Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

Baseline and Targets

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

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

Baseline Data

FFY	2013
Data	33.16%

FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	34.89%	36.63%	38.36%	40.10%	41.83%

Description of Measure

Included in South Dakota's Flexibility Waiver (**attached as flexibility waiver**) is an explanation of how targets are set for reducing the number of students who are not reaching proficiency according to the state assessment.

AMO goals and targets will be set as follows:

STEP 1: In the base year of each six-year cycle, calculate the percentage of students in the school who test at the Basic and Below Basic levels.

STEP 2: Divide this percentage in half. This is the school's goal for reducing, within six years, the percentage of students who are not proficient.

STEP 3: Subtract this amount from 100%. This is the inverse of the above and represents the school's goal for percentage of students testing at the Proficient and Advanced levels in six years.

STEP 4: Divide the amount in Step 2 by six. This is the school's annual target for increasing the percentage of students who are Proficient.

STEP 5: Calculate the percentage of students in the base year who test at the Proficient and Advanced levels.

STEP 6: To determine the AMO in Year 1, add the base year percentage of students testing at the Proficient and Advanced levels to the annual target for increasing the percentage of students who are proficient.

STEP 7: To determine the AMO in Years 2-6, add the annual target to the previous year's AMO

We have followed the same steps when setting targets for the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Our Baseline data was set using 2012-13 D-STEP data. We will be working with six pilot districts during the 2015-16 school year so the state data and pilot district data are included below. This shows how closely the two data sets compare. The pilot district SLD student population constitutes 35% of the state SLD students.

documents attached (**pilotspedldgradek3sld**)-has proficiency of K-3 SLD students broken down by state and compiled by the six pilot districts

document attached (**pilotspedgradek3swd**)-has proficiency of K-3 SWD students broken down by state and compiled by the six pilot districts

Step 1:

State: In the category of specific learning disabilities in South Dakota, third graders scored 36.05% proficient or advanced, compared to all Students with Disabilities scoring proficient or advanced at 53.28%. The gap between these two groups is 17.23%.

Pilot districts: In the category of specific learning disabilities, the third graders scored 33.16% proficient or advanced, compared to all Students with Disabilities scoring proficient or advanced at 50.50%. The gap between these two groups is 17.34%.

Step 2:

State: To decrease the gap by 50%, the gap is divided in half. The gap would have to be reduced by 8.62% at the state level within six years.

Pilot districts: To decrease the gap by 50%, the gap is divided in half. 8.67% is South Dakota Special Education Program's goal for reducing, within six years, the percentage of SLD students who are not proficient compared to the SWD population.

Step 3:

State: There would have to be a 8.62% increase in proficiency by 2018 which would be divided by 5 years. To close the achievement gap at the state level there would have to be a 1.724% increase each year.

Pilot districts: There must be a 8.67% increase in proficiency by 2018 which is divided by 5 years. To close the achievement gap there will be a 1.734% increase each year.

Step 4:

State: baseline of 36.05%

Pilot district: baseline of 33.16%

Step 5:

Pilot district: 2014 target is based on the baseline of 33.16% plus 1.734%. 2014 target set for 34.89%.

Step 6:

Pilot districts: Continue to add 1.734% to the previous years target

2015 pilot target-34.89% +1.734=36.63%

2016 pilot target--36.63% +1.734=38.36%

2017 pilot target--38.36% +1.734=40.10%

2018 pilot target--40.10 +1.734=41.83%

South Dakota will monitor and report on the targets each year.

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

The Special Education Programs office (SEP) set its targets after the selection of a Coherent Set of Improvement Strategies were identified, taking into consideration stakeholder input and the formula in the flexibility waiver to reduce achievement gaps. The targets are based on data from the six pilot districts that closely mirrors the state data. The improvement strategies identified proved to be key to the stakeholder recommendations as to the rate of change that will occur over the life of the SSIP.

Targets were set based on the master waiver gap reduction formula and stakeholder review of data, infrastructure, the SiMR and expected effectiveness of the selected improvement strategies. SEP obtained broad representation of stakeholders throughout the process of Phase I development. These discussions and analyses occurred with stakeholders at the state and

local levels. SEP considered stakeholder input and obtained SEA Leadership approval at each point stakeholder recommendations were received. Stakeholders included:

- South Dakota State Board of Education;

- South Dakota SEA staff across departments (e.g., Special Education, Title I, Teaching and Learning, Assessment, and Data);

- South Dakota Special Education Advisory Council;

- Local Education Agency (LEA) Special Education Directors;

- Other LEA staff, as invited by the Special Education Director (e.g., Superintendent, Directors, and Title I Directors);

- South Dakota's Parent Connection;

- United States Department of Education (USDOE) Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP);

- National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) state contact;

- Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs);

- Educators (general education and special education teachers);

- Parents.

These stakeholders were included as they either pay for, provide, receive, participate in or collaborate on Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) services and issues, and/or provide expertise. South Dakota's stakeholders are vital to the success of the SSIP and more specifically the outcomes as measured against the SiMR. Stakeholder efforts are valued and integral to the SSIP Phase I, as is their ongoing commitment to continue work towards improving outcomes for students with disabilities during subsequent phases.

Based on stakeholder input and feedback, South Dakota identified reading proficiency among students with learning disabilities entering grade four as the main focus for the SSIP and have set these Baseline and Target numbers for purpose of measuring the overall success of the SSIP.

OSEP Response

Required Actions

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan
Data Analysis

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

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

Data Analysis

A description of how the State identified and analyzed key data, including data from SPP/APR indicators, 618 data collections, and other available data as applicable, to: (1) select the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities, and (2) identify root causes contributing to low performance. The description must include information about how the data were disaggregated by multiple variables (e.g., LEA, region, race/ethnicity, gender, disability category, placement, etc.). As part of its data analysis, the State should also consider compliance data and whether those data present potential barriers to improvement. In addition, if the State identifies any concerns about the quality of the data, the description must include how the State will address these concerns. Finally, if additional data are needed, the description should include the methods and timelines to collect and analyze the additional data.

Starting in April 2014, the Special Education Programs office (SEP) began conducting a broad data analysis review for purposes of Phase I of the SSIP. The SEP reviewed data in a variety of different ways and from various sources, including all 618 data submissions, the State Performance Plan Indicator data along with types of related services students received. The team narrowed the data points of interest to the area of reading proficiency of students with Specific Learning Disabilities.

In conjunction with a broad analysis of data, the team also began a broad review of the Department of Education (DOE) infrastructure, specifically looking at DOE's initiatives and goals aligning with contractor expertise; the consensus of this statewide review was that the focus would be on reading. Because the key considerations of the infrastructure analysis were the years of Reading in Response to Intervention work, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support including Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, the South Dakota DOE's overall goal of "all students entering 4th grade will be proficient or advance in reading", along with several other initiatives focused on reading, the stakeholder groups and SEP planning team determined that the data point identified (reading proficiency of students with Specific Learning Disabilities) would fit within these existing initiatives and would align with existing infrastructure efforts.

On June 23, 2014, a large stakeholder group was brought together to conduct a more in-depth data analysis. The group conducted data analysis around students with disabilities reading proficiency scores. The group reviewed data disaggregated by:

- Ethnicity/Disability/Educational Service Agency (ESA)

- Female/Male

- Demographics/Native American/Disability Category

- Middle School and High School dropout?

- Why Resource Room and Separate class not doing as well?

- Performance related to Professional Attendance? Highly Qualified Staff?

- Why numbers of students dropping out as get older (exit)? Disability Category / Grade

- Placement agency/General Education Setting/Proficiency

- ESA/Male verse Female

- Female Native American/Male Native American proficiency

- Other Health Impaired/Emotional Disturbance/Specific Learning Disability

Data questions which were noted/identified as possible needs:

- Is there information on reading instruction, teacher effectiveness and summer slide?

- Possible New Data collection?

- Collecting Child Count Data on which area of Specific Learning Disabilities does a student qualify.

- How to measure reading proficiency and benchmark/progress in Preschool to grade 3

- Other data points that could be used and limitation of access (Dibbles/AIMS/etc…)

- Strategies used in Early Intervention

- Prior Response To Intervention pilot districts doing better? They are closing the Native American Gap.

- Native American and other ethnicities

- Instruction: general education and resource room – Is there a difference?

After the data analysis by the stakeholder group, the group decided to support one of the Office of Special Education Program recommendations to focus on improving the reading proficiency for students with specific learning disabilities by the 3rd grade statewide assessment.

The following graph was an example of the different data breakdowns reviewed (see file: summaryproficiencyjune6.pdf).

Note: Special Education is demonstrating Specific Learning Disability Category but same breakdown occurred for a variety of other data.

Data analyzed in October 2nd Stakeholder Meeting and internally in Department of Education:

Special Education Programs provided stakeholders information on proficiency levels of students with IEPs on each reading standard according to the Statewide Assessment. There were no patterns on proficiency levels related to different grade levels or cohort groups. Information also included data on statewide accommodations related to reading; for example, almost 60% of our students with disabilities receive "read aloud" as an accommodation on the statewide assessment.

The Response to Intervention Coordinator provided the group with information on reading issues identified in the pilot districts. Districts had to work through conducting, understanding, and utilizing data to determine appropriate targeted interventions. Once teachers received instruction to analyze data, they learned to group students according skills they needed to develop. Teachers then received professional development in instruction of reading through CORE Foundational Reading. Once they understood the strengths and weakness in their instruction, teachers could better intervene with the students in their classroom. RTI data showed that students then made growth whether a general education student or student with a disability.

Description of Concerns:

Since the assessment data file only includes whether a student is on an IEP and does not include a student's demographic information such as disability category, the child count and assessment file were merged. Due to the assessment file including more students than child count, some of the student's disability categories could not be matched.

A question also came up about how to measure growth prior to the statewide assessment at end of 3rd grade.

South Dakota is developing assessment reports in the longitudinal data system (SD-STARS), which will allow districts to disaggregate the all-assessed report by disability category, setting category, and grade. A DIBELS and AIMSweb report is being developed for the 44 districts who signed an agreement to upload the data. Both reporting features should be in place by summer of 2015. Districts implementing state specific interventions will send progress data to the state yearly for reporting purposes.

Compliance Data:

South Dakota's compliance indicators reflect a high level of compliance. The Corrective Action Plans (CAP) from the reviews indicated skill-based assessment is an area several districts are not understanding. Unfortunately, data has not been collected specifically in areas where reading was the issue. South Dakota is currently in the process of developing and moving toward a

results-driven accountability monitoring system.

Description of Stakeholder Involvement:

The main stakeholder group for the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) was selected based on several factors. The state Special Education Program office (SEP) ensures that the entire state geographic area is covered along with different district sizes in order to adequately represent the diversity in South Dakota. Personnel were selected which represented special education administrators, superintendents, current special education professors from IHEs, parents, educational agencies, educational cooperative staff, reading interventionists, special education teachers, behavior specialists, Birth to Three (Part C) representative, Title office, Division of Learning and Instruction, the State Library, Division of Education Services and Supports director, State Performance Plan coordinators, Parent Connections (PTI Center), contractors specializing in behavior and instruction and Special Education Program staff.

January 2015-Special Education Advisory Panel reviewed the State Systemic Improvement Plan and was given the opportunity to share their ideas.

Based on preliminary feedback from OSEP the baseline and targets have been changed to reflect the six pilot districts information verses the whole state.

Each pilot district has been given the opportunity to apply for a grant provided by the Office of Special Education Programs to support their work on the SSIP. The grant application entails how the district will support the theory of action and what supports are needed to improve results for the target population.

On March 23 and 24th, 2015, SD Special Education programs staff shared with the Special Education Advisory Panel how the coherent improvement plan was developed with the six pilot districts. At this time the advisory panel did not recommend any changes to the plan.

OSEP Response

Required Actions

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan
Analysis of State Infrastructure

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

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

Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity

A description of how the State analyzed the capacity of its current infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity in LEAs to implement, scale up, and sustain the use of evidence-based practices to improve results for children with disabilities. State systems that make up its infrastructure include, at a minimum: governance, fiscal, quality standards, professional development, data, technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring. The description must include current strengths of the systems, the extent the systems are coordinated, and areas for improvement of functioning within and across the systems. The State must also identify current State-level improvement plans and initiatives, including special and general education improvement plans and initiatives, and describe the extent that these initiatives are aligned, and how they are, or could be, integrated with, the SSIP. Finally, the State should identify representatives (e.g., offices, agencies, positions, individuals, and other stakeholders) that were involved in developing Phase I of the SSIP and that will be involved in developing and implementing Phase II of the SSIP.

South Dakota began planning for the development of the SSIP once the changes to the SPP/APR package were finalized and published by OSEP. The South Dakota Special Education Programs office (SEP) held initial planning meetings with key department leadership and staff to ensure understanding of what was meant by Infrastructure Analysis as part of the Phase I activities under Indicator 17. OSEP TA centers were consulted as well as OSEP state contacts. Early in 2014 a team of SEA staff attended a regional SSIP planning event that included state level data analysis and infrastructure analysis strategies and reviews of planning and analysis tools and processes. From that "kick-off" meeting, SEP began contacting key stakeholders to schedule work groups and planning meetings. SD SEP staff held meetings with the leadership team at DOE to explain the SSIP effort under the revised SPP/APR package and to brainstorm ideas. The resulting ideas were then discussed by staff for relevance to this effort.

Using the SSIP Phase I development framework created by the RRCP (see attached slide: ==PhaseIVisualFramework==), the SEP began with a broad look at the state's current infrastructure, considering the various nuances, dynamics, and context specific to our state. Several broad guiding questions were developed to help paint the infrastructure picture. SEP understood the need to identify and consider existing efforts, including state and local initiatives and to identify the priorities within the state from a broad perspective.

Initial Guiding Questions and discussion needs for Broad Analysis:

- Define current conditions for each area of the state systems: governance, fiscal, quality standards, professional development, data, technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring.
- What are the current SEA level initiatives?
- What do we know about what the locals are doing? What are their priorities?
- Where is the money going? Current focus and uses of discretionary grant money.
- Professional Development and Technical Assistance efforts to-date; what impact, if any has it had on student outcome improvement?
- Beginning to consider data as part of infrastructure analysis, what data sources does the state have and how is it being used to assess infrastructure? What data is needed?
- Recognizing the value and need for stakeholder input: Who are our stakeholders? What do stakeholders need to know to be able to help in the analysis and development of a plan? How can stakeholders be meaningfully involved in the Phase I activities and beyond?

These questions were used to further provide the basis for additional planning ahead of the first stakeholder planning meeting related specifically to conducting a more in-depth state-wide analysis of infrastructure.

An in-depth Infrastructure Analysis meeting was conducted with a broad stakeholder group in June 2014. Participants included the SD parent center, representatives from LEAs, IHE's and the SEA. The goal of this meeting was to conduct a thorough review of existing initiatives across the state and determine how these existing initiatives may impact the emerging SiMR statement, as well as to determine alignment with any emerging Improvement Strategies that are currently being implemented by LEAs or that need to be developed and implemented as part of Phase 2 and 3 of the SSIP process.
In preparation for this meeting, SEP developed a comprehensive list of SEA level initiatives, activities, events, resources and processes that might be used in consideration of SSIP Phase I activities and RDA work (==see attachment: reading work in doe.docx==). Additionally, a SWOT Analysis framework was developed by the planning team for use in the in-depth analysis process (see attachment: swot notes june 23, 2014 meeting.docx).

Based on input from stakeholders, themes were developed within each of the four SWOT quadrants (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). Key themes were identified as follows:

- Strengths: SEA level collaboration (de-siloing of education department); Early Intervention (RTI, MTSS, EIS coaching and staff development); Literacy Initiatives (statewide emphasis on reading proficiency and use of evidence-based practices).
- Weaknesses: Teacher Qualifications and Availability (preservice and turnover issues); Time (full plates); Funding; Ruralness of state.
- Opportunities: Collaboration between state agencies, partners, and LEAs; Increased reading proficiency leading to lower dropout rates and increased school completion; incorporate reading skills into all subjects; increase parental involvement.
- Threats: Teacher workload issues; lack of buy-in; perceived lack of time; silos not fully deconstructed.

Of particular concern and focus for the SSIP planning team based on the stakeholder input and analysis work were the issues around teacher qualifications, use of evidence-based practices, improved collaboration across state agencies, and increased parental involvement. Further discussions of infrastructure and capacity included the state and local capacity related to data analysis processes, including knowledge and use of data for improvement planning.

Results from the SWOT Analysis (see SDSWOTforStakeholders_collated) were taken and used in subsequent smaller group, focused infrastructure analysis activities.

In final preparation to fulfill Phase I activities of the SSIP and begin work on Phase II, SEP planned and conducted a "pilot district" improvement strategy work group meeting with key LEAs involved in beginning the implementation of the SSIP. During this meeting participants were provided with a review of the SSIP work completed to-date, including the data analysis process that led to the SiMR, results from the infrastructure analysis activities completed so far, and a review of existing statewide initiatives that have bearing on the SiMR. The goals of this meeting were to finalize a set of Coherent Improvement Strategies and a Theory of Action based on the data and infrastructure analysis work completed so far. Please see the following attachments to review outcomes of this meeting: pilot_district_survey.pdf; pilot_district_initiatives_in_place.docx; coherentimprovementstrategies.docx.

OSEP Response

Required Actions

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

Measurable Results for Students with Disabilities

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

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

State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities

A statement of the result(s) the State intends to achieve through the implementation of the SSIP. The State-identified result(s) must be aligned to an SPP/APR indicator or a component of an SPP/APR indicator. The State-identified result(s) must be clearly based on the Data and State Infrastructure Analyses and must be a child-level outcome in contrast to a process outcome. The State may select a single result (e.g., increasing the graduation rate for children with disabilities) or a cluster of related results (e.g., increasing the graduation rate and decreasing the dropout rate for children with disabilities).

Statement

Students with Specific Learning Disabilities will increase reading proficiency prior to fourth grade from 33.16% to 41.83% by 2018 as measured by the statewide assessment.

Description

South Dakota's SIMR aligns with Indicator 3 (attached as Indicator3a, Indicator3b, Indicator3c) . This Indicator measures the participation and performance rate on the state assessment.

During our data analysis the SLD category students in resource room were the 3rd lowest achieving subgroup. Only cognitive disabilities and multiple disabilities scored lower. After reviewing the data in a variety of ways, including; 618 data submissions, State Performance Plan data along with additional child count information, the team returned to SLD category reading proficiency deficits.

The SSIP Stakeholder Group consisted of the following: special education administrators, superintendent, current special education professor, parents, educational agency, educational cooperative staff, reading interventionist, special education teachers, behavior specialist, Birth to Three representative, Title office, Division of Learning and Instruction, State Library, Division of Education Services and Supports director, State Performance Plan coordinators, Parent Connections (PTI Center), contractors specializing in behavior and instruction and Special Education Program staff.

The special education advisory panel has also contributed as stakeholders. This panel includes: parents, higher education personal, vocational school personal, administrator, state juvenile/adult corrections, welfare/foster care, McKinney-Vento, private school, teacher, SEP staff.

Current initiatives in South Dakota Department of Education were compiled to initiate support for the SIMR. All departments at SD-DOE were included in the compilation (attached as Reading Work in DOE).

Addressing this SIMR will impact SLD student achievement in reading. The gap between students with disabilities and specific learning disability students will be reduced by 50% by 2018. The state will begin with six pilot districts in the first year of the SSIP. The six districts and their student level data are attached (pilot district data2). This districts were chosen for district size, location in the state, student population, SLD population in K-3rd grade, and other profile information. Based on the first year with these pilot districts, improvements will be calculated and strategies adjusted for a state-wide model.

June 23rd, 2014-SSIP Stakeholder meeting-

The SSIP Stakeholder Group consisted of the following: special education administrators, superintendent, current special education professor, parents, educational agency, educational cooperative staff, reading interventionist, special education teachers, behavior specialist, Birth to Three representative, Title office, Division of Learning and Instruction, State Library, Division of Education Services and Supports director, State Performance Plan coordinators, Parent Connections (PTI Center), contractors specializing in behavior and instruction and Special Education Program staff.

Outcomes:

- Gain an understanding of recent hot topics in special education and discuss strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

- Gain a better understanding of state-wide data to help guide the SSIP and provide input into the development of the SSIP.
- Gain a better understanding of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and receive stakeholder advice on the issue of improving <u>reading proficiency of students with learning disabilities</u> regarding Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (attached as SWOT notes June 23, 2014).

September 30th, 2014-Special Education Advisory Panel Meeting-

This panel includes: parents, higher education personal, vocational school personal, administrator, state juvenile/adult corrections, welfare/foster care, McKinney-Vento, private school, teacher, SEP staff.

Agenda:

- Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities.
- Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under Section 618 of the Act-State Performance Plan Coordinators, State Systemic Improvement Plan
- Advise the SEA of unmet needs within the state in the education of students with disabilities

October 2nd, 2014-SSIP Stakeholder meeting-

The SSIP Stakeholder Group consisted of the following: special education administrators, superintendent, current special education professor, parents, educational agency, educational cooperative staff, reading interventionist, special education teachers, behavior specialist, Birth to Three representative, Title office, Division of Learning and Instruction, State Library, Division of Education Services and Supports director, State Performance Plan coordinators, Parent Connections (PTI Center), contractors specializing in behavior and instruction and Special Education Program staff.

Outcomes:

- Gain an understanding of requirements from OSEP related to the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP, Indicator 17).
- Gain a better understanding of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) information from the previous Stakeholder input meeting, as well as a review of data related to <u>reading proficiency of students with learning disabilities.</u>
- Provide input into the development of the SSIP, specifically related to helping identify root causes, setting a baseline and target for the SSIP, and identifying improvement strategies.

January 14th, 2014-Pilot District Strategy Planning Meeting

The stakeholders at this meeting were the proposed pilot districts for the 2015-16 school year. Prior to this meeting there was a survey sent to all staff in the districts who worked with K-3rd grade reading <mark>(results attached as pilot district survey).</mark> The districts compiled a list of the initiatives in their districts currently (attached as pilot district initiatives in place). After looking at the state and district initiatives there was discussion on the strategies needed to make improvements in SLD students. The list of coherent improvement strategies was compiled.(coherent improvement strategies attached)

OSEP Response

Required Actions

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan
Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

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

Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies

An explanation of how the improvement strategies were selected, and why they are sound, logical and aligned, and will lead to a measurable improvement in the State-identified result(s). The improvement strategies should include the strategies, identified through the Data and State Infrastructure Analyses, that are needed to improve the State infrastructure and to support LEA implementation of evidence-based practices to improve the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities. The State must describe how implementation of the improvement strategies will address identified root causes for low performance and ultimately build LEA capacity to achieve the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

South Dakota's Set of Coherent Improvement Strategies was determined through a systematic process of data analysis and infrastructure analysis conducted by a series of SEP internal and external stakeholder group meetings. Based on stakeholder input, the specific improvement strategies are framed within four broader areas of improvement that align with state and local initiatives as well as federal guidance related to the focus for results-driven accountability:

Data Analysis
Districts can provide:

- Monthly meetings on progress (data analysis) to monitor and guide instruction.

State support:

- Understanding and applying special education evaluation data to plan instruction (PD).
- Train districts on data workbook use (PD).

Instructional Practices and Strategies
Districts can provide:

- Review schedules at the building level to improve efficiency.
- Review evaluation components and the impact on instructional practices.

State support:

- Foundational reading professional development.
- Design matrix of intervention strategies tied to reading components (research-based strategies and programs).

Collaboration
Districts can provide:

- "De-silo" departments and staff within a district (all students are all teachers' students).
- Train general education staff about students with specific learning disabilities.
- Model how to instruct or support students in the general education classroom.

State support:

- Guidance on how to de-silo staff within a district (all students are all teacher's students).
- General education and special education collaboration and communication PD (common language, curriculum knowledge).

Family and Community Engagement
Districts can provide:

- Student-led portfolios at conferences.
- Improve parent involvement in Reading as needed (specific to district).
- Create positive experiences for parents (emotionally safe environment).

State support:

- Professional Development or materials for district staff in engaging parents.

Throughout the SSIP process we have gathered information from stakeholders and had DOE internal conversations concerning improvement strategies to decrease the gap between specific learning disability (SLD) students and all students with disabilities (SWD). SEP conducted a survey of what was currently being done in the pilot districts (attached as Pilot District Survey) and what initiatives are in place at the SD-DOE (attached as reading work at DOE). This inquiry created a list of hypothesis which included:

- There is a shift in education that has impacted student outcomes. This shift has required teachers to acquire new skills they may not currently have due to a variety of factors (school climate/culture, lagging teacher prep programs, data drill-down understanding, evidence based practices, alignment of student need and instruction, teacher impact on achievement).

- South Dakota is currently supporting Multi-Systems of Support (MTSS) which includes Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) and Response to Intervention (RTI). RTI is an effective program because it is a systems approach, an Every-Ed initiative (It's not a general education initiative and it's not a special education initiative, it's an 'every education' initiative), about prevention, collaborative-team oriented process, and is a process that relies on strong core instruction. RTI coordinators who support schools with trainings and guidance have been an active part in K-3 reading improvement. We have used their knowledge to create a plan to close the reading gap in K-3 students. The coherent improvement strategies were based on pilot district needs.

The RTI model in South Dakota is designed to help teachers select and design student learning targets, increase teacher knowledge and skills, select and/or develop tightly aligned materials, monitor implementation with fidelity. These strategies have been proven in South Dakota(attached 2007-2012 RTI Data). When looking at the data from the schools involved in RTI during the years 2007-2012, each benchmark period showed improved achievement. Slide one combines all grade levels in which proficiency increased each benchmark period. Slides 3-6 separate the scores by grade level proficiency. Each benchmark period by grade level also showed increased proficiency.

During the October 2nd, 2014 Stakeholder meeting the root cause for reading deficits in SLD students was determined to be:

- Shifts in education, which impact all students, are requiring teachers to have skills that they don't have due to a variety of factors.
- Culture/climate of the school.
- Progression of education.
- Maintaining teacher mentor programs - the effectiveness of the teacher has the greatest impact on students.
- Teacher prep programs.
- Data drill down understanding by teachers.

The coherent improvement strategies will target the root causes and build capacity for South Dakota and support systemic change. A logical team approach will begin the process of collaboration at each district level. Districts will be provided the training they need to support the shift to data driven instruction. That support will include instructional coaches and trainings designed for needs specific to reading.
South Dakota Department of Education Special Education Program has also purchased DirectSTEP reading related courses/modules for paraprofessionals. The courses are:

- Roles and Responsibilities of the Paraeducator
- Assessment, Diagnosis and Evaluation
- Improving Behavior
- Paraeducator Support: Instructional Content and Practice

All of the coherent improvement strategies will encompass general education teachers, special education teachers, and para-professionals. The strategies will also be specific to those employed at a district as instructional coaches and RTI Interventionists. This will ensure an implementation framework which will support systemic change.
Through the State infrastructure analyses, it has been determined that LEAs are in need of support that will create a shift in the educational structure to data driven instruction. The strategies are determined to improve results when used with fidelity.

The above strategies will target all district staff who work with K-3rd grade students. The SIMR is specific to K-3rd grade SLD students but the stakeholders feel it is vital to strengthen all CORE teachers to create a preventative model for South Dakota. During stakeholder meetings and internal conversations, high staff turnover across the state was discussed. This training

could target district staff with job assignments of curriculum specialists, reading coaches, RTI coaches, and reading interventionists. They will not only participate in the coherent improvement strategies provided above, but will have additional trainings as needed to continue to support new staff. This will assure continuity and sustainability of the increased reading outcomes for all students and specifically SLD students.

To scale up support to school districts and strengthen the reading structure a team approach will be built with school districts. The first year of the SIMR will include pilot districts and then support will be expanded state-wide. The pilot districts encompass 1/3 of the SLD population. This will offer a good indicator of the adjustments needed as the project continues. Also, during the pilot year, the state will build trainer capacity and support.

- Input from stakeholders included the following evidence – based strategies based on http://www.readingrockets.org/ and
- National Reading Panel report http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/nrp/documents/report.pdf

Oct. 2, 2014 SSIP Stakeholder meeting hypothesis

- Increase foundational reading skills thru professional development would improve reading skills.
- SLO (Student Learning Objectives) to support progress monitoring.
- Formative assessment strategies (on-going and not one end of year assessment).
- Data driven instructional strategies.
- Train the trainer models.
- Research based instruction (direct and explicit instruction).
- Teacher training and support for higher education and practicing teachers.

January 14th, 2015 SSIP Pilot District meeting

Districts were surveyed prior to the meeting to determine what they had in place to improve reading instruction. All staff who worked on K-3rd grade reading in the pilot districts was included. (Pilot district survey results attached).

Current district initiatives discussed (attached as pilot district initiatives in place).

Coherent improvement strategies where suggested by pilot districts. (attached as coherent improvement strategies).

OSEP Response

Required Actions

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

Theory of Action

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

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

Theory of Action

A graphic illustration that shows the rationale of how implementing the coherent set of improvement strategies selected will increase the State's capacity to lead meaningful change in LEAs, and achieve improvement in the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

theory of actiontheory of action

Illustration

☐ **Provide a description of the provided graphic illustration (optional)**

OSEP Response

Required Actions