Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Public School System

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase 1

IDEA Part B, Special Education Program

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SSIP Phase 1: INTRODUCTION

Stakeholder Involvement for SSIP Phase 1 Development: *CNMI engaged stakeholders, including parents of children with disabilities, school personnel, the State Advisory Panel, and others, in developing CNMI's IDEA Part B SSIP Phase 1, including establishing CNMI's targets under CNMI's State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator 17.*

The CNMI Public School System (PSS) is a unitary educational system responsible for the implementation and supervision of special education and related services to children three through 21 years old in 21 public schools on three populated islands. The Commissioner of Education (COE) is the PSS Chief State School Officer responsible for administering the IDEA Part B and Part C grants, as well as all other local and Federal appropriations for the development, delivery, and evaluation of the educational system. The COE provides leadership in the development, implementation, and evaluation of programs and services for all public school children in the CNMI.

During school year 2012-2013, with technical assistance from the University of Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (Guam CEDDERS), an overview of OSEP's new Results Driven Accountability was presented to the PSS school leadership, the Special Education State Advisory Panel (SESAP), and special education staff. Regular updates were provided to the school leadership and SESAP as new information was made available to the states and jurisdictions, including the proposed State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) framework. In October 2013, with resources from the Regional Resource Center Program (RRCP), a preliminary CNMI SSIP Gantt Chart with monthly tasks was developed and updated regularly.

In April 2014, the COE recognized the systemic impact of the SSIP development and implementation and officially appointed the CNMI PSS SSIP Core Team members, made up of individuals from the Offices of Curriculum and Instruction, inclusive of Language Arts, Math, and Technology; Accountability, Research, and Evaluation; Student and Support Services, inclusive of Special Education; Federal Programs; and Finance. In addition, the SSIP Core Team included Elementary and Junior High School administrators and teachers, and parents. SESAP members, made up of agency representatives and a majority of parents of children and youth with disabilities, were considered primary stakeholders and were involved in the overall development of CNMI IDEA Part B SSIP Phase 1.

The SSIP Core Team, comprised of key stakeholders from various aspects of PSS and the community, was charged with analyzing the capacity and ability of the PSS to support system wide improvement and to build capacity in the schools to implement, scale up, and sustain the use of evidence-based practices to improve results for students with disabilities. The SSIP Core Team and SESAP members were provided an orientation specific to the SSIP Components and the Gantt Chart with monthly tasks to be completed.

In May 2014, input sessions began the broad and in-depth analyses of the PSS data and infrastructure. The SSIP Core Team review sessions were held regularly with technical assistance from Guam CEDDERS on Saipan, CNMI. The SSIP Core Team also participated in regional and CNMI-specific sessions on Guam: OSEP's on-site regional SSIP Implementation Support in August 2014, the Western Regional Resource Center's (WRRC's) Pacific Early

Reading Summit in November 2014, and a team working session with Guam CEDDERS in February 2015.

In March 2015, the SSIP Core Team facilitated an input session with special education teachers on why reading proficiency for students with disabilities was lower than their grade-age peers. Consistent with the SSIP Core Team review, the teachers shared that they were not familiar with the reading proficiency data of the students and that there was inconsistent use of screening tools and literacy curriculum for the early grades. (refer to Data Analysis section for additional feedback)

SESAP is the main stakeholder group for CNMI's SPP-SSIP development. Throughout the engagement process, members of SESAP were included in the SSIP Core Team review sessions. On March 23, 2015, SESAP provided their final input to the targets for the SSIP. On March 26, 2015, the SSIP was presented to the Board of Education subcommittee on Instructional Service and Assessment for final review and approval.

Stakeholders for the development of Phase II of the SSIP will primarily consist of the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, inclusive of Language Arts; the Office Student Support Services; and school administrators, general and special education teachers, and parents of the three target schools.

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Stakeholder Involvement & Resources Accessed: *CNMI engaged in a systematic process to identify, select, and analyze existing data.*

Over the past year and half, numerous working and input sessions were conducted with the SSIP Core Team, the Special Education State Advisory Panel (SESAP), and additional stakeholders. Technical assistance from Guam CEDDERS, the Regional Resource Center Program (RRCP), and OSEP provided guidance to the SSIP Core Team in organizing the analysis process, making decisions on tools and resources needed to conduct the analysis, reviewing data, conducting broad and in-depth reviews, conducting surveys, and preparing the narratives. The SSIP Core Team utilized the *Data Analysis Template* developed by *Southeast Regional Resource Center* as the basis for the data analysis work. Other data tools and resources were utilized to support the data review.

Data Analysis: *CNMI identified and analyzed key data, including data from SPP/APR indicators, 618 data collections, and other data as applicable to determine the SIMR and the root causes contributing to low performance, including broad and more focused data analysis with multiple data sources.*

Broad Data Analysis
In May 2014, with technical assistance from Guam CEDDERS, the SSIP Core Team initiated the first round of data discussions. The PSS has a wealth of data available to work with so the SSIP Core Team work sessions involved a broad analysis of data for the purpose of identifying areas of low performance and to subsequently identify a primary area of concern. Discussions included what qualitative and quantitative data were going to be reviewed, what process the stakeholders were going to use to analyze and sort the data, who needed to be involved in the analysis, how the data would be disaggregated (by ethnicity, disability, LRE, etc.), were there areas of high performance, were there areas of low performance, what questions needed to be answered, and what were the desired outcomes of reviewing the data.

The SSIP Core Team was cognizant of the time constraints to review, organize and analyze the data in order to begin discussion on the other SSIP components. It was essential to focus on data that would lead to the SIMR and was aligned to the State Performance Plan (SPP) Results Indicators. The broad analysis looked at graduation rates (Indicator 1), dropout rates (Indicator 2), preschool outcomes (Indicator 7), statewide assessment (Indicator 3), and post-school outcomes (Indicator 14). As a result of the data reviewed, the SSIP Core Team considered all the information and determined that low reading performance and the significant gap between students with and without disabilities as the focus of the SSIP. The results of the broad analysis did indicate other areas of concern such as math proficiency; however, improving reading results of all students is a priority of the PSS, which is aligned with SPP Indicator 3C.

Quantitative Data Sources
In conducting the broad data analysis of its statewide assessment results, CNMI identified all available data sources to determine the State-Identified Measurable Results (SIMR) and the root causes contributing to low academic performance. Below is a list of the quantitative data sources identified and analyzed as part of the broad data analysis of performance in reading and math:

- Stanford Achievement Test Series, Tenth Edition (SAT-10). Grade levels tested from 3rd through 11th with the exception of 10th grade.
- Standards-based Assessment (SBA). The SBA is a locally-based criterion-referenced assessment developed by the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL). The SBA was not used in 2014 for the assessment of reading and math.
- Reading First Data for grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade.
- Basic Reading Inventory for Grades 4th through 6th.
- Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards conducted for reading and math for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

The broad analysis involved reviewing the achievement data for the core subjects for reading and math. The three-year trend data for the SAT-10 for reading and math showed that 3rd graders' percentile ranking was below the percentile ranking for 4th through 11th grades (10th graders were not tested). The annual yearly progress data for reading and math from 2009-2014 for grades 3rd through 8th on SAT-10 indicated that all grade levels failed to meet the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) for reading. Math results were similar to the reading results. In reading, the 3rd grade cohort dipped from 2009 to 2013 with a slight increase in 2014, while grades 4th through 8th, with the exception of 7th grade, showed slight increases during the same period. For math, there were inconsistent increases during the period from 2009-2014. In comparing the results for students with disabilities, there is a significant gap between the performance of students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

In-depth Data Analysis
After the broad analysis was conducted, the SSIP Core Team drilled down further, an in-depth analysis, to confirm the primary area of low performance and to identify the root cause of the low performance.

Using a Evidence-Inference-Action (E-I-A) process, an analysis of 2014 reading performance on the SAT-10, the percentile ranking for ALL 3rd graders was 32, with only 29% at or above the 50th percentile. For performance level, 63% performed at or above the 50th percentile and 37% performed in the below average range. For students with disabilities, 14% fell within the average or above average range while 86% fell in the below average range. For math, the percentile ranking for ALL 3rd graders was 30, with only 26% performing at or above the 50th percentile. For performance level, 53% performed at or above the average range while 47% performed in the below average range. There is a slight increase in the overall proficiency of students who took an alternate assessment from 1.3% in 2011-2012 to 2.5% in 2012-2103. The 3rd grade trend for students who took the alternate assessment was 2% in 2011-2012 and 4% in 2012-2013. Participation rates of student with disabilities in the state assessment are in the high range of 97.8% in 2011-2012 and 95% in 2012-2013. The percentage of participation and proficiency in Math is similar for both years.

A review of Standards-Based Assessment (SBA) for 2013 revealed similar results to the SAT-10. The 3rd graders failed to meet the district goal of 50% of the students reaching the grade level benchmarks. SBA was not administered in 2014 and PSS will no longer administer the SBA for core content. Beginning in the Spring of 2015, PSS will administer the ACT Aspire in grades 3 through 10. For students with significant cognitive disabilities who require an alternate

assessment based on alternate achievement standards, the PSS partnered with the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC).

Disaggregation of Quantitative Data to Identify Areas of High and Low Performance

CNMI disaggregated the data across multiple variables to conduct a focused data analysis. The 2013-14 SAT-10 statewide assessment data were disaggregated by grade levels, English Language Learners (ELL), students with IEPs, placement, and disability. For the focus, the data were disaggregated by reading subtests and content clusters. For the 2012-2013 school year, the PSS total enrollment was 10,646, of which 895 (8.4%) were students with IEPs. The total elementary population was 5,153, of which 358 (7%) were students with IEPs. In school year 2013-2014, the total PSS count was 10,638, 907 (8.5%) were students with IEPs. The total elementary count was 4,984, of which 350 or 7% were students with IEPs.

There are 894 students with IEPs from Kindergarten (K) through 12th grade (December 1, 2014, Child Count). Of the 894, 298 (33%) are in grades K through 5th grade. Of the 298 in elementary, 167 (56%) are in grades K-3. Students with IEPs in grades K-3 make up 19% of the total PSS population of students with IEPs. Approximately 90% percent of all students with IEPs receive instruction in the general education classroom 80% or more of the day. For students with IEPs in K-3, the percentage receiving instruction in the general education classroom more than 80% of the time is even higher at 97%.

The CNMI PSS overall Grade 3 Adequate Yearly Progress trend data for the SAT-10 for 2009-2014 ranged from a decrease of 3 percentile points to an increase of 3 percentile points. The PSS overall grade 3 Total Reading Statistical Summary for 2014 indicated that 29% are at or above the 50th percentile, 37% fall in the below average range, 53% in the average range, and 10% in the above average range. For students with IEPs, 2.4% fell within the above average range, 12% in the average range, and 86% in the below average range. For students with disabilities, indicate that only 14% fell within the average or above average range for Total Reading as compared with 63% for all students.

The disaggregation of data by the reading subtests for all Grade 3 students indicate that 52% of the students performed in the average to above average range for Word Study as compared with 14% for students with IEPs and 44% for English Language Learners (ELL). For the Reading Vocabulary subtests, 60% of all students performed in the average to above average range as compared to 6% for students with IEPs and 47% for ELL. For Reading Comprehension, 73% of all students fell within the average to above average range as compared to 29% for students with disabilities and 66% for ELL.

The disaggregation by disability and placement revealed no significant differences among the disabilities. All of the 3rd grade students with disabilities receive their instruction in regular education classrooms 80% or more of the day and of the 3rd grade students with IEPs, 90% were identified as having a learning disability.

Areas of High Performance

High performance on the 2013 SAT-10 results indicated growth in reading for grades 8th & 11th and in math for grades 9th and 11th. The two-year cohort analysis showed positive trends in

grades 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 11. The SAT-10 test results for 2013 also indicated that all grade levels have 50 to 60 percent of students at or above the 50th percentile in spelling.

The area of high performance in reading as measured by the SAT-10 for all 3rd graders was in reading comprehension. Students with disabilities achieved similar results. For the 2014, the SAT-10 results for all students for reading indicated high performance in reading comprehension. Approximately 73% fell within the average to above average range. Similar results were found for ELL and students with IEPS. Of the reading comprehension subtests content clusters, high performance for students with disabilities were found in context clues, initial understanding, and literary which was consistent with the total population of 3rd graders, as well as ELL.

For the math subtest, the highest performance was in mathematics procedures with 62% performing in the average or above average range for the total population of 3rd graders. . Though mathematic procedures was also a high performance area for ELLs and students with IEPs, the percentage of students in the average to above average range was significantly below the percentage of the total population of 3rd graders.

Areas of Low Performance
Based on the SAT-10 trend data from 2009-2014 and specifically the 2014 data, reading was identified as an area in need of improvement. The 2013 SBA data also indicated that 62% of the all students are at the beginning and developing levels which results in only 38% at the proficient range. The trend data for 3rd graders as reported in the Student Diagnostic Report indicate a negative trend, 32nd, 38th, and 26th percentile, respectively for 2010, 2012, and 2013.   In 2014, the subtest results for reading, specifically reading vocabulary, for students with IEPs, was significantly below the results for all students as well as for ELL with only 6% performing at the average or above average range.

Qualitative Data
The SSIP Core team reviewed four of the accreditation reports from Advance Education, Inc. (AdvancEd): (1) Report from Student Diagnostic self assessment group sessions (2) Parent Perception Survey report; (3) Stakeholder Feedback Survey report and (4) February 2014 Report of the External Review for CNMI PSS by AdvancED the accreditation agency. Information from the Student Diagnostic focus group session provided a process to report summative student assessments. This diagnostic was significant to the accreditation and continuous improvement process as it served as a resource for schools to view content area assessment results required by the PSS, determine the quality and reliability of the given assessments, and show the alignment of the assessments to the school's curriculum. The external review team used the performance level computed at the completion of the diagnostic as a comprehensive report to understand fully the PSS assessment program.

The Parent Perception survey provided information on parents' perception of the PSS educational system and the program. The survey was to gather data on parents' understanding of all five standards for accreditation. The Stakeholder Feedback Survey report did not provide information related to academic performance areas. The accreditation report from AdvancEd

indicated that the PSS system required some improvements in the comprehensive assessment system.

The SSIP Core team also needed input from teachers as to their perceptions of why reading proficiency for students with IEP's was significantly lower than that of their grade peers. During the input session, when asked why students with IEPs were significantly lower than that of their grade peers, comments from the special education teachers included they were not familiar with the reading proficiency data of the students, there was inconsistent use of screening tools and literacy curriculum for the early grades, large class sizes, very little time for collaboration between teachers, learning standards were not the same for students with disabilities, professional development not tied to the needs, technical assistance not tied or aligned to their needs.

Focus Area
Based on the findings of the broad and in depth data analyses, reading was identified as an area of low performance thus is the area of focus for the SIMR. In addition, as noted earlier, the Public School System has prioritized improving reading results for all students. According to the 2010 KIDS COUNT Special Report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, "reading proficiently by the end of 3rd grade is a crucial marker in a child's educational development. Failure to read proficiently is linked to higher rates of school dropout, which suppresses individual earning potential as well as the nation's competitiveness and general productivity" (Anne E. Casey Foundation, 2010).

The overall trend data for Reading proficiency of 3rd grade students with IEPs indicates a downward trend over the last 4 years. The proficiency gap between 3rd grade students with and without disabilities has steadily increased over the past few years and the gap continues in subsequent grades. The data indicates that students start out in 3rd grade with low reading performance and end high school with low reading performance.

Based on implementation science, the SSIP Core Team determined that in order to effect changes needed to improve reading performance, CNMI must provide intentional supports in the early grades to improve 3rd grade reading proficiency. As discussed earlier, of the 894 total students with IEPs in the CNMI, 298 (33%) are in grades Kindergarten (K) through 5th grade. Of the 298 in elementary schools, 167 (56%) are in grades K through 3rd grade. Students with IEPs in grades K-3 make up 19% of the total PSS population of students with IEPs.

CNMI further determined that providing intentional supports in the early grades must be in selected schools to demonstrate effectiveness for scaling up implementation. CNMI therefore identified three elementary schools with the largest population of students with IEP's in grades K-3 as the target population to work with. The three elementary schools identified as target schools include a total of 78 students with IEPs in grades K-3 or 47% (78/167) of the total number of students with IEPs in grades K-3 in the CNMI.

In-depth data analysis of the 3rd grade students with IEPs in the three target schools shows the average Total Reading is 14% at or above proficiency. The average subtest scores are 4% in Word Study Skills, with the school scores ranging from 0% to 13%; 4% in Reading Vocabulary,

with the school scores ranging from 0% to 13%; and 35% for Reading Comprehension, with the school scores ranging from 20% to 63%. The scores of the three target schools are considered representative of CNMI's reading performance, and serving close to 50% of CNMI's total students with IEPs in K-3 will have impact on the system review for scaling up implementation.

As part of its in-depth analysis to determine root causes, the SSIP Core Team also conducted an inventory of instructional initiatives implemented within the district. The inventory resulted in numerous competing initiatives across the district with inconsistent documented evidence of desired outcomes.

In addition, selected schools completed the tool "Taking Stock of Reading Materials' to review the curricular instructional materials utilized within the elementary schools. The completion of this tool produced the following findings: (1) inconsistent curriculum implemented at the elementary level; (2) each school determines the reading curriculum to be implemented with no standardized requirement that the curriculum address the five evidence-based components of reading; and (3) inconsistent data collection on progress of the students' reading ability.

Data Quality, Compliance, and Other: *CNMI reviewed the quality of data, compliance data, and identified additional data needed to ensure adequacy of CNMI's plan for addressing any data concerns.*

Quality of Data
The SSIP Core Team did identify some discrepancies with the number of students with IEPs who took the SAT-10. The discrepancy was limited to one school. To ensure the accuracy of the data, students who were not identified as a student with an IEP were manually inputted into the count. PSS has since put into place, procedures to ensure that proctors and test coordinators manually verify each student's profile for correct identification of students with IEPs.

Compliance Data
The SSIP Core Team reviewed the compliance and monitoring reports to determine whether compliance issues presented potential barriers to improvement. Although there have not been any compliance findings that present barriers to improvement, there are several areas that school IEP Teams must carefully consider related to (1) The decision for determining the least restrictive environment; (2) The location for "specially-designed" instruction (i.e. special education); and (3) The consideration of resource room instruction as a supplementary service.

Additional Data
Additional data needed from the three target schools include:
- Individual Reading subtest scores for students with IEP's.
- A file review of IEPs of students with IEPs. The review will focus on several areas such as but not limited to access to the general curriculum, access to accommodations in instruction and assessment, quality of instruction, competency level of general/and special education teachers, access to professional development specific to instructing students with disabilities.
- Interviews with focus groups of parents and teachers to gather additional perspectives that might not be apparent in the file reviews, such as a perspective on class size and its

impact on teaching and learning, preparation time, professional development needs, technical assistance needs, parent engagement in the IEP process, parent, teacher and school leadership expectations of students with disabilities. As noted earlier, the SSIP Core Team facilitated an input session with special education teachers. Additional sessions with general education and special education teachers will provide information on the specific barriers to implementing evidenced-based instruction with fidelity.

Described in the Coherent Improvement Strategies section of this SSIP, includes a plan for collecting the additional data needed, including what data is needed, how the data will be collected, who will collect the data, and the timelines for collection and analysis.

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Stakeholder Involvement & Resources Accessed: *CNMI engaged in a systematic process to analyze the capacity of CNMI infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity at the local level in relation to the State-Identified Measurable Results (SIMR).*

During OSEP's August 2014 on-site regional support meeting on Guam, technical assistance from Guam CEDDERS, WRRC, and OSEP supported the SSIP Core Team to utilize the *SERRC Broad Infrastructure Analysis Guide* developed by the Southeast Regional Resource Center as a tool for CNMI's broad review of the PSS infrastructure and data. The SSIP Core Team looked at PSS Self-Assessments and surveys, the AdvancED *Accreditation Report,* the External Review Report, Special Education Annual Performance Reports, the Student Accountability Plan, Student Performance Data, Power Walk Through data, PSS Governance, *PSS Strategic Priorities and Goals,* professional development policies, staff qualifications and teacher evaluation systems, fiscal supports, technical assistance system and supports, monitoring and accountability practices and PSS current initiatives. The SSIP Core Team also used a SWOT Analysis strategy that reviewed the Strengths, Weaknesses (need improvement), Opportunities and Threats of the PSS infrastructure to determine if an area/s of the infrastructure could be a possible barrier or support to implementing the SSIP.

The SSIP Core Team continued the in-depth analysis of CNMI's infrastructure systems that closely align to the improvement focus area and SIMR. The SSIP Core Team also looked for alignment of *PSS Strategic Priorities and Goals* and the academic challenges and opportunities for improvement, as recommended by the AdvancED *Accreditation Report*.

INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS

CNMI's Infrastructure: *CNMI analyzed all relevant systems within its infrastructure in relation to the SIMR.*

The following is a description of the 'infrastructure' systems within PSS, including areas of strength and areas that need improvement identified for most of the infrastructure systems. Following the *SERRC Broad Infrastructure Analysis Guide*, the SSIP Core Team reviewed the seven infrastructure systems of PSS, including PSS initiatives which most closely align to the SIMR: (1) Governance, (2) Data Systems, (3) Fiscal System, (4) Quality Standards, (5) Professional Development, (6) Technical Assistance, and (7) Accountability/Monitoring. At the end of each infrastructure system review, a brief description is provided in relation to the SSIP Core Team's discussion on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and/or threats in relation to the SIMR.

(1) GOVERNANCE:

Article XV of the CNMI Constitution, originally ratified in 1977, established the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System (CNMI PSS). The provision of the Constitution states that "the educational system shall provide maximum educational and training opportunities and be sensitive and responsive to the needs and desires of the community as it pursues its central objective of developing human potential. The educational system shall also provide support and guidance for students in assessing areas of interest and ability, in clarifying

values and goals, and in providing students with clear and accurate information so they may gain the most from their educational experience. The educational system shall recognize the distinct and unique cultural heritage and indigenous way of life of the people and shall be committed to provide for the language needs of the people and the preservation of their cultural integrity within a global community."

The Board of Education (BOE) through the Commissioner of Education (COE) administers the Public School System (PSS). PSS is the state agency responsible for the implementation, supervision, and monitoring of the Early Intervention Program (IDEA Part C), Head Start Program, Special Education Program (IDEA Part B), preschool, elementary, and secondary programs. The BOE also has the responsibility of Licensure and Certification of its certified school staff, including teachers, administrators, and counselors.

The BOE delegates to the COE the responsibility of implementing all Board policies and regulations, and administration of the PSS. On a continual basis, the BOE determines the effectiveness of policy implementation through evaluation of school operations, practices and program outcomes. The achievement level of students is the guiding standard through which all success is measured.

Annually, the COE must report progress to the BOE and community on the *PSS Strategic Priorities and Goals*. In 1998, the PSS leadership, with stakeholder input, established the first Four Strategic Priorities. Every year thereafter, the Strategic Priorities are reviewed, revised, and expanded to be consistent with the trends in education with emphasis on how the PSS delivers instruction, educational services, supports and programs to over 10,000 children, including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. In 2009, the COE expanded the *Strategic Priorities and Goals* to include "Parental Involvement and Community Partnerships" as the fifth priority. In 2012, the COE, in consultation with the PSS Central Office Leadership, School Leadership, various advisory panels such as the Parent Teacher Association, the PSS Youth Panel, the Special Education State Advisory Panel (SESAP), and Teachers revised and expanded the Strategic Priorities once again to address the need for data-driven and research based reform and improvement, thus, the sixth Strategic Priority, "High Performing with High Reliability System." These *Strategic Priorities PLUS and Goals* are what drive the PSS to achieving and accomplishing the highest expectations for all students.

The infrastructure analysis of the *Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals and Objectives*, did not identify "Areas of Strengths or Areas that Need Improvement" as that was not the purpose of the *Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals and Objectives.* The SSIP Core Team narrowed down the *Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals* to those that most closely align to the SIMR which were: *High Student Performance*, *Highly Qualified and Effective Personnel* and *High Performing & High Reliability Systems.* **Appendix A** includes the *PSS Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals and Objectives*, brief excerpts from the COE's 2014 Progress Report, and descriptions of the *2015 Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals* that most closely align to the SIMR.

To meet the *PSS Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals and Objectives*, the COE engaged PSS in a series of reflection and continuous improvement processes. In school year 2012-2013, the PSS, under the leadership of the COE, moved from a school level accreditation process to a system

level accreditation process. The PSS self-assessment was conducted using the AdvancED's Self-Assessment process. The process looked at five Standards of Quality of an Educational System which then served as the foundation for accreditation and continuous improvement process. These Standards of Quality are: (1) Purpose and Direction, (2) Governance and Leadership, (3) Teaching and Assessing for Learning, (4) Resources and Support Systems, and (5) Using Results for Continuous Improvement. Conducting the self-assessment under the direction and leadership of the COE proved to be a valuable process for collaboratively engaging all PSS staff members and stakeholders in purposeful dialogue and reflection of the Standard of Quality of the PSS. The primary purpose of the self-assessment was to assess the PSS adherence to the Standards of Quality, and to guide PSS' continuous improvement efforts. The self-assessment included self-ratings for each of the standard indicators, comments that explain the indicator's ratings, and an overall narrative of each of the Quality Standards. The self-assessment also included a Stakeholder Feedback diagnostic and Student Performance Diagnostic including Student Performance Data, Evaluative Criteria, and Rubrics. The two Self-Assessment areas related to Governance included:

Purpose and Direction: *The system maintains and communicates at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.*

Governance and Leadership: *The system operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student performance and system effectiveness.*

The system wide accreditation process looked at the conditions and processes within the PSS as a "system" that impact student performance and PSS organizational effectiveness. PSS relies on an accreditation process to effectively drive student performance and allow for continuous systemic improvement. Upon completion of the self-assessment, an External Review was conducted in the fall of 2014 by a team of evaluators. The External Review was a rigorous 10 day process that included the examination of evidence and relevant data, interviews with stakeholders, and observations of instruction, learning, and operations. During the review a total of 755 interviews were conducted, including 32 administrators, 171 teachers, 25 support staff, 488 students, and 39 parents. Using the evidence at their disposal, the AdvancED External Review Team presented the Findings, Conclusion, and Required Actions for the PSS.

Governance: Areas of Strength and Opportunities for Improvement
The following highlights the areas of strength and opportunities for improvement for the Governance infrastructure system:

Governance: Areas of Strength
- Clear commitment to a culture of shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and it permeates at all levels of the system. The development of the PSS vision, mission, and goal statements included participation by representatives from all stakeholder groups. Shared leadership is evident among Central office staff, school administrators, teacher leaders, and parents.
- PSS leadership has clear and distinct vision for student success, a strong foundation.
- PSS programs are designed and implemented to regularly inform and engage

stakeholders in the educational process and provide opportunities to give recommendations and feedback hence very involved and with an open-door policy.

- Strong support of BOE that allows the leadership team to lead and manage autonomy. The BOE approved teacher and school leader evaluation systems establish clear expectations of roles and responsibilities that focus on managing change, leadership, and purposeful community.

Governance: <u>Opportunities for Improvement</u>:

- Need to ensure that all system and school personnel maintain and consistently use a comprehensive assessment system that produces data from multiple measures, including locally developed and standardized assessments that are regularly evaluated for reliability and effectiveness in improving. Monitor the maintenance of school data and provide feedback for improvement.
    - o *"There are efforts in place to ensure that assessment data are used to inform improvement at the system level, but it is not evident to what degree individual teachers and schools evaluate assessments and use them to develop interventions."* (AdvancED *External Review*)
- Need to develop systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from multiple data sources that are used consistently by all teachers.
    - o *"Teachers and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) need a structured process for collecting, analyzing, and determining instructional next steps for students and programs."* (AdvancED *External Review*)
- Need to ensure that there is coordinated effort to include training for teachers in data collection, evaluation, interpretation and usage and a structure to communicate findings to all stakeholder groups.
    - o *"Some teachers are using data and have been adequately trained, however many have not received comprehensive professional development that allow them to make appropriate decisions for informing instruction, creating goals, closing achievement gaps, and targeting school-wide and individual interventions. There is an absence of protocols for reviewing data and analyzing school improvement across the system."* (AdvancED *External Review*)

Governance in Relation to SIMR:

As described, PSS has the vision, mission, and clear commitment to "Students First," inclusive of students with disabilities. The establishment of the SSIP Core Team is evidence that the COE understands the SSIP must be developed and implemented as a system and not a separate program. The Self-Assessment and AdvancED engagement included active participation by special education personnel at all levels: Administrators, staff, teachers, and parents. The SSIP Core Team reviewed PSS reports to assess the level of involvement of special education and the likelihood that the PSS is committed to the SIMR. It was determined that the governance infrastructure system is a <u>strength</u> that will facilitate the SSIP development and implementation in relation to the SIMR.

(2) DATA SYSTEMS:

The PSS has a data system in place to collect and report on numerous structures at the system level, program level, and school level. The Pacific Education Data Management System (PEDMS) is the management system that generates the student identifier numbers. Student demographics, populations, annual Facts and Figures, student discipline, attendance, classes, grades, disability information, and English Language Learner information is managed through the Rediker Admin Plus. Program level data specific to each program is collected, reported and managed at the program level (Special Education, Early Intervention, Head Start, Title I, AmeriCorps, Wellness Program, etc). All other departments and functions such as the Human Resource office, the Fiscal and Budget office, Procurement, and Certification and Licensing, collect and maintain data relevant to the function of the office. PSS also has access to web-based data systems that house or maintain student performance data such as the Pearson test site that generates the Sat10 student assessment data, Star Reading and Math, Achieve 3000, Reading First Assessments, World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) and WIDA MODEL placement test.

The PSS has a student accountability system that generates a variety of information about student learning, student performance, and effective classroom instruction. The PSS large scale assessments include locally developed Standards Based Assessments (SBA), Stanford Achievement Tests, 10th Edition (SAT 10) and academic performance data of students with significant cognitive disabilities who take an Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achieve Standards.

The PSS Self-Assessment area related to Data Systems included:

> *Using Results for Continuous Improvement: The system implements a comprehensive assessment system that generates a range of data about student learning and system effectiveness and uses the results to guide continuous improvement.*

The schools develop and report annually on their School Wide Plans (SWPs) to the COE and a panel of peers. Based on the PSS Self-Assessment and further acknowledged by the AdvancEd Report, the schools reported being unsure of how to analyze and use their data to make instructional decisions based on that data. In 2014-2015, the COE implemented a data dialog process prior to the development of the SWPs. The *Data Dialogue* is included in the school's plan to address a systematic and systemic continuous improvement and quality process as part of collecting, gathering, compiling, analyzing and preparing data to make sound instructional program decisions. The schools work within their school clusters to review student academic performances specifically on SAT10, STAR Reading and STAR Math from Kindergarten, Grades 1 through Grades 12 and teacher data collected from *Power Walk Through* focus on instructional delivery and classroom organization. The data dialogue is held three times a year – at the beginning of the school year, midyear, and at the end of the school year. The data dialogue is a strategy to monitor progress and track the schools' performance during the school year.

In 2006, PSS submitted its initial State Performance Plan (SPP) for Special Education – IDEA Part B to the US Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) for review and approval. The

SPP included baseline data on OSEP selected indicators, measureable targets, and improvement activities. Annually thereafter, PSS submitted a report of its progress on the targets, trend data and an explanation of slippage, if any. OSEP reviewed the APR and provided a determination as to whether the PSS met the requirements of the IDEA based on the PSS performance. The SPP Indicators are: Graduation Rates, Drop-out Rates, Participation and Proficiency in State Wide Assessment, Suspension/Expulsions: Significant Discrepancy, Least Restrictive Environment School-Age, Least Restrictive Environment Preschool, Preschool Outcomes, parent Involvement, 60-day TimeLine for Initial Evaluations, Individualized Education Programs in Effect by Third Birthday, Secondary Transition, Post School Outcomes, General Supervision: Identification and Verified Correction of Noncompliance, Resolution Hearings, Mediations, and State Reported Data.

Data Systems: Areas of Strength and Opportunities for Improvement
The following highlights the areas of strength and opportunities for improvement for the Data Systems infrastructure system:

Data Systems: <u>Areas of Strength</u>:
- The continuous review process used to determine improvement needs in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.
- The PSS leadership engages in an annual panel review process of school improvement plans to ensure the allocation of resources is directly related to student learning and improved outcomes as well as system-wide improvement needs. The panel review process requires all school leaders to present their school improvement plans to the Peer Panel Reviewers in order to determine learning goals for the year and to determine the supports needed to improve individual student outcomes. Schools are required to use their assessment data from all data sources to make informed decisions.
- The PSS has embarked on a school level data collection-reporting process, *Data Dialogues*, in response to the identified area of need specific to data collection, analysis and interpretation.
- The timely submission of the IDEA Part B SPP, APR, and 618 Data.
- The IDEA Part B SPP compliance indicators have met substantial compliance over the last few years, a significant improvement from the baseline data.
- Significant progress in all of the IDEA Part B SPP results indicators, with many meeting target.

Data Systems: <u>Opportunities for Improvement</u>:
- The need for targeted training of staff and school personnel on the analysis, interpretation and use of assessment data to ensure system wide improvements in student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions of learning. This was also described as an area in need of improvement in the Governance system.
- The *Data Dialogues* need to systematically and systemically include data on students with disabilities (performance, discipline, attendance, etc.).
- The *Data Dialogues* need to include performance data on students in K to 2nd grade, including progress monitoring data. This was discussed in the Data Analysis component of this SSIP.

Data Systems in Relation to SIMR:
Based on the Self-Assessment, AdvancED *Accreditation Report*, and Special Education APRs, although PSS has multiple sources of data to pull information to make continuous improvements, it is not evident to what degree individual teachers, schools, and the system in general, use data to make Data Driven Decisions about policies, practices, and procedures in order to improve student outcomes. There is limited evidence supporting a detailed plan on how assessment data are analyzed or how improvement is measured with fidelity. However, the initiation of the Data Dialogues shows promise of focusing and maximizing the use of data for improving student outcomes. The SSIP Core Team therefore considered the Data Systems infrastructure as an opportunity to align data systems and to ensure that Data Driven Decisions positively impact the SIMR.

(3) FISCAL SYSTEM:

PSS receives both local and federal appropriations used to support the education of all children. Federal Grants include, but are not limited to the Consolidate Grant, Special Education and Early Intervention, Food Services, Head Start, TFASEG, AmeriCorps, Striving Readers, E-Rate, JROTC, and Child Care. Based on the total funding, the PSS cost per pupil is roughly $5,991.00. Although PSS has shown an increase in student enrolment over the years, local appropriations to PSS has not increased. In June 2014, the Board of Education requested a constitutional amendment, through HLI 18-12, which would change the funding level of PSS from 15% to 25%. The initiative, if passed, would guarantee PSS the future funding support it needs to provide appropriate education for all students. The increase in the annual funding level would be used to improve the education programs and infrastructure in four main areas: 1) Full Time Full Day Kindergarten programs, 2) Classroom Instructional Materials and Instructional Technology, 3) Class-size Reduction, and 4) Continuous School Improvement and Modernization of School Facilities. The amendment, HLI 18-12, was put on the election ballot in November 2014 and passed. The additional local appropriations will directly impact student performance, particularly in the lower grades as PSS will be able to provide full day Kindergartens, lower class sizes, and additional instructional materials and technology.

The *School Wide Plans (SWPs)* include each school's plan to address student performance deficiencies, as well as to report results. The plans include an allocation formula, with 40% of the funds targeted for struggling learners or those performing two grade levels or more below proficiency, 40% for students achieving the proficiency rate, and 20% towards character development and/or technology instruction. In addition to the general overview of the SWPs, school teams prepare trilateral plans that outline key areas for addressing student needs:

- School Practice (guaranteed and viable curriculum)
- Student Characteristics (student motivational factors)
- Classroom Practice (instructional strategies)

These factors are taken into consideration with the performance data and are used to drive a Student Outcome goal. School level teams collect data from multiple sources including Power Walk Through, STAR Reading and Math, SAT 10 and the CNMI Standards Based Assessments (SBA) to evaluate Professional Development and instructional materials/equipment needs, and

allocate funding accordingly. The SWPs are presented to the COE and the leadership and supported by data. Consolidated funds are then allocated to schools for the purchase of supplemental instructional materials, equipment, software and hardware that directly benefit student learning and teacher instruction.

Although every school is required to prepare an annual SWP with student performance goals and fund allocations, the goals statements for K to 3rd grade are global statements and do not systematically address literacy or reading deficiencies in the early grades.

- SWP's need to include specific literacy and reading goals based on screening and assessment data for K to 3rd grade.
- SWP's need to include systemic literacy and reading programs that are evidence based and plan for explicit instruction in the essential components of reading.
- SWP's need to include specific measures to monitor progress of K to 3rd grade.
- SWP's need to systematically allocate resources specific to literacy and reading programs of K to 3rd grade.

Fiscal System in Relation to SIMR:
The SSIP Core Team determined that the Fiscal System infrastructure provides an <u>opportunity</u> for dedicated funding streams to support the SIMR, especially with the focus on the early grades.

(4) QUALITY STANDARDS

In 2009-2010, the PSS adopted the Common Core State Standards with full implementation in all grades in 2012-2013. The PSS has taken many steps and has implemented worthy initiatives over the years that focus on improving results of all students, and more specifically, improving the results in the early years, before the academic gap starts. The following is a description of the Public School System current initiatives, both general education and special education, that are based on needs as identified in the accreditation report, various self-assessments and surveys and the PSS *Strategic Priorities Plus Goals,* that will directly support improvement for all students and the PSS capacity to implement the SIMR.

The PSS understands that by the end of third grade, students should have mastered foundational language and literacy skills necessary to succeed. By fourth grade, students should be reading to learn. The 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reported only 34% of fourth graders were at proficiency and 33% at basic and 33% below proficiency. The CNMI reading scores for all students is similar to that of the NAEP and much lower for students with disabilities. In 2012, the BOE approved the *Comprehensive Birth to Third Plan* initiated by the COE. It is the PSS vision that all children be accorded coherent learning experiences and opportunities from birth to third grade and beyond. The development of Birth to 3rd plan provides the infrastructure to allow all children the continuum of services, learning experiences and learning opportunities that are developmentally-age appropriate, needs-focused with effective instructional strategies, positive relationships and learner-centered environment. The comprehensive service system was modeled after the Head Start Program with essential components that addresses the WHOLE CHILD. It is about a comprehensive and systemic

process of providing high quality instruction to improve child outcomes and close achievement gaps.

In SY2012-2013, the COE, Office of Instructional Support Leadership, Head Start, Early Intervention, Special Education, School Leaders, teachers and parents, established an Executive Committee for the purpose of developing a P-3 Roll out plan. Numerous meetings were conducted throughout the year around the key concepts of the P-3 plan. The National Governors Association (NGA) provided quality resources and opportunities for CNMI to engage in the process to develop goals and a roll out plan to ensure that various components essential to the implementation of the P-3 plan were implemented across all schools in the CNMI. **Appendix B** includes a description of the eight P-3 goal areas: Collaboration, Administrator Effectiveness, Teacher Effectiveness, Instructional Tool, Learning Environment, Data-driven System, Engage Families, and Transitions for Continuity.

In November 2014, the National Governors Association (NGA) staff met with a CNMI team to discuss the CNMI policy priorities that would enhance CNMI's strategy for raising reading proficiency by the end of 3rd grade. As a result of the meeting, the CNMI priorities, major considerations for addressing the priorities and examples of relevant, promising strategies from other states were discussed. The five priorities identified by the CNMI team are:

Priority 1: *Aligning language and literacy standards from early childhood through 3rd grade as represented in CNMI's early learning standards and the Common Core State Standards.*
Priority 2: *Implement language and literacy standards from early childhood through 3rd grade.*
Priority 3: *Build principals' capacity to support early elementary literacy instruction.*
Priority 4: *Ensure sufficient supply and quality of literacy coaches for ECE and pre-K–3 teachers.*
Priority 5: *Develop a state-led strategy to bring more coherence across the territory to districts' and schools' approach to improving 3rd grade reading outcomes – instruction, assessment, professional development, etc.*

The CNMI Team, using the NGA framework and policy tool, completed a policy audit, including a review of the Education Act, Board of Education regulations and policies and the *PSS Strategic Priorities,* to ensure there is a systematic and systemic comprehensive plan to improve reading. The following are policy actions as determined by the CNMI team's assessment of the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for raising early literacy and 3rd grade reading levels:

Policy Action 1: To adopt comprehensive language and literacy standards and curricula for early care and education programs and kindergarten through 3rd grade.
Policy Action 2: To expand access to high quality childcare, pre-kindergarten and full day kindergarten.
Policy Action 3: To engage and support parents and partners in early language and literacy development:

Policy Action 4: To equip professionals providing care and education with the skills and knowledge to support early language and literacy development.
Policy Action 5: To develop mechanisms to promote continuous improvement and accountability.

As described under Fiscal System, in SY2013-2014, the PSS initiated an amendment to the funding level from 15% to 25%. The initiative was put on the November 2014 ballot and was passed. The increase in the annual funding level would be used improve the education programs and infrastructure in 4 main areas: 1) Full Time Full Day Kindergarten programs, 2) Classroom Instructional Materials and Instructional Technology, 3) Class-size Reduction and 4) Continuous School Improvement and Modernization of School Facilities. In order to meet the demands of proficient readers by the end of third grade, the PSS recognizes the need for longer time in quality instruction. A promising outcome of full day kindergarten is the highest performing school in the CNMI implemented full day kindergarten several years ago. Although much too early to make predictive assumptions or correlations between the full day kindergartens and half day, in SY 2014-2015, 2 more schools of 8 elementary schools implemented full day kindergarten programs. The infrastructure in these schools allowed for the full day programs unlike the other schools. It is anticipated that in school year 2015-2016, with the passage of the funding level, all schools will implement full day kindergarten programs with appropriate teacher-child ratios and class sizes.

The latest PSS initiative is the grant award for Early Head Start. In SY2014-2015, the PSS as the grantee agency for the Head Start Program, applied for and was granted funds to operate Early Head Start. The program options will include PSS center-based, community centers and relative care. The ability for families, including families of children with disabilities to enroll in and participate in an early care program such as the Early Head Start Program, is a much needed opportunity for our families as many families do not have the resources for private care of any quality. The first year of funding is primarily for infrastructure development, professional development, recruitment of staff and families etc. The CNMI is looking forward to serving the newest group of young children in quality care facilities which will positively impact our effort to improve the reading proficiency of all 3rd graders.

Quality Standards in Relation to SIMR:
The SSIP Core Team determined that the Quality Standards infrastructure is a <u>strength</u> and provides an <u>opportunity</u> for support of the SIMR, especially with the focus on the early grades and literacy development. As described, PSS has developed early education initiatives, including obtaining the Early Head Start grant to support young children birth to age three and their families, complementing PSS's Early Intervention Program (IDEA Part C). PSS has increased its capacity to support children from cradle through high school, with a focus on early language and literacy development.

(5) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

The PSS Procurement and Human Resource Departments have policies and procedures in place to provide the support needed to implement quality standards across the system. However, the departments have been subject to audit findings in the last few years. PSS leadership has

addressed many of the issues with revised policies and procedures to ensure accountability of the departments. These revised policies and procedures, although needed to ensure accountability for all program, did lengthen the Request for Proposals and contract award time and the small purchase ability of the programs. Thus, the programs must plan well in advance to procure required services. The Human Resource office is also reviewing and revising employment procedures and plans to implement an electronic data tracking system which will allow for a more effective and efficient employment system.

In response to classroom observation data over the past few years, the COE felt the need to transition from the teacher performance appraisals to an evaluation process that was based on 21st century education and a set of rigorous research-based standards designed to promote effective leadership, quality teaching, and student learning, while enhancing professional growth of the teacher. In SY 2010-2011, the BOE approved the use of the McRel Teacher Evaluation System to be used for all teachers, including teachers of students with disabilities. The McRel Teacher Evaluation system assesses the teacher's performance in relation to Five Professional Teaching Standards and guides teachers through a self-assessment process in order to plan for their professional growth. The BOE also approved the McRel's Principal Evaluation System for school leadership. The intended purpose of McRel's Principal Evaluation System is to assess the principal's performance in relation to research-based strategies and to serve as a guide for professional development and growth for the individual principal. The system is based on a framework of 21 leadership responsibilities in an organized structure of leadership, focus of change, magnitude of change and purposeful community.

The PSS has in place a system of professional development tied directly to employment contracts of certified personal contracts. The system includes 10 days of State-and School level Professional Development (PD) scheduled throughout the year. Over the past few years PD has included a wide variety of topics for administrators and teachers such as Differentiated Instruction, Classroom Instruction that Works, Understanding by Design, Universal Design for Learning, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, English Language Learner, Teacher Certification, Singapore Math, Six Traits of Writing, Instructional Technology Training Course, just to mention a few. Some PD incorporates the principles of implementation science and mechanisms to build local capacity.

Based on several years of *Power Walk Through* (PWT) data, specifically the teacher directed technology and student directed technology data, the PSS recognized the need to develop and implement an Instructional Technology Training Program in its effort to bring effective use of technology into the system and classrooms and to support data collection which should guide the decision making processes. The Instructional Technology Training Program, funded through T&FASEG funds, has basically 2 goals: 1) To build capacity in instructional technology from within and expand outward to reach all teachers and administrative leaders, and 2) To improve student academic achievement and teacher effectiveness through the use of high quality digital tools and materials integrated with the curriculum. Two of several objectives of the training program are that all of the EdTech participants will demonstrate use of at least 30% of the Instructional Technology applications as measured by PWT Reports and at least 95% of the 8th grade students will meet or exceed standards for technology literacy by 2015. Courses in the EdTech program include *Classroom Instruction that Works (CITW) with Technology*, *Advance*

Computer Applications, Google Apps for Education, *Student Profiles, Solo 6 and Literacy*, and *Creative Design*.

Professional Development: Areas of Strength and Opportunities for Improvement
The following highlights the areas of strength and opportunities for improvement for the Professional Development infrastructure system:

Professional Development: <u>Areas of Strength</u>:
- The PSS has in place a system of professional development tied directly to employment contracts of certified personal contracts.
- Several years of PWT data showed that teachers who have gone through the EdTech training program do use **more** teacher directed technology and their students do use **more** student centered technology. Participants of the Cohort 1 data in Year 1 (SY 2011-12) shows an average of 67% use of teacher directed technology compared to the overall PSS average of 38%. A difference of 29%. The same difference of 29% seen in Year 2 (SY 2012-13). In addition, Participants of the Cohort 1 data in Year 1 (SY 2011-12) shows an average of 45% use of student directed technology compared to the overall PSS average of 28%. A difference of 17%.

Professional Development: <u>Opportunities for Improvement</u>:
- Professional Development (PD) needs to be systemically planned based on data and relevance to school needs.
- PD needs to incorporate the basic principles of Implementation Science and a means to build local capacity to sustain the activity.
- PD needs to focus on strategies that have the most impact on student performance.
- NOTE: The *Instructional Technology Training Program* is a new initiative and will take a few years of data to determine areas that may need improvement.

Professional Development in Relation to SIMR:
The SSIP Core Team determined that the Professional Development (PD) infrastructure is a <u>strength</u> and provides an <u>opportunity</u> for support of the SIMR, especially with the focus on the early grades and literacy development. PSS has in place professional standards and an evaluation system for all administrators and teachers, inclusive of special education teachers. The various PD includes considerations for struggling learners and technology support for accessing the general curriculum.

(6) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The PSS has a technical assistance system and mechanisms in place to ensure the timely delivery of high quality, evidence based support provided to the schools. In the past few years, the PSS implemented several school level system-wide initiatives intended to improve results for all students such as *Classroom Instruction That Works*, *Universal Design for Learning, Understanding by Design, Response to Intervention*, *Success in Sight, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol* (SIOP) and *Positive Behavioral Intervention Support Systems*.

Principals are also required to conduct *Power Walk Through* for each teacher several times per year. The data derived from *Power Walk Through* show the level of instruction and student engagement, at the time of the observation. *Power Walk Through* data are discussed with each teacher to determine how or what the teacher must do to increase higher order thinking and improve overall instructional practices. The PSS has also implemented, in collaboration and partnership with AdvancED, a Teacher and Principal Evaluation System, and recently completed a system-wide accreditation with a district-wide on-site visit from AdvancED staff in October 2013. This state-wide accreditation process assisted the PSS to determine its effectiveness as a school system in preparing all students for college and careers, and allow for a systematic way for PSS to identify areas of strengths and opportunities for improvement. Follow-up training and school level visits have continued around the initiatives in the drive to improve student performance on state-level assessments.

Technical Assistance: Areas of Strength and Opportunities for Improvement
The following highlights the areas of strength and opportunities for improvement for the Technical Assistance infrastructure system:

Technical Assistance: <u>Areas of Strength</u>:
- The PSS has a technical assistance system in place ensure the timely delivery of high quality, support to the programs and schools. Initiatives include technical assistance (TA) provisions from National Centers, Regional Centers, or local support.

Technical Assistance: <u>Opportunities for Improvement</u>:
- With many competing priorities within the PSS and rigid schedules of the TA providers, often the schools are inundated with technical assistance that is tied to an initiative rather than on student performance data. TA needs to be aligned to student performance data as well as PSS initiatives
- TA needs to be aligned to school needs relevant to data collection, reporting and interpretation and to instructional practices.
- TA needs must incorporate mechanisms to sustain the desired results and outcomes and designed to build local capacity. Some, not all TA provisions, incorporate mechanisms of Implementation Science to maintain and sustain the activity or desired improvement.

Technical Assistance in Relation to SIMR:
The SSIP Core Team determined that the Technical Assistance (TA) infrastructure is a <u>strength</u> and provides an <u>opportunity</u> for support of the SIMR, especially with the focus on the early grades and literacy development. This is evident from the noted strength under Governance that the PSS has a "clear commitment to a culture of shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning. The TA provisions apply to all teachers and students. Special Education teachers are involved in the TA supported within their schools and as a system.

(7) ACCOUNTABILITY/MONITORING

In 1999, the BOE approved a *Comprehensive Student Accountability Plan* which required multiple assessments in accordance with the BOE policies. The plan was developed with the purpose of determining and measuring what students know and are able to do based on multiple

modes of assessments: the Stanford Achievement Test, 10th Edition (SAT10), Standards Based Assessments, and Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Achievement Standards for students with significant disabilities. Grades 3 to 8, and at least, one high school grade, are tested annual.

As discussed under Governance, the COE, in consultation with the PSS Central Office Leadership, School Leadership, various advisory panels, and teachers revised and expanded the PSS Strategic Priorities to address the need for data-driven and research based reform and improvement. The one *Strategic Priorities PLUS and Goal* that drive the PSS to achieving and accomplishing the highest expectations for all students and supports the *Comprehensive Student Accountability Plan*, states:

> (*1*) *High Student Performance: The High Student Performance priority was established to ensure that the public school system develops and implements quality* <u>*curriculum, instruction and assessment*</u> *to help students achieve their academic goals and to be college and career ready by the time the leave the CNMI Public School System.*

The CNMI PSS Standard Based Assessment (SBA) was a criterion referenced standards based test used to measure student knowledge and skills based on CNMI PSS standards and benchmarks. The SBA measured and reported benchmark mastery. The only statistical process used was the percent of benchmarks in each performance level and the percent of benchmarks at proficient and advanced.

In SY2012-2013, the PSS phased out SBA's for core subject areas in anticipation of administering the Act ASPIRE test, which is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Spring of 2015, will be the first Act ASPIRE test administered to all students in grades 3rd through 8th and one high school grade. For students with significant cognitive disabilities who require an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards, the PSS partnered with one of the US Department of Education funded consortia, the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC). In Spring 2015, students with significant disabilities will take the first NCSC assessment for accountability purposes. Other sources of student performance data used by the schools for program improvement include STAR Reading, STAR Math, World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) for English Language Learners, Reading First, and classroom formative assessments. PSS uses assessment trend data to determine system-wide progress or slippage over time and to provide valuable feedback to schools in order for school leaders to make decisions about improving classroom instruction and student learning. The data also gives an overall picture of how effective educational and instructional programs are and the areas that need to be strengthen or improved.

The Student Performance Diagnostic conducted by AdvancED, provided PSS with a process to review, in depth, the student academic performance on state assessments. The diagnostic process served as a resource for the schools to view content area assessment results in order to determine the quality and reliability of the state assessments, and to show the alignment of the assessments to the PSS curriculum. The diagnostic review determined areas of notable achievement, areas above the expected level of performance, areas that showed positive trends in performance, areas of highest performance, subgroups that show positive trend in performance, subgroups that are closing the gap, areas that are below the expected levels of performance, areas that show a

negative trend in performance, areas that show increasing gaps in performance and areas, and areas with an overall lowest performance.

In SY 2010-2011 the PSS developed a *Power Walk Through* (PWT) Implementation plan that included the number of power walk through needed to be collected and reported on a monthly basis. The baseline month was October 2010. The 3–5-minute observation template focuses on teachers' use of instructional strategies, how students interact, and other teacher practices that research has shown influence student learning. The data collected through PWT is used to provide support and assistance to teachers and to provide them with in-depth knowledge on pedagogy, effective delivery of instruction. The PWT data, specifically teacher directed technology and student directed technology data, was used to develop the Instructional Technology Program.

In 2014-2015, the PSS Office of Curriculum and Instruction (OIC) developed and implemented an Instructional Review Process (IRP) as a result of the much needed focus on instruction based on the accreditation reports and external reviews. The OCI needed to develop a systemic and systematic framework and structure to examine the "systems and supports" that have been put in place at schools to ensure that research-based instructional practices are fully implemented in all classrooms. The intended purpose and outcomes of the IRP is to improve teaching and learning and reduce the variability in the quality of instruction. The IRP is about using data collected through PWT, Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (ELEOT), and Understanding by Design (UbD) to improve the learning environment and promote student-engagement in the learning process.

The OCI team conducts observation using ELEOT and PWTs. The team reviews the PWT and ELEOT data, analyze patterns and themes and problems of practice. They provide feedback and prepare a profile of the school based on the data. The most significant part of the process is the feedback loop provided to teachers on an individual basis based on the observations. This feedback loop supports instructional improvement at the school level by sharing what is learned through the process and building those skills collaboratively. As of November 2014, 183 Middle School and High School teachers, instructors and substitute teachers were observed, including special education teachers. Preliminary results of the ELEOT data revealed similar strengths and areas of concern/need improvement from middle and high school teachers. A similar strength noted was "supportive learning environment." Similar areas of concern/need improvement included:

- Progress monitoring and feedback environment on feedback on student work, know assessment criteria, feedback to improve understanding.
- Active Learning Environment on Connection to real Life.
- Equitable Learning Environment on opportunities to learn culture, backgrounds and differences.
- High Expectation on providing exemplars of high quality work and questions that are HOTS-critical thinking.
- Digital Learning on use of digital tools to conduct research, problem solving, creating, and communicate work collaboratively.

CNMI PSS has in place a general supervision system that allows for the identification and timely correction of IDEA Part B non-compliances. In May 2011, the PSS revised its Special Education Monitoring Procedures, which now includes reference to OSEP's Memorandum 09-02 on timely correction of noncompliance, a definition of a "Finding", a description of sanctions that are in line with PSS Disciplinary Procedures, the timelines and responsible party for the issuance of the written notices from the COE, the monitoring responsibilities of the internal and external monitor, and revisions to the file review checklist. Recent Audit reports have determined that the Special Education Program's general supervision and monitoring system is in compliance with the monitoring requirements and is capable of identifying and timely correcting non-compliances.

Accountability/Monitoring: Areas of Strength and Opportunities for Improvement
The following highlights the areas of strength and opportunities for improvement for the Accountability/Monitoring infrastructure system:

Accountability/Monitoring: <u>Areas of Strength</u>:
- All students in grades 3rd through 8 and at least one high school grade are included in the student accountability plan, with students with significant disabilities participating in the alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards following the same tested grades.
- The schools include some assessment data in the School Wide Plans (SWPs) and allocate resources directly to student learning and improved outcomes.
- The PSS Office of Curriculum and Instruction (OCI) Team works collaboratively with the school leadership, teachers and students to discuss what to expect during the Instructional Review Process (IRP). Currently, the IRP takes 3-12 days at a school site, depending on the population.

Accountability/Monitoring: <u>Opportunities for Improvement</u>:
- As discussed earlier in the other infrastructure systems review, there is the need for targeted training of staff and school personnel on the analysis, interpretation and use of assessment data to ensure system wide improvements in student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions of learning. Although PSS collects a variety of information about classroom instruction and student learning, not all of the information is used in a systemic or systematic manner or evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction and student learning.
- Need to ensure that all system and school personnel maintain and consistently use a comprehensive assessment system that produces data from multiple measures, including locally developed and standardized assessments that are regularly evaluated for reliability and effectiveness in improving learning. There is limited evidence supporting a detailed plan on how assessments are analyzed or how improvement is measured with fidelity.
- Need to develop systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from multiple data sources that are used consistently by all teachers. Teachers need a structured process for collecting, analyzing, and determining instructional next steps. There are no formal protocols to review common formative and summative assessment data to determine the strengths and needs of their students and program.

- The Student Accountability Plan needs to include systemic and systematic screening, assessment and progress monitoring of students in K through 2nd grade. PSS needs to implement a systemic means to measure performance or skill level of students in K to 2nd grade in the core curriculum.
- OSEP issued a "needs assistance" determination for CNMI's FFY 2011 and FFY 2012 APRs. This determination was not based on program performance but rather on long term risk status of the PSS as a system.

Accountability/Monitoring in Relation to SIMR:
The SSIP Core Team determined that the Accountability/Monitoring infrastructure is a strength and an opportunity for support of the SIMR, especially with the focus on the early grades and literacy development. With the SSIP Core Team appointments, the COE understands the need for a system development of the SSIP. Key stakeholders are represented and involved in the development process, with additional stakeholders providing input throughout the process. As discussed under Additional Data in the Data Analysis component of this SSIP, a review of IEPs at the target schools will provide critical information on how students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum, which will support PSS's accountability system.

CNMI's Infrastructure SWOT: *CNMI identified relevant strengths and areas for improvement within and across the systems in relation to the SIMR.*

The infrastructure analysis showed many areas of strength within the system's infrastructure that directly support student improvement and many positive outcomes over the years as a result of revisions to policies, procedures, practices and technical assistance provided to schools and the Central Office. There are however, areas of the infrastructure that need improvement viewed as opportunities if PSS truly intends to improve results for all children, with and without disabilities, particularly in the early grades.

As discussed earlier, at the end of each infrastructure system review, a discussion is provided on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and/or threats (SWOT) of the infrastructure system in relation to the SIMR. By infrastructure system, the SSIP Core Team determined the following: (refer to each system for discussion)

(1) Governance = Strength
(2) Data Systems = Opportunity
(3) Fiscal System = Opportunity
(4) Quality Standards = Strength and Opportunity
(5) Professional Development = Strength and Opportunity
(6) Technical Assistance = Strength and Opportunity
(7) Accountability/Monitoring = Strength and Opportunity

As a result of the infrastructure analysis indicating many areas in need of improvement and to focus attention to the early reading improvement area identified in the Data Analysis component of this SSIP, the SSIP Core Team, using the *School Planning and Evaluation Tool for Effective School Wide Reading Programs,* conducted a review of the PSS school wide reading program The tool, developed by the Western Regional Resource Center (WRRC), rates seven areas of a

school wide reading program using a scoring rubric of 0 to 2: 0 being *Not in Place*, 1 *Partially in Place*, and 2 *Fully in Place*. The seven areas include:

(1) Goals, Priorities, Objectives
(2) Assessment and Data Utilization
(3) Instruction: Programs and Materials
(4) Instruction: Differentiated Instruction/Time/Grouping/Practices
(5) Leadership/Organization/Communication
(6) Professional Development and Instructional Support
(7) Commitment

Appendix C includes the results of the rating for each area. Overall, the self-assessment survey results indicate that only half of what is considered Effective School Wide Reading Programs is perceived to be implemented in the schools. That not all schools have clear and focused goals on reading achievement and that data is not always collected and used for the purpose of improving academic goals for students. The instructional materials and resources are used in some schools, not all, and very little evidence of differentiated instruction observed or used in the classrooms. Instructional leaders at the school level might not be as informed as they should regarding early literacy and reading, and professional development does not always include good coaching models or is relevant to early literacy and reading. These results are aligned with AdvancED *Accreditation Report*, the PSS Self-Assessment, the School Wide Plans (SWP), and the PSS *Strategic Priorities Goals.*

The SSIP Core Team then organized statements of need by key strands and components for consideration in identifying the Coherent Improvement Strategies component of this SSIP. It is understood that not all statements of need were selected for improvement strategies. The statements include:

- PSS needs policies and procedures that outline the expectations for schools regarding a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process for review, revision and communication of a purpose for student success.
- PSS needs to monitor and maintain school data and provide feedback for the improvement
- PSS needs to implement a documented, systematic continuous improvement process that will be utilized by all schools and the Central Office throughout the school year to improve student learning and the conditions that support learning.
- PSS needs to develop a policy and standard operating procedure to hold all personnel accountable for and evaluate the overall quality of the implementation of all interventions and strategies toward achieving improvement goals.
- PSS and the school level leadership must continue to improve processes that engage stakeholder participation which allows opportunities for active engagement to make informed decisions that directly impact student outcomes.
- The system's central office leadership and administrators must be consistent in monitoring instructional practices, such as consistency with *Power Walk Through*, evaluation, data collection framework, and communication protocols.
- Instructional focus on the standards and benchmarks needs consistent monitoring,

including instructional delivery.

- PSS needs to plan targeted training of staff and school personnel on the analysis, interpretation and use of assessment data to ensure system wide improvements in student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions of learning.
- PSS needs to ensure that all system and school personnel maintain and consistently use a comprehensive assessment system that produces data from multiple measures, including locally developed and standardized assessments that are regularly evaluated for reliability and effectiveness in improving.
- PSS needs to develop systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from multiple data sources that are used consistently by all teachers.
- PSS needs to ensure that there is coordinated effort to include training for teachers in data collection, evaluation, interpretation and usage and a structure to communicate findings to all stakeholder groups.

CNMI's Alignment: *CNMI identified relevant state-level initiatives, including special education and general education plans, that are aligned and could be integrated with the SSIP for measured improvement in the SIMR.*

As mentioned in the Introduction section of this SSIP, the COE recognized the systemic impact of the SSIP development and implementation and officially appointed the CNMI PSS SSIP Core Team to analyze the capacity and ability of the PSS to support system wide improvement and to build capacity in the schools to implement, scale up, and sustain the use of evidence-based practices to improve results for students with disabilities. The COE understands that to improve educational results for students with disabilities, improvement must have a systemic and systematic approach to change. All initiatives are therefore developed and implemented with all students in mind. The COE's leadership has led PSS to really look at the early grades and younger. With the Early Head Start award, the PSS has the opportunity to ensure young children from birth and their families are ready for school.

The SSIP focus on early reading development will be an opportunity to incorporate existing initiatives, such as the School Wide Plans and the *Data Dialogue*. As discussed earlier, the *Data Dialogue* is included in the school's plan to address a systematic and systemic continuous improvement and quality process as part of collecting, gathering, compiling, analyzing and preparing data to make sound instructional program decisions. The schools work within their school clusters to review student academic performances specifically on SAT10, STAR Reading and STAR Math from Kindergarten, Grades 1 through Grades 12 and teacher data collected from Power-Walk Through focus on instructional delivery and classroom organization. The data dialogue is held three times a year – at the beginning of the school year, midyear, and at the end of the school year. The data dialogue is a strategy to monitor progress and track the schools' performance during the school year.

Another PSS resource to support the SSIP early reading focus area is the Instructional Review Process (IRP) for informing schools of the teaching and learning practices in the classrooms based on the use of the ELEOT. School year 2014-2015 was considered the baseline year for the Office of Curriculum and Instruction to use a systematic and systemic review of instructional practices in the schools. The results will not be available until end of SY 2014-2015, but the

results will be used to provide technical assistance and professional development specific to the school needs.

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SSIP Phase 1 Component #3: STATE IDENTIFIED MEASUREABLE RESULT

Stakeholder Involvement & Resources Accessed: *CNMI engaged in a systematic process, including involving multiple internal and external stakeholders, in selecting the SIMR.*

As indicated in the Introduction section of this SSIP, multiple internal and external stakeholders involved in CNMI's SSIP development, including the selection of CNMI's SIMR, included Public School System (PSS) administrators, school principals, parents, teachers, and other agency and organization representatives. These individuals participated in work sessions or presentations as members of the CNMI SSIP Core Team, the Special Education State Advisory Panel (SESAP), and the target schools.

With technical assistance from Guam CEDDERS, the SSIP Core Team, SESAP, and the principals and staff of the three target schools, engaged in conversations and work sessions to develop the SIMR, which was not an easy task. The stakeholders used resource tools such as the ECTA Center SIMR Worksheet and the *Review of State Context: Considerations in Identifying Measureable Result for Students/Children with Disabilities as Focus for SSIP* tool developed by the RRCP, to guide the conversation regarding the SIMR. Ultimately, the discussions centered around how narrow or broad the SIMR should be, if the SIMR was aligned with PSS goals and initiatives for all students, if there was a need to focus on it, how would the "system" benefit from the SIMR, are resources and technical assistance available to implement the plan, and if achieved, would it truly impact improved results of all students. It was agreed that the SIMR aligns with PSS current initiatives, such as but not limited to the Early Head Start and the Comprehensive Service Plan Birth to 3rd, and the PSS *Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals 2015.* These initiatives and Strategic Priorities are discussed in the Infrastructure Analysis section of this SSIP.

SIMR Statement: *CNMI's SIMR is clearly based on Data and CNMI Infrastructure Analysis, is aligned with current agency initiatives or priorities, and will impact improved results for students with disabilities in the CNMI.*

CNMI's State-Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)

By June 30, 2019, at least 55% of 3rd grade students with IEPs in three target schools will perform at or above reading proficiency against grade level and alternate academic achievement standards as measured by the state assessment. This SIMR is a subset of and aligned to Indicator 3C of the SPP.

As described in the Data Analysis section of this SSIP, the overall trend data for Reading proficiency of 3rd grade students with IEP indicates a downward trend over the last 4 years. The proficiency gap between 3rd grade students with and without disabilities has steadily increased over the past few years and the gap continues in subsequent grades. The data indicates that students start out in 3rd grade with low reading performance and end high school with low reading performance.

PSS is cognizant that the changes will not occur overnight and to realize the academic improvement of students with IEP's, it may take two to four years to successfully and fully implement a plan in stages beginning with the selection of three target schools with the largest

population of students with IEPs and scaling up in the next two years to include additional schools. The three elementary schools identified as target schools include a total of 78 students with IEPs in grades K-3 or 47% (78/167) of the total number of students with IEPs in grades K-3 in the CNMI. The reading proficiency scores of the three target schools are considered representative of CNMI's reading performance. In addition, serving close to 50% of CNMI's total students with IEPs in K-3 will have an impact on the system review for scaling up implementation.

As of December 1, 2014, the grade breakdown in the target schools shows that there are 13 students in kindergarten, 19 in first grade, 22 in second grade and 24 in third grade. Over the next 3 years, 54 students (students currently in K to 2nd grade not including new referrals) will have been screened and provided appropriate early literacy and reading instruction based on individual literacy profiles thus, the overall reading scores of 3rd grade students in the target schools will have improved and ultimately impacting the overall reading proficiency of all students with disabilities over time.

As discussed in the Infrastructure Analysis section of this SSIP, the PSS Commissioner of Education (COE) understands that to improve educational results for students with disabilities, improvement must have a systemic and systematic approach to change. All initiatives are therefore developed and implemented with all students in mind. The COE's leadership has led PSS to really look at the early grades and younger.

The SSIP focus on early reading development will be an opportunity to incorporate existing initiatives, such as the School Wide Plans and the *Data Dialogue*. The *Data Dialogue* is included in the school's plan to address a systematic and systemic continuous improvement and quality process as part of collecting, gathering, compiling, analyzing and preparing data to make sound instructional program decisions. As revealed by the target schools, there is inconsistency in implementation of reading programs and student progress monitoring. The *Data Dialogue* framework will provide the structured approach needed to address the what, why, and how schools can improve reading performance. Implementation of a continuous improvement model, with intentional supports for the target schools, will provide the focused attention for how improvement can happen on a small scale and what we learn will influence how the system can scale up implementation with fidelity.

Baseline and Targets: *CNMI provided baseline data and targets that are measurable and rigorous (expressed as percentages) for each of the five years from FFY 2014 through FFY 2018, with the FFY 2018 target reflecting measurable improvement over the FFY 2013 baseline data.*

As discussed in the Data Analysis section of this SSIP, in-depth data analysis of the 3rd grade students with IEPs in the three target schools shows the average Total Reading is 14% at or above proficiency. The average subtest scores are 4% in Word Study Skills, with the school scores ranging from 0% to 13%; 4% in Reading Vocabulary, with the school scores ranging from 0% to 13%; and 35% for Reading Comprehension, with the school scores ranging from 20% to 63%.

Baseline Data: 2013-2014

In 2013-2014, 14% of 3rd grade students with IEP's in three target schools scored at or above proficiency in Total Reading. The baseline data is an average of the total reading scores for the three target schools: (22+20+0/3) 14%. This average percentage is the same proficiency rate for all 3rd graders with IEPs reported in the 2013-2014 Annual Performance Report for Indicator 3C.

In order to set the SIMR targets, CNMI first set the individual school targets based on the schools baseline performance and the number of students currently enrolled in K through 3rd grade. The individual school targets were averaged to set the SIMR targets factoring in a reasonable percentage of growth per school and ultimately ending with 55% performance in the target schools. The end target of 55% proficiency in the target schools is aligned with CNMI's SPP Indicator 3C target for the same year at 60% proficiency rate in reading.

CNMI's SSIP Targets

Average of 3 Schools	2013-2014 Baseline	2014-2015 Target	2015-2016 Target	2016-2017 Target	2017-2018 Target	2018-2019 Target
	14%	21%	29%	37%%	46%	55%

It is worthy to note that the baseline data and targets were established in school year 2013-2014, using the results from the SAT10 assessment. The PSS has transitioned to the ACT Aspire test and will administer the test for the first time in the Spring 2015. The results of the ACT Aspire test and the alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards will be used to measure the target. Although we do not anticipate much variation in the scores or subtests, it might be necessary to revisit the targets once the current scores are available.

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SSIP Phase 1 Component #4: IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Stakeholder Involvement & Resources Accessed: *CNMI engaged in a systematic process, including involving multiple internal and external stakeholders, in identifying improvement strategies based on the Data and Infrastructure Analysis.*

The data and infrastructure analysis describe the PSS Governance, Data Systems, Fiscal Systems, Technical Assistance Systems, Processional Development Systems, Accountability and Monitoring Systems, and PSS initiatives.   The supporting documents and data sources reviewed were student performance data over several years, *PSS Strategic Priorities Plus Goals,* the Commissioner annual report on the goals*,* accreditation reports, self-assessment reports, the Comprehensive Student Accountability Plans, the School Wide Reading Program data collection and reporting systems, school wide action plans, instructional review plans and reports, professional development systems, technical assistance systems, and accountability and monitoring processes and reports.   Using a SWOT process, the SSIP Core Team first looked at areas of strengths in the system, the areas that need improvement and what might be barriers to implementing improvement strategies to meet the SIMR.

The SSIP Core Team sorted through the areas that need improvement and selected those areas that most closely align to implementing the SIMR. The analysis identified some areas in need of improvement that overlap or were identified in several of the infrastructure systems.   SSIP Core Team looked at the bigger picture in order to make generalized improvement activity statements in the following components; Leadership, Professional Development, Collaboration, Technical Assistance Accountability, and Monitoring.

In order for schools to improve reading results of students with disabilities, literacy and reading instruction must start in the early grades and must incorporate ongoing screening and assessment of the student's literacy skills and knowledge in the essential components of reading.   It is difficult to monitor progress and to plan for differentiated instruction if the skill level is not known.   The PSS administers the first official state test in 3rd grade. The test data indicates gaps between students with and without disabilities as early as 3rd grade. It is much more difficult to close the gap than it is to prevent the gap in the first place. The implementation of universal literacy screening and ongoing progress monitoring in grades K to 3rd will promote better instruction focused on the essential components of reading. The selection and adoption of an early literacy program/curricula based on the essential components of reading is paramount to improving results for students with disabilities.

The infrastructure analysis did indicate that some data, although not systemically collected, is available from the STAR Reading and Math assessments, Reading First assessments and other sources however, the teachers do not regularly or systematically use the data for instructional purposes or for progress monitoring.   The self-assessment also indicated the need for training on how to collect appropriate data, what to collect and how to analyze the data to inform instruction.

The accreditation report addressed the need to provide professional development that is directly aligned to areas of need (data collection, analysis, and use, differentiating instruction for divers learners, evidence based literacy curricula, progress monitoring).   With many competing priorities, this is a challenge for the system and will need to be intentionally targeted.

Over 88% of students with disabilities received 80% or more of their special education in general education classrooms.   Therefore the need for general and special education teachers to work collaboratively together to plan appropriate instruction and monitor progress, using an evidence based process, is imperative to ensuring students with disabilities receive an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.

For the SIMR to work and for students to demonstrate improved results, the system must plan for and deliver, appropriate, consistent and ongoing technical to the target schools school leadership, teachers and parents.   The technical assistance must incorporate an implementation framework with a plan to build school level capacity and be able to scale up.

Coherent Improvement Strategies: *Likelihood improvement strategies will address the root causes that led to poor performance and based on the implementation framework will support systemic change.*

The CNMI's coherent improvement strategies are organized by key strands:

Leadership:
Screening and Assessment: Systemic implementation of universal screening and assessment of early literacy skills and development in grades K to 3rd grade.

Early Literacy Curricula: Systemic implementation of researched based early literacy curricula for grades K to 3rd grade based on common core state standards that explicitly teach the essential components of reading (Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Phonemic Awareness and Phonics).

Professional Development:
Data Collection, Analysis, Interpretation and Application: Provide professional development based on the needs of the target schools for collection, analysis, and applying data from multiple data sources to inform classroom instruction.

Early Literacy Curricula and Instructional Strategies: Provide professional development to the target schools on early literacy and reading curricula in order to ensure the curriculum is delivered with fidelity and allows for differentiated instruction, peer coaching, and is evidence based to ensure access to and benefit from the general curriculum for students with disabilities.

Collaboration:
Implement evidence base collaborative models such as Step Wise Process, to promote collaborative work between general education and special education teachers to plan appropriate instruction and monitor progress for students with disabilities in K to 3rd grade in the target schools.

Technical Assistance:
Provide on-going technical assistance to target schools based on an implementation framework to ensure the plan is successfully and fully implemented.

Accountability:
School Wide Plans of target schools to include section specific to K to 3rd grade with student performance goals directly aligned to screening and assessment and progress monitoring data. Data Dialogues of target schools will specifically address K to 3rd grade performance data and progress monitoring data.

Monitoring:
School leadership to Implement Instructional Review Process specific to K to 3rd grade to determine effectiveness instructional practices in early reading and literacy, data use to inform instruction, and progress monitoring.

Alignment: *Improvement strategies are sound, logical, and aligned to current initiatives and have research and evidence-base to support implementation.*

The improvement strategies, organized by key strands are sound, logical and aligned to the *PSS Strategic Priorities,* current PSS initiatives, and address the areas of need as described in the data and infrastructure analysis.

In order to ensure the improvement strategies are evidence and researched based, the SSIP Core Team conducted a literature review on journal articles, including research articles, that focused on the reading proficiency in third grade, improving reading results for students at risk for reading disabilities, how to prevent reading gaps, what makes reading programs effective, essential components of reading and early literacy and how other states are addressing the low reading proficiency of students in their state. What we generally know about low reading proficiency of students, although not exhaustive, is; students who are not proficient readers by the end of third grade are at a much higher risk of dropping out of school; Third graders reading below grade level have great difficulty catching up and the gap increases over time; Gaps in reading achievement appear before entry into kindergarten; Universal Screening at the beginning of the school year, especially in the early grades, is an efficient way to identify children who are at risk of reading difficulties; assessment data for progress monitoring can and should guide the determination if an intervention is improving the students reading skills; increasing the intensity of reading instruction can prevent reading difficulties; and effective reading programs involve intentional instruction on the developmental components of reading and include one to one instruction, small group tutorials, specific classroom instructional processes and instructional technology. We also know that professional development designed to increase a teachers knowledge in research based instructional practices and supporting consistent long term implementation of research based instructional strategies can improve the delivery of evidence-based instruction and interventions.

Below is a reference list of the literature reviewed by the SSIP Core Team. The list is not exhaustive and does not include all other information team members referenced during the work sessions.
- Governors' Guide to Early Literacy: Getting All Students Reading By Third Grade; October 2013.
- *Early Warning Why Reading by the end of Third Grade Matters;* KIDS COUNT Special Report

- *A Summer of Extra Reading and Hope for Fourth Grade; Literacy Laws Challenge Third Graders and Schools*; Motoko Rich Aug, 2014
- *Is it Possible to Legislate Reading Proficiency?;* New Your Times
- *Early Warning Confirmed; A Research Update on Third Grade Reading;* Anne E. Casey Foundation
- *Data Base Individualization in Reading: Intensifying Interventions for Students with Significant Reading Disabilities; Teaching Exceptional Children 2014*
- *WWC Intervention Report: Accelerated Reader; US DOE, Institute of Educational Sciences.*
- *Improving Reading Outcomes for Students with or at Risk of Reading Disabilities; A Synthesis of the Contributions form the Institute of Education Sciences Research Center*
- *Effective Programs for Struggling Readers; Best Evidence Encyclopedia Synthesis, July 7, 2009*
- *Identifying What Works for Struggling Readers; Best Evidence Encyclopedia, January 2010*
- *Three Techniques for Successful Literacy Coaching, February 2007*

Improvement Strategies Address the Root Cause and Based on Implementation Framework

The in-depth data analysis of reading proficiency of 3rd grade students with disabilities indicated several "root causes" of the low performance which led to the selection of the improvement strategies.   Root causes such as the lack of a s systemic reading curriculum for K to 3rd grade, lack of universal screening and assessment for K to 3rd grade, inconsistent use of the data that is available for K to 3rd grade to plan appropriate instruction and for progress monitoring, the competence level of K to 3rd teachers in early literacy and reading, the competence level of general education teacher primarily responsible for instruction of students with disabilities, IEP goals not directly aligned to state standards, professional development not directly related to K to 3rd needs specific to reading and literacy, and inconsistent literacy coaching and mentoring in K to 3rd grade.

Based on these inferences of the root cause of low reading proficiency, the improvement strategies were prioritized, selected and organized in to achievable outcomes that will build the capacity for the target schools and allow for scaling up to other schools in the next 2 to 3 years. The SSIP Core Team and the principals of the target schools, used the Hexagon Tool to evaluate the improvement strategies and to determine the likelihood that the strategy will address the root cause of the low performance, will have the desired impact of improving reading results of students with disabilities and will allow the system to build the capacity and scale up over time. Each improvement strategy was rated using a 5 point rating scale; high =5, Medium =3 and Low =1. The improvement strategies addressed in this SSIP were rated in the high Need, Fit, Resource Availability, Evidence, Readiness for Replication, and Capacity to Implement.

Implementation Plan

It is the PSS mission to improve academic results for all students. The *PSS Strategic Priority Goals* and the current initiative were revised, developed or enhanced in response to the academic performance of all students over the past few years. The accreditation report, the self-assessment report, Power Walk Through data, ELOET Observation Data, Special Education Indicator 3 data, and several other data sources all indicate the need to make systemic and systematic improvements, across the board, not just in the special education program, in order to improve

the academic result for all students. The likelihood that the improvement strategies, implemented in stages beginning with 3 target schools, will effectuate changes needed is high considering the PSS systemic goals and focus on improving achievement for all students, including students with disabilities.

PSS is cognizant that the changes will not occur overnight and to realize the academic improvement of students with IEPs, it may take two to four years to successfully and fully implement a plan in stages. As PSS works towards the development of Phase II of the SSIP, the initial stage of the implementation plan will include building the capacity of the target schools to implement evidence based practices specific to universal screening and early literacy instruction. The plan will also include activities, resources and steps needed to implement the coherent improvement strategies and a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the improvement strategies.

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SSIP Phase 1 Component #5: THEORY OF ACTION

Stakeholder Involvement & Resources Accessed: *CNMI engaged in a systematic process, including involving multiple internal and external stakeholders, in developing the Theory of Action.*

As indicated in the Introduction section of this SSIP, multiple internal and external stakeholders involved in CNMI's SSIP development, including developing CNMI's Theory of Action, included Public School System (PSS) administrators, school principals, parents, teachers, and other agency and organization representatives. These individuals participated in work sessions or presentations as members of the CNMI SSIP Core Team, the Special Education State Advisory Panel (SESAP), and the target schools.

SIMR Statement: *CNMI's Theory of Action illustration is clearly based on the Data and Infrastructure Analysis, is aligned with current agency initiatives or priorities, and will impact improved results for students with disabilities in the CNMI.*

CNMI's State-Identified Measurable Result (SIMR)

By June 30, 2019, at least 55% of 3rd grade students with IEPs in three target schools will perform at or above reading proficiency against grade level and alternate academic achievement standards as measured by the state assessment. This SIMR is a subset of and aligned to Indicator 3C of the SPP.

Rationale for Theory of Action

The CNMI Public School System's Theory of Action articulates how PSS will improve reading proficiency of students with disabilities in three target schools by the end of 3rd grade, which will ultimately improve the reading proficiency for all students with disabilities as measured by the State Assessment. The strands of action are based on the in-depth analysis of the PSS data and infrastructure's strengths and areas that need improvement, the academic performance of all students with and without disabilities, academic performance of students in the target schools, the current PSS system initiatives and PSS *Strategic Priorities Plus*. The Theory of Action graphic, in the following page, incorporates the coherent improvement strategies and how the improvement strategies will lead to the achievement of improved results for children with disabilities.

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Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands - Theory of Action

Key Strands of Action	If PSS	Then	Then	Then
Leadership *Universal Screening and Assessment in K to 3rd Grade* *Early Reading and Literacy Curricula*	…implements systemic universal screening and assessment in grades K to 3rd …implements researched based early literacy program based on common core state standards that incorporate the essential components of reading (Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Phonemic Awareness and Phonics)	… teachers in target schools will screen and assess students early literacy development …teachers in target schools will report screening and assessment results to school leadership to incorporate in the Data Dialogues and SWP's … teachers in target schools will provide literacy instruction with fidelity in K to 3rd grade	… students entering Kindergarten and the subsequent grades thereafter in the will be screened and assessed to determine the student's literacy level in the essential components of reading …K to 3rd assessment data will be reported in SWP and used to support the allocation of resources … students in the targeted schools will be provided with evidenced based literacy instruction in K to 3rd grade that …each child will have a literacy profile of their growth and progress in essential reading components	
Professional Development *Professional Development:* *Data Collection, Reporting and Use for Screening and Assessments* *Early Literacy Curricula*	…provides professional development on how to collect, report and maintain early literacy Screening and Assessment Data in the targeted schools …provides professional development in the essential components of reading and early literacy …provides Literacy Coaches in target schools	…the general education and special education teachers can accurately and systematically screen and assess the children's literacy knowledge and skills in the essential reading components … teachers will be knowledgeable in literacy instruction for early grades …teachers will increased their competence in teaching early literacy to students with disabilities … teachers can provide systematic evidence based literacy instruction on the essential components of reading	… teachers will be able to systemically use the data to report growth and progress and plan differentiated instruction based on individual needs of the student …children will be meaningfully engaged in appropriate literacy instruction in K to 3rd grade …all students in the target schools will demonstrate growth in their early literacy profiles	*By June 30, 2019, 55% of 3rd grade students with IEPs in 3 target schools, will perform at or above proficient against grade level and alternate academic achievement standards in total reading as measured by the state assessment.* *CNMI will have the infrastructure capacity to scale-up implementation with fidelity.*
Collaboration *General Education and Special Education Teachers*	…implements the use of an evidence based Step Wise Process to ensure access to literacy instruction in the early grades …allows for collaborative planning time	Gen Education and Special Education Teachers will plan together using a systematic process to identify instructional barriers that prevent students with disabilities from accessing and benefiting from literacy instruction	students will access and benefit from differentiated literacy instruction …students will be provided appropriate accommodations ….students with disabilities in K to 3rd grade will receive appropriate literacy instruction in the least restrictive environment	
Technical Assistance	…provides technical assistance that is based on the data and need in the target schools …incorporates coaching and modeling strategies in K to 3rd grade in target schools	….schools can increase their capacity to support the teachers to deliver effective literacy instruction …teachers can increase their knowledge of effective literacy instruction …the number of effective literacy coaches will increase	…K to 3rd teachers will provide literacy instruction on the essential components of reading …teachers will use effective instructional strategies based on evidence based modeling …schools will leverage resources of teachers trained in effective coaching and modeling strategies … students in the targeted schools will demonstrate improved reading proficiency by the end of 3rd grade	
Accountability	…holds school leadership accountable for clearly identified, prioritized, and measureable goals in SWP's specific to literacy and reading in K to 3rd grade …schools systematically engage all stakeholders in the development of SWPs …holds schools accountable for continuous improvement using school data	…schools will develop procedures to systematically report data on K to 3rd programs … teachers will be accountable for student learning and progress monitoring	…teachers will personalize professional growth through the Teacher Evaluation System	
Monitoring	…implements an Instructional Review Process using and Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (ELEOT) in K to 3rd grade to measure the teaching and learning process and meaningful student engagement	…teachers will have immediate feedback and information specific to the their instructional process that identifies strengths and areas that need improvement …teachers will adjust the teaching and instructional process to focus on areas that need improvement …the teaching and learning process will differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students with disabilities	…Students will be engaged in meaningful and purposeful literacy instruction based on progress data that will lead to improved results	

SSIP Component #2: INFRASTRUCTURE ANALYSIS

Appendix A: *CNMI PSS Strategic Priorities PLUS and Goals*

(1) High Student Performance: The High Student Performance priority was established to ensure that the public school system develops and implements quality curriculum, instruction and assessment to help students achieve their academic goals and to be college and career ready by the time the leave the CNMI Public School System.

(2) Highly Qualified and Effective Personnel: The quality of human capital in the Public School System is of utmost importance. The public school system employs non-certified and certified staff. Regardless of this distinction, the public school system expects the highest performance of staff in exhibiting their effectiveness on the job and their ability to perform based on qualification. The Public School System developed this priority as we pursue to be a top performing organization in the Commonwealth.

(3) Effective and Efficient Operations: The establishment of the effective and efficient operations strategic priority is to ensure the PSS staff and key leaders oversee and use the resources of the public school system to achieve the organizational goals. The resources of the public school system include personnel, knowledge and skills of its staff, fiscal and other resources such as fixed assets.

(4) Safe and Orderly Schools: Safety, orderliness, and caring in schools today cannot be assumed but must instead be explicitly addressed (Riley, P.L. 2013). The Safe and Orderly School committee continues to collaborate with all key stakeholders within the Public School System and in our community to develop and implement sound policies and procedures. Our goal is to ensure that PSS has policies and procedures that will ensure the health, safety, orderly school environment.

(5) Parental Engagement and Community Partnership: Research is very clear that parental engagement and community partnership does have an impact on high student performance and school improvement. The engagement of parents in their children's school work correlates with high grades in schools, positive attitude towards school and good attendance in school. The Parental Engagement and Community Partnership was strategically added to the priorities in our effort to continuously reached out to key stakeholders to make a difference in our children's educational goals.

(6) High Performing and High Reliability Systems: The PSS endeavors to fulfill its vision by ensuring high instructional quality while reducing variability in the quality of education for every student. In a high reliability educational system, the PSS aims at achieving the strategic priorities goals, improve standard operating procedures, design effective structures and processes for defined autonomy and constrained improvisation; and create and maintain safe reporting cultures for continuous high performance by all stakeholders within the organization.

COE Progress Report: Strategic Priorities PLUS: GOALS 2014:

The Commissioner of Education's (COE's) *Strategic Priorities PLUS Progress Report for 2014* is a detailed report of progress on over 20 goals and objectives specific to the *Strategic Priorities PLUS.* The progress report describes, in detail, the goals, objectives, fiscal and non-fiscal supports, and evaluation measures used to determine the progress of the goals. This SSIP document does not include all of the narratives of the progress report, only the goal and progress statements of each priority in order for the reader to get a sense of the PSS *Strategic Priorities PLUS* Goals.

High Student Performance
Goal #2: By the end of School Year 2013-2014, the State Board of Education will adopt the Next Generation Assessment (SMARTER Balanced) for implementation during School Year 2014-2015: This goal was revised to adopt Act ASPIRE instead of SMARTER Balance. Complete and Approved by the BOE on March 14, 2014.

Goal #3: By the end of 2014, Early Intervention Services, Head Start Program and all Elementary Schools will implement the Comprehensive Service Plan for Birth to Third Grade: Plan was Completed and Approved by the BOE on March 4, 2014

Highly Qualified and Effective Personnel
Goal #2: By the end of School Year 2013-2014, Human Resources Office (HRO) will submit a comprehensive employment services plan focused on recruitment, retention and renewal for Board of Education approval. Work in Progress.

Goal #3: By the end of School Year 2013-2014, the PSS management, the Certification and Licensure Office, and the Certification and Licensure Review Committee will submit to the Board of Education their recommendation on the 5 types of certification, eligibility requirements and supporting documents for instructors, teachers, librarians, counselors, related service providers, program managers and school administrators. Partial submission to Fiscal, Personnel, and Administration (FPA) has been made on this goal. Work in Progress.

High Performing & High Reliability Systems.
Goal #1: By the end of School Year 2013-2014, the CNMI Public School System management will receive a system-wide accreditation for five (5) years by the AdvancED, North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement Accreditation. In February 2014, the External Review team recommended PSS and all of its school to be system-wide accredited with AdvancED.

PSS Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals 2015

Described below are the *Strategic Priorities PLUS Goals 2015*, as approved by the Board of Education that most closely aligned to the SIMR.

High Student Performance:

- Approve research-based instructional strategies and data driven system to improve Quality Standard 3: Teaching and Learning
- Develop blueprint for implementation by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction with the schools to close the achievement gap through an Instructional Review Process and scale up practices at the central office and school level
- Adopt a comprehensive high quality early learning childhood system that prepares children from birth to age 5 for school in school and life
- Students read at grade level, are college and career ready, and are able to make personal choices of what they desire to be when they leave PSS. Students are prepared to contribute back to their community

Highly Qualified and Effective Personnel Goals:
- Update recommendations to the Board of Education their recommendation on the types of certification, eligibility requirements and supporting documents for instructors, teachers, librarians, counselors, related service providers, program managers and school administrators

High Performing and High Reliability Systems Goals:
- Provide technical assistance to all schools and Head Start on the PSS continuous improvement process to review, analyze and report student data and plan of action
- Develop a system-wide accountability plan to include school report cards, program report cards and a district-wide report card

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Appendix B: *CNMI PSS P-3 Goals*

Collaboration: Establish and support collaborative committee that moves Birth to 3rd Grade efforts. There is a need to create formal linkages with primary early learning programs and schools with explicit roles and responsibilities for making decisions and guiding directions about Birth-3rd efforts. Engagement of early learning with schools, community and family is critical in shared understanding of the significance of early beginnings for all children. Mechanisms, structures and resources exist that reflect and support collaborative relationship, mutual accountabilities and shared vision.

Administrator Effectiveness: Create a culture and organizational structures that ensure the quality of Birth-3rd grade learning. There is a need to foster teamwork among teachers, leaders and parents within the birth to 3rd work. Birth to 3rd work requires effective instructional leaders. Teamwork is horizontal and vertical including Head Start, SPED, schools, leaders, community-based early learning programs (DCCA), PK-3rd teachers.

Teacher Effectiveness: Commit to provide high quality instruction and effective learning experiences for children Birth to 3rd. PSS is committed to meet the needs of the WHOLE CHILD, wherein positive social and emotional climates and high quality instruction needs to happen. Teachers' professional development is focused on instruction with instructional practices that support the whole child and delivery of meaningful learning. Teachers need to work collaboratively as teams both vertically and horizontally to improve instruction and effectiveness in the classroom.

Instructional Tool: Align to create instructional coherence from birth-PK-3rd grade, in standards, curricula and assessments on both academic and social-emotional skills. Aligned standards (meaningful and rigorous) informs/articulates what students are expected to learn-know and do. Intentional, relevant and balanced and developmental age appropriate curricula are used to support the standards. A comprehensive assessment system includes diagnostic, formative and summative used to understand students' progress. The alignment reflects the standards (WHAT students will know and do), the curricula (HOW students will be taught/facilitate learning), and assessment (HOW do we know students are learning and meeting the objectives).

Learning Environment: Promote collaborative relationships, actively engage all children in a variety of learning experiences and settings and support the health and wellness of children and adults. The physical space and emotional environment (classrooms, offices, playground, school) matter. School connectedness with caring adults support safe learning environment and builds positive relationships and interactions among children and adults. Culturally inclusive and responsive classrooms reflect the learning environments – welcoming every child, making each person belong, a true sense of community within families, communities and schools.

Data-driven System: Use multiple sources of data to improve instruction, programs, classrooms, professional development and academic achievement for all children. Meaningful data such as student performance, attendance, observations, screening results, family engagement are used to

identify areas for improvement and allocate resources to support K3 efforts. Data from multiple child-based assessments will provide clear focus on instructional improvement.

Engage Families: Support active and systemic engaged activities with P3 teachers and leaders in helping children develop, learn and achieve. Engaging families in every child's life are about building the child together with schools. Parents, families are the first and foremost parents. Full partner begins early and consistently throughout every child's education. Communication and shared decision-making for children is critical.

*Transitions for Continuity***:** Support access to continued services of quality learning from birth to 3rd grade. Children's access to quality learning continues from P3 to 12th grade and beyond. Opportunities need to be extended, expanded especially those children in greater need, those most at risk. Practices need to be in place that ensures a consistent quality learning experiences for every child from P3 on to 12th grade and beyond.

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Appendix C: *School Wide Reading Program*

As a result of the infrastructure analysis indicating many areas of need specific to the PSS reading program, the SSIP Core Team, using the *School Planning and Evaluation Tool for Effective School Wide Reading Programs,* conducted an review of the PSS school wide reading program   The tool, developed by Regional Resource Center Program, rates seven areas of a school wide reading program using a scoring rubric of 0 to 2, 0 being *Not in Place*, 1 *Partially in Place* and 2 *Fully in Place*. Below, are brief descriptions of the implementation areas and the results of the survey:

(1) Goals, Priorities, Objectives: *School goals for reading achievement are clearly defined, anchored to research, prioritized in terms of importance to student learning, commonly understood by users, and consistently employed as instructional guides by all teachers of reading.*

Results:
Of the 6 indictors in this area, only 4 areas were rated as "*Partially in Place*" with 4 of 12 possible points or only 33% of this indicator is implemented.   No indicator was scored as Fully in Place.

(2) Assessment and Data Utilization: *Instruments and procedures for assessing reading achievement are clearly specified, measure essential skills, provide reliable and valid information about student performance, and inform instruction in important, meaningful, timely and maintainable ways. Data are used to create and revise instructional plans at the system, grade level and group levels. Grade level teams meet regularly and use data to create and revise instructional plans at the individual level.*

Results:
Of the 7 indicators, only 1 area was rated as "*Fully in Place",* 6 were rated as *Partially in Place* with a total of 8 of 16 possible points or 50% of this indictor is implemented. Additional comments in this indicator were: *Instructional Plans not always documented; data is discussed, but not regularly; not always use data for planning; look at data to make assumptions and reported; data informed decision is not always there; Reviewed annually; SPED part of action planning, but not ELL teachers; Not reported to stakeholders; Not all staff understand purposes of assessment; Not used consistently across the system; not used to inform instruction*

(3) **Instruction: Programs and Materials**: *Instructional programs and materials have documented efficacy, are drawn from research-based findings and practices, align with school standards and benchmarks and support the full range of learners.*

Results:
Of the 7 indicators, only 1 area was rated as "*Fully in Place",* 6 were rated as *Partially in Place* with a total of 10 of 18 possible points or 56% of this indictor is implemented. Additional comments in this indicator were: *Inconsistent across schools; not across the board; Variety of*

Reading Programs used: DI, 21st Century; Data is reviewed; grade level teams discuss but not on regular basis.

(4) **Instruction: Differentiated Instruction/Time/Grouping/Practices:** *The school recognizes that differentiated instruction optimizes learning for all students. Systems are in place to tailor instruction to individual skill levels and needs. A sufficient amount of time is allocated for instruction based upon students' needs, and the time allocated is used effectively.*

Results:
All 4 indicators were rated as "Partially in Place" with a total of 5 of 10 possible points or 50% of this indictor is implemented. Additional comments in this indicator were: *Time may be allotted but not daily and resources and training are not always available. Provided by Title I, special education teachers, etc.; Time may be provided, but not daily. Resources training are not always available;*

(5) **Leadership/Organization/Communication:** *Strong instructional leadership at the State and school level maintains a focus on high-quality instruction, organizes and allocates resources to support reading, and establishes mechanisms to communicate reading progress and practices.*

Results:
All 4 indicators were rated as "*Partially in Place*" with a total of 5.5 points of a possible 10 points or 55% of this indictor is implemented. Additional Comments in this indictor were: *There are policies & guidelines. Communication trickles down to the teaching personnel. Concept of shared leadership; Some supports may not always be there; Not all administrators are knowledgeable; Observed, feedback not provided. Have great principals who are instructional leaders, but not all. Implementing Character Ed.*

(6) **Professional Development and Instructional Support:** *Initial and ongoing professional development is available to support reading instruction. A reading coach or coach designee is available to assist staff through model teaching and in-class support.*

Results:
Of the 5 indicators, 4 were rated as "*Partially in Place*" and 1 indicator as "*Not in Place*" with a total of 4 points of a possible 10 points or 40% of this indictor is implemented. Additional comments in this indicator were: *Provide training in SIOP (for ELL), Use of SAT 10 data, Separate state-wide PD from school-wide PD, PREL PD on literacy strategies, Certain schools pilot certain strategies.*

(7) **Commitment:** *All school personnel are committed to summative and formative goals, and the school promotes a culture of shared responsibility that makes it possible for all students to reach these goals.*

Results:
Of the 4 indicators, 2 were rated as "Parti*ally in Place*" and 2 were rated as "*Fully in Place"* with a total of 6 of 8 possible points or 75% of this indictor is implemented.

Overall, the self-assessment survey results indicate that only half of what is considered Effective School Wide Reading Programs is perceived to be implemented in the schools. That not all schools have clear and focused goals on reading achievement and that data is not always collected and used for the purpose of improving academic goals for students. The instructional materials and resources are used in some schools, not all, and very little evidence of differentiated instructions observed or used in the classrooms. Instructional leaders at the school level might not be as informed as they should regarding early literacy and reading, and professional development does not always include good coaching models or is relevant to early literacy and reading.

The survey results of the *School Planning and Evaluation Tool for Effective School Wide Reading Programs* are aligned with ADvancED Accreditation report, the Self-Assessment, the School Wide Plans and the PSS *Strategic Priorities Goals.*

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