

Phase III: 2017-18 School Year – Review

The 2017-18 school year saw the implementation of coherent improvement strategy two of the SSIP: ensuring special education is the most intensive intervention to best support students. This strategy was well-received by the 28 participating school districts (two districts elected to withdrawal from participation in the SSIP work in 2017-18), and lessons learned through the training process allowed department staff to begin refining the trainings for all three coherent improvement strategies as a second cohort gets underway in the 2018-19 school year.

Upon the conclusion of the final spring trainings on the second improvement strategy of ensuring special education is the most intensive intervention, 181 survey responses from 18 of the 28 participating districts were captured. At least 96 percent of the responses to the questions in the survey were “agree” or “strongly agree” (see more detailed questions below).

Survey Questions Regarding Trainings	Spring % Agree (n=181)
I understand that reading for full understanding is always the goal	96.7 percent
I understand better that I must actively overcome barriers to generalization and transfer of new student learning	98.4 percent
My ability to determine appropriately aligned intervention resources for each individual student based on diagnostic assessments has increased	96.7 percent
I am confident in my ability to strategically evaluate student progress using both mastery and general outcome measures has increased	96.7 percent
My ability to adapt instruction, according to mastery measure monitoring, to meet each student’s need has increased	97.2 percent
I understand the next steps I need to take to implement this training	96.7 percent

To evaluate change in student performance over the course of a school year using data sources other than summative statewide assessments, the department had 28 participating districts in the initial SSIP cohort provide universal screener data for two students from two participating educator’s caseloads. Educators were selected based on whether they had participated in all three training sessions and whether they had students with a specific learning disability (SLD). Students were selected based on if they were enrolled in both the beginning of the school year (prior to the implementation of SSIP practices for strategy two) and the end of the school year and if they had an SLD. There were two unique

circumstances in which a student who did not have an SLD was selected based on the classroom makeup of a selected educator.

Formative assessments like universal screeners can produce very different data points across the different tools available. For example, the data yielded from EasyCBM will be very different from that yielded from AIMSweb. However, all the tools selected produce data that is nationally normed. Accordingly, the department accounted for the change between the fall universal screening data and the spring universal screening data. If there was an increase in the data produced by the tool, this was reflected positively in data analyses; conversely, a decrease in data was reflected negatively. Of the 104 student files reviewed, **23.08 percent showed a decrease from the fall to the spring on universal screener data, 59.62 percent showed an increase, and 17.31 percent had data that stayed the same.**

As noted in the [Spring 2018 SSIP Quarterly Update](#), a state-identified measurable result for the SSIP was updated due to the implementation of a new assessment in Tennessee. According, **the new baseline percentage of students with specific learning disabilities in grades 3-8 scoring at or above approaching on the ELA statewide assessment is 36.79 percent for the state. For the participating cohort, this percentage is 36.31 percent.** The department anticipates having finalized test results for this same participating cohort for the 2017-18 school year in December 2018.

Phase III: 2017-18 School Year – Incorporating Feedback

In April 2018, the department held a summit with the Advisory Council for the Education of Students with Disabilities to share data and solicit input from the broad cross-section of stakeholders. The executive director of special populations navigated the trainings and supports provided to the participating cohort, asked stakeholders to consider the value of the information gleaned and opportunities to expand the work. In addition, the executive director of special populations led activities used in the SSIP trainings to provide stakeholders with first-hand experience using the training materials provided.

In addition to these activities, stakeholders were asked to develop questions that they would like answered as a result of the information provided. These questions were aggregated and have been identified to be discussed in further communications. Stakeholders had the opportunity to review the data gathered thus far to assess progress toward the goal of increasing by three percent annually the percent of students with an SLD scoring at or above approaching on the 3-8 English/language arts (ELA) statewide assessment. They provided feedback on what the data meant to them, and flagged areas they felt could be improved based on the data results.

Phase III: 2018-19 School Year

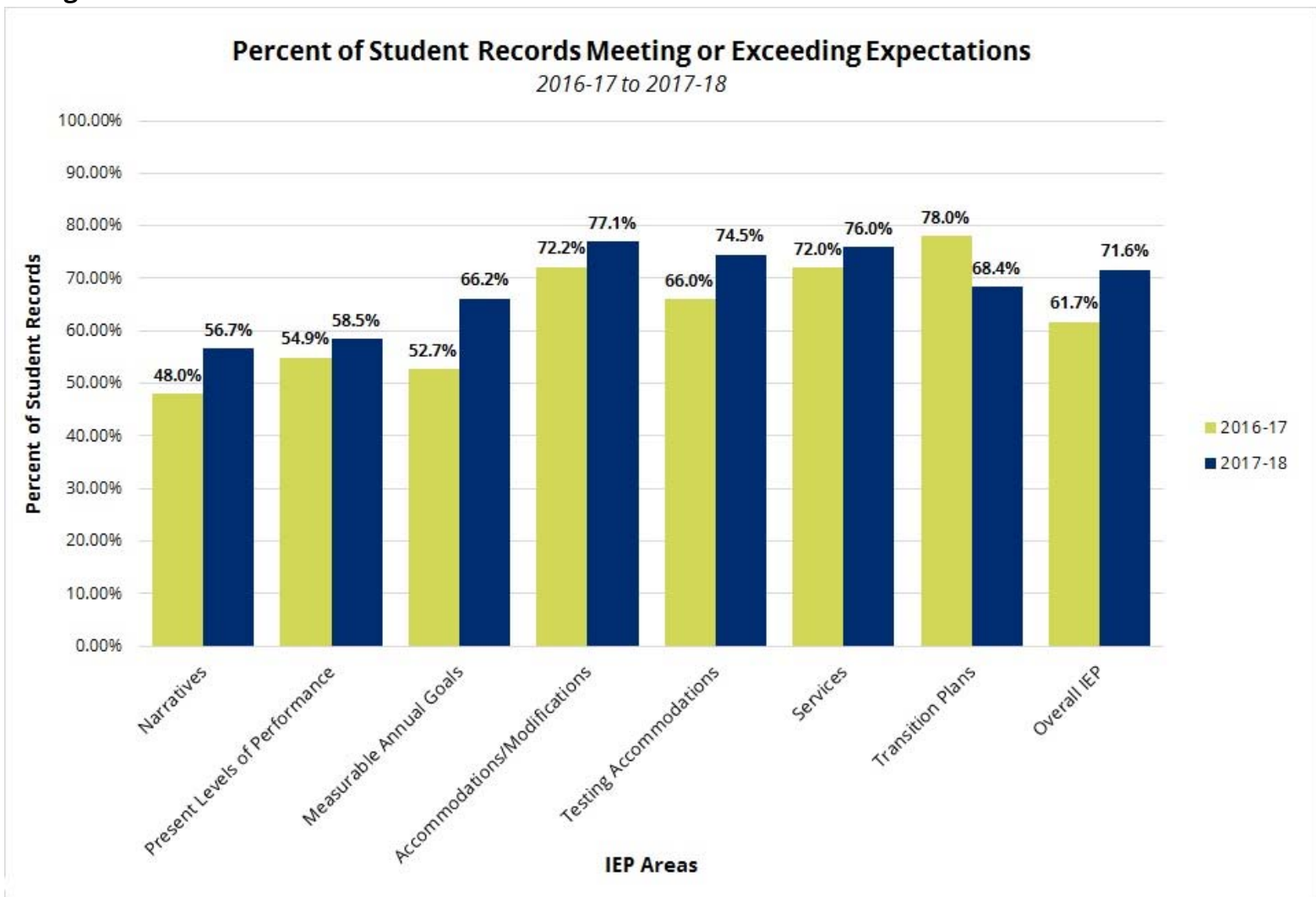
This school year the department will expand implementation efforts for the SSIP to 20 new districts selected for participation. These districts will have a similar implementation structure to the original 30 participating school districts, with implementation of strategy one – access to core instruction – taking place in this 2018-19 school year, and implementation of strategy two – special education in a continuum of service model – taking place in the 2019-20 school year. Some of these 20 new school districts will also be implementing strategies to address early childhood components of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG).

The original cohort of participating districts will continue expanding the work of the SSIP across their district with support from department staff, as needed. Some districts have experienced great success and developed internal mechanisms by which the work can be supported. Other districts will require more nuanced and intensive support in their continued implementation efforts. Data for both the original cohort and new cohort will continue being aggregated and reported annually to both the public and federal government.

In preparation of the evaluation of the third coherent improvement strategy, writing instructionally appropriate IEPs, the department employed the same process of IEP file reviews used in the 2016-17 school year. Student files were randomly selected for review in a detailed rubric developed by department staff and made available to districts across the state. Files from the original cohort of districts were pulled to assess progress, and files from the second cohort of districts were pulled to serve as baseline data. The information gathered through these reviews will be essentially to flag areas of need in districts relative to their development of appropriate IEPs.

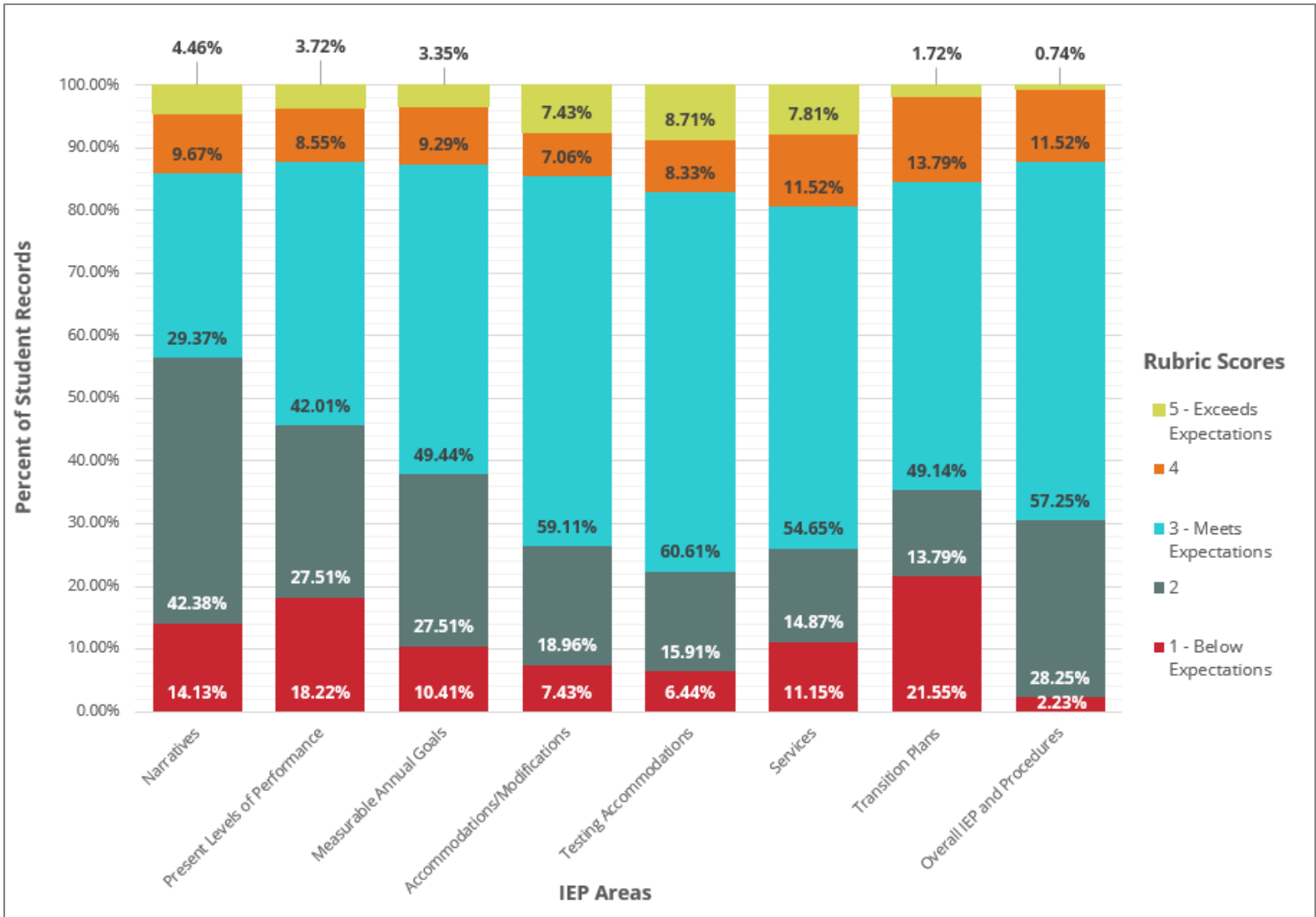
In the 2017-18 school year, 275 student records (only students with an SLD) were selected for review from the initial cohort. There was an increase in the percent of student records being rated a three or above in each of the reviewed areas, except for transition plans (decrease of 9.58 percent). The average increase was 7.17 percent, with the largest increases appearing for narratives (8.69 percent) and measurable annual goals (13.43 percent). More details about the difference in performance from 2016-17 to 2017-18 can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1



In Figure 2, a detailed breakdown of records sampled for the second cohort comprised of 20 new school districts is provided. There were 269 records selected for review (only students with an SLD reviewed). This data will serve as a baseline for comparison in the 2019-20 school year (similar to the process outlined above for the initial cohort).

Figure 2



For more information or questions about the SSIP, please contact Rachel.Wilkinson@tn.gov.