



TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF

EDUCATION

TENNESSEE'S EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM (TEIS)

**STATE SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SSIP)
PHASE I**

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Overview

Description of State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)

Phase I work for the development of the State Strategic Improvement Plan (SSIP) culminated in the selection of the following SIMR as the Lead Agency's area of focus for improving results for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

The percent of infants and toddlers who demonstrate improved acquisition and use of knowledge and skills and who function within age expectation by the time they exit or turn age three will increase.

Early Childhood Outcome 3B, Summary Statement 2

Description of State Program

The Lead Agency in Tennessee for Part C, Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) is the State Department of Education (TDOE). The department went through reorganization in March 2015 and the Part C program, Tennessee's Early Intervention System (TEIS) is administered by the Office of Early Learning within the Division of Student Support and Services which houses the following units:

- Tennessee's Early Intervention System
- Part B, 619 Special Education Preschool
- Early Head Start and Head Start
- Voluntary Pre-K
- School-based Support Services
- Conditions for Early Learning
 - Extended Learning
 - Coordinated School Health
 - Safe and Supportive Schools
 - School Nutrition

Early Intervention Service (EIS) programs are defined as the nine TEIS Point of Entry Offices (POEs). Each POE has a District Administrator who reports directly to the state's Part C coordinator who has oversight for the operation of POE offices. Personnel in these offices are state employees who are responsible for: 1) Part C eligibility determination and 2) all service coordination activities including IFSP development, oversight of service delivery, and transition.

During FFY 2013-14 there were 7,583 eligible infants and toddlers with IFSPs served through TEIS. In contrast, Tennessee's federal 618 Dec. 1, 2013 one day count of infants and toddlers with active IFSPs was 4,127.

TEIS has a network of Early Intervention Service (EIS) providers who deliver Part C early intervention services based on a child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). There are two groups of EIS providers:

Early Intervention Resource Agencies (EIRAs)

These are providers of what the state refers to as developmental therapy (DT). This service of special instruction and family training is primarily delivered in home and community settings by an early interventionist (EI). As of this report date, there are 35 EIRAs statewide.

Vendors

These are providers of other Part C early intervention services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, vision services, assistive technology, etc. These services are provided in home, clinic, and community settings. As of this report date, there are 179 total vendors statewide.

In Tennessee the child's official educational record is housed in a real-time, web-based data system, Tennessee Early Intervention Data System (TEIDS). The data management system contains demographic and parent information; the child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), including evaluation and ongoing assessments, family assessment, goals, planned services, and the transition plan; contact logs documenting work activities by IFSP team members; service logs for IFSP delivered services; and an accounts payable section for reimbursement of delivered services where TEIS is payor.

Process Used for Developing Phase I of the SSIP

Phase I of SSIP development efforts were led the Part C monitoring coordinator (SSIP coordinator) and program monitor (e.g., SSIP team). Work was planned and completed using direction from principle TEIS leadership: executive director, Part C coordinator, state data manager, and quality improvement manager.

The SSIP team also worked closely with and utilized technical assistance (TA) expertise from a state contractor and the state's Part C contact who is a joint technical assistance provider with both the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ETCA) and the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy Center). Ongoing work included regular monthly (web-based or face-to-face) meetings to: plan SSIP work, prepare for upcoming meetings with stakeholders, analyze data, and to obtain feedback for Phase I report writing. The SSIP team participated on relevant federal TA center webinars and OSEP monthly TA calls, utilizing guidance documents available. The SSIP coordinator with other TEIS leadership attended the Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC) Leadership Forum in February 2013, which had its focus on the SSIP. The SSIP coordinator with other TEIS leadership also attended the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Leadership Conference and DaSy Conference which informed SSIP work.

The OSEP state contact provided on-site technical assistance relative to the early stages of Phase I work. During his site-visit the state contact met with the SSIP team and principle TEIS leadership. He attended the October 2014 State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) meeting where he presented information about the federal focus on results driven accountability and actively participated in a SSIP work/feedback activity.

SSIP work was completed with guidance and decision-making from lead TDOE staff, the assistant commissioner and deputy assistant commissioner of the Division of Student Support and Services. TDOE leadership were instrumental in the Lead Agency's decision for selection of its SIMR.

Overview of Stakeholder Involvement

The Lead Agency had involvement from a broad group of stakeholders for the development of the Phase I of the SSIP. The State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) was the primary stakeholder group for work. The SICC suspended its regular meeting format to provide input and guidance toward SSIP development. Four meetings were held between July 2014 and March 2015, three of which were full-day meetings.

During SICC meetings, the SSIP team shared data, ongoing SSIP work efforts, and solicited additional input from the typical 40 to 50 visitors present. Visitor representation consisted of POE district administrators and staff, EIRA administrators and early interventionists, vendors, and other TEIS staff.

Additional stakeholder involvement was also solicited between SICC meetings. Stakeholder events were intentionally planned to seek varied representation outside SICC membership. These included:

- Internal meetings with TEIS leadership and other staff
- Data and infrastructure analysis meetings
- Three statewide regional forums

Stakeholder involvement is addressed in each of the Phase I components. Refer to Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix for information regarding internal and external stakeholder representation. The matrix details:

Stakeholder Representation

Identifies all stakeholder departments, agencies, offices, and positions represented.

Stakeholder Types

Identifies stakeholders as either internal or external. Internal stakeholders are those working directly within Tennessee's Early Intervention System (TEIS). External stakeholders include contracted EIS providers (EIRAs and vendors), other agencies or programs, and individuals (e.g., parents).

Formal Stakeholder Events

Planned events involving stakeholders identified in the matrix

Component 1: Data Analysis

1(a) How Key Data were Identified and Analyzed

The Lead Agency reviewed all data sources (child outcomes, family outcomes, compliance, and Annual Performance Plan [APR] indicators). Family, APR Indicator C4 and Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) data, APR Indicator C3 were identified as key outcome data sources most applicable to the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).

ECO data are available through the Tennessee Early Intervention Data System (TEIDS), which is the database utilized by the state for all children served by Tennessee's Early Intervention System (TEIS). Family outcomes data is gathered via a survey instrument completed by either online or by a paper copy.

The state data manager, Part C monitoring coordinator, program monitor, other state staff, state contractor and Part B state contact from Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC) met in July 2014 to conduct broad data analysis of child and family outcomes data to begin development of the direction and focus of the SSIP.

Family Outcomes

Family outcomes data were collected via a modified version of the National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring (NCSEAM) survey instrument during the timeframes reviewed (FFY 2005-2012). Family outcomes data were gathered via an annual point-in-time data collection administered to all families of children with an Individualize Family Service Plan (IFSP) who had received TEIS services for at least six months. Beginning in FFY 2013-14 the Lead Agency changed its family survey instrument, and an additional change in survey modification began in FFY 2014-15. These new data were unavailable at the time SSIP broad data analysis began.

As part of the SSIP data analysis the FFY 2005-2012 family outcomes data were analyzed for trends. These data were unremarkable as the state consistently outperformed the national average in all three family outcome sub-indicators: The percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family

- A. Know their rights (95.22% in FFY 2012-13)
- B. Effectively communicate children's needs (94.06% in FFY 2012-13)
- C. Help their children develop and learn (96.82% in FFY 2012-13)

These data were shared with the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) who agreed family outcomes was not the priority need area for the SSIP.

Early Childhood Outcomes

The Child Outcomes Summary (COS) form is used to collect entrance and exit data for all eligible infants/toddlers with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) in place for a minimum of six months. The Lead Agency analyzes ECO data annually for reporting Indicator 3 of the Annual Performance Report (APR). These child-level data are available at state, county and Point of Entry office (POE) levels. Detailed information about how ECO results are measured is available in Appendix 2: Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) with Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) Priorities. General information is described below.

ECO are measured in three areas:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs

Children are rated at program entry and exit on a 1-7 scale in each of the three outcome areas. When an infant or toddler who has had an IFSP for at least six months exits from TEIS, the child's entrance and exit ratings for each of the three outcomes are used to calculate one of five progress categories ranging from no improvement in functioning to functioning at a level comparable to same aged peers. These five progress categories are used to calculate the state's performance by grouping the children into one of two summary statements:

Summary Statement 1: *Developmental progress or "Closing the Achievement Gap"*

Of those children who entered the program below age expectations in each outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.

Summary Statement 2: *Same developmental age as peers or "Preschool Readiness"*

The percent of children who were functioning within age expectations in each outcome by the time they exited the program.

As part of SSIP data analysis for FFY 2009-2013, child outcomes data were analyzed by summary statements. (Figures 1 and 2). The analysis showed the state had consistently performed above the national average for all three outcome areas in Summary Statement 1 and significantly below the national average for all three outcomes areas in Summary Statement 2.

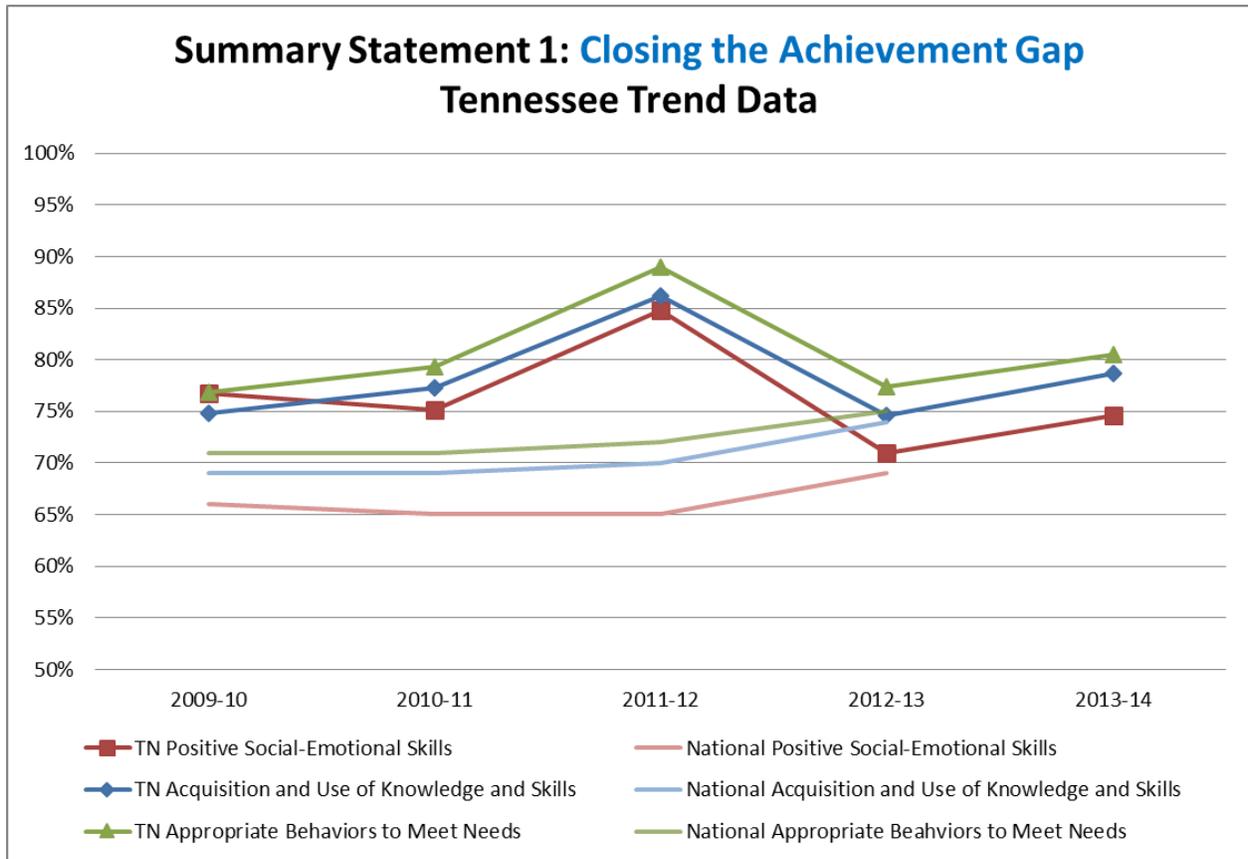


Figure 1

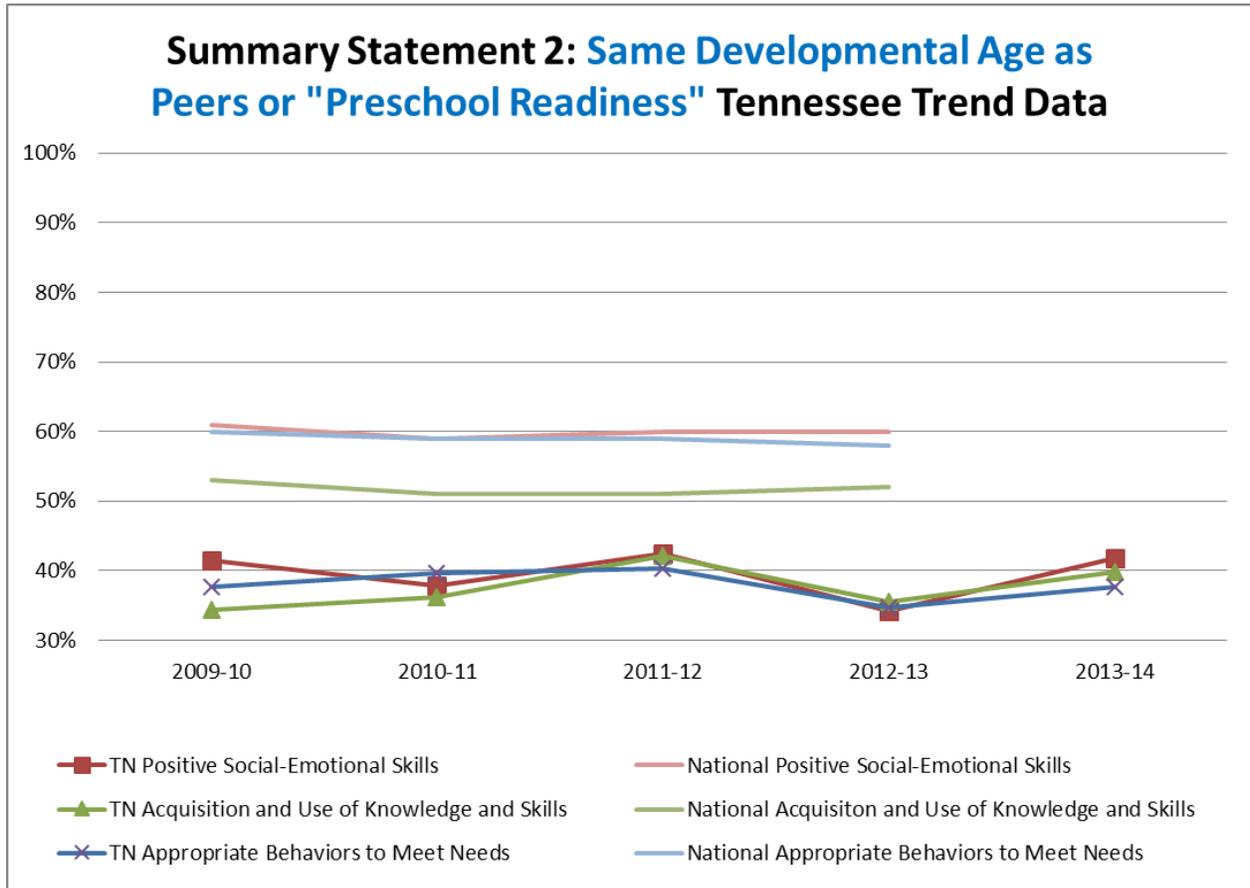


Figure 2

These data were shared in July 2014 with the SICCC, in August 2014 with a select group of infrastructure stakeholders, and in October 2014 at three regional stakeholder forums. In all instances stakeholder input received pointed the Lead Agency to further analyze Summary Statement 2.

As noted in section 1(b) below, the Lead Agency used multiple data sources in its data analysis to identify root causes contributing to low performance. In addition to annual ECO data, additional data sources utilized in the development of Tennessee’s SSIP include: ECO calculators available through the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center, 618 exiting data collections, compliance monitoring data, referral data, census data and multiple data sources utilized in the development of *Kids Count: The State of the Child in Tennessee* available at <http://www.tn.gov/tccy/kc.shtml>.

Throughout Phase I of the SSIP, the Lead Agency used ongoing data analysis, as described further in section 1(b), in the development of the SIMR.

1(b) How Data were Disaggregated

ECO Summary Statement 2, the percentage of children who exited the program at the level of same-age peers, was identified as the greatest area of need for the state. Disaggregation of

ECO data was conducted to identify potential sub-groups or areas to further narrow the focus of the SSIP. Additional broad and focused analyses by multiple variables using ECO data were conducted across entrance/exit scores, progress categories, and summary statements. These analyses are listed below.

Additional ECO Analyses:

- FFY 2011-12 through 2013-14 trends by progress categories across each outcome
- Summary statements, progress categories and average entrance/exit scores by TEIS point of entry office (POE) for FFY 2012-13 and FFY 2013-14
- Summary statements and progress categories by child's race/ethnicity for FFY 2012-13 and FFY 2013-14
- Summary statements by child's age at entry into TEIS for FFY 2012-13 and FFY 2013-14
- Summary statements by child's length of time in TEIS for FFY 2012-13 and FFY 2013-14
- Meaningful differences calculation for summary statements for FFY 2011-12 through FFY 2013-14
- ECO summary statements and progress categories comparing Tennessee to states with similar definitions of eligibility for FFY 2011-12 and FFY 2012-13
- Summary Statements by Early Intervention Resource Agency (EIRA)
- Summary Statement 2 compared to percentage of children receiving TennCare (Medicaid) by POE
- Summary Statement 2 by socioeconomic status (SES) factors comparing/contrasting low, middle and high SES counties using multiple external data sources

Results of Focused Data Analysis

The disaggregation of data as described above did not reveal any statewide discrepancies in the performance of infants or toddlers within a particular subset of data that would justify the Lead Agency narrowing the focus of its State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) to a subset of infants/toddlers or to a particular ECO Outcome (e.g. positive social-emotional skills). As described in Component 3: SIMR, the Lead Agency ultimately decided to focus on improving Summary Statement 2, Outcome B: Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills based on Tennessee's Department of Education (TDOE) priorities and initiatives, and stakeholder input.

Stakeholders recommended additional data analysis be conducted on socioeconomic factors as a possible root cause of low performance that could possibly narrow the focus of the SIMR. Early in the SSIP process, the Lead Agency did not have the ability to analyze socioeconomic data because collection of income data is not required from families receiving Part C services in Tennessee's Early Intervention System (TEIS). An initial look at the potential impact of socioeconomic status (SES) was conducted using TennCare (Medicaid) data by POE. This analysis indicated a negative correlation between the percentage of children receiving TennCare within a POE and the percentage of children exiting Part C at the level of same age peers in acquisition and use of knowledge and skills. This result suggested that additional data analysis was needed. The program monitor and state contractor utilized existing data sources as a proxy for SES data at the county level. Multiple county-level data sources were available in *Kids Count: The State of the Child in Tennessee*. Specific SES related indicators of child well-being were selected based on their pertinence to the population of children served by early intervention. Each county within the state was scored on each selected indicator to calculate a county aggregate SES score.

TEIS-POEs are comprised of multiple counties. The 25% of counties with the lowest and 25% of counties with the highest SES scores were identified. These high and low SES counties were used in calculating the percentage of children exiting at the level of same-age peers for the entire POE compared to sub-groups of low and high SES counties within each POE. These county SES scores were displayed on a large state map in an effort to identify any statewide pattern of the of low/high SES counties.

This process confirmed the negative correlation between SES and ECO. A smaller percentage of children from low SES counties exited Part C services at the level of same-age peers when compared to children from high SES counties and when compared to the state as a whole. This statement held true for each POE. Conversely, a larger percentage of children from high SES counties exited Part C services at the level of same-age peers when compared to children from low SES counties.

However, this analysis merely represents a correlation at the county level – not the child level. The Lead Agency does not collect income data from families receiving TEIS services making it impossible to track outcomes by socioeconomic status at an individual child level. Therefore, the correlation between child outcomes and socioeconomic status will be used to drive the selection of improvement activities in Phase II of the SSIP but does not justify the narrowing the SIMR to a subset of children and/or counties.

Similar to the SES analysis, ECO data by Early Intervention Resource Agency (EIRA) was not initially possible given limitations in the data system. The state data manager worked to develop a method of disaggregating child level ECO data by EIRA. The results show a broad range among EIRAs in the percentage of children exiting Part C services at the level of same age peers in FFY 2013-14. These data will be used as a baseline measurement for future evaluation of EIRA performance as part of the SSIP.

1(c) Data Quality

Over the past two years, the Lead Agency implemented strategies to address data quality concerns around missing ECO data as well as accuracy of ratings. These data improvement efforts, described below, allow the Lead Agency to have increasing confidence in the ECO data.

Missing data were addressed through validations in the Tennessee Early Intervention Data System (TEIDS) which require an entrance ECO score to be entered before the initial IFSP can be finalized and an exit ECO score to be entered before a child's record can be closed. Beginning December 2013, ECO data have been collected at every six month and annual IFSP meeting, nearly eliminating the possibility of missing data for families who exit the program without notice.

ECO score accuracy and inter-rater reliability issues were addressed through POE staff training. The most recent training in June 2014 outlined a new process for service coordinators to utilize z-scores from the child's Battelle Developmental Inventory™, Second Edition (BDI-2™) eligibility evaluation to anchor entrance ECO score discussions held with families. Annual ECO training is on the professional development calendar used by the quality improvement team. Annual training will continue to address consistency of the ECO collection process.

There are two concurrent pilot projects in place to explore other avenues to address ECO data quality concerns. One involves completion of a BDI-2 evaluation on children transitioning from

TEIS to Part B-619 preschool services. Due to the relatively small numbers of records in the pilot program, it has taken some time to gather enough records to have confidence in the analysis. The second pilot utilizes early interventionists at an EIRA to complete ECO ratings on children referred to their agency for developmental therapy. Within the SSIP Phase II timeframe, the Lead Agency will evaluate the results of both pilots to determine expansion or discontinuation.

1(d) Considering Compliance Data

In FFY 2013-14 focused monitoring was conducted relative to Indicator 7: timely Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) development. The Lead Agency identified concerns relative to eligibility procedures and the percentage of children who are re-referred to TEIS. The results of this focused monitoring led to additional data analysis of federal 618 exiting data collections, and referral data to identify areas for improvement. When the concerns related to eligibility procedures were echoed by SSIP stakeholders at SICC meetings, infrastructure analysis meetings and regional stakeholder forums, the results of this focused monitoring were again reviewed and discussed by TEIS leadership as a potential SSIP improvement strategy. This topic was selected as one of the state's coherent improvement strategies and will specifically address children who are referred and initially found ineligible for services but return later and identified as eligible. See Component 4: Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies for additional information.

The Lead Agency has been in "Meets Requirements" since FFY 2008-09 based on the state's annual program determination from the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Whenever findings of noncompliance are identified through monitoring, the Lead Agency takes appropriate action to address the finding with the POE to ensure timely correction. Component 2: Analysis of Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity for a description of monitoring activities. The Lead Agency will continue this process through all phases of the SSIP and monitor POEs to assure that local efforts to correct noncompliance do not present barriers to improvement efforts related to the SIMR.

1(e) Additional Data

At the conclusion of Phase I of the SSIP, the Lead Agency has not identified any outstanding areas of need for additional data. Throughout Phases II and III of the SSIP, data analysis will be critical in evaluating the effectiveness of implemented improvement strategies and activities. The Lead Agency will conduct ongoing and/or new data analysis as needed to support improvement strategies/activities during Phases II and III of the SSIP.

1(f) Stakeholder Involvement in Data Analysis

Stakeholders have been actively involved in reviewing and providing feedback on SSIP data analysis. See Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix for representation details. Sharing and discussion of data has been a part of each stakeholder meeting. The SSIP team provided and utilized data to anchor discussions with stakeholders. A feedback loop between SSIP team, TEIS leadership and stakeholders has been an essential part of SSIP development wherein ongoing data analysis was completed, shared with stakeholders, discussed, feedback obtained, and possible additional data and analyses identified.

Beginning at the July 2014 SICC meeting, results from the initial data analysis were shared and large and small group discussions were held. Both verbal and written feedback were collected by the SSIP team. Post SICC meeting, SSIP team and TEIS leadership reviewed and considered all feedback, including suggested areas of focus as well as recommendations for additional data analysis. Additional recommendations for data analyses were evaluated for feasibility and potential benefit; assignments and target dates were identified for additional data analysis.

Data analysis was also shared at three regional stakeholder forums in October 2014. At the regional forums statewide data were shared, and selected ECO data were disaggregated at POE and regional levels. Attendees were asked to respond to the data and provide regional context and input on data analysis and potential root causes for low performance.

Additional data analyses recommended by the SICC were completed by the program monitor and shared at the October 2014 SICC meeting. Members, visitors (POE staff, EIS providers [EIRAs and vendors]), other TEIS staff participated in group discussion about the data. Both verbal and written feedback were collected by the SSIP team.

Data relative to establishing targets for SSIP were shared and discussed at the January 2015 SICC meeting. SICC members were asked to respond to proposed targets and feedback was reviewed and evaluated in establishing final targets.

Final Phase I data analysis was shared with SICC at the March 2015 meeting prior to SSIP submission. New data analysis shared at this meeting included ECO by socioeconomic status and ECO by EIRA.

Component 2: Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity

2(a) How Infrastructure Capacity was Analyzed

The Lead Agency engaged in four key activities to systematically analyze the capacity of the current State infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity at the local level in relation to the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR).

General Supervision/ Early Infrastructure Meeting, June 2013

The Lead Agency began an initial analysis of capacity with a review of its system of general supervision and infrastructure in June 2013. Work utilized the proposed measurements for the new State Performance Plan (SPP)/ Annual Performance Report (APR), including Indicator 11, the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), released on April 15, 2013 by the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Eight components of a general supervision system were reviewed: effective dispute resolution processes; improvement, correction, incentives, and sanctions; targeted technical assistance and professional development; fiscal management; SPP/APR; policies and procedures; integrated monitoring activities; and data. The group identified elements operating within each component, then identified and ranked key elements as strengths or challenges. The meeting was facilitated by the state contractor along with the state's Part C contact with Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC) working with state staff and invited stakeholders.

SSIP Infrastructure Analysis Meeting, August 2014

Formal infrastructure analysis for the SSIP was conducted in August 2014. The foundation of this work utilized initial broad data analyses conducted in July 2014 along with infrastructure information from June 2013. Data analyses informed the infrastructure activity work to begin the focus on Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) for Summary Statement 2. The analysis identified elements operating within each of the following six infrastructure components: governance, fiscal, professional development and technical assistance, quality standards, accountability and monitoring, and data. Elements within each component were identified as strengths and challenges. Reviewing the results, the group ranked specific component areas as having higher a priority for potential impact in building local capacity to support improved results for the SIMR. These components were selected to study further to identify potential leverage points and/or barriers. Additionally, during this meeting, information about known state initiatives was collected. Refer to sections 2(c) and 2(d) below.

Time was also spent during infrastructure work to identify potential root causes for low performance. Qualitative information collected was later analyzed to identify trends. This is addressed in detail in Component 4: Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies. The meeting was facilitated by the state's Part C contact with Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC) and by the state contractor.

Regional Forums, October 1-3, 2014

The Lead Agency held three statewide, regional (east, middle, and west) forums which built upon data analysis and infrastructure analysis to obtain local input. POE and regional level data were shared with standard questions developed for input about why the data look the way they do and possible root causes for low performance. The Part C coordinator, program monitor and the state contractor facilitated the forums with invited local POE staff and a regional cross-section of stakeholders. Refer to Component 4: Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies for detailed information regarding the regional forums.

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) Meeting, October 2014

The October 2014 SICC meeting was a full day meeting with membership and visitors present engaged with SSIP work. The meeting was facilitated by the SSIP team. The TEIS executive director announced the Lead Agency's decision to further narrow the SIMR focus to the Early Childhood Outcomes area 3B, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills to align TEIS with the Tennessee's Department of Education (TDOE) priority for student achievement particularly in the academic areas of reading and math. A summary of infrastructure analysis work was shared within the framework of the narrowed SIMR focus. Potential root causes for low performance were shared for reaction and feedback. Additionally, state information on initiatives that crossed agencies and had potential for alignment and integration with the SSIP was solicited from membership and visitors.

At this meeting a key TEIS initiative relative to Early Intervention Resource Agencies (EIRAs) was shared by the Part C coordinator. Beginning in FFY 2013-14 contacts, TEIS established performance measures along with a training and supervision plan to better ensure consistency and alignment of the early intervention service of developmental therapy with family centered early intervention best practices. The quality improvement manager and staff led efforts for this initiative. Specific EIRA performance measures within the initiative are:

- Home visit activities are routine based
- IFSP goals are addressed during each home visit
- Family engagement occurs during home visits

2(b) Description of State Systems

Below is a description of the State's systems infrastructure related to the State Identified Measureable Result (SIMR):

Governance

The Lead Agency adopted Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C federal regulations for its State regulations. For daily operational procedures and processes the TEIS Operations and Policy Manuals are utilized which have their foundation in Part C regulatory requirements. The Lead Agency has an effective dispute resolution process to resolve disputes if issues cannot be resolved locally. EIS providers are funded through contracts for the provision of early intervention services. The TEIS executive director and Part C coordinator leverage fiscal and human resources to meet the needs of the system.

Fiscal

The Lead Agency has a fiscal services unit within the TEIS state office. This unit manages payment reimbursement to vendors for Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) services for which TEIS is either sole, secondary, or tertiary payor. The Lead Agency maintains consistent statewide service rates for early intervention service (EIS) providers. Contracts are developed with EIS providers through a competitive contract process. The fiscal services unit has a budget management and reporting component to ensure federal and state allocations are within budget. The TEIS executive director, Part C coordinator, and fiscal services unit manager work with TDOE fiscal staff to develop annual and long-term budgets.

Quality Standards

The Lead Agency has state qualification requirements for TEIS central and POE office staff. Appropriate qualifications and licensing information is verified and maintained for EIS providers prior to the issuance of a contract for Part C services. A major quality standards priority was

initiated in FFY 2013-14 with the addition of performance measures in EIRA contracts. See section 2(d) for additional information about EIRA performance measures. The state has also established Tennessee-Early Learning Developmental Standards (TN-ELDS) for children, birth through four years of age. These standards help ensure high quality programming in the state's Voluntary Pre-K programs. The quality improvement team works jointly with EIRAs to plan an annual Building Best Practice Conference

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The Lead Agency's professional development and technical assistance efforts are led by the TEIS quality improvement manager and staff. Because these areas are closely connected it was decided to address these two components together for infrastructure analysis related to the SIMR. POE staff are state employees. The Lead Agency has established staff qualification criteria and has the ability to hire POE staff when positions become vacant. The quality improvement team utilizes an annual professional development calendar that outlines all required training for POE staff. In addition to the calendar, technical assistance activities and resources are provided to support POEs such as new hire training and online resources available on a variety of topics, including: Early Childhood Outcomes, TEIS Operations Manual, Routines Based Interview-Functional Goal Development, Family Centered Services, etc. The quality improvement team is also responsible for providing support, opportunities, and monitoring to contract Early Intervention Resource Agencies (EIRAs) to ensure they complete appropriate professional development activities required by their contracts. The quality improvement team continually develops capacity around implementation of effective early intervention practices through its system of professional development and technical assistance.

Accountability/ Monitoring

Accountability and monitoring efforts for early intervention service (EIS) programs (e.g., POEs) are led by the Part C monitoring coordinator and staff. TEIS operates under the State of Tennessee's annual performance evaluation process for all state employees. Performance of POE staff are measured through **Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Timely (SMART) Job plans**; built upon responsibilities for federal compliance and child results.

The Lead Agency utilizes a real-time, web-based data management system (e.g., Tennessee Early Intervention Data System [TEIDS]) for collecting and analyzing data relative to its monitoring processes. Monitoring activities are conducted through the following three avenues:

1. **Annual Monitoring:** Tennessee's data management system enables the Lead Agency to track through desk audits the existence of noncompliance and the verification the correction of child level noncompliance. Full fiscal year census data from TEIDS are utilized annually for the monitoring of federal compliance Indicators 1, 7, and 8C. Compliance with Indicator 8A is maintained through a TEIDS validation. Compliance with Indicator 8B is addressed through quarterly data sharing at the state level between Part C and Part B, 619 preschool. Compliance monitoring and the issuing of written findings, when warranted, occur during September-October for the previous fiscal year.
2. **Dispute Resolution:** Findings of noncompliance may be issued as an outcome of one of the three dispute resolution processes (i.e., administrative complaint, mediation, due process). Identifying noncompliance and issuing a written finding, when warranted, may occur at any time during the year.
3. **Focused Monitoring Activities:** Activities may be either planned or conducted as needed. Planned focused monitoring activities typically arise from possible IDEA or operational

issues identified from TEIS leadership which need deeper investigation. Focused monitoring may additionally be initiated upon a particular concern expressed outside of TEIS which warrants investigation. Focused monitoring activities may occur at any time during their year.

A written finding of noncompliance can be issued to an EIS program (TEIS-POE) through any of the monitoring activities described above. When this occurs the Part C monitoring coordinator issues a letter of finding along with supporting data and a corrective action plan (CAP) template.

Along with monitoring processes relative to federal compliance indicators, the Lead Agency also has a mechanism for local program improvement planning based on annual letters of determination issued to EIS Programs (POEs). Since spring 2013, the rubric for local program determinations has included data for both compliance and result indicators. The rubric is used to calculate determinations: Meets Requirements, Needs Assistance, Needs Intervention, and Needs Substantial Intervention. The program monitor provides POEs technical assistance in their development of an improvement plan to address areas of low performance as identified through annual program determinations.

Data

Efforts to ensure a high quality data management system are led by the central office state data manager and staff located in each POE. In Tennessee the child's official educational record is housed in a real-time, web-based data system. This data management system, Tennessee Early Intervention Data System (TEIDS) has numerous validations that help ensure high-quality data. Data and reports are available for use at the state and local POE level. The child's record in TEIDS is viewable by authorized IFSP team members providing early intervention services.

2(c) System Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Generated through numerous SSIP activities and meetings previously described, the list below contains current and coordinated strengths of the State's infrastructure relevant to the SIMR.

Fiscal

- Ability to hire TEIS staff when positions become vacant
- Equitable payments to EIS providers (EIRAs and vendors)
- Timely reimbursement to EIS providers

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

- Quality improvement team
- TEIS monthly newsletter to TEIS staff and EIS providers facilitates good communication
- Quality improvement team support to EIRAs
- Joint planning by quality improvement team and EIRAs for annual Building Best Practice Conference

Governance

- TEIS Operations and Policy Manuals for daily procedures
- Procedures for dispute resolution when issues cannot be resolved locally
- Competitive contract process for EIS providers (EIRAs and vendors)
- Active State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC)

Data

- Tennessee Early Intervention Data System (TEIDS). Refer to Overview, Description of State Program for a description of TEIDS.
- TEIDS reporting capacity to meet federal reporting requirements: compliance indicators, results indicators, and 618 data collections
- State data manager's direct working relationship with TEIDS programmer
- Data managers in all POEs work closely with the state data manager

Infrastructure components warranting improvement in relation to the SIMR are:

Accountability/Monitoring

- Refinement of monitoring processes for EIRA performance measures to ensure quality early intervention service provision
- Staff capacity to conduct focused monitoring activities

Quality Standards

- Ensuring EIRAs implement quality early intervention practices
- EIS providers (EIRAs and vendors) understanding of Early Childhood Outcomes
- Sharing of Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) data with EIRAs for program improvement

Data (identified as both a strength and challenge)

- Timely data entry by POE staff and EIS providers (EIRAs and vendors)
- Accessing Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) data for EIRAs

Potential leverage points were identified as having the greatest potential to build capacity within and across state systems to address the SIMR. System challenges/barriers were also identified for improvement. These are summarized below in Table 1.

Leverage Points	Challenges/Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEIS initiative in FFY 2013-14 to implement EIRA performance measures • TEIS monthly newsletter to EIS programs and EIS providers • Quarterly meetings with EIRAs • Revised Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards (TN-ELDSs) for birth through 4 years of age and recent cross-walk with Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children (AEPS) for use in ongoing child-level progress reporting for IFSP reviews • Quality personnel requirements for EIRA Early interventionists (EIs) in contracts • Availability of an existing training video developed by an EIRA to train Early interventionist (EI) new hires (BB mentioned that this could probably be a standalone). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent avenues to monitor for quality services • Ensuring all IFSP team members have the opportunity to participate in meetings • Accessibility of ECO data analyzed at the EIRA and Early interventionist level in relation child progress • Lack of standardized instrument to measure EIRA, Early interventionists (EI) performance • Establishing a common language used in both EIRA ongoing child progress assessments to support the IFSP team's review of goals and the service coordinator's ECO discussions with families • Ensuring all EIS providers, including Vendors understand developmentally appropriate practices in early intervention • Standardized training for Early interventionist new hires

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Building Best Practices (EIRA) Conference with focuses on best practices in the field of early intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-rater reliability in the collection of ECO data using the Child Outcomes Summary form (COS)
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Table 1

2(d) State-level Improvement Plans and Initiatives

A number of state initiatives were identified during Phase I of the SSIP. Those that best aligned for use in the SIMR are below.

TDOE Race to the Top

Tennessee received a competitive, five-year federal Race to the Top grant award in FFY 2010-11. The purpose of grant was for states to create education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, improving high school graduation rates, and ensuring student preparation for success in college and careers; and implementing ambitious plans in four core education reform area. The grant addresses four component areas: 1) data systems to improve instruction, 2) great teachers and leaders, 3) higher quality standards and assessments, and 4) turning around low-performing schools. As a result of this grant award, the strategic priority throughout all of TDOE work has been focused on:

- Closing student achievement gap
- School readiness

TDOE Division of Student Support and Services, Office of Early Learning Strategic Planning

Strategic planning which began in February 2015 has its focus on three priority areas:

- Teacher/ provider quality and evaluation
- Program quality and evaluation
- Student-level formative and summative assessment

As part of the Office of Early Learning, TEIS' strategic planning for these three priorities will be initiated April 2015. These division priorities align with SSIP infrastructure needs identified for building capacity in EIS programs and providers to address the SIMR. As noted in section 2(c) above, the three areas for strategic planning align with challenges/barriers identified by stakeholders.

Early Intervention Resource Agency (EIRA) Performance Measures

In FFY 2013-14, TEIS established performance measures along with a training and supervision plan to better ensure consistency and alignment of early intervention developmental therapy with family centered early intervention best practices. The improvement strategies are aligned with TDOE priorities. The quality improvement manager and staff are leading efforts for this initiative. Performance measures are as follows:

- Home visit activities are routine based,
- IFSP goals are addressed during each home visit
- Family engagement occurs during home visits

Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children (AEPS®) Second Edition

The Tennessee-Early Learning Developmental Standards (TN-ELDS) were recently cross-walked with the AEPS. In the fall of FFY 2015-16, EIRAs statewide will begin using the AEPS to standardize child progress reporting for six month and annual IFSP meetings. The Lead Agency

is exploring the use of AEPS scores to age anchor Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) discussions with families to support service coordinators in ECO data collection at six month intervals and at exit.

Autism Navigator

Autism Navigator is a web-based resource with tools and courses developed to bridge the gap between science and community practice developed by Florida State University, College of Medicine. The resource is designed to increase the capacity of providers and families to improve outcomes for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Training for selected EIRAs in the use of the system is currently underway.

Screening Tools and Referral Training (START) training for physicians

The Lead Agency has had an ongoing partnership with the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (TNAAP) for the purpose of increasing early identification and referral of children with developmental delays or behavioral problems using standardized screening tools. Medical personnel represent a primary referral source for TEIS. The START Program is an educational program to help pediatric care providers (including pediatricians, family physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, and others) learn skills and strategies to implement routine developmental screening using standardized screening tools as part of routine health care procedures. One component of the training is specific to the TEIS referral process.

The primary consideration for the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) was driven by priorities and initiatives within the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE):

- TDOE Race to the Top
- TEIS Early Intervention Resource Agency (EIRA) initiative on performance measures
- TDOE Office of Early Learning Strategic Planning

2(e) Representatives Involved

The Lead Agency utilized a broad group of internal and external stakeholders for its infrastructure analysis crossing agencies, positions, and offices. The Lead Agency found stakeholder involvement a critical component in Phase I development and commits to using stakeholders for Phase II of SSIP development. The primary stakeholder group will continue to be the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) as well as visitors present at quarterly meetings. Additional relevant stakeholders will be utilized based on areas of content need.

2(f) Stakeholder Involvement in Infrastructure Analysis

Multiple Internal and external stakeholders were utilized for infrastructure analysis. Intentional consideration was given to inviting stakeholder representatives outside the SICC membership for infrastructure meetings (June 2013 and August 2014) and regional stakeholder forums (October 2014). The Lead Agency also took the opportunity to solicit input from visitors present at quarterly SICC meetings. Refer to Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix for information about the cross-section of stakeholder representation.

Component 3: State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)

3(a) SIMR Statement

Based on data analysis, infrastructure analysis and stakeholder input and current agency initiatives, the State Identified Measurable Result for Tennessee Part C is:

The percent of infants and toddlers who demonstrate improved acquisition and use of knowledge and skills and who function within age expectation by the time they exit or turn age three will increase.

Early Childhood Outcome 3B, Summary Statement 2

3(b) Data and Infrastructure Analyses Substantiating the SIMR

The Lead Agency selected its SIMR through a systematic process, which included data analysis, infrastructure analysis and stakeholder input. After extensively reviewing data, which indicated Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Summary Statement 2 was lagging across all three outcome areas, the Lead Agency held discussions with stakeholders who agreed Summary Statement 2 was the area of greatest need. Data were disaggregated using multiple variables to identify if there was a particular subset which should become the SIMR target group (e.g. race/ethnicity, age of child, POE). These analyses did not yield any results to narrow the SIMR focus.

Current priorities and initiatives were reviewed for TEIS, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) and other state departments and programs. Outcome B: acquisition and use of knowledge and skills was identified as the focus of the SIMR based on current initiatives, including quality improvement for TEIS early intervention resource agencies (EIRAs) and learning priorities outlined in the strategic plan for the Department of Education, Office of Early Learning as described in Component 2: Analysis of Infrastructure.

3(c) SIMR as a Child-Family-Level Outcome

Tennessee's SIMR is a direct measurement of Annual Performance Report (APR) Indicator 3: Early Childhood Outcomes, Outcome B: Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, Summary Statement 2 (the percentage of infants and toddlers who function within age expectations by the time they exit or turn age three). This SIMR will address all children receiving Part C services within the state. Selected improvement strategies and activities will lead to improved results for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

3(d) Stakeholder Involvement in Selecting the SIMR

Stakeholders were actively involved in selecting the SIMR for TEIS. Potential SIMR topics were reviewed with SICC stakeholders at meetings in July and October and feedback was obtained. See Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix for stakeholder representation. Stakeholders were in agreement that Summary Statement 2 across all areas was an obvious area of need for the state. Discussions were held relative to narrowing the SIMR to one of the three outcome areas: A) Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships), B) Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication) or C) Use of appropriate

behaviors to meet needs. Given extensive data analysis did not reveal one of the three outcome areas to be a greater area of need, stakeholders were in agreement with the selection of Outcome B: acquisition and use of knowledge and skills as the SIMR which best aligned with state and TDOE priorities and initiatives.

3(e) SIMR Baseline Data and Targets

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
TN Target		44.7%	45.2%	45.2%	45.2%	45.2% SSIP	45.2%	45.5%	46.0%	46.5%	47.0%
TN Actual	44.2%	34.4%	36.2%	42.1%	35.5%	39.8% Baseline					
Ntl. Avg.	54.0%	53.0%	51.0%	51.0%	50.0%						

Table 2

FFY 2013-14 data will serve as the baseline measurement for the SIMR. Targets outlined in the Table 2 above were selected after analysis and discussion of the state's performance relative to current targets and national averages. Although the state has had fluctuations yearly in performance on this indicator, it has never met the current target of 45.2% and continues to perform well below the national average.

The rationale used to set the baseline and targets was based on historical performance, national averages, and from stakeholders. The SSIP team and TEIS leadership met to review trend data on this indicator and established proposed targets for the SSIP. These proposed targets along with the rationale were reviewed with technical assistance and the SICC and feedback was gathered.

The Lead Agency set the targets as outlined in Table 2 above with incremental increases beginning annually with year three of the SSIP, which is the anticipated implementation timeframe of SSIP improvement activities. Since the measurement of performance with this SSIP coincides with Indicator 3, Outcome B, the targets for that sub-indicator were set in the Annual Performance Report (APR) to match these outlined above for SSIP. State targets are reviewed annually with SICC membership.

Component 4: Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies

4(a) How Improvement Strategies were Selected

Potential improvement strategies were identified through facilitated stakeholder activities at infrastructure analysis meetings and regional stakeholder forums. Stakeholders attending the infrastructure analysis meeting in August 2014 identified strengths and challenges within the TEIS infrastructure as well as possible leverage points and challenges/barriers to improving outcomes, which is reviewed in Component 2: Analysis of State Infrastructure. They also identified 13 possible root causes of low performance. After the meeting, the 13 possible root causes were analyzed and grouped into like themes, which are the four root causes of low performance listed below.

ECO Measurement/Data

- Understanding of ECO
- Service Coordinator knowledge of child development

Child Find/Referral/Screening

- Screening/eligibility processes and instruments
- Re-referrals
- Medical conditions/characteristics of children served

Family Factors

- Income
- Education
- Transportation
- Resources

Provider Availability/Service Delivery

- Service delivery settings/natural environments
- Availability of specialty therapies in rural areas

Stakeholders attending the October 2014 regional forums were asked to provide feedback and regional context to data shared. See section 4(e) below for detailed information about the forums. Feedback obtained was related to factors that may contribute to low performance. Individual comments were recorded, disaggregated and analyzed for recurring themes. These themes were identified as potential improvement strategies. There were nine themes identified through the regional forums. Five of the nine themes correlated strongly with the root causes of low performance identified by stakeholders at the infrastructure meeting. These aligned themes are marked below with an asterisk (*).

- **ECO Measurement*** – Improve the administration of the processes that lead to ECO measurements
- **ECO Data*** – Improve ECO data collection, local reporting and use
- **Eligibility Procedures*** – Improve screening and evaluation of infants/toddlers
- **Family Engagement*** – Build family capacity to support their children
- **Service Delivery Method*** – Improve quality of early intervention services through evidence-based practices (i.e. frequency, intensity, setting, duration, model)
- **IFSP Team Function** – Support IFSP team members full investment in maximizing child outcomes

- **Transition** – Aligning ECO processes between Part C and Part B 619 services
- **Cross-Agency Collaboration** – Engage local and state level resources to improve collaboration and avoid duplication of effort
- **Fiscal Resources** – Ensure distribution and direction of agency resources are aligned with and support programmatic goals

These potential improvement strategies along with examples of improvement activities were reviewed at the October 2014 SICC meeting. Feedback was gathered relative to the strategies and activities. Members were given the opportunity to generate additional strategies and/or activities. Feedback from SICC was reviewed by SSIP team with TEIS leadership. TEIS staff discussed all strategies and selected those improvement strategies which offered the greatest opportunity for positive impact on the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) and were best aligned with the priorities and initiatives within TEIS, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) and other state departments and programs. Consensus was reached and four draft improvement strategies were selected. From those improvement strategies a draft Theory of Action was developed. These drafts were shared with SICC at the January 2015 meeting and feedback was gathered. See Component 5: Theory of Action for detailed description of the stakeholder feedback process. In response to feedback, revisions were made to the four improvement strategies and the final version was shared at the March 2015 SICC meeting. The four strategies are outlined in Table 3 below.

Tennessee’s Early Intervention System Improvement Strategies
Eligibility Procedures – Improve processes for screening, and evaluating potentially eligible infants/toddlers to ensure fewer children are found initially ineligible and are later re-referred and identified as eligible.
IFSP Team Function – Establish clear expectations for the role of the IFSP team and the contributions of its members in achieving child outcomes to ensure that local programs have well-functioning IFSP teams that are more coordinated in their implementation of early intervention services.
Family Centered Services – Evaluate program quality and increase early intervention provider competence and confidence to implement family centered early intervention, which includes services based on child and family needs, routines, and natural environments to ensure quality family centered early intervention statewide.
ECO Data – Implement measures to improve processes for accurate data collection and dissemination to increase providers’ overall understanding of ECO data.

Table 3

4(b) How Improvement Strategies are Sound, Logical and Aligned

The improvement strategies selected are sound and logical as a result of being derived from Phase I data analysis, infrastructure analysis, stakeholder feedback and numerous internal and external discussions and work among the SSIP team, TEIS leadership and with the state contractor and consultant providing technical assistance. The selection of these four particular strategies was substantiated by multiple stakeholder groups across the state.

Each selected improvement strategy is aligned with the SIMR and each independently has the potential to positively impact outcomes for infants/toddlers and their families in a measurable way. When implemented in a coordinated and well-planned sequence of activities, these strategies will work in concert to maximize improvement.

These selected improvement strategies are strongly inter-related, which supports efficient implementation on the part of the Lead Agency. Connections across improvement strategies were substantiated during the March 2015 SICC meeting when attendees were divided into groups by strategy area and asked for suggestions for improvement activities that would follow the progression of the Theory of Action and achieve the SIMR. When reporting out, a high degree of correlation was noted between activities recommended by groups working on different improvement strategies indicating that selected improvement activities in Phase II of the SSIP have the potential to address more than one improvement strategy

Improvement strategies are also aligned with TDOE office of early learning strategic planning and with TEIS initiatives around EIRA performance measures. See Component 2: Analysis of State Infrastructure, section 2(d) for detailed information about these initiatives. When considering the SIMR and the selection of improvement strategies, the Lead Agency intentionally sought strategies that would facilitate the alignment of priorities and the coordination of effort across all plans.

4(c) Strategies that Address Root Causes and Build Capacity to Achieve SIMR

As outlined in section 4(a), the improvement strategies were selected based on their alignment with the four possible root causes of low performance that were developed through the infrastructure analysis stakeholder meetings. Table 4 below shows the corresponding root causes addressed by each improvement strategy.

Improvement Strategies Correlated with Root Causes
<p>Eligibility Procedures – Improve processes for screening, and evaluating potentially eligible infants/toddlers to ensure fewer children are found initially ineligible and are later re-referred and identified as eligible.</p> <p><i>Root causes addressed: Child Find/Referral/Screening, Family Factors</i></p>
<p>IFSP Team Function – Establish clear expectations for the role of the IFSP team and the contributions of its members in achieving child outcomes to ensure that local programs have well-functioning IFSP teams that are more coordinated in their implementation of early intervention services.</p> <p><i>Root causes addressed: ECO Measurement, Family Factors, Provider Availability/Service Delivery</i></p>
<p>Family Centered Services – Evaluate program quality and increase early intervention provider competence and confidence to implement family centered early intervention, which includes services based on child and family needs, routines, and natural environments to ensure quality family centered early intervention statewide.</p> <p><i>Root causes addressed: ECO Measurement, Family Factors, Provider Availability/Service Delivery</i></p>

Improvement Strategies Correlated with Root Causes

ECO Data – Implement measures to improve processes for accurate data collection and dissemination to increase providers’ overall understanding of ECO data.

Root causes addressed: *ECO Measurement*

Table 4

The improvement strategies are realistic and address the root causes of low performance as identified by stakeholders. In order to implement the improvement strategies and address the root causes of low performance, the Lead Agency will continually evaluate infrastructure needs and bolster internal systems as needed

4(d) Strategies Based on Data and Infrastructure Analysis

As noted in sections 4(a), 4(b) and 4(c), SSIP improvement strategies were identified and selected largely through stakeholder input beginning with initial data analysis shared at the July 2014 SICC meetings and again at the infrastructure analysis meeting in August 2014. The infrastructure analysis meetings yielded infrastructure strengths and challenges, leverage points and barriers to improvement and potential root causes for low performance.

As can be seen in Component 5: Theory of Action, improvement strategies implemented at the state level impact and support improvements at subsequent levels (local programs [POEs, EIRAs and vendors], families and children). In order to effectively implement the improvements outlined in the Theory of Action, the Lead Agency will need to:

- Conduct ongoing data and infrastructure analyses
- Ensure evidence-based practices are utilized consistently among POEs and EIS providers (EIRAs and vendors)
- Continually monitor progress at local levels to address any modifications needed to the SSIP
- Implement effective evaluation tools

4(e) Stakeholder Involvement in Selecting Improvement Strategies

Regional Stakeholder Forums

In addition to the quarterly SICC meetings held throughout Phase I, TEIS conducted regional forums to gather additional input from stakeholders who had not yet had the opportunity to participate in SICC or infrastructure analysis meetings. In October 2014 the Lead Agency conducted regional forums in each of the three “grand regions” of Tennessee (East, Middle, and West). Working from each POE’s local interagency coordinating council (LICC) membership list, approximately 30 potential stakeholders were identified and invited to participate in each forum. Total attendance was 48 participants statewide. A breakdown of participants by region is shown in Figure 3 below. See Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix for stakeholder representation.

Component 5: Theory of Action

5(a) Graphic Illustration

The graphic illustration of the Theory of Action (Figure 4) on the next page depicts the state's vision of how implementing the coherent set of improvement strategies will result in improvement for local programs, families and children and achievement of the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR). The Theory of Action clearly shows the state's actions and the consequent actions of TEIS local programs and families.

Tennessee's Early Intervention System

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Theory of Action

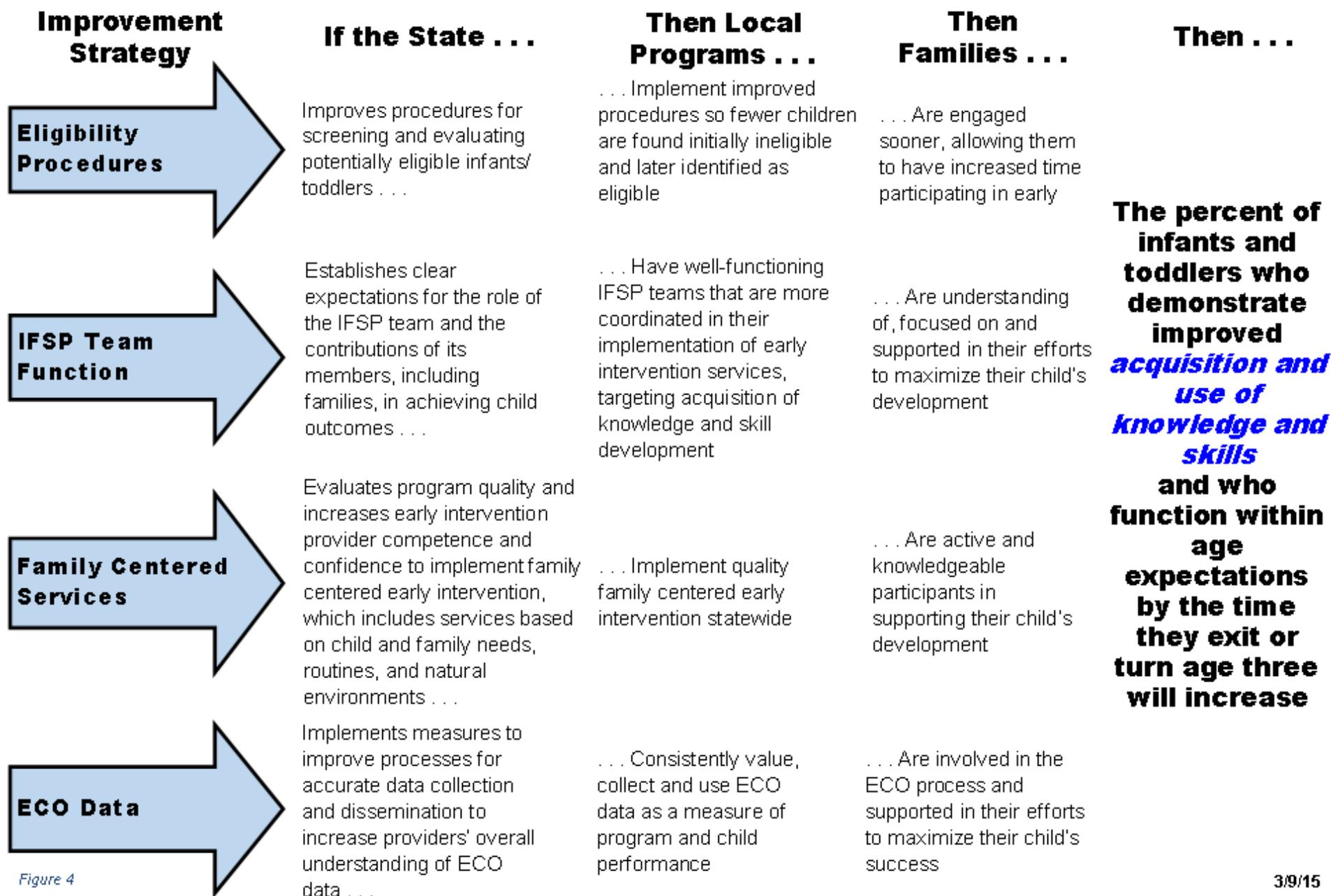


Figure 4

5(b) How Improvement Strategies will Lead to Improved Results

The Theory of Action graphic visually depicts the impact of each improvement strategy on each level of the system (state, local programs, families, and children). The responsibility is on the state to ensure that each level of the system has the infrastructure, support, training/technical assistance, and measurement standards in place to fully implement the selected improvement strategies to improve outcomes for infants and toddlers. Local programs (POE staff, EIRAs, vendors) have been fully engaged as stakeholders in the development of this plan and as such, are fully invested in the results.

5(c) Stakeholder Involvement in Developing the Theory of Action

Multiple internal and external stakeholders were actively involved in the development and refinement of the Lead Agency's Theory of Action. See Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix for representation. As previously described in Component 4: Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies, input from stakeholders attending SICC meetings, infrastructure analysis meetings and regional stakeholder forums led to the identification of improvement strategies. Of the nine potential improvement strategies identified, the four outlined in the Theory of Action were selected by TEIS leadership for their potential to maximize gains in outcomes for infants and toddlers.

A draft of the Theory of Action was shared with SICC members and visitors at the January 2015 meeting and both verbal and written feedback was obtained. Written feedback was gathered via a survey form which asked members to "indicate the extent to which each improvement strategy (arrows) shows a logical relationship likely to positively impact the SIMR. Responses for each topic were on a four point Likert scale: 1) poorly relates to 4) strongly relates. A blank text box for ideas and suggestions for improving/strengthening the relationship(s) between improvement strategies and the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) was at the bottom of the form.

Mean scores for each of the four improvement strategies were calculated for SICC members and visitors to measure the level of agreement among stakeholders that improvement strategies were likely to positively impact the SIMR. Written comments were sorted by improvement strategy area. Each of the four improvement strategy areas was assigned to a member of the SSIP team for review and analysis. After independent review, each member of the team proposed changes to the Theory of Action based on stakeholder feedback. Proposed changes were then collectively reviewed by the SSIP team then reviewed and approved by TEIS leadership. The revised Theory of Action was reviewed with SICC members and visitors at the March 2015 SICC meeting.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix

Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix

SSIP Phase I

Stakeholder Representation	Stakeholder Type		Formal Stakeholder Events									
	Internal	External	General Supervision System/ Early Infrastructure June 2013	SSIP Data Analysis July 2014	SICC Mtg. July 2014	SSIP Infrastructure Analysis Aug. 2014	West TN Regional Forum Oct. 2014	East TN Regional Forum Oct. 2014	Middle TN Regional Forum Oct. 2014	SICC Mtg. Oct. 2014	SICC Mtg. Jan. 2015	SICC Mtg. Mar. 2015
SICC-TN Dept. of Education (TDOE)-Assistant Commissioner	●				X	X				X		X
SICC-TN Dept. of Human Services		●			X							X
SICC-TN Dept. of Health		●			X				X	X		X
SICC-TN Dept. of Mental Health		●			X				X	X		X
SICC-TN Council on Developmental Disabilities		●	X		X				X	X		X
SICC-TN Dept. of Commerce and Insurance		●							X	X		X
SICC-TN Bureau of TennCare		●			X							
SICC-Pediatric Health Care		●										
SICC-Higher Education		●	X		X				X	X		X
SICC-Homeless Migrant Education		●							X	X		
SICC-Head Start Collaboration Office		●			X				X	X		X
SICC-Parents		●			X				X	X		X
SICC-EIS provider-EIRA	●				X				X	X		X
SICC-EIS provider-Vendor		●			X				X	X		X
TN Part C Federal State Contact		●							X			
TDOE Deputy Commissioner	●		X									
TDOE Deputy Assistant Commissioner	●					X			X	X		X
TDOE-619 Preschool Coordinator	●		X			X						X
TDOE-619 Preschol Consultant	●		X			X	X	X				
TDOE-Part B, Federal Reporting Coordinator		●				X						
TDOE-Part B, Data Coordinator		●										
TDOE-Voluntary Pre-K		●				X						
TDOE-HIV Education Consultant		●						X				
TEIS-Executive Director	●			X	X	X			X	X		X
TEIS-Part C Coordinator	●			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
TEIS-Quality Improvement Manager	●		X	X	X	X			X	X		X
TEIS-Early Childhood Consultant	●				X	X			X	X		X

Appendix 1: Stakeholder Involvement Matrix

SSIP Phase I

Stakeholder Representation	Stakeholder Type		Formal Stakeholder Events									
	Internal	External	General Supervision System/ Early Infrastructure June 2013	SSIP Data Analysis July 2014	SICC Mtg. July 2014	SSIP Infrastructure Analysis Aug. 2014	West TN Regional Forum Oct. 2014	East TN Regional Forum Oct. 2014	Middle TN Regional Forum Oct. 2014	SICC Mtg. Oct. 2014	SICC Mtg. Jan. 2015	SICC Mtg. Mar. 2015
TEIS-Autism Resource Specialist	●				X	X				X	X	X
TEIS-Part C Monitoring Coordinator	●		X	X	X	X				X	X	X
TEIS-Program Monitor	●			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
TEIS-Fiscal Unit	●								X			X
TEIS-State Data Manager	●		X	X		X			X	X		X
TEIS-POE Data Manger	●		X			X			X	X		
TEIS-POE-District Administrator	●		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
TEIS-POE-Program Coordinator	●					X	X	X	X	X	X	X
TEIS-POE-Deveopmental Specialist	●					X	X	X	X		X	X
TEIS-POE-Service Coordinator	●		X			X	X	X	X		X	X
EIS Provider-Early Intervention Resource Agency (EIRA)-Administrator		●	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
EIS Provider-Early Intervention Resource Agency (EIRA)-Early Interventionist		●			X	X	X	X	X			X
EIS Provider-Vendor-Administrator		●			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
EIS Provider-Vendor-Therapist (e.g. PT, OT, SLP, etc.)		●					X	X	X			X
TN Association of American Pediatrics (TNAAP)		●			X					X	X	X
TN Disability Pathfinder		●			X						X	
Vanderbilt Kennedy Center/ TRIAD		●							X	X		X
TN Dept. of Health-Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)		●			X							
Tennessee Voices-Parent-to-Parent		●										X
TN Dept. of Children's Services-regional		●					X		X			
Tennessee Voices-other		●					X					
Early Head Start		●					X					
Head Start/ Early Head Start		●						X				
Migrant Head Start		●						X				
EIS Provider-Vendor-Interpreter		●					X					

**Appendix 2: Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) with Tennessee
Department of Education (TDOE) Priorities**

Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) with Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) Priorities

Child Outcomes

The percent of infants and toddlers with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) who demonstrate improved:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication [and early literacy]); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Outcomes Defined:

- A. Positive social emotional skills (including social relationships).** This outcome involves relating to adults, relating to other children, and for older children, following rules related to groups or interacting with others. The outcome includes concepts and behaviors such as attachment/separation/autonomy, expressing emotions and feelings, learning rules and expectations in social situations, and social interactions and social play.
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication/early literacy).** This outcome involves activities such as thinking, reasoning, remembering, problem solving, number concepts, counting, and understanding the physical and social worlds. It also includes a variety of skills related to language and literacy including vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and letter recognition.
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.** This outcome involves behaviors like taking care of basic needs, getting from place to place, using tools (such as forks, toothbrushes, and crayons), and, in older children, contributing to their own health, safety, and well-being. It also includes integrating motor skills to complete tasks; taking care of one's self in areas like dressing, feeding, grooming, and toileting; and acting on the world in socially appropriate ways to get what one wants.

Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Form Ratings

Entrance and Exit ratings collected through discussion with family and IFSP team

7	Completely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shows functioning expected for his or her age in <u>all or almost all everyday situations</u> that are part of the child's life. Functioning is considered <u>appropriate</u> for his or her age. • No one has any concerns about the child's functioning in this outcome area.
6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child's functioning generally is considered <u>appropriate</u> for his or her age but there are <u>some significant concerns</u> about the child's functioning in this outcome area. These concerns are substantial enough to suggest monitoring or possible additional support. • Although age-appropriate, the child's functioning may border on not keeping pace with age expectations.
5	Somewhat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shows functioning expected for his or her age <u>some of the time and/or in some settings and situations</u>. Child's functioning is a mix of age-appropriate and not age-appropriate behaviors and skills. • Child's functioning might be described as like that of a <u>slightly younger child</u>.
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shows occasional age-appropriate functioning across settings and situations. More functioning is <u>not</u> age-appropriate than age appropriate.
3	Nearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child does <u>not yet</u> show functioning expected of a child of his or her age in any situation. • Child uses <u>immediate foundational skills</u>, most or all of the time, across settings and situations. Immediate foundational skills are the skills upon which to build age-appropriate functioning. • Functioning might be described as like that of a <u>younger child</u>.
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child occasionally uses <u>immediate foundational skills</u> across settings and situations. More functioning reflects skills that are <u>not</u> immediate foundational than are immediate foundational.
1	Not Yet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child does <u>not yet</u> show functioning expected of a child his or her age in any situation. • Child's functioning does <u>not yet include immediate foundational skills</u> upon which to build age-appropriate functioning. • Child functioning reflects skills that developmentally come before immediate foundational skills. • Child's functioning might be described as like that of a <u>much younger child</u>.

Progress Categories

Five progress categories for each of the three child outcomes:

- a. Children who did not improve functioning.
- b. Children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same aged peers.
- c. Children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same aged peers but did not reach it.
- d. Children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same aged peers.
- e. Children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same aged peers.

Summary Statements

Data used to compare to state targets and for Annual Performance Report (APR), Indicator 3 reporting

Summary Statement 1: *Developmental progress or "Closing the Achievement Gap"*

Of those children who entered the program below age expectations in each Outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.

Calculation using progress category data: $c+d / a+b+c+d$

Summary Statement 2: *Same developmental age as peers or "Preschool Readiness"*

The percent of children who were functioning within age expectations in each Outcome by the time they exited the program.

Calculation using progress category data: $d+e / a+b+c+d+e$



**Appendix 3: Annual Performance Plan (APR), Indicator 11
State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) Certification**

**ANNUAL REPORT CERTIFICATION OF THE
INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL
UNDER PART C OF THE
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)**

Under IDEA Section 641(e)(1)(D) and 34 CFR §303.604(c), the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) of each jurisdiction that receives funds under Part C of the IDEA must prepare and submit to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education (Department) and to the Governor of its jurisdiction an annual report on the status of the early intervention programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families operated within the State. The ICC may either: (1) prepare and submit its own annual report to the Department and the Governor, or (2) provide this certification with the State lead agency's Annual Performance Report (APR)¹ under Part C of the IDEA. This certification (including the annual report or APR) is due no later than February 2, 2015.

On behalf of the ICC of the State/jurisdiction of Tennessee, I hereby certify that the ICC is: [please check one]

1. Submitting its own annual report for FFY 2013 (which is attached); or
2. Using the State's Part C APR for FFY 2013 in lieu of submitting the ICC's own annual report. By completing this certification, the ICC confirms that it has reviewed the State's Part C APR for accuracy and completeness.²

I hereby further confirm that a copy of this Annual Report Certification and the annual report or APR has been provided to our Governor.

Jacqueline Johnson
Signature of ICC Chairperson

March 31, 2015
Date

jacqueline.johnson@tn.gov
Address or e-mail

(615) 741-0361
Daytime telephone number

¹ Under IDEA Sections 616(b)(2)(C)(ii)(II) and 642 and under 34 CFR §80.40, the lead agency's APR must report on the State's performance under its State performance plan and contain information about the activities and accomplishments of the grant period for a particular Federal fiscal year (FFY).

² If the ICC is using the State's Part C APR and it disagrees with data or other information presented in the State's Part C APR, the ICC must attach to this certification an explanation of the ICC's disagreement and submit the certification and explanation no later than February 2, 2015.