



MISSOURI PART C INDICATOR 11: STATE SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SSIP)

2013-14 through 2019-2020



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Missouri Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan Background

The first phase in the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) consisted of extensive data analyses of infrastructure and child outcomes, which occurred between April 2014 and March 2015. The state identified the determination of Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) ratings were not consistent within or between regions in the state, not frequent enough to accurately report progress between entry and exit, and not meaningful to the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team. These three aspects were determined to be the root cause for data quality issues with the state's child outcome data.

To address the root cause, the state considered two existing initiatives to include in the SSIP: Early Intervention Teams (EITs) and the ECO pilot. An infrastructure analysis identified EITs as the component of infrastructure to leverage in order to build capacity to improve child outcomes. A child outcome analysis resulted in an implementation of three key practices:

- Discussing and collecting ECO ratings every six months
- Discussing the child's functioning/progress in-person at IFSP meetings
- Using questions from the ECO Decision Tree to determine appropriate ratings

By making slight modifications to the current structures and procedures through the implementation of key improvements as described in the *Missouri Part C Theory of Action* (see Appendix 1), the state has created a system for improving outcomes for children with disabilities. To measure the progress made by children who enter and exit the ECO pilot, the state identified the following State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR) statement:

By FFY 2019, Missouri Part C intends to increase by 10 percent the number of children with disabilities participating in the ECO pilot who improve their social-emotional skills by the time they exit Part C, for children entering Part C below age expectation in social-emotional skills.

During Phase II (i.e., April 2015 to March 2016) and year one of Phase III (i.e., April 2016 to March 2017), the state implemented an annual needs assessment that included observations of provider and Service Coordinator practices; provided paid professional development time during team meetings in the pilot regions to enhance discussions about child outcomes; and disseminated the *Training & Sustainability Plan for Missouri First Steps Early Intervention Professionals* (see Appendix 2) with key stakeholders.

As part of the second year in Phase III (i.e., April 2017 to March 2018), the state worked to communicate evidence-based practices to stakeholders; disseminated guidance to providers and Service Coordinators on service delivery and EIT; developed materials to assist providers and Service Coordinators in the pilot regions with creating and implementing professional development plans; and conducted work group meetings to discuss evidence-based practices and collect suggestions for tools to measure practices. In the third year of Phase III (i.e., April 2018-March 2019), the state continued its focus on communicating best practices to the field to further implement the states sustainability plan. The state released additional information for providers regarding evidence based practices through new resources and revised modules. The state began creating a tool rooted in evidence based practices that

would be available to all regions to assist System Point of Entry Directors in observing Service Coordinators during IFSP meetings.

Missouri Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan Summary of Phase III (Year Four)

The purpose of Phase III of the SSIP is to evaluate and report on the state's progress in implementing the SSIP. For Missouri Part C, the focus in Phase III, year four (i.e., April 2019 to March 2020) is continuing to build the state's capacity to support the regional system in identifying, implementing, and evaluating the use of evidence-based practices.

During Phase III, year four the lead agency's state level leaders began to take another look within the department and at the statewide five year strategic plan. The state level strategic plan includes an alignment of the numerous systems with the department. Part C early intervention is a key component in this alignment and the work being done to make sure that every child and family are ready for success in school and in life. There are five proposed goals within the Missouri Strategic plan and Missouri's Part C Program's SSIP work aligns with those related to Early Learning and Early Literacy and Success Ready Students and Workforce Development.

The Missouri Part C Theory of Action fits within this state strategic plan as it steps out how the state's focus on evidence based practices improves social emotional outcomes for children. In the theory of action the goal is to increase a child's participation in family and community life and therefore be ready for continued early learning success. Workforce development is an important focus for Missouri. The Training and Sustainability Plan for Missouri's First Steps Early Intervention Professionals clearly outlines how Part C will continue to support the provider workforce with training and professional development therefore supporting families.

The state continued to share the *Training & Sustainability Plan for Missouri First Steps Early Intervention Professionals* with stakeholders during Phase III, year four. The state enhanced the graphic which improved stakeholder's understanding of short-term and long-term objectives in the state's improvement plan. Therefore, the state aligned the Phase III (Year Four) report with the levels in the training and sustainability plan.

Components

The components of Phase III, year four are: (1) progress on SSIP implementation, (2) rationale for revisions to the plan (3) evidence based practices and fidelity, (4) stakeholder involvement and (5) progress to the SiMR

The following critical questions guided the evaluation of SSIP activities conducted during year four of Phase III.

- *Component 1 – Progress on SSIP Implementation:* What data are available to indicate progress implementing the SSIP? Were timelines met for implementation? What data are available to indicate progress toward the SiMR?
- *Component 2 – Rationale for Revisions to the Plan:* Have child outcomes changed as a result of implementing SSIP strategies and activities? What revisions, if any, are necessary for the SSIP strategies and activities and why?

- *Component 3- Evidence Based Practices and Fidelity:* how did EBP affect Child Outcomes? What data is being collected to support EBP?
- *Component 4 – Stakeholder Involvement:* How are stakeholders involved in evaluation and modification of the state’s plan?
- *Component 5-Progress towards the SiMR:* What will be implemented in the following year to support and relate to the SiMR?

Implementation Status

The state identified the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) pilot and Early Intervention Teams (EITs) as the two key mechanisms to improve child outcomes. These two activities are in different stages of implementation. All ten regions are implementing EIT; however, only eight of the ten regions were implementing the ECO pilot in 2019-2020.

The following cohorts were participating in the ECO pilot in year four of Phase III.

- *Cohort 1* – One rural (Region 10) and one suburban area (Region 9). Implementation date was October 1, 2013.
- *Cohort 2* – One urban area (Region 5). Implementation date was October 1, 2014.
- *Cohort 3* – One rural (Region 3) and one suburban area (Region 4). Implementation date was October 1, 2016.
- *Cohort 4* – One urban area (Region 6). Implementation date was November 1, 2018.
- *Cohort 5*- Two rural regions (Regions 7 and 8). Implementation date November 1, 2019.

*In November 2019, the state scaled up the ECO pilot to an eighth area of the state (Region 7 and 8); however, for the purposes of this SSIP, these regions were included in the non-pilot cohort since there was not enough time to have an adequate sample size for data reporting purposes.

Unless otherwise noted, data for Phase III, year four represents only Cohorts 1, 2, and 3 (i.e., Regions 5, 9, 10, 3 and 4) as these regions have participated in the pilot throughout the majority of the SSIP phases. The data reviewed continues to show similar trends as those early pilot regions. The state monitored the data progress to determine feasibility of rolling out the final regions of the state in 2020. At the current time the state plans to begin the final push to statewide implementation in Fall of 2020.

Revisions

During Phase III, year four the state made a few revisions to the SSIP. The state continued its focus on supporting the training and sustainability plan and moved beyond the exploration and installation stage by observing and evaluating the use of evidence based practices in the field. The foundational materials and tools established in the training and sustainability plan continued to be used throughout the state to support positive child outcomes. The state’s evaluation of progress towards short-term and long-term objectives is described in the following report.

Missouri Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan Phase III (Year Four) Report

1. Component One – Evaluation of Progress toward SSIP Implementation

The state designed the evaluation plan to be handled internally by state staff. The evaluation plan utilizes implementation science stages. The initial implementation stage involve professionals learning about and using evidence-based practices (i.e., short-term objectives). The full implementation stage involves evaluating the use of evidence-based practices to ensure implementation with fidelity (i.e., long-term objectives) related to improved child outcomes.

1.1 Evaluation of Progress toward Short-Term Objectives

The primary strategy for Missouri’s Part C SSIP is the implementation of the ECO pilot. There are two short-term objectives related to the implementation of the ECO pilot: (1) developing, updating and sustaining foundational materials to support early intervention professionals, and (2) ensuring the pilot procedures are being implemented with fidelity.

A. Foundational Materials

In previous submissions the state’s focus for the *Training & Sustainability Plan for Missouri First Steps Early Intervention Professionals* had been developing the first level (exploration) in order to ensure introductory information is available to professionals in early intervention. The state is currently moving past developing the foundational materials into ensuring the foundational materials are sustainable. The foundational materials continue to be available in a variety of formats to accommodate different learning styles and different levels of experience in early intervention. Foundational materials are reviewed on a regular basis for any necessary enhancements or revisions. For example, due to new regional contracts awarded in 2019, updates were required to the foundational materials: Practice Manual Chapter 1: Infrastructure and the SPOE Administration Manual.

To begin moving from the exploration phase into the installation phase and learning about evidence based practices, the state began to take a look at the tools provided to the field to ensure evidence based practices are being utilized.

The first tool, the IFSP Meeting Observation Tool was used in ECO pilot regions to observe evidence based practices in IFSP meetings. This tool is attached to this submission. At time of submission the state was working with local communication offices to make the document 508 Compliant. To help maintain sustainability, a webinar was recorded with guidance and suggestions on how to use the IFSP meeting tool effectively. The state made this webinar available to the field. The state also provided technical assistance at the regional level by reviewing the tool and assisting SPOE Directors in developing their plan for observations. ECO pilot regions also participated in self-assessment and feedback while implementing the tool. The IFSP Meeting Observation tool will continue to be more widely used by regions in their Needs Assessments during the current contract. For the current submission, the tool was used within the ECO Pilot regions only (Cohorts 1, 2, 3 and 4) and the data collected is represented in Figure 6.

During Phase III, year four the state identified the need for a second tool, the Family Assessment Tool. This tool is another important piece of Evidence Based Practices in the *Training & Sustainability Plan for Missouri First Steps Early Intervention Professionals*. For this submission the state is currently working with local communication offices to make this document 508 Compliant. It is attached to this submission but not 508 compliant at this time. The goal of this tool is to help create IFSP outcomes that are rooted in the families concerns, priorities and resources. This tool includes guiding questions and space to document what is working well and what is not working well for the family. The tool is currently being used in both pilot and non-pilot regions.

The state gave a great deal of consideration on how to best share this new tool with the field. The state discussed the possibility of in person trainings or web based trainings. To allow for trainings to occur during the winter months the state decided to deliver Family Assessment Tool training via webinar. The state first piloted this tool and training in a few select regions. Following the webinar, Service Coordinators were required to use the tool with at least four families and then submit their completed tool it to state staff for feedback

Following the feedback from those in the initial Family Assessment pilot, revisions were made to the tool and training presentation before being shared with the remainder of the state. To assist in the training of this tool, the state implemented a Service Coordinator mentor program. Selected Service Coordinators in each region provided feedback and support their colleagues on the Family Assessment Tool.

B. Pilot Implementation

The state has continued to learn valuable lessons since initial implementation in 2013, such as the need to provide more support to professionals as they learn new procedures and practices. Since first scaling up the ECO pilot to Cohort 2 in 2014, the pilot project has gained a lot of interest in the field. Regions are anxious to join the pilot and begin putting ECO policies and procedures into place. To prepare for scaling up the final regions, the state focused on sustainable professional development and team structure through additional written and online materials.

i. Pilot Implementation Activities

Throughout the implementation of the pilot, the state used content specific to social-emotional development for the **Early Childhood Outcomes Pilot** level in the *Training & Sustainability Plan for Missouri First Steps Early Intervention Professionals*. The state utilized resources from the Technical Assistance Center on Social-Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) and the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI).

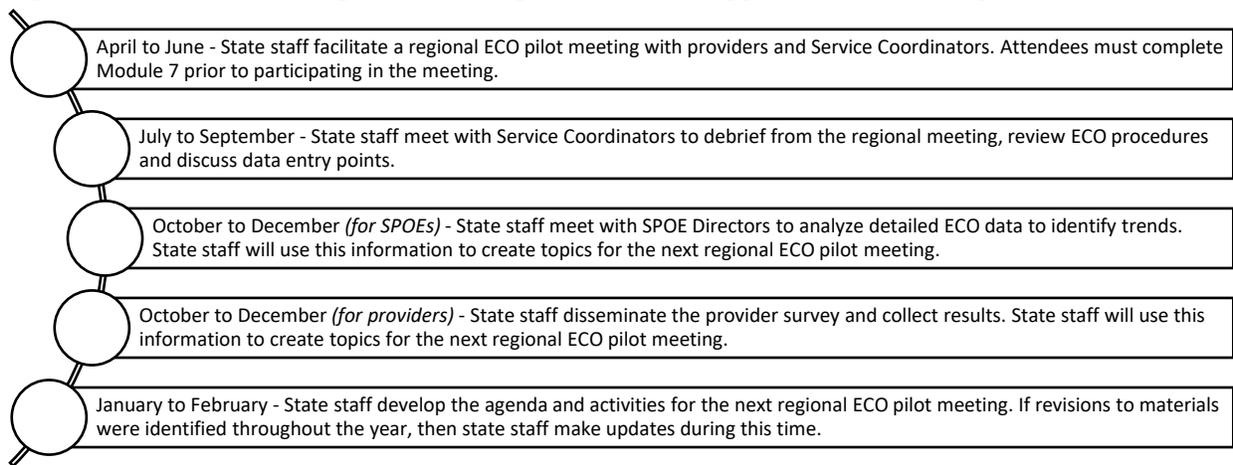
To support the **Early Childhood Outcomes Pilot** level in the *Training & Sustainability Plan for Missouri First Steps Early Intervention Professionals*, the state conducted regional ECO pilot meetings with providers and Service Coordinators in April and May of 2019, as part of planned activities for Phase III, year four. The state analyzed the feedback from the 2018 Regional ECO pilot meetings and identified some providers were struggling with creating and using a professional development plan. These meetings focused on the evaluation of the

effectiveness of professional development plans. Providers and Service Coordinators evaluated their professional development plans as well as shared the professional development challenges and successes they experienced since the beginning of professional development time within the ECO pilot. Overall providers noted an increase in quality child development conversations, knowledge of resources and an opportunity for providers to share their expertise with the team. The results from recent provider pilot surveys were shared, and implementation procedures were discussed. These meetings and surveys are critical in collecting feedback from professionals as key stakeholders in the pilot.

During Phase III, year four the state continued to use the annual calendar of activities to support the regional ECO pilot meetings (see Figure 1). State staff found the calendar to be very helpful in organizing activities to complete before and after the regional ECO pilot meetings, which resulted in improved preparation and follow through. To complement the annual calendar the state created an ECO Pilot Training & Meeting Key and Time-line. This document is attached as at time of submission it was not 508 Compliant and the state continues to work to make documents 508 compliant with the help of their communications office and technical assistance centers. This time line helps the state identify and track training needs for each of the regions as they progress through the pilot. The state re-purposed the ECO Pilot training and the ECO spring meeting from 2018 to create Level 1 and Level 2 ECO trainings that are available on an as needed basis for regions. For example, in 2019 when regional contracts were awarded state staff traveled to those ECO pilot regions that had been in the pilot since its inception to deliver the Level 1 Universal Training to new regional staff and providers who had not been a part of the original pilot roll out. These universal trainings are created with more sustainability in mind and the state anticipates using them throughout the continued scale up in the pilot to support best practice and procedures.

The state also continued to address analyzing and discussing data with SPOE Directors. For the initial data discussions in 2018, the state used APR and SSIP data disaggregated by region as a way to initiate data discussions with regional staff. After reflecting on the initial data discussion, state staff identified the need to explore ways to engage SPOE Directors in meaningful data discussions. Therefore in 2019 the state created simple data charts that compares pre-pilot and pilot data for each cohort. State staff created a set of discussion talking points to accompany the data chart. State staff then reviewed the data charts and talking points with SPOE Directors. The simple data charts are a strong starting point but the state continues to look for ways to display this data in more meaningful ways to enhance stakeholders understanding of pre-pilot and pilot data.

Figure 1: Annual ECO Regional Meeting Activities to Support ECO Pilot Implementation



In 2019, for the first time since implementing the pilot, state staff in non-pilot regions also facilitated discussions with providers during the same time frame that state staff in the pilot regions facilitated regional ECO pilot meetings. During these meetings, the state shared the training and sustainability plan in order to educate providers and Service Coordinators on the state’s plan for identifying, implementing and evaluating evidence-based practices. The state also shared evidence-based decision-making information (i.e., informational flyer and video) from NCSI Social-Emotional Outcomes Learning Collaborative. The state conducted an evaluation of these meetings and based on the feedback from providers and Service Coordinators, the state was able to make an informed decision on shifting the focus of spring trainings to a shared topic for both pilot and non-pilot regions. State staff are currently training pilot and non-pilot regional staff on the evidence based Family Assessment tool through a variety of webinars and face to face meetings. In 2020 the state will also provide training and support on creating functional outcomes based on information derived from the Family Assessment Tool.

The state continues to develop connections between content in the online training modules and discussions at ECO regional meetings. For example, the completion of Module 7: ECO is a prerequisite for providers to attend the Level 2 ECO meetings held for regions who are new to the pilot and as needed for those regions who are currently in the pilot. The state completed revisions to Module 5 by July 31, 2019. The original completion date of July 1 was delayed due to updates the contractor needed to make to the log-in and shopping cart additions to the platform. The Module 5 updates included more comprehensive information about supporting diverse families (i.e., the five protective factors and understanding trauma).

The state released Module 8 Foundational Practices in Early Childhood to the field in August of 2019. Module 8 focuses on skills early intervention professionals use to be successful during interactions and activities with young children and families. Determining the effectiveness of those skills require careful consideration of multiple sources through evidence-based decision-making. Information shared in the spring 2019 meetings on evidence-based practices is included in Module 8 to support further learning during professional development time.

The results from the yearly ECO provider survey results showed that the modules were not being used for professional development time in the pilot regions. In order to help ease accessibility to information the state revamped the Resource Library housed in the online modules. Improvements include an enhanced search feature. Users are able to search by type of resource (video, document, and website) or by topic (e.g. child trauma, home visits and family engagement). Future provider surveys will inquire about the usage of the Resource Library to support professional development time.

In the state's continued effort to keep trainings sustainable and resources current, Module 9, The Developmental Assessment of Young Children-2, is being written to support the states early intervention examiners. Module 9 will be available to all those who have completed the states face-to-face training on the DAYC-2 received EI Examiner status. The state expects Module 9 to be available to EI Examiners in the fall of 2020.

In conjunction with revisions to Module 5 and the creation of Module 9, the state reviewed each existing module to determine necessary content edits. The state also updated user access when registering, selecting and completing each module by creating a "shopping cart" and "checkout" function. Currently enrolled providers are only required to take certain modules as part of their initial provider enrollment. However, the new access system will assist users in tracking module history as the state is still considering an additional requirement for providers to complete modules on an ongoing basis (e.g., every two years) as part of required professional development. If a module is a prerequisite for an upcoming training regional staff may keep track of provider's completion of the module. The state will continue to provide the modules at no-cost to providers and the general public.

Like the online modules the ECO Handbook is another important foundation material. When necessary the state makes revisions to the ECO Handbook. Revisions are often prompted by stakeholder feedback. In 2018, the handbook was revised to address the lack of specificity on data entry procedures. More data entry information was included and then disseminate not only to the new region entering the pilot, but also to the existing pilot regions. In 2019, the state aligned the revised handbook to Module 7 content, which was to be completed by May 20th, 2019 in order for Module 7 to be used as the prerequisite for additional pilot rollouts. The state had an original goal of May 1st for this revision, but, due to the contractor's transition to new technology that runs the module system more time was needed for completion.

ii. Pilot Implementation Data

Since the initial scale up of the ECO pilot, the state continues to learn more about how to analyze implementation measures and ways to display implementation data. When possible, the state uses existing processes to evaluate implementation data. As explained in previous submissions, the state continues to analyze implementation of the pilot using the following three data sources:

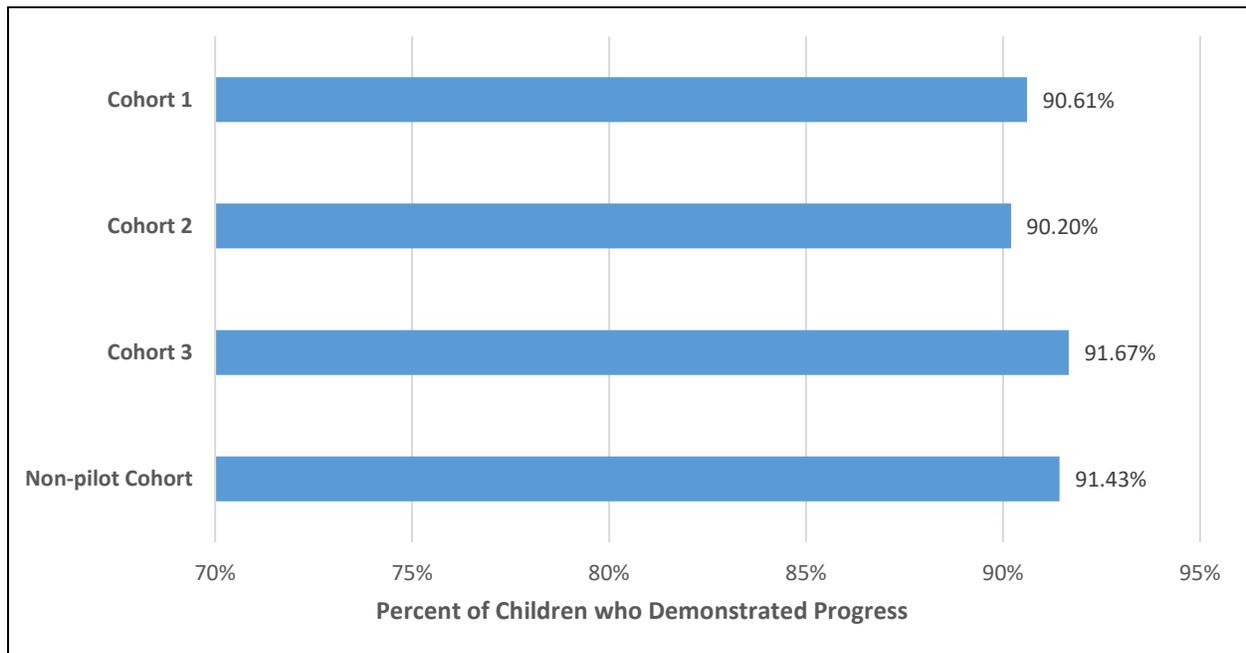
- ECO pilot data
- Provider and parent surveys

- Service Coordinator observations

For **ECO pilot data**, since data for Indicator 3.A. summary statement 1 for positive social-emotional skills is already compiled each year for the Annual Performance Report (APR), the state decided to track Indicator 3.A. summary statement 1 by pilot and non-pilot cohorts. The timeline to analyze implementation data is twice a year, in January and July, which aligns with the annual plan for data reviews to support the regional ECO pilot meetings.

Figure 2 represents APR Indicator 3.A. summary statement 1 data for pilot and non-pilot cohorts in 2018-2019. The data this year continues to demonstrate a leveling off and consistency in Cohorts 1 and 2 who have been in the pilot the longest. Cohort 3 is slightly higher and the state attributes this to the continued difference between length of time in the pilot and the training and resources available. This difference in scores continues to support why the state continues to make resources and trainings more sustainable.

Figure 2: APR 3.A. Summary Statement 1 Data



For **provider survey data**, the state disseminates an annual survey to EIT providers in the pilot regions. The survey items and topics may vary each year, but the questions represented in Figure 3 remain the same in order to analyze the use of evidence-based practices in the pilot (i.e., discuss outcomes in-person at IFSP meetings, use the Decision Tree to determine ratings, and collect ratings every six months). In 2018-19, a fourth question was asked regarding the use of the three sources (i.e., assessment results, parent input and professional observations) in the rating determination.

The method the state uses to calculate survey data is a regional tally of responses. The timeline the state uses to analyze survey data is annually. The implementation measure for the provider

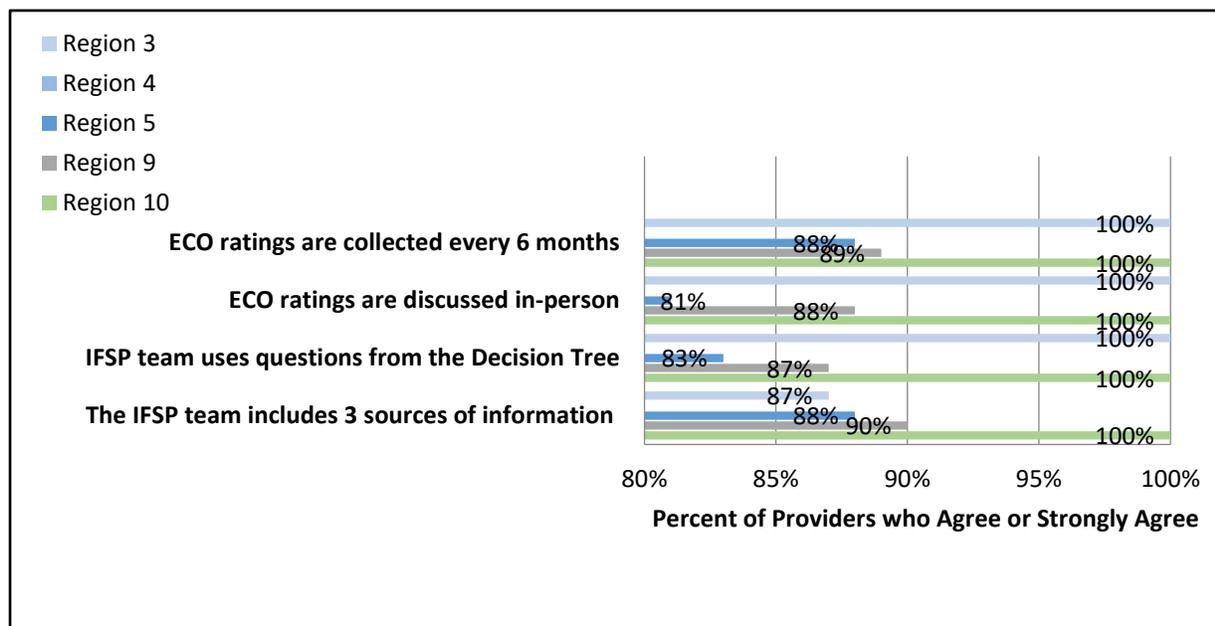
survey is, of those who responded, at least 75 percent indicate they are implementing the expected practice.

In 2018-19, the state disseminated a survey to providers in every pilot region. Even though the state extended the time frame in an attempt to collect more survey responses, for a second year in a row, the response rate for the provider survey decreased. The response rate in 2017 and 2018 were 72 percent and 47 percent, respectively. In 2019, the response rate was 36 percent (N = 201 of 553).

Figure 3 represents the results from the provider survey responses in Regions 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10. Although Region 5 is the most populated region, the highest response rate was from Region 9 (N=58, 52 percent) when compared to Region 5 and Region 10 response rates (N=42, 34 percent and N=44, 33 percent, respectively).

Overall, the results are comparable to last year with most providers agreeing to the survey items, and comparable responses across regions this year. The results continue to indicate the implementation measure is being met (i.e., at least 75 percent of the providers who responded agree the required pilot procedures are being utilized).

Figure 3: Pilot Implementation Data – Provider Survey Responses



As indicated previously in year three of Phase III, the state began collecting Service Coordinator input on the use of ECO procedures, as a comparison point for the provider survey. The state added the following questions to the database for children’s electronic records:

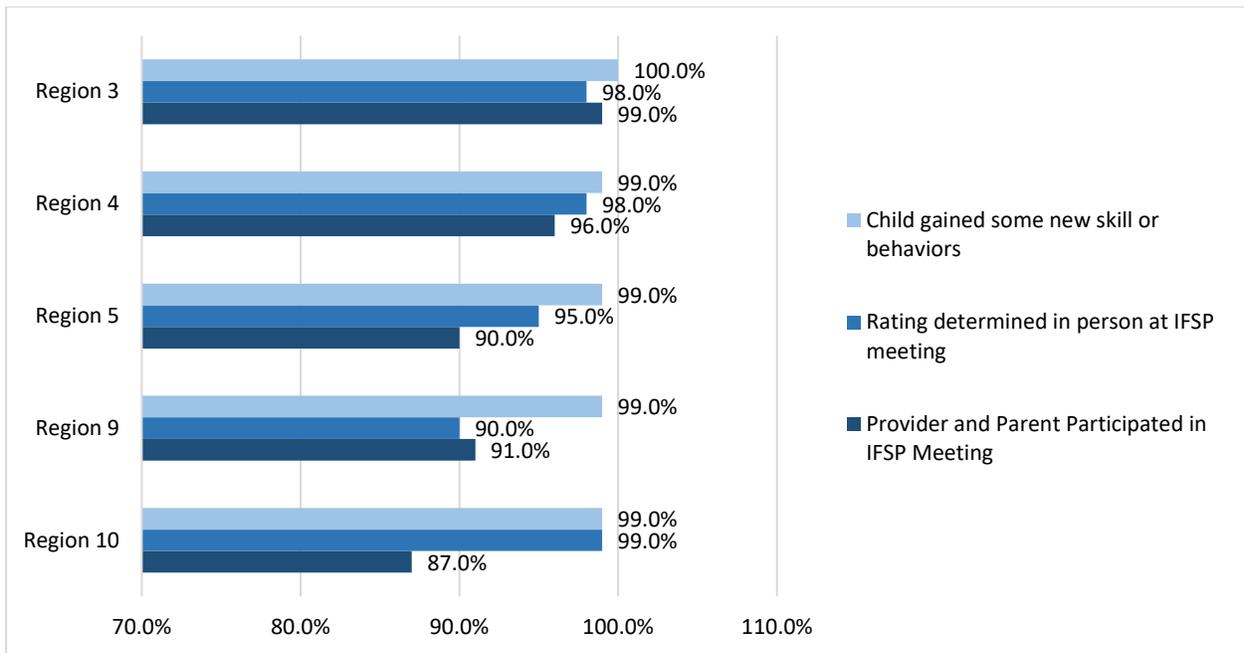
- Question 1: Did at least one parent and one provider participate in this IFSP meeting?
- Question 2: Were the ECO ratings determined in-person at this IFSP meeting?

- Question 3: Did the child gain some new skills or behaviors (i.e., made any amount of progress) since the last ECO rating? (*This question is not applicable for the Initial IFSP meeting*)

Since November 2018, Service Coordinators in the pilot regions answered these three questions after every IFSP meeting held in-person. Figure 4 represents the results of these three questions for IFSP meetings held March 1, 2019 to February 28, 2020. Regions 5 and 9 held the most IFSP meetings during this time period as expected, since they are the most populated regions in the pilot, followed by Region 4, 3 and 10.

For Service Coordinator questions one and three above, the responses are slightly higher than the provider results. Ranges in responses fell between 80 to 100 percent. This difference could be because in 2019 the state discovered through Service Coordinator feedback that clarification was needed on questions one and three, regarding parent participation and child’s acquisition of new skills. The state created an attachment for the ECO Handbook that more clearly defined the questions being asked. State staff then shared this information during meetings with SPOE staff. Further analysis of this data will occur in the subsequent SSIP submissions.

Figure 4: Pilot Implementation Data – Service Coordinator Questions



For **family survey data**, the state disseminates an annual survey to all parents who have children with IFSPs currently participating in the program. To evaluate pilot implementation, the state analyzes responses from two questions about child outcomes that already existed in the statewide parent survey.

The method the state uses to calculate survey data is a regional tally of responses. The timeline the state uses to analyze survey data is annually. The implementation measure for the parent

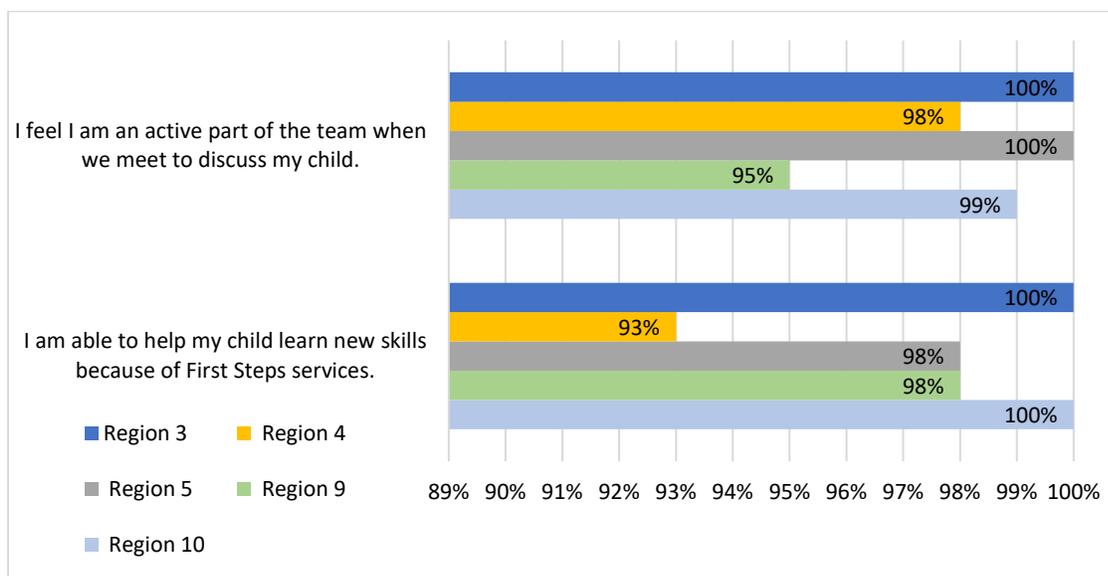
survey is, of those who responded, at least 75 percent indicate their child is making progress and they are satisfied with the program.

Over the past three years the state has worked to increase, the parent survey return rate. In 2019 the return rate increased to 19.9 percent from 16.8 percent in 2018 and 14.7 percent in 2017. This continued increase is due to the state’s continued consultation with the State Interagency Coordinating Council regarding different ways to disseminate the survey to families. In 2019, the state’s dissemination strategies were the same ones used in 2018 which included a self-addressed stamped envelope, providing a quick response code to scan with a device and a link to complete the survey online.

Figure 5 represents results from the annual parent survey in pilot regions. All five pilot regions represented in Figure 5 had a response closer to the state rate. Regions 5, 9 and 10 demonstrated an increase in the number of responses from 2018. Regions 3 and 4 are new to the data review and demonstrated a consistent return rate. (Region 5: N=86, 14 percent; Region 9: N=107, 23 percent; and Region 10: N=55, 13 percent, Region 3: N=47, 22 percent, Region 4: N=69, 22 percent).

To help ensure that return rates increase the state implemented a new strategy in 2019. A performance incentive was added to the most recent contract requirements for SPOE agencies. The state finds great value in the feedback obtained in the parent survey therefore the state connected the return rate on parent surveys to the contract incentive. The 2020 parent survey response will be used as the base rate for the new incentive. Each SPOE will be required to increase the regional base return rate by 2% during each subsequent contract year. The state will continue to offer the same methods for submission of the family surveys and regional offices may use a variety of strategies for follow-up to insure an increase in return.

Figure 5: Pilot Implementation Data - Parent Survey



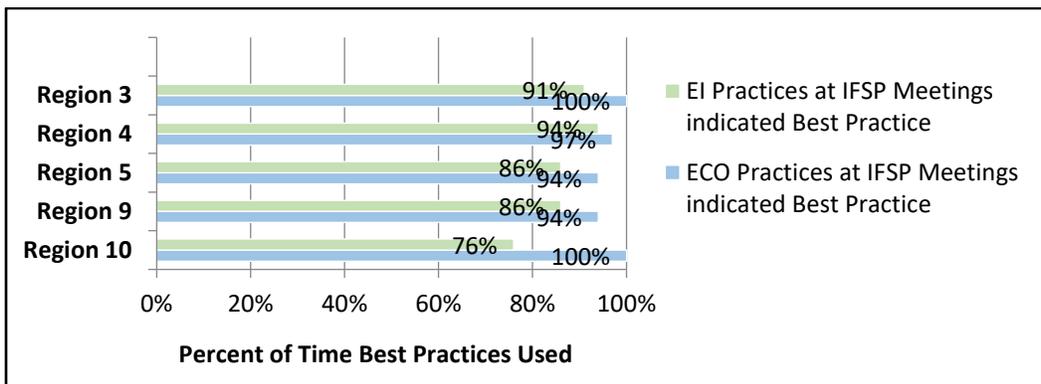
The results continue to indicate the implementation measure for parent surveys is being met (i.e., at least 75 percent of the parents who responded agree their child is making progress and they are satisfied with the program).

For **observation data**, the state analyzes data collected from the annual SPOE needs assessment. The needs assessment produces both qualitative and quantitative data from observations of Service Coordinators in intake visits (for non-pilot regions) and IFSP meetings (for ECO pilot regions). However, for the purposes of reporting observation data in the SSIP, intake visits are not included, as only IFSP meeting observation data from five pilot regions are included in the SSIP (i.e., Regions 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10). The method the state uses to calculate observation data is a tally of regional reports from Service Coordinators in pilot regions. The timeline the state uses to analyze observation data is annually. The implementation measure for observations is, of those who were observed, at least 75 percent demonstrate evidence-based practices.

During Phase III, year four, the state provided the option to use the IFSP Meeting Observation tool. All five regions included in the SSIP used the IFSP Observation Tool provided by the state. The data collected from IFSP meeting observations in pilot regions consisted of two prongs: early intervention practices and ECO practices. The state provided a report template to assist SPOE Directors with gathering and reporting on data consistently. State staff grouped similar practices measured by tools the SPOEs used for observations to report observation results in Figure 6. The number of Service Coordinators observed is determined by the SPOE Director. Depending on the size of the staff some regions observe all Service Coordinators and some only observe a portion each year (i.e., Region 3: N=7, Region 4: N=6, Region 5 N = 6; Region 9: N = 7; and Region 10: N = 9). The results indicate the ECO practices observed during IFSP meetings received slightly higher results than early intervention practices. The state believes that the ECO practices are higher due to the focus within the last few years on ECO procedures. The state expects the results to level out over time as the state continues to support evidence based practices through the foundational materials such as Module 8 and the Family Assessment tool.

Although there is some variance in results among all three regions, and within Region 10, the results indicate the implementation measure for observations is being met (i.e., at least 75 percent of the Service Coordinators observed demonstrated evidence-based practices).

Figure 6: Pilot Implementation Data - Service Coordinator Observations at IFSP Meetings



Throughout Phase III year four and beyond the state continues to work on statewide observation tools that will be required to be used by SPOEs in future years, in order to provide consistency in observation data and ensure fidelity with the use of evidence-based practices (see Section 1.2. for more information on observation tools).

1.2 Evaluation of Progress toward Long-Term Objectives

The state continues to work on three long-term activities for statewide implementation of the SSIP: (1) develop observation tools that measure fidelity in the implementation of evidence-based practices, (2) create a coaching system to support the implementation of evidence-based practices, and (3) provide training and technical assistance to early intervention professionals.

A. Observation Tools

In 2019, the state continued to promote the regional use of the *IFSP Meeting Observation Tool*. This tool consists of four essential IFSP meetings practices: establish and maintain a collaborative and respectful climate, prioritize the family's concerns, determine IFSP outcomes, and prepare the family for next steps. Each essential practice identifies three or four observable components necessary to achieve the essential practice and ensure fidelity of implementation.

The state disseminated the observation tool in November 2018 as the statewide method to assist in evaluating the use of evidence-based practices in IFSP meeting activities. The observation tool is based on the *Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices, Seven Key Principles: Looks Like/Doesn't Look Like, and Agreed Upon Practices for Providing Early Intervention Services in Natural Environments (AUP)*. Stakeholders previously identified the *AUP* as a key source for evidence-based practices because it organizes activities according to the IFSP process and it includes a self-assessment tool that can be used by professionals as a pre-assessment activity prior to being observed in an IFSP meeting. During the development of the observation tool, the state broadened the scope of sources to include the *DEC Recommended Practices – Practice Checklists* and *Practitioner and Family Guides*, and *Seven Key Principles* because these documents include observable behaviors and specific examples of what are evidence-based practices.

In 2019, SPOE Directors used the *IFSP Meeting Observation Tool* for the first time to collect Service Coordinator observation data for the annual needs assessment. The state collected feedback in during a number of regional meetings from individuals using the tool. From this feedback, the state recorded a webinar to help make training individuals on the tool more sustainable.

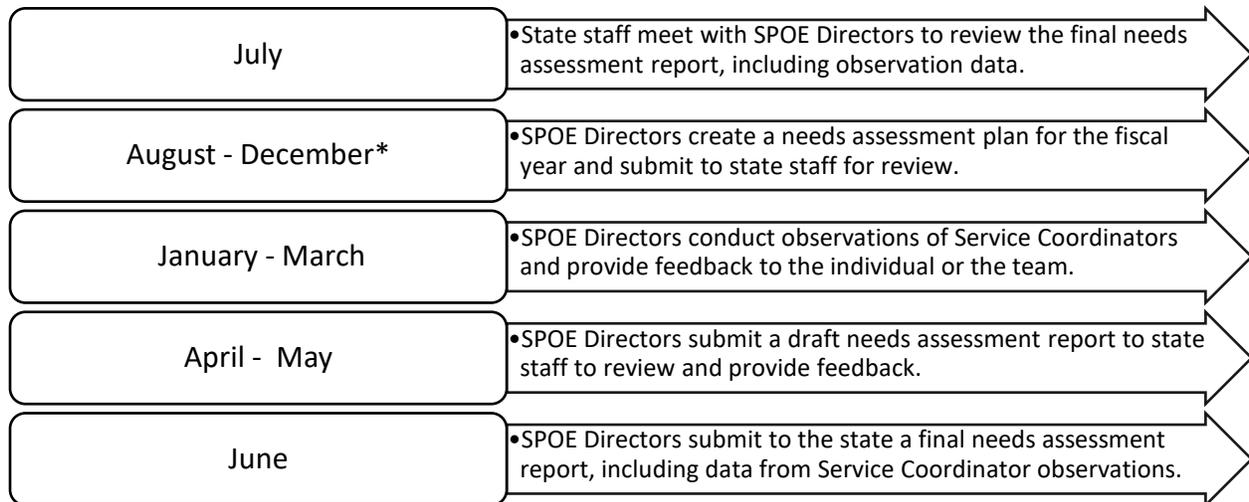
In 2019, the state had planned to develop the next tool: *EIT Meeting Observation Tool*. The state initially selected EIT meetings as the second tool since there were some similarities to the existing tool for IFSP meetings (i.e., teaming and collaboration), and the state had foundational materials to support this topic. In a number of regional and state meetings, regional staff shared the desire for more guidance and direction with the Family Assessment and functional outcomes.

So in the fall of 2019, the state shifted its focus from the EIT Meeting Observation Tool and began creating the Family Assessment Tool. The state created and trained regional staff on this tool throughout the remainder of 2019 and early 2020. In 2020, the state anticipates moving forward with the EIT Observation Tool.

Prior to developing the observation tools, the state developed a calendar of needs assessment activities (see Figure 7) to support SPOE Directors in planning and implementing observations of Service Coordinators, which is one source of data for measuring implementation of the pilot. State staff and SPOE Directors have found the calendar to be helpful in planning and reporting observation data.

The state made a few necessary revisions to incorporate current dates for reports submitted to the state, per the SPOE contract that took effect July 1, 2019. This SPOE contract will continue to have the needs assessment requirement. SPOE Directors have three deadlines to meet regarding their needs assessment. A needs assessment plan submitted by December 15th, a draft needs assessment report submitted by April 30th and a final draft submitted by June 15th.

Figure 7: Annual Needs Assessment Activities to Support ECO Pilot Implementation



*SPOE Directors may begin conducting observations once state staff review the needs assessment plan for the fiscal year.

B. Provider Coaching System

A critical aspect for the implementation of the EITs and the ECO pilot is the state’s infrastructure capacity to be able to measure and evaluate the practices of professionals who are delivering services to families. In previous submissions the state shared how they explored various coaching models and worked with stakeholders and technical assistance centers on a provider coaching system. During Phase III, year four, the state decided to put the provider coaching system on hold due to a number of factors. These factors include a change in the Part C Coordinator and the roll out of the new SPOE contracts.

The state continues to recognize a need to build a support system for provider practices. While oversight of and support to Service Coordinators is fulfilled by the SPOE contract requirements, there continues to be a gap in support for providers. The state did not include a coach position in the new SPOE contract, only Service Coordinator positions. The state will continue to support providers through guidance materials and face-to-face trainings. The state will explore the provider coaching system in the future.

C. Support Early Intervention Professionals

As the state continues to work on infrastructure capacity to support implementation, the state recognizes the need to provide individualized and/or statewide support to professionals as a mechanism for continuous quality improvement.

Support is the last level in the *Training & Sustainability Plan for Missouri First Steps Early Intervention Professionals*. At this level, SPOE Directors, other designees, and/or state staff provide targeted technical assistance and training to professionals to ensure evidence-based practices are implemented with fidelity. Support is a necessary step in sustaining the Part C system in Missouri as turnover in staff is reality.

Support to professionals may occur at the individual, regional, or state level. As needed, professionals will return to a lower level in the sustainability plan (i.e., the foundational materials level) to obtain additional knowledge about evidence-based practices and continue to work up the sustainability plan through the use of practice profiles and reflective practices. This process creates a cycle of professionals' learning, implementing, and evaluating the use of evidence-based practices with individual, regional, and state-level assistance to support all professionals in Missouri Part C.

1.3 Evaluation of Progress toward the SiMR

Preliminary data from the implementation measures indicate the implementation of the pilot is generating more consistency and confidence in social-emotional outcome data. As a result of this consistency, the state scaled up the pilot in Phase III, year four to include two additional regions (7 and 8) in the pilot, resulting in eight of ten SPOE regions in the pilot as of November 2019.

The state recognizes when the pilot expands to new regions, it is critical to not only spend time training the new regions, but also spend time supporting the existing regions to ensure all regions (i.e., new and existing) are using the same practices in the pilot. The state will continue to monitor the progress of the existing pilots, as well as regions new to the pilot. The state plans to add the last two regions to the pilot in the year 2020.

A. SiMR Statement

There were no changes in the SiMR statement during Phase III, year four, other than to extend it for one additional year. The following continues to be the SiMR for Missouri Part C:

By FFY 2019, Missouri Part C intends to increase by 10 percent the number of children with disabilities participating in the ECO pilot who improve their social-emotional skills by the time they exit Part C, for children entering Part C below age expectation in social-emotional skills.

Although the SiMR only addresses summary statement one* for social-emotional outcomes, the state continues to collect and analyze the results for all three outcome areas and for summary statement two** as a measure of the implementation of the procedures used in the pilot.

*Summary statement one: Of the children who entered the program below age expectation for the outcome, the percent that substantially increased their rate of growth in the outcome by the time they exited.

**Summary statement two: Percent of children who were functioning within age expectations in the outcome by the time they exited.

B. SiMR Data

Reported Data (Baseline Year: 2013)

FFY	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target		71.10%	73.10%	75.10%	77.10%	79.10%
Data	69.10%	92.00%	89.50%	91.30%	91.40%	90.80%

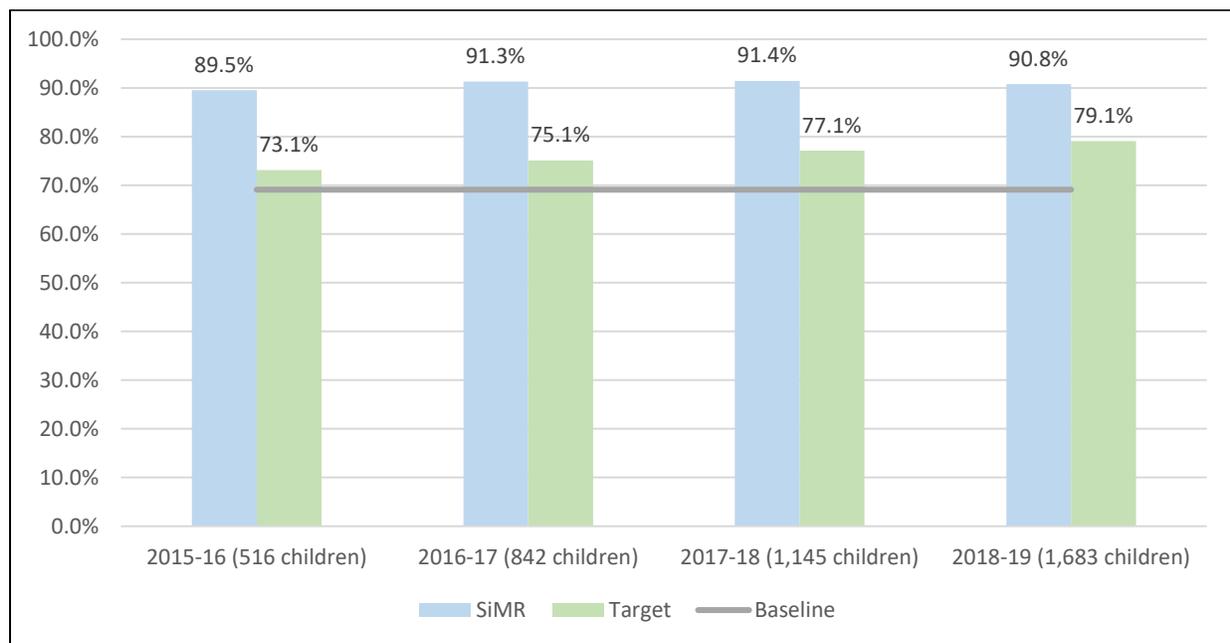
FFY 2019 Target

FFY	2019
Target	79.10%

The child outcome data collected from the pilot regions for the SiMR this year indicate a slight decrease from the prior year, however the data continue to exceed the target (see Figure 8: *SiMR Data*).

Figure 8 also shows an increased number of children included in the SiMR data for 2018-19. This is due to the inclusion of two additional regions of the state (Cohort 3) that were fully implementing the pilot process for children who exited First Steps during 2018-19.

Figure 8: SiMR Data



The state conducted an analysis of geographic and demographic data of children represented in the SiMR data. For geographic data, the state used the SPOE regions. The regional participation was comparable to the region's child count for the SPOEs included in the 2018-19 SiMR data (i.e., SPOE 5 has 32.9% of the ECO data and 32.2% of the child count).

Demographic data indicates the children included in SiMR data are representative of statewide data (see Figure 9: *SiMR and Statewide Demographics (2018-19)*). In addition, Figure 10

indicates that eligibility reasons are similar across SiMR regions and statewide (see Figure 10: SiMR and Statewide Data - Primary Eligibility Reasons).

Figure 9: SiMR and Statewide Demographics (2018-19)

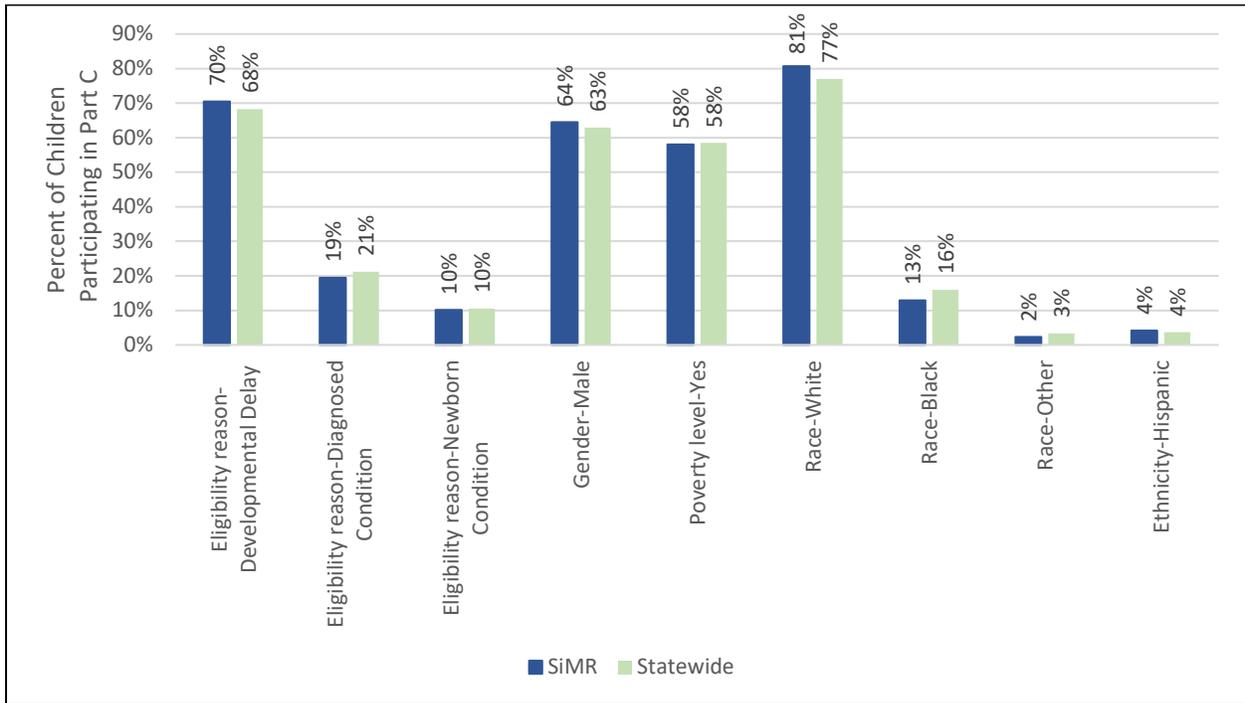
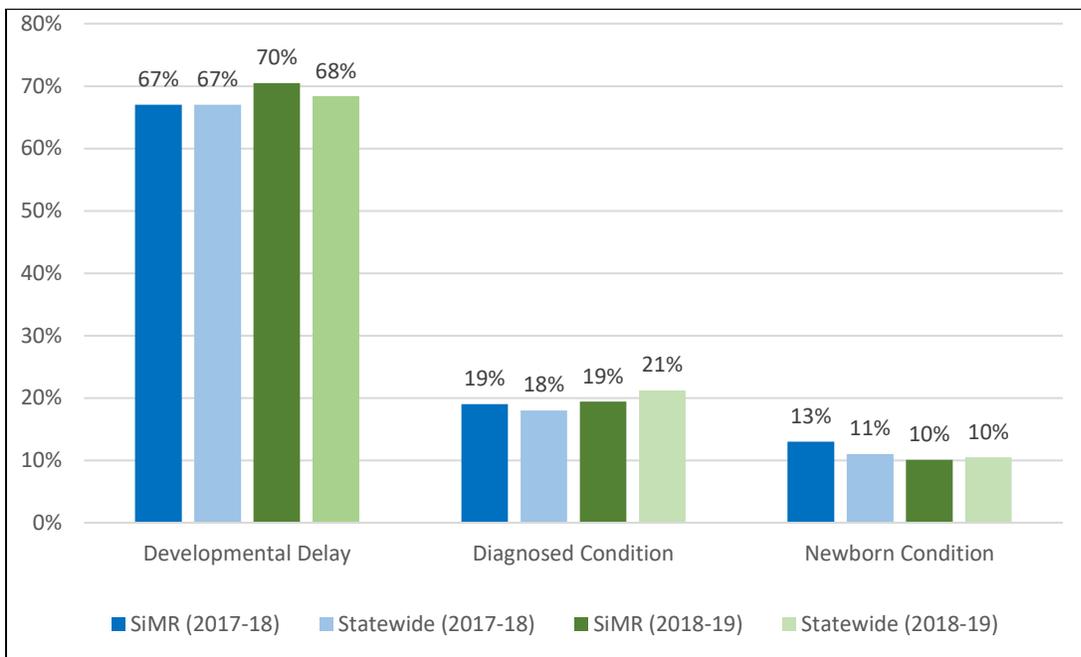


Figure 10: SiMR and Statewide Data - Primary Eligibility Reasons

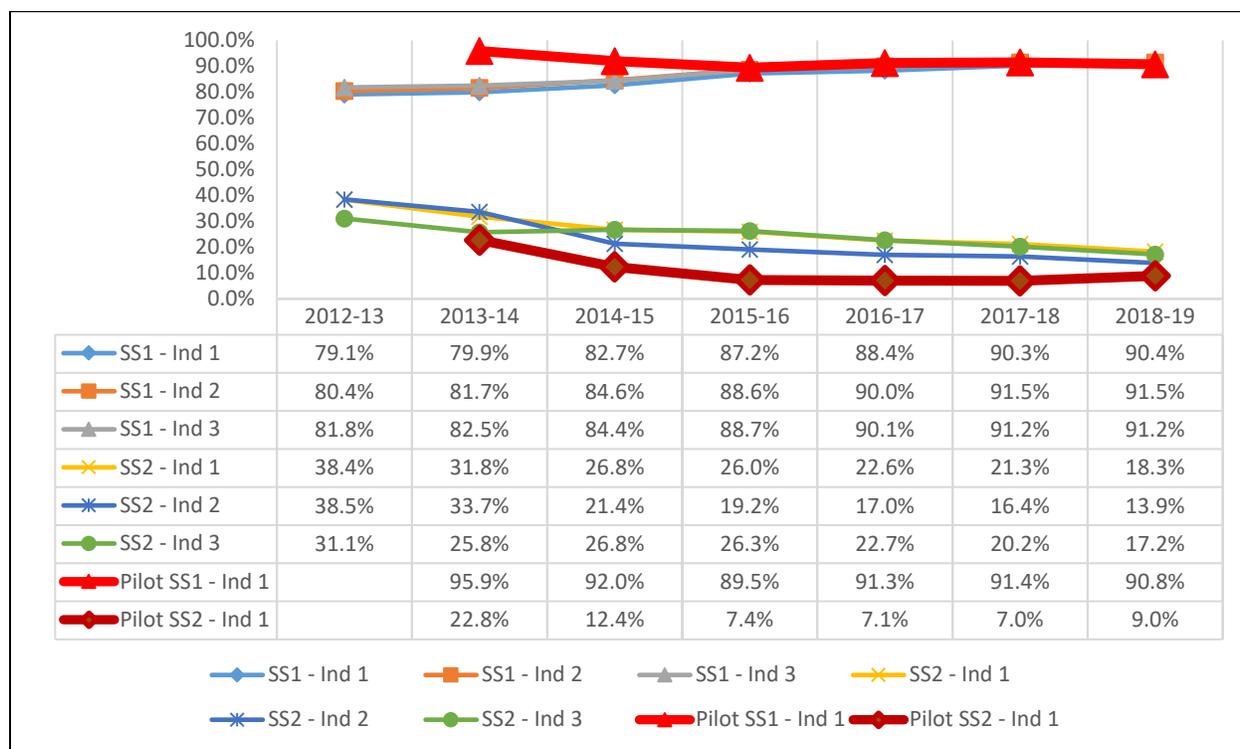


C. Data Trends

Statewide data from the three ECO areas show a continuing trend in increasing percentages in summary statement one and decreasing percentages in summary statement two (see Figure 11: *ECO Data Trends*). This trend was identified in Phase I and the state worked with ECTA and NCSI on options for improving data quality for child outcomes including the tools used to collect outcome data and the methods used to calculate the summary statements.

Figure 11 displays statewide and pilot data for summary statement one and summary statement two for all child outcome areas. The bolded red line reflects SiMR data, which is Cohort 1 and 2 (including Cohort 3 in 2018-19 data) of the pilot regions. The past two years of SiMR data indicate a leveling off in the summary statement data, which is a sign that the pilot regions are producing more accurate and consistent data on child outcomes.

Figure 11: *ECO Data Trends*



1.4 Next Steps

At the time of submission of this SSIP the United States is currently embedded in the COVID-19 pandemic. The current focus of the Part C program is to support and provide guidance to our families and early intervention professionals. It is unknown at this time how long our attention and resources will be focused on supporting the field due to the pandemic. The state anticipates the impact of this pandemic will be reflected over time in both policy, procedure and data. However for the remainder of calendar year 2020, state staff in the Early Intervention section hopes to complete the following **short-term objectives** to support the need for more foundational materials and resources.

- *March to June 2020* – The state will continue training on the Family Assessment Tool and share ECO Universal Trainings.
- *June-September 2020* – The state will prepare for the final roll out of ECO in the remaining two pilot regions.
- *November 2020* - ECO pilot roll out in the two remaining regions.
- *September–December 2020* -The state continue working on Module 9 for EI Examiners.
- *July to December 2020* – The state will meet with Service Coordinators to debrief from any ECO regional meetings and meet with SPOE Directors to analyze ECO data.

Looking ahead to the next two years, state staff in the Early Intervention section will consider the following **long-term objectives** to support statewide implementation of the SSIP.

- Explore the use of self-assessments to support the SPOE Directors with observations of Service Coordinators. The goal is to use self-assessments and observations to ensure fidelity in the implementation of evidence-based practices of Service Coordinators.
- Research the coaching practices used by other early childhood programs (e.g., Head Start, Parents as Teachers) and other state’s early intervention programs (e.g., West Virginia, Hawaii). The goal is to identify and implement a provider coaching program in order to ensure fidelity in the implementation of evidence-based practices used by providers.

As the state continues to monitor the impact of changes in infrastructure and the use of improvement strategies on the state’s child outcome data, modifications may need to be made to the targets. When the pilot achieves statewide implementation, which is the state’s long-term goal to support child outcomes, then the state expects to reset the baseline and subsequent targets for both APR Indicators 3 and 11.

2. Component Two – Rationale for Revisions

There were a few changes from year three to year four of Phase III. The state followed through on many of the objectives listed in last year’s SSIP including updated online module trainings, creation of a Family Assessment tool and revised ECO trainings for sustainability.

The state also faced some challenges in year four. Turnover was experienced at the state level including the Part C Coordinator and one compliance staff which delayed some activities.

State staff listened to stakeholder feedback and altered the plan for developing evidence-based practice tools. The state shifted its focus from the creation of the EIT Observation tool to the Family Assessment tool.

The implementation of a new contract also presented a unique challenge in regards to the ECO pilot and procedures. State staff used the addition of new Service Coordinators in pilot regions to support the creation of Universal Level 1 ECO training.

3. Component Three – Stakeholder Involvement

In Phase III year four, the state experienced little change in the involvement and use of stakeholders for Missouri Part C.

In 2019-20, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the lead agency for Missouri Part C, continued the department wide improvement effort to increase student achievement through *Show-Me Success*, which involves four priority areas; early learning and literacy, success ready students and workforce development, safe and healthy schools and educator recruitment and retention. The lead agency’s initiative continues to promote school readiness for toddlers and preschoolers through improved student learning.

The work of the cross-agency team of DESE staff in early childhood programs continues to provide Missouri Part C with opportunities to align program policies between offices and work together to increase the number of children prepared to enter kindergarten. Missouri Part C staff also participated in collaborative work to provide regional access to coordinated early childhood services to better meet a family’s needs, enhance and streamline training opportunities for early learning professionals, and improve systems to better inform decision-making about early learning through the Preschool Development Grant. The PDG is a federal grant awarded to the state in December 2019. This work with stakeholders will continue throughout the next three years.

3.1 Key Stakeholders

Throughout the SSIP process, the state primarily used three existing stakeholder groups: (1) the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC), (2) the ECO pilot work group of Service Coordinators and providers, and (3) the DESE Early Learning team.

A. Internal Stakeholders

Persons within the Part C system are internal stakeholders. In year four of Phase III, the state continued to use the following internal stakeholders:

- State staff in the Office of Special Education, Early Intervention section who are members of all three stakeholder groups
- Early intervention providers who are members of the SICC
- Parents of children with disabilities who are members of the SICC
- SPOE Directors, Service Coordinators and providers participating in the ECO pilot

B. External Stakeholders

Persons outside of the Part C system are external stakeholders. In Phase III year four, the state continued to use the following external stakeholders:

- State staff in the Office of Special Education, Part B/619 section who are members of the Department’s Early Learning team

- State staff in the Office of Quality Schools, Early Learning section who are members of the DESE Early Learning team
- Staff from state agencies who are members of the SICC, including the Departments of Social Services, Health and Senior Services, Insurance, and Mental Health
- Staff from the Head Start State Collaboration Office who are members of the SICC
- Personnel preparation staff from the Center for Excellence, Education, Research, and Service in Developmental Disabilities who are members of the SICC
- Staff from Early Childhood Special Education in local school districts
- Staff from the Regional Head Start Training Office

3.2 Stakeholder Activities

Missouri continues to use internal and external stakeholders to assist with identifying, implementing, and evaluating SSIP activities. Stakeholders are particularly important when the state needs to collect feedback and suggestions for evaluating implementation activities from a variety of perspectives such as individuals from rural and urban areas of the state, agency employees, and independent vendors, public/state and private agency staff, home visiting, and center-based staff, and lead agency/education or other state agency staff.

Throughout Phase III, year four state staff in the Early Intervention section conducted the following SSIP-related activities with key stakeholders.

A. SICC Meetings

Throughout Phase III, year four state staff in the Early Intervention section provided information about SSIP activities during SICC meetings in 2019, including: (1) discussion about the ECO Pilot and enhanced training and sustainability plan, (2) the Family Survey data collected and effective methods to increase return rate, and (3) various cross state collaborations shared activities and outcomes. Council members, including parents and staff from various state agencies and audience members such as SPOE Directors and Service Coordinators, were given an opportunity during each meeting to review and provide suggestions to revise SSIP activities.

Next steps include continuing discussions on SSIP activities from the national, state and regional perspectives in order for state staff to share with the SICC members the plan regarding full implementation of the pilot.

B. SPOE Small Group Discussions

State staff in the Early Intervention section continued to facilitate small group discussions on SSIP activities with the SPOE Directors and Service Coordinators throughout Phase III, year four. In order to provide individualized technical assistance, the state facilitated regional discussions with Service Coordinators about ECO policies and procedures. Additionally, the state continued group discussions during two statewide meetings. Next steps include continuing opportunities for the state to talk with SPOE Directors and Service Coordinators at both a regional (individualized) and state (generalized) level.

C. Provider Small Group Discussions

In past years, state staff in the Early Intervention section recognized providers did not receive the level of involvement in SSIP activities as expected due to turnover in state and regional staff involved in the pilot. In year four of Phase III, state staff maintained communications with providers in Missouri Part C. The state facilitated small group discussions on SSIP activities, through regional discussions during various ECO trainings. Most of these trainings occurred within the context of provider's early intervention teams which allows for quality conversation regarding strategies, policies and procedures. Next steps include the state continuing communications with providers to discuss Early Intervention Team strategies for success as well as further the early childhood outcome conversation. The state will plan on more provider small group discussions throughout 2020 conducted either in-person or through webinars.

Missouri Part C Theory of Action

Vision: First Steps is a support and service system designed to improve family capacity to enhance their child’s development and learning, and to increase the child’s participation in family and community life.

Strands of Action	If	Then	Then	Then
Exploration/ Installation	...the state implements professional development plan for EIT members in the ECO pilot to have meaningful discussions about evidence-based practices that improve social-emotional outcomes...	... EIT members in the ECO pilot will recognize typical and atypical social-emotional skills, and increase the use of evidence-based practices to improve outcomes...		
Initial Implementation	... the SPOEs in the ECO pilot use reflective practices, which includes self-assessment, observation, and feedback, to evaluate the use of evidence-based practices...	... the SPOEs will know if EIT members are using evidence-based practices and, if needed, provide targeted training and technical assistance...	... Parents use strategies between visits with professionals, then the ECO pilot will show an increased percent of children with positive social-emotional outcomes. Infants and toddlers participating in Missouri Part C will be prepared for continued early learning success.
Ongoing Implementation	... the state collects and analyzes information from the ECO pilot (i.e., data, surveys and observations) to evaluate child outcomes...	... the state will determine if the current level of training and technical assistance is working, or if a more intensive plan is necessary to improve child outcomes...		
Full Implementation	...EIT members in the ECO pilot (1) discuss child progress during IFSP meetings and accurately rate child outcomes, and (2) monitor the child's progress during home visits...	... parents will (1) engage in IFSP discussions about their child's progress, and (2) participate in home visits to learn strategies that support IFSP outcomes and improve their child's development...		

March 2018

Training & Sustainability Plan for Missouri First Steps Early Intervention Professionals

