasing reading proficiency for grades 4, 8, and HS students with disabilities who receive special education. The

⁷ <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>

⁸ <https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-declares-state-of-disaster-in-texas-due-to-covid-19>

⁹ <https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-waives-staar-testing-requirements>

¹⁰ <https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-issues-executive-orders-to-mitigate-spread-of-covid-19-in-texas>

TEA has committed additional resources and expanded its capacity to provide oversight and targeted engagement over special education programs. For example, the Department of Review and Support's Differentiated Monitoring and Support (DMS) system aims to be inclusive of all LEAs in Texas, helping to improve compliance and statewide performance. Additionally, the TEA has committed additional support by redesigning the technical assistance (TA) networks, expanding the number of state TA staff, and by executing on agency wide initiatives related to reading outcomes.

Outcomes Regarding Progress Toward Objectives

Ongoing connections across infrastructures, the inclusion of metrics, measures in network project plans, and expected stakeholder engagements support strategy implementation.

Benchmarks regarding progress toward short-term goals include:

- How well resources are being used; how well participants are engaged with implementation and fidelity; how knowledgeable stakeholders are of expectations, standards, and results
- How prepared practitioners are upon completion of training
- These metrics have been expanded and are providing more lead measures that are anticipated to be more predictive of student outcomes often based on lag measures for statewide projects.

The TEA has taken steps to increase capacity through strategies identified in the LbC principles. Education service center (ESC) leaders can help to better allocate resources, increase participant engagement in implementing evidenced-based practices with fidelity, and increase knowledge and preparation of stakeholders and practitioners. Two-way active engagement is necessary to achieve short-term and long-term goals of the SSIP. Preliminary results indicate high levels of engagement and positive outcomes regarding implementation activities, short-term goals, and the positive impact on increased reading proficiency.

Measurable Improvements in the SiMR (Baseline)

The SiMR is measured by aggregating the results from the English Language Arts State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessments in grades 4 and 8, along with the high school STAAR English I assessment, to evaluate student performance against grade-level standards, inclusive of any accommodations. Reading proficiency is determined by scoring at grade level or above on the STAAR assessments.

From Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020 to FFY 2023, there have been varying levels of progress on the STAAR reading assessments among children with disabilities (CWD) in grades 4, 8, and high school. In Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020, a baseline proficiency rate of 10.85% was established. The following year, FFY 2021, showed significant improvement, with a proficiency rate of 15.22%, exceeding the target of 12%. In FFY 2022 and FFY 2023, there were modest increases to 15.05% and 15.88% respectively, although these rates fell short of the ambitious targets of 20% and 25%.

In FFY 2020, the baseline year, 11.83% of 4th grade CWD scored at grade level or above on the STAAR English Language Arts (ELA) assessment. In FFY 2021, the reading assessment score improved significantly to 21.58%, surpassing the target of 12%. However, in FFY 2022, the percentage declined to 16.29%, which did not meet the target of 20%. In FFY 2023, there was a slight improvement to 17.81%, but it still fell short of the target of 25%. Despite not meeting the targets in the last two years, there was an overall increase in proficiency levels from FFYs 2020 to 2023.

In FFY 2020, 10.04% of 8th graders scored at grade level or above on the STAAR ELA assessment. This percentage increased to 15.83% in FFY 2021, exceeding the target of 12%. In FFY 2022, there was a slight decrease to 15.22%. By FFY 2023, the percentage increased again to 15.94%. The data reflects a positive trend from FFYs 2020 to 2023 for 8th grade CWD.

In FFY 2020, 10.49% of high school CWD scored at grade level or above on the STAAR English I assessment. This percentage decreased to 9.83% in FFY 2021. In FFY 2022, the proficiency level increased to 13.91%, and in FFY 2023, it further increased to 14.03%. Although proficiency levels showed an upward trend from FFYs 2020 to 2023, the targets set for each year were not met.

The SSIP data from FFY 2020 through FFY 2023 shows progress despite some fluctuations. The positive trends highlight the effectiveness of current strategies, although continued focus is needed to sustain and enhance progress and to meet ambitious targets.

Baseline reading outcomes for students receiving special education services in grades 4, 8, HS are obtained from the Texas Performance Reporting System (TPRS). Table 5 shows baseline data and COVID change from 2019 and 2021 that skips 2020 because no data were available. 2021 data were used to establish a baseline for the SiMR.

Table 5

Baseline Special Education STAAR Reading Results for Grades 4, 8, and High School (HS).

Source: [Texas Performance Reporting System \(TPRS\) Statewide STAAR Performance](#)

Year	Special Education (Current)				Special Education (Former)			
	2019	2021	2022	2023	2019	2021	2022	2023
Grade 4 Reading								
At Approaches Grade Level or Above	44%	35%	48%	51%	74%	62%	80%	80%
At Meets Grade Level or Above	24%	20%	35%	25%	40%	35%	54%	47%
At Masters Grade Level	8%	6%	10%	7%	19%	15%	27%	20%
Grade 8 Reading								
At Approaches Grade Level or Above	48%	38%	50%	52%	83%	71%	81%	83%
At Meets Grade Level or Above	23%	21%	25%	25%	48%	42%	54%	55%
At Masters Grade Level	8%	6%	11%	7%	23%	18%	34%	26%
End of Course English I								
At Approaches Grade Level or Above	28%	31%	29%	37%	59%	61%	57%	67%
At Meets Grade Level or Above	15%	19%	17%	21%	38%	41%	38%	46%
At Masters Grade Level	3%	4%	4%	5%	5%	9%	6%	9%
End of Course English II								
At Approaches Grade Level or Above	28%	32%	34%	39%	57%	64%	61%	69%
At Meets Grade Level or Above	16%	22%	21%	22%	35%	47%	42%	45%
At Masters Grade Level	4%	2%	5%	5%	3%	5%	5%	5%

Section 6. Plans for Next Year

Next steps include continuing the Texas Education Agency's (TEA's) infrastructure improvement strategies, which involve allocating resources, expanding initiatives and opportunities, communicating expectations, standards, and results, and fostering collaboration. This includes enhancing professional development through training and coaching programs, providing technical assistance to address specific educational challenges, allocating resources and funding to support initiatives, ensuring implementation fidelity by maintaining effective application of training and strategies, and assessing the effectiveness of programs through monitoring participation rates and gathering feedback. By focusing on these improvement strategies, the TEA aims to create a support system that enhances reading proficiency for children with disabilities (CWD).

The TEA also plans to review the existing Texas Reading Academies content next year to enhance training and resources on dyslexia, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and inclusive practices. The updated content is expected to provide teachers with the knowledge and strategies needed to support CWD.

The Tiered Interventions using Evidence-based Research (TIER) initiative will continue to certify trainers at the education service center (ESC) and local educational agency (LEA) level to support strong implementation of MTSS including screening, intervention, and progress monitoring in the area of reading.

After the 2023-24 school year, educators who are employed in their first year in a Texas public school or charter school will be required to participate in the Reading Academies course during their first year of employment. This includes all educators who are new to teaching/administering kindergarten through 3rd grade students, new to Texas, or new to a Texas public school or Texas open-enrollment public charter school. Beginning in fall 2024, the TEA will provide opportunities for Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) in Texas to offer the Reading Academies for elementary teacher candidates. This initiative will promote reading improvement by ensuring that future elementary teachers are well-prepared with effective reading instructional practices before they enter the classroom. By requiring first year educators to participate in the Reading Academies and integrating the Reading Academies into EPPs, teachers will gain comprehensive training in evidence-based reading strategies, which will enhance their ability to support student reading achievement from the start of their teaching careers.

The TEA expects these strategies to improve reading outcomes for CWD. By providing targeted professional development, technical assistance, and updated resources, teachers will be better prepared to address the specific needs of CWD. This will lead to more effective and individualized reading instruction, ensuring that students receive the support they need to succeed. Monitoring and feedback mechanisms will help ensure that these strategies are implemented consistently and effectively, further contributing to improved reading outcomes.

Appendix

Progress on SSIP Implementation

Progress on SSIP Implementation - Examples of professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) aligned to the SiMR and provided by the 20 regional education service centers (ESCs).

Regional ESC Activities (Sampling of Reported Activities)

- Provide a professional development series designed for 4th grade Reading, 8th grade Reading, and English I teachers (both general education and special education) who work with students with disabilities in inclusive settings. The Unlocking Learning Potential: Effective Strategies for Students with Disabilities Academy program includes five professional development days:
 - Day 1: Disability Awareness and Specially Designed Instruction
 - Day 2: Lesson Design, Lesson Delivery, and Universal Design for Learning
 - Day 3: Accelerated Learning Strategies
 - Day 4: High-Leverage Effective Teaching and Learning Strategies
 - Day 5: EdTech Tools
- Host a Building Bridges for Struggling Learners conference focused on literacy to enhance outcomes for struggling learners.
- Offer professional development and follow-up coaching specifically for new special education teachers in co-teaching and inclusion settings.
- Deliver training to low-performing LEAs and campuses to improve reading achievement by offering "Literacy for All" training throughout the year in various formats. After completing the course, participants are offered coaching from an education service center specialist.
- Provide strategic professional development (e.g., assessing readers, word study, and comprehension) to targeted local educational agencies, enabling participating teachers to develop the skills needed for effective reading instruction to positively impact classroom instruction and assessment.
- Facilitate a goal-setting meeting and at least three coaching cycles with targeted local educational agencies to ensure the effective implementation of learning from the professional development sessions. Participants will provide artifacts, such as lesson videos, coaching feedback forms, and student work samples, to demonstrate their implementation.
- Provide technical assistance to five low-performing local educational agencies and campuses to improve reading achievement by reviewing and analyzing individual student assessment results and other relevant data (e.g., discipline removals, retention, settings). Key activities include:
 - Presentation for speech language pathologists, diagnosticians, and dyslexia interventionists on conducting dyslexia evaluations and writing impact and need statements.

- Conducting campus needs assessments on Inclusive Practices through ongoing technical assistance for special education resource staff.
 - Providing face-to-face technical assistance to evaluation staff and dyslexia teachers on "determining unexpectedness" during dyslexia evaluations.
 - Collaborating with the Special Education Director and 504 Coordinator to create a face-to-face training for evaluation staff and dyslexia teachers on specific learning disability and Dyslexia evaluations and eligibility determinations.
- In collaboration with other education service center (ESC) departments, ESC staff will provide access to professional development and technical assistance to improve reading achievement. Examples include:
 - Phonics 101
 - Getting Ready for Reading by Design
 - Reading by Design
 - Dysgraphia
 - Elementary RLA Reading Series: Purposeful Small Group Instruction
 - Primary Data Dig: Using Student Data to Create Personalized Small Groups
 - Elementary RLA: Digging Deeper, Strategies to Enhance Your Instruction
 - Dyslexia Conference: The Dyslexic Brain and the Joy of Reading
 - Offer at least five professional development opportunities focused on accommodations to support students with disabilities, including:
 - 411 For the Future: Exploring Accommodations for Enhanced Inclusivity and Accessibility
 - Effective Accommodation Plan
 - Engage at least two external partners in higher education through professional development on best practices for students with disabilities, followed by a participant exit ticket to reflect on student learning and conduct a needs assessment.
 - Meeting the Needs of All Kids: What's Happening Now in Texas
 - MTSS - The Texas Plan for Every Student
 - Conduct six professional development sessions during the quarter focused on reading instruction and achievement for students with individualized education programs. The sessions include:
 - Reading Rescue/Accommodations
 - Reading Rescue Retreat
 - AT to Support Struggling Readers and Writers
 - Inclusion that Works! Meeting Learner Needs through SDI, DBI, UDL, and Flexible Grouping
 - Increasing Rigor in the Resource Classroom
 - Reading Retreat 2.0 for Secondary Teachers

Participants offered technical assistance and coaching for implementation following each session.
 - Provide English Language Arts/Reading professional development to support a cohort of local educational agencies that rank in the bottom 25% of the region for English Language Arts/Reading scores in grades 4, 8, and high school.

- Provide sessions for new special education teachers, focusing on the diverse needs of students in inclusive settings. Training topics include Behavior/Classroom Management, Instructional Practices, Compliance, Culture and Inclusion, Co-teaching, Accommodations, Differentiation, Stations, and Task Boxes.
- Engage stakeholders in a high-focus improvement local educational agency (LEA) to conduct analysis and develop an improvement plan focused on enhancing reading achievement.
 - Facilitate collaborative meetings and workshops with relevant LEA stakeholders to examine reading achievement data.
 - Collaborate with LEA stakeholders to establish and implement an ongoing task force or committee dedicated to improving reading outcomes for students with individualized education programs.
 - Maintain a cadence of accountability for a comprehensive analysis of existing data, including student performance, instructional practices, intervention strategies, and resource allocation, to identify areas for improvement and set specific targets.
- Develop and deliver professional development and technical assistance based on the analysis findings in reading achievement.
 - Identify, review, and revise professional development needs and gaps, based on the analysis, focusing on evidence-based reading instruction, differentiated instruction, and strategies to support students with individualized education programs (IEPs).
 - Facilitate collaborations with expert educators, specialists, and researchers to design targeted professional development workshops, seminars, and coaching sessions.
 - Provide ongoing technical assistance to teachers and support staff, offering guidance on implementing effective instructional strategies, utilizing assistive technologies, differentiating instruction, and specially designed instruction to meet the diverse needs of students with IEPs.
- Provide extended support or mentoring to stakeholders.
 - Analyze data from the tracking system to determine the need for extended support.
 - Reach out to local educational agencies rated exemplary in Individualized Education Programs (IEP) Implementation to share current practices or strategies that could benefit local educational agencies in need of improvement.
 - Arrange for the Special Education Director of a local educational agencies rated exemplary in IEP Implementation to present to interested and targeted stakeholders during a scheduled virtual professional learning community.
- Based on the education service center (ESC) needs survey, an interdepartmental ESC team will collaborate with ESC staff to analyze and tailor services aimed at improving reading achievement. The training, "Supporting the General Educator's Implementation of High-Quality Inclusive Practices for All Students," will be offered to LEAs.
- Ongoing technical assistance and coaching support provided by the education service center's special education team to reading teachers in targeted areas, including:
 - Virtual sessions focused on 3rd and 4th grade reading technology resources and instructional strategies to help students master understanding and analyzing informational texts.

- Touchpoints for meetings with general education teachers to support students transitioning from STAAR Alt 2 to STAAR.
 - Universal training on accelerated instructional strategies in reading for 4th, 8th, and high school teachers.
 - Training for special education reading/language arts teachers on how to appropriately determine and model the use of supplemental aids in reading content to support students.
- Provide access to professional development opportunities and coaching to improve reading achievement, particularly for low-performing LEAs and campuses. Expand reading initiatives, opportunities, and resources to support and enhance reading achievement.
 - Provide three comprehensive trainings and/or technical assistance sessions on Universal Design for Learning for both general education and special education teachers focused on meeting the needs of students with individualized education programs in the general education classroom.
 - Provide Dyslexia trainings and turn around trainings through the Texas Complex Access Network (TXCAN) and Texas Statewide Leadership for Autism Training (TSLAT).
 - Provide professional development to improve reading achievement for regional clients, including:
 - Dyslexia: Decoding, Syllable Types, and Morphology
 - Build: K-1 Reading Intervention
 - Collaboration and Implementation Considerations: When Designing PLAAFPS and Standards-Based Goals for Students Receiving Dyslexia Services
 - The 5 Elements of Literacy and Deaf Education (Phonology)
 - Instructional Strategies to Support Students with Dyslexia in General Education

Data

Data are tracked through an online application for accounting purposes based on an allocation of funds and monitoring for use of funds in negotiated or otherwise required activities for the 20 regional education service centers (ESCs). Each required or negotiated activity is reported as incomplete or complete before the close of the Federal fiscal reporting year. Activity reports are reviewed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) before renegotiating or appropriating continuing or additional fiscal year funding. ESCs retain additional documentation for audit, analysis, or other improvement planning activities, or another review by the State.

Negotiations and reporting mechanisms have evolved to incorporate not only measurable lag goals tied to student outcomes for statewide activities, but also lead measures and metrics tied to quarterly reporting milestones to better track and gauge progress.

