



IL-EMPOWER

Annual Evaluation Report

April 2022



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Prepared for
Illinois State Board of Education
by





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Executive Summary: IL-EMPOWER Year 3 Evaluation Report

IL-EMPOWER is the Illinois state system of support for school improvement. It supports schools in their efforts to build a strong and stable system that results in positive teaching and learning outcomes. School eligibility for IL-EMPOWER is based on the summative designation rating that is assigned to each school and is determined by multiple measures of the school's performance and growth. Schools with the designation rating of comprehensive (i.e., lowest performing of 5%) and targeted (i.e., underperforming in student subgroups) are eligible for the supports bulleted below.

- ◆ Title I 1003 funding in addition to funding based on the state's equity formula, which is weighted on student enrollment and level of district funding adequacy.
- ◆ School improvement planning, which requires a review of academic and school success quality data, and a system needs assessment. Schools outside of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) use the Illinois Quality Framework Supporting Rubric (IQFSR) and schools in CPS use the School Excellence Framework (SEF). Assessment findings are used to develop, implement, and monitor a 3-year School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- ◆ Approved Learning Partners (LPs) that provide a variety of services such as professional development, coaching, data analyses, and school improvement planning. Schools can use Title I 1003 funds to contract one or more of the 56 state-vetted LPs. Working with an Approved LP is a requirement for comprehensive schools but optional for targeted schools.
- ◆ Primary Partners (PP) that provide professional learning supports in areas pertaining to school culture, data driven instruction and decision making, evidence-based practices, leadership, and standards-based learning and assessment. Comprehensive schools outside of Chicago can participate at zero cost. PP supports are not available to targeted schools.
- ◆ Six IL-EMPOWER Coordinators provide guidance on the school improvement process, clarify the participatory components of IL-EMPOWER, and facilitate quarterly meetings with schools and their Approved LPs. Comprehensive schools outside of CPS are assigned to an IL-EMPOWER Coordinator. Targeted schools may receive assistance from the IL-EMPOWER Coordinator by calling the Help Hotline.

During the 2020-21 school year, 886 schools (226 comprehensive and 660 targeted) participated in IL-EMPOWER. Most schools in both groups (i.e., 80%) became eligible for IL-EMPOWER in the fall of 2018 and were in the second year of implementing the three-year SIP.

The year three evaluation report was completed by Measurement Incorporated (MI) and Censeo Group. The report summarizes data that examined (1) school improvement efforts, (2)

supports provided under IL-EMPOWER, and (3) improvements in student and school outcomes. Additionally, the evaluation produced several research briefs to provide ongoing information to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) regarding the status of IL-EMPOWER supports and the schools' continuous improvement efforts. These briefs can be found in [Appendix A](#).

When reviewing the report findings, it is necessary to consider the context of the 2020-21 school year. The COVID-19 pandemic created a host of forces that left schools in a state of uncertainty and disruption throughout the entire school year. Due to ongoing surges in positive cases and new variants of the virus, the return to full-time in-person instruction was delayed for most schools until late winter or early spring. Additionally, quarantining procedures and other mitigation efforts caused staff shortages, gaps in staff and student attendance, scheduling challenges, to name a few, but all of which made it difficult for teachers and students to experience and benefit from consistent, cumulative teaching and learning. The impact of these challenges is addressed in the report along with the key findings related to school improvement and outcomes.

School Improvement Efforts

The report provides an overview of IL-EMPOWER continuous improvement practices and participating schools. Following is a summary of evaluation findings on School Leadership Teams and the practices they used to develop, implement, and monitor their SIP. Also included are data on schools' implementation of evidence-based programs and interventions. The section ends with a description of the effects the COVID-19 pandemic had on school improvement efforts. The data are disaggregated by region (i.e., CPS and ROS) and school group (i.e., comprehensive and targeted), wherever differences between the groups were statistically significant.

Overall, there was mixed evidence of schools' capacity to effectively implement continuous improvement practices. On the one hand, many school administrators from comprehensive and targeted schools reported that their School Leader Team (SLT) used good practices during meetings to discuss and conduct school improvement activities. For instance, meetings were focused on school improvement, team members had a shared understanding of goals, and the team was able to work efficiently during meetings in over half of the schools. Less agreement was found, though, in teams holding themselves accountable by developing action steps that promote team decisions and goals.

On the other hand, SLTs' implementation of continuous improvement practices varied in both comprehensive and targeted schools. Many SLTs struggled with practices related to the use of data, making this most problematic. These practices included examining patterns of performance across subgroups (e.g., racial/ethnic, SES, language proficiency, disability status), using data to identify gaps, and identifying or verifying root causes for lower student performance. For these three practices, between 34% and 45% of administrators from Rest of State (ROS) schools reported that implementation was in the *planning* or *emerging* stages, meaning that the practices were not being implemented or had large gaps in usage. School

administrators from CPS schools had more favorable reports of the SLTs' capacity and implementation of the continuous improvement practice, however, many schools still did not demonstrate routine implementation. The lower ratings are problematic because quality school improvement planning is contingent upon appropriate data analyses.

Lastly, most schools, regardless of region and designation status, were not implementing evidence-based programs and interventions at levels that will likely translate to improved student outcomes. Undoubtedly, the extenuating circumstances presented by COVID-19 made it difficult for schools to gain momentum in their efforts towards improvement. Indeed, 56% of administrators from comprehensive schools and 65% in targeted schools reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had a large impact on school improvement efforts.

Support for School Improvement

The evaluation examined supports from IL-EMPOWER Coordinators, Approved Learning Partners, Primary Partners, and districts. This section of the report summarizes data on the types of supports, support frequency rates, and how school administrators' view the quality and effectiveness of support. Key findings on each group are bulleted below.

IL-EMPOWER Coordinators

- ◆ Six IL-EMPOWER Coordinators were each assigned 22 comprehensive ROS schools. They served as thought-partners to schools and provided guidance on data reviews, IL-EMPOWER requirements, and school improvement planning.
- ◆ Most administrators (59%-72%) rated support from the IL-EMPOWER Coordinators as *very helpful*. Administrators also provided high ratings for the level of professionalism, attitude, and interactions IL-EMPOWER Coordinators had with the school and staff.

Approved Learning Partners

- ◆ Half of the Approved LPs had contracts with ROS comprehensive schools. Nearly half of the estimated total budgets for Approved LPs (\$2.6 million) went to two organizations, the IARSS and the Urban Learning and Leadership Center (ULLC). They also ranked highest in the number of schools that they supported.
- ◆ Several Approved LPs were heavily concentrated in several regions of the state. For example, the IARSS was prevalent in Areas 2, 3, and 4 (10-14 schools). ULLC had nine schools in Area 2, all of which were from the same district. Finally, CEC and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt had eight schools in Area 4; all Houghton Mifflin schools were from the same district.
- ◆ School administrators rated their level of satisfaction with the Approved LPs' performance on several research-based indicators of effective support systems. The ratings from comprehensive schools were positive across all quality indicators, with most administrators reporting that they were *very satisfied* with their school's Approved

LP. Targeted schools were more evenly split between *satisfied* and *very satisfied* when compared to comprehensive schools.

- ◆ School administrators from comprehensive schools reported a higher level of satisfaction than school administrators from targeted schools on the extent to which Approved LP helped to address improvement goals. The difference between the school groups was statistically significant.
- ◆ Nevertheless, the majority of school administrators from comprehensive and targeted schools reported that LPs fulfilled *all* terms of their contract.

Primary Partners

- ◆ Fifty-four percent of comprehensive schools participated in support from at least one PP. The Illinois Principals Association had the most schools reaching a total of 21, followed by Lurie Children’s Hospital with 19 schools, and IARSS with 18 schools.
- ◆ The evaluation was unable to accurately assess the quality of services provided by PPs because some schools also contracted with the organization as an Approved LP, e.g., IARSS served as an Approved LP and PP. This resulted in confusion over the different types of supports provided by each.

Districts

- ◆ While districts did not have an explicit role in IL-EMPOWER aside from completing the Title I grant application, they played a role in school improvement planning in ways typical of district support.
- ◆ Most important to schools and school districts were sufficient resources and school level authority to make decisions about staffing, scheduling, and resources to implement the school improvement plan. Between 85% and 90% of school administrators from comprehensive and targeted schools and over 90% of superintendents agreed that these supports were provided by the district.
- ◆ Schools and districts were also in agreement with statements regarding district support for the school improvement plan, including identifying gaps in student outcomes, developing the plan, and monitoring progress toward goals (i.e., between 71-75% agreement for schools and between 93-94% for districts).

Outcomes

The final section of the report presents findings on summative designation ratings and student success indicators for the 2020-21 school year. Data from the 2018-19 school year are provided as a point of comparison. The evaluation also examined the relationships between school improvement implementation, Approved LP supports, and student outcomes. Lastly, school administrators offered their thoughts on the success their schools experienced despite the challenges presented by the pandemic.

Starting with the positive findings, the evaluation found that half or more of ROS schools improved their summative designation rating back in 2019, most notable are the schools that moved up to *commendable* or *exemplary* in both groups. For instance, 30% of comprehensive and 64% of targeted schools were rated *commendable* or *exemplary* one year after implementing school improvement under IL-EMPOWER. Interviews with school administrators from a sample of successful schools revealed several important actions that were instrumental to their schools' success. First, they conducted a robust needs assessment to identify strategies and systems that would support system-level school improvement and then engaged the entire school community in systems-level change. They also focused on building capacity for improvement with professional development, connecting efforts with other initiatives, and making systems changes that supported sustained efforts.

The student success indicator data also had areas of progress. Specifically, high schools successfully increased their graduation rates and decreased chronic absenteeism. Data from other areas, however, did not improve from 2019. Indeed, trending across most schools was the decrease in proficiency coupled with an increase in chronic absenteeism. This relationship was more prominent in several student subgroups including Asian and Black/African American students (see [Appendix D](#)). Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic can be attributed to increased student absences, which also impacted student learning.

The larger decreases in ELA and math proficiency that were seen in the targeted and CPS schools are particularly concerning. These groups did not benefit from the same level of supports and resources as comprehensive schools under IL-EMPOWER. For example, they did not have a designated IL-EMPOWER Coordinator and many targeted schools did not contract with an Approved LP. In addition, SLTs from most targeted schools were not routinely implementing continuous improvement practices and evidence-based practices. Finally, CPS schools did not reopen schools for in-person learning until March 1st, 2021. All these factors could have contributed to lower performance.

Another important finding from the outcomes analyses is the significant relationship between school improvement and student outcomes. The evaluation identified several key components that were directly and indirectly related to outcomes which included district support of school improvement, use of effective SLT meeting practices, limited obstacles to using data, and routine implementation of continuous improvement practices.

In comparison, the relationship between Approved LP supports and outcomes was not as transparent. When comparing schools that had an Approved LP with schools that did not, a small but significant effect was found. Moreover, schools that contracted with two or more Approved LPs had the highest percentage of students proficient in ELA. Nevertheless, other variables pertaining to the Approved LPs, such as perceived quality of supports, were not related to outcomes. Further investigation is needed to better understand the ways in which Approved LP supports are impacting school and student outcomes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings tell a story of tenacity and strain as schools grappled to make improvements during what is arguably the most challenging school year in recent history. That some schools were able to routinely implement effective practices and continue the work of school improvement is highly commendable; however, this was not the typical story. Furthermore, the level of support provided to schools was not extensive enough to increase student achievement. After reviewing the data findings, we offer the following actionable recommendations on the improvement of the system design, implementation, and reporting.

Increase clarity and focus of supports on the continuous improvement process. This will ensure that all schools receive support in critical areas, such as data use. Recent changes to IL-EMPOWER, which began in the 2021-22 school year, show change in this direction. For example, the state published several resources on the IL-EMPOWER website that clarify the school improvement process, the school improvement plan, and a “year in the life of IL-EMPOWER.”¹ To add, IL-EMPOWER coordinators are implementing structured protocols during their monthly meetings with schools that focus on specific topics related to the continuous improvement process. In addition to these changes, the state could provide stronger program requirements to ensure that Approved LPs are focused on building school staff’s capacity to implement the continuous improvement process.

Leverage the support of districts. Research shows that districts provide vital leadership, resources, and guidance to their schools outside of the statewide system of support. Findings from the current evaluation demonstrate the valuable role districts played in supporting school improvement. The state should formalize the role of districts in IL-EMPOWER to ensure that they are involved in decision-making at the school level, particularly as it relates to outside supports and how those supports are used.

Increase the level of supports provided to targeted schools. Data presented on targeted schools showed deficiencies in their use of continuous improvement practices, the implementation of evidence-based programs and interventions, and their performance on student success indicators. For these reasons, the state should consider allowing targeted schools the same level of supports as comprehensive schools.

Provide focused training on data analysis and decision-making. Schools reported lower levels of implementation practices involving data on continuous improvement efforts. We recommend that the state provide professional learning and support to all schools that participate in IL-EMPOWER. This could be offered in the form of statewide trainings.

¹ See <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ILEmpower2-CS.aspx>

Improve data reporting. One of the challenges faced during the evaluation was an inconsistency in data reporting. This was primarily evident in two areas: Primary LP supports and CPS schools. We recommend that the state include CPS in the SIR data system so that they can be included in all analyses. We also recommend that the state clarify the supports provided by Primary LPs so schools are accurately reporting the quality of supports. In addition to these two areas, we recommend that the state increase the monitoring of report submissions to ensure that all relevant data is available for the evaluation.



I. Introduction

IL-EMPOWER is the Illinois state system of support for school improvement. It provides supports and resources to help build educators capacity to strengthen their schoolwide systems and produce positive teaching and learning outcomes. School eligibility for IL-EMPOWER is based on its summative designation rating, which is determined by multiple measures of school performance and growth.¹ Schools with the summative designation rating of comprehensive² and targeted (i.e., underperforming in student subgroups) are eligible for the supports bulleted below.

- ◆ Title I 1003 funding in addition to funding based on the state's equity formula, which is weighted on student enrollment and level of district funding adequacy.
- ◆ School improvement planning, which requires a review of academic and school success quality data, and a system needs assessment. Schools outside of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) use the Illinois Quality Framework Supporting Rubric (IQFSR), and schools in CPS use the School Excellence Framework (SEF). Findings made from the assessment are used to develop, implement, and monitor a 3-year School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- ◆ Approved Learning Partners (LPs) that provide a variety of services such as professional development, coaching, data analyses, and school improvement planning. Schools can use Title I 1003 funds to contract one or more of the 56 state-vetted LPs. Working with an Approved LP is a requirement for comprehensive schools but optional for targeted schools.
- ◆ Primary Partners (PP) that provide professional learning supports in areas pertaining to culture, data driven instruction and decision making, evidence-based practices, leadership, and standards-based learning and assessment. Comprehensive schools outside of Chicago can participate at zero cost. PP supports are not available to targeted schools.
- ◆ Six IL-EMPOWER Coordinators provide guidance on the school improvement process, clarify the participatory components of IL-EMPOWER, and facilitate quarterly meetings with schools and their Approved LPs. Comprehensive schools outside of CPS are assigned to an IL-EMPOWER Coordinator. Targeted schools may receive assistance from the IL-EMPOWER Coordinator by calling the Help Hotline.

¹ Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the national education law that is committed to equal opportunity for all students. It requires states to provide a summative designation based on multiple measures of school performance and growth. Illinois has four summative designations: exemplary, commendable, targeted, and comprehensive.

² This includes lowest performing 5% of eligible Title I schools statewide, and high schools that have a graduation rate of 67% or less.

In September 2018, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) contracted Measurement Incorporated (MI) and Censeo Group to conduct a three-year evaluation of IL-EMPOWER. The overall purpose of the evaluation was to assess (1) the effectiveness of supports provided under IL-EMPOWER, (2) schools' implementation of the continuous improvement process, and (3) improvements in student and school outcomes.

During the third year of the contract, the evaluation produced several research briefs to provide ongoing information to ISBE regarding the status of IL-EMPOWER supports and the schools' continuous improvement efforts. Specifically, the *January Brief* summarized school feedback on supports provided by IL-EMPOWER coordinators and Approved LPs. The *May Brief* provided findings on schools' implementation of school improvement plans and their progress toward meeting annual targets during the first two quarters of the 2020-21 academic year. Lastly, a third brief included a case study that examined leadership and best practices related to the Illinois Quality Framework standards in a sample of schools that had significant improvement in student outcomes. These reports can be found in [Appendix A](#).

The current report provides a summary of findings for the entire 2020-21 school year. It is divided into the following three sections.

School improvement efforts. This section begins with an overview of IL-EMPOWER continuous improvement practices and schools participating in the effort. Following is a summary of evaluation findings on School Leadership Teams and the practices they used to develop, implement, and monitor their SIP. Also included are data on schools' implementation of evidence-based programs and interventions. The section ends with a description of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on school improvement efforts.

Support for School Improvement. This section includes a summary of findings on the types of supports provided to schools by IL-EMPOWER Coordinators, Approved Learning Partners, Primary Partners, and districts, and the perceived quality and effectiveness of the supports by school administrators.

Outcomes. This section summarizes findings on changes in schools' summative designation ratings as well as student success indicators. It also examines the impact of schools' improvement practices and supports on student outcomes. The section ends with a summary of reflections by school administrators on the positive outcomes of the school year.

Findings for the report were obtained from various sources, which are listed and described in [Table 1](#). References to data sources are provided throughout the report.

TABLE 1. YEAR 3 EVALUATION DATA SOURCES

Data Source	Description	Sample (n)
School Improvement Report (SIR)	ISBE IL-EMPOWER reporting system for comprehensive schools. Reports were submitted on a quarterly basis. The report contained information about school improvement goals and progress made toward meeting annual targets. Schools also provide information about the Approved Learning Partners that supported their school.	108/128 (84%) Rest of State (ROS) schools matched across Q1, Q2, and Q4. ³
Learning Partner Quarterly Progress Monitoring Report	ISBE IL-EMPOWER reporting system for Approved Learning Partners. Reports were submitted for the 1-2 quarters combined, 3rd quarter, and 4 th quarter. The report contained information on the funds budgeted and spent, types of supports provided, and the number of hours of service provided at schools.	Qtrs. 1-2: 110 schools from 19 LPs Qtr. 3: 106 schools from 19 LPs Qtr. 4: 73 schools from 13 LPs ⁴
Annual Program School Survey	Online survey completed in spring 2021 by school administrators from comprehensive and targeted schools. The survey measured supports that were provided by the district, Primary Partners, Approved Learning Partners, and IL-EMPOWER Coordinators. It also assessed schools' implementation of continuous improvement practices and evidence-based practices and interventions. School administrators provided feedback about successes and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through open-ended items.	445/886 (50%) surveys submitted Comprehensive schools: 151/226 (67%); 68 CPS schools; 83 ROS schools Targeted schools: 294/660 (44%); 89 CPS schools; 205 ROS schools
Annual Program District Survey	Online survey completed in spring 2021 by Superintendents of districts with comprehensive and/or targeted schools. The survey measured supports that were provided by the district to the schools.	117/288 (41%) submitted
Illinois School Report Card Public data	ISBE database with school demographic and summative data on the 2020-21 school year.	226 Comprehensive and 660 targeted schools

³ 131 schools submitted Qtr 3 report; however, data from the quarter was not needed for the current report.

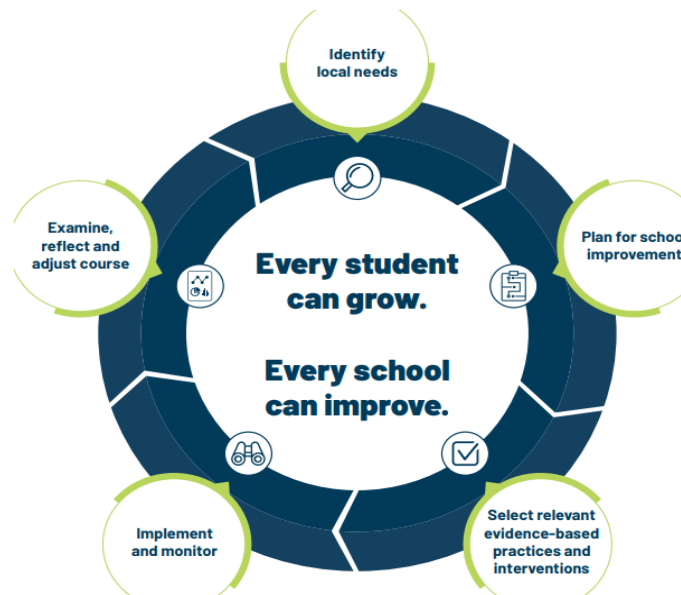
⁴ Schools may not have had yearlong contracts with Approved LPs, which may explain why the n's vary across reporting periods.



II. School Improvement Efforts

IL-EMPOWER promotes the effective use of continuous improvement practices to build strong and stable schoolwide systems where all students can thrive and reach their potential. The process for building a strong schoolwide system is depicted in [Figure 1](#).

FIGURE 1. IL-EMPOWER CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT⁵



The process begins with a **local needs** assessment, as shown at the top of the figure. School Leadership Teams (SLTs) from schools that are in the Rest of State (ROS) region outside of Chicago use the Illinois Quality Framework Supporting Rubric (IQFSR) to identify strengths and gaps in adult practices. SLTs from schools located in the CPS region use the School Excellence Framework (SEF).⁶ Both school groups identify gaps in student outcomes through their review of local student academic and school success quality data.

Next, the SLT develops a three-year **plan for school improvement** that includes SMART goals based on priority areas identified in the needs assessment. They **select relevant evidence-based practices and interventions** to improve student and adult practice outcomes. Using IL-EMPOWER funds, schools arrange for resources and supports such as Approved Learning Partners (LPs), to support the **implementation and monitoring** of the school's progress towards meeting annual goals. The process is iterative and allows the SLT to **examine, reflect, and adjust their course of action** to better support continuous growth and development.

This section of the report begins with an overview of the schools that participated in IL-EMPOWER. It then presents findings on schools' implementation of the IL-EMPOWER continuous improvement process. The data is disaggregated by region (i.e., CPS and ROS) and

⁵ Figure was taken from IL-EMPOWER website published by ISBE.

⁶ While the content of each framework varies, both align with effective indicators of a healthy schoolwide system.

school group (i.e., comprehensive and targeted), wherever differences between the groups were statistically significant.

IL-EMPOWER schools

Table 2 provides an overview of the types of schools that participated in IL-EMPOWER and pertinent student demographics. Statewide data is shown as a point of comparison.

TABLE 2. SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS
Comprehensive schools, targeted schools, and all public schools across the state

	Comprehensive schools (n=226)	Targeted schools (n=660)	All Illinois public schools
Year Implementing SIP: n (%)			
Year 2 (RC18)	176 (78%)	536 (81%)	n/a
Year 1 (RC19)	50 (22%)	124 (19%)	n/a
Location n (%)			
Chicago Public Schools	98 (44%)	190 (29%)	630 (13%)
Rest of State	128 (56%)	470 (71%)	4,096 (87%)
District size %			
Small	14%	4%	12%
Medium	10%	21%	33%
Large	76%	75%	55%
School type %			
Elementary	53%	64%	63%
Middle	17%	3%	16%
High	18%	29%	17%
Charter	11%	4%	4%
Student enrollment (mean, range)	371 (25-1,807)	519 (44-4,522)	497 (15-4,522)
% of students by race/ethnicity			
White	30%	38%	47%
Black/African American	62%	28%	17%
Hispanic	17%	32%	27%
Asian	2%	3%	5%
Native Hawaiian	<1%	<1%	<1%
Indigenous people	<1%	<1%	<1%
Two or more races	4%	4%	4%
% of students with an IEP	17%	15%	15%
% of English Language Learners	9%	18%	12%
% of students from low-income families	83%	68%	48%

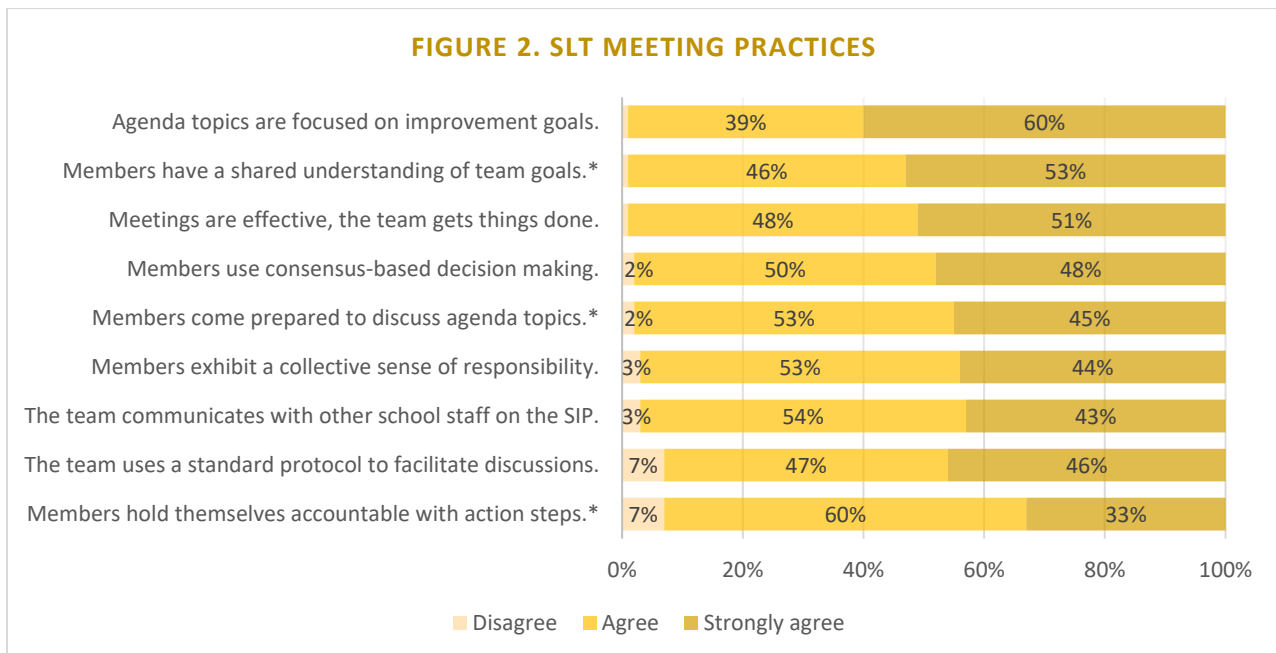
Data source: 2020 Illinois Report Card Public Data

As seen in the table above, 226 schools were eligible for comprehensive supports and 660 schools were eligible for targeted supports. Most schools in both groups became eligible in the fall of 2018. Several other noteworthy distinctions can be made in reference to Table 2. First, a higher percentage of schools from CPS participated in IL-EMPOWER (44% in comprehensive and 29% in targeted groups) relative to the percentage represented at the state level (13%).

Secondly, IL-EMPOWER schools were more racially/ethnically diverse and served more students from low-income families when compared with all other schools in the state. Finally, targeted schools served a higher percentage of English Language Learners (18%) compared to comprehensive and all schools in the state (9% and 12%, respectively).

A. Continuous improvement process

The continuous improvement process was carried out by SLTs and, though the composition of the teams varied school to school, they typically included administrators, teachers, school and district support staff, and community members (e.g., parents). More important to the evaluation was the extent to which team members used effective meeting practices to discuss and conduct school improvement activities. Figure 2 lists these practices and the level of agreement by school administrators from the annual program school survey.⁷



Overall, the figure shows a high level of agreement among school administrators. For instance, over half of school administrators *strongly agreed* that agenda topics were focused on improvement goals, members had a shared understanding of the goals, and meetings were effective. There were no significant differences between school administrators from comprehensive and targeted schools. There were several differences between CPS and ROS schools. The practices listed in the figure with an asterisk indicate where school administrators from CPS schools had a stronger agreement than school administrators from ROS schools.

⁷ School administrators used a 4-point Likert scale to rate each practice, but the figure combined strongly disagree and disagree into the category of “disagree” due to the small percentages.

The evaluation also assessed SLTs' implementation of the continuous improvement practices promoted under IL-EMPOWER. For this assessment, school administrators rated the team's level of use on a four-point scale (see **Box 1** for a description of these levels). A summary of the ratings can be found in **Figure 3** and **Figure 4**, which are disaggregated by schools in CPS and ROS (see **Appendix B** for data disaggregated by school status).⁸

Box 1. Implementation Levels

None/Planning: SLT hasn't started but may be planning to implement

Emerging: SLT is beginning its use of this practice. There are major gaps and improvements are needed

Partial: SLT has this practice in place but there are some gaps

Routine: SLT is fully implementing this practice with no major gaps

Figure 3⁹ shows that CPS administrators were likely to provide *partial* or *routine* implementation ratings across all practices. For example, between 41% and 55% of the practices were *routinely* implemented by SLT with no major gaps. Additionally, 33% to 46% of the practices were *partially* implemented by SLTs, meaning that there was some implementation, though gaps existed, and improvements were needed. Only 21% or less of the practices were not being implemented or were in the beginning stages at the time of the survey.

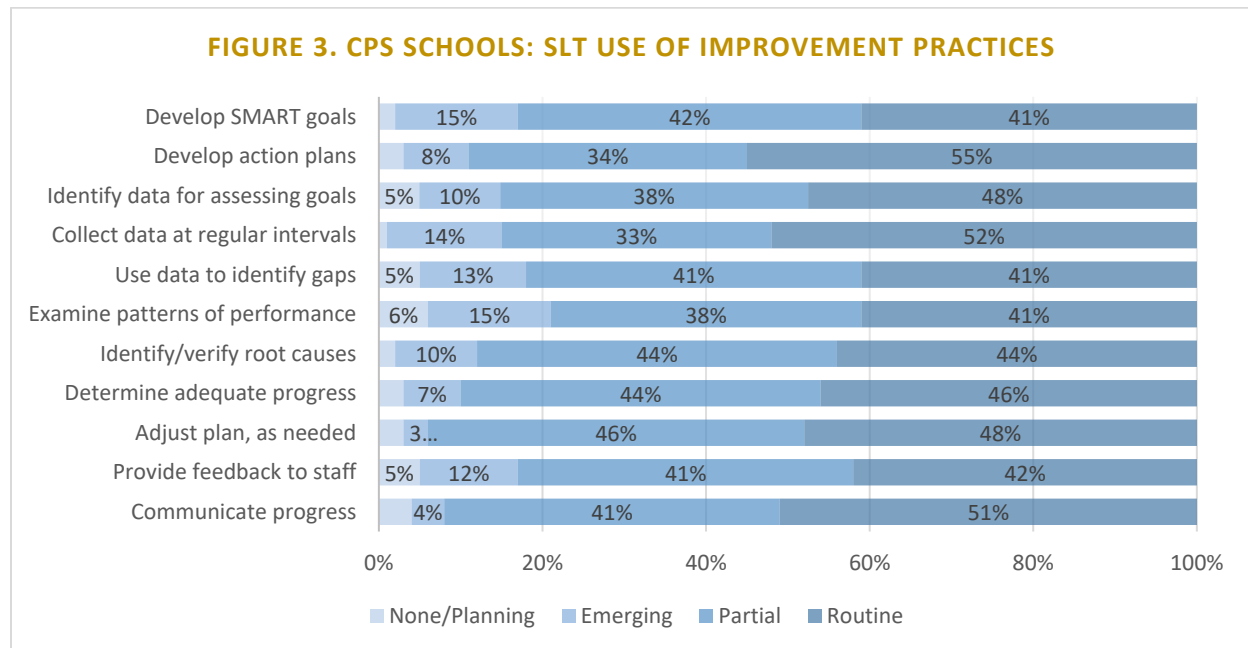
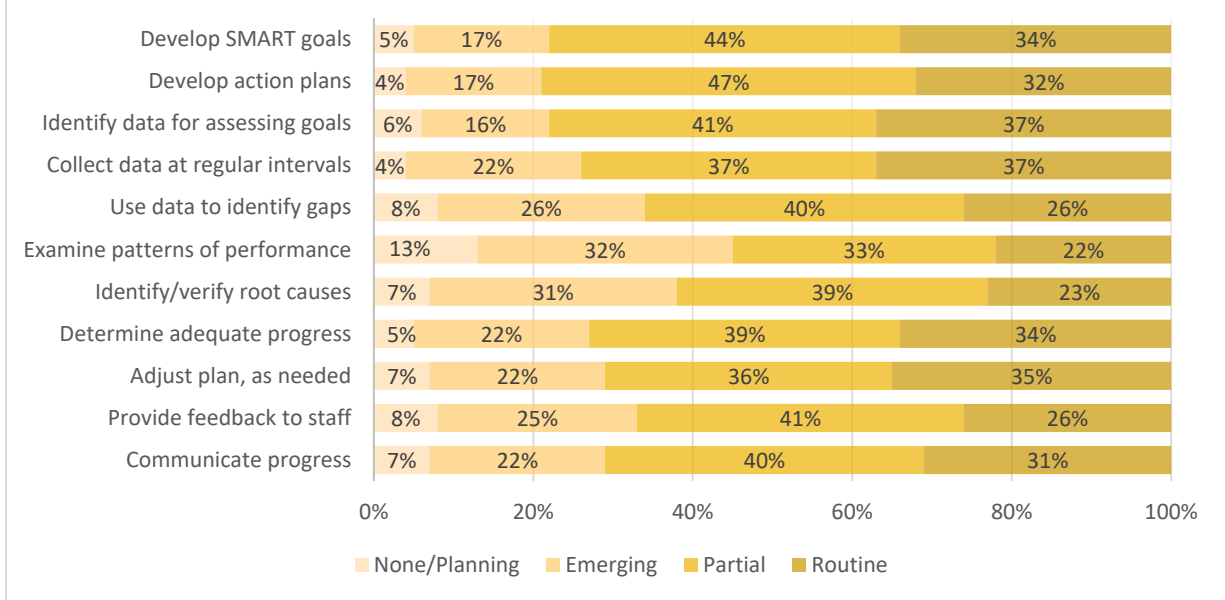


Figure 4, on the other hand, shows that administrators from ROS schools provided varied ratings on their SLTs' implementation of improvement practices when compared to administrators in CPS. Generally, practices were being *partially* implemented (33% to 47%).

⁸ Differences in ratings by the two regions were statistically significant, though not by school designation status.

⁹ Percentages for the planning level that were less than 5 are not recorded in the figure.

FIGURE 4. ROS SCHOOLS: SLT USE OF IMPROVEMENT PRACTICES



Most notable from the figure, ROS schools rated lower on implementation of practices related to data use compared to other practices. These practices included: examining patterns of performance across subgroups (e.g., racial/ethnic, SES, language proficiency, disability status); using data to identify gaps; and identifying or verifying root causes for lower student performance. For these three practices, between 34% and 45% of administrators reported that implementation was in the *planning* or *emerging* stages, meaning that the practices were not being implemented or had large gaps in usage. The lower ratings are problematic because quality school improvement planning is contingent upon appropriate data analyses. When asked about the obstacles faced when using data, most school administrators (62%) reported that there was not enough time to analyze or review data. Other obstacles included: data was unreliable (29%), there are too many systems of data available (26%), and staff do not have sufficient knowledge of how to act on data (25%).

B. Implementation of evidence-based programs and interventions

Similar to the implementation of continuous improvement practices, school administrators rated their schools’ implementation of evidence-based programs and interventions on the annual program school survey. Refer to **Box 2** on the following page for listed levels of implementation. **Figure 5** and **Figure 6** provide data on comprehensive and targeted schools. Differences between CPS and ROS were not statistically significant; however, there were statistically significant differences between the two IL-EMPOWER groups that can be found in **Appendix B**. The number of schools implementing each program/intervention is provided in the figures.

Figure 5 illustrates how the implementation levels of programs and interventions varied greatly in comprehensive schools. On the positive side, just over half of school administrators (52%) indicated that their schools were *routinely* implementing programs that targeted students with IEPs, as well as attendance monitoring and outreach programs. Nevertheless, this means that nearly half of programs and interventions were at lower implementation levels. All other programs showed more variation across the implementation levels, with many in the early stage of implementation (e.g., Freshman supports/academies, emergent bilingual student programs).

Box 2. Implementation Levels

Planning: Our school is planning to implement but hasn't started

Emerging: Our school is beginning its use but there are major gaps and improvements are needed

Partial: Our school has the program in place but there are some gaps

Routine: Our school is fully implementing with no major gaps

FIGURE 5. COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS: IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS

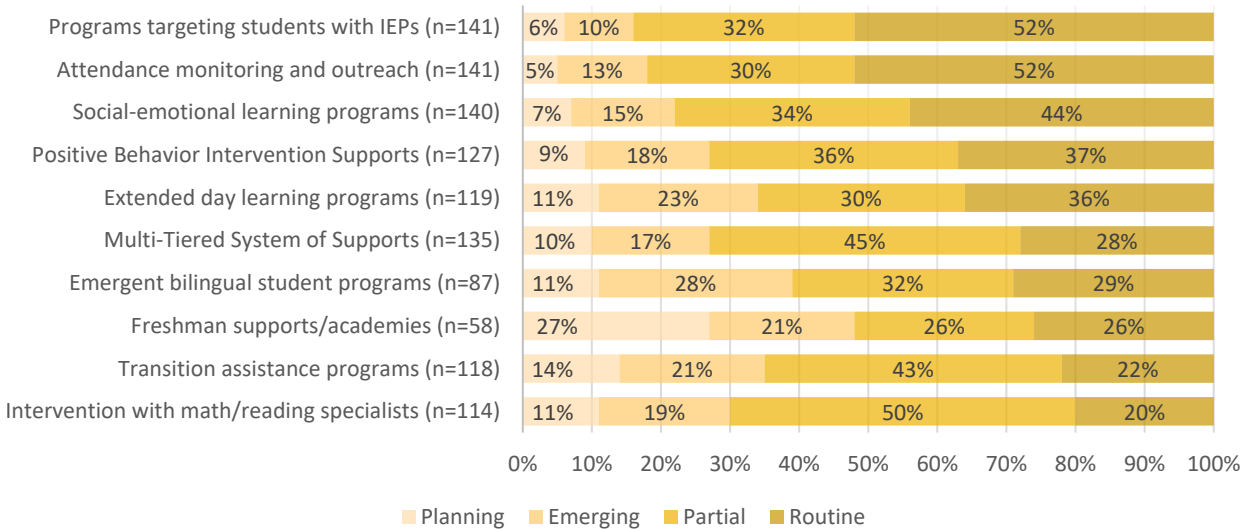
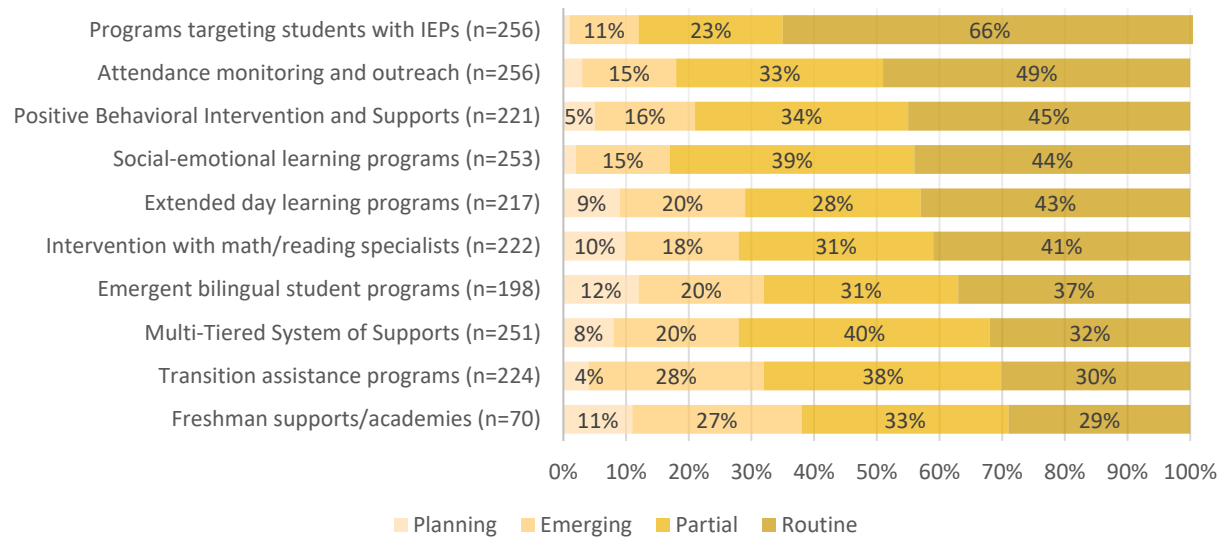


Figure 6 (on the following page) shows higher levels of implementation for targeted schools. More administrators reported *routine* or at least *partial* implementation of programs and interventions in comparison to comprehensive schools, with the exception of programs that targeted students with IEPs. Even still, there remains a sizable percentage of schools at the lower implementation levels. Most concerning is that only 37% of schools were routinely implementing programs for emergent bilingual students. Recall that targeted schools had a higher percentage of English Language Learners compared to other schools in the state.

FIGURE 6. TARGETED SCHOOLS: IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS



C. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on improvement plans and implementation of programs

Lastly, the annual program school survey asked school administrators about the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on school improvement efforts. As expected, many school administrators felt the pandemic hindered improvement efforts, though the extent of this negative impact varied across schools. School administrators commented on the various challenges faced by schools during the school year:

“Our school improvement plan was created largely on a more traditional school year. Once we finally figured out how to work our plan in a remote environment, we then needed to shift gears and begin working on reopening. Having some staff at home, some at school, needing to ensure adequate supervision and social distancing, limited our ability to work our academic improvement plans, and in many cases, we had to completely abandon portions to support the physical supervision needs of students.”

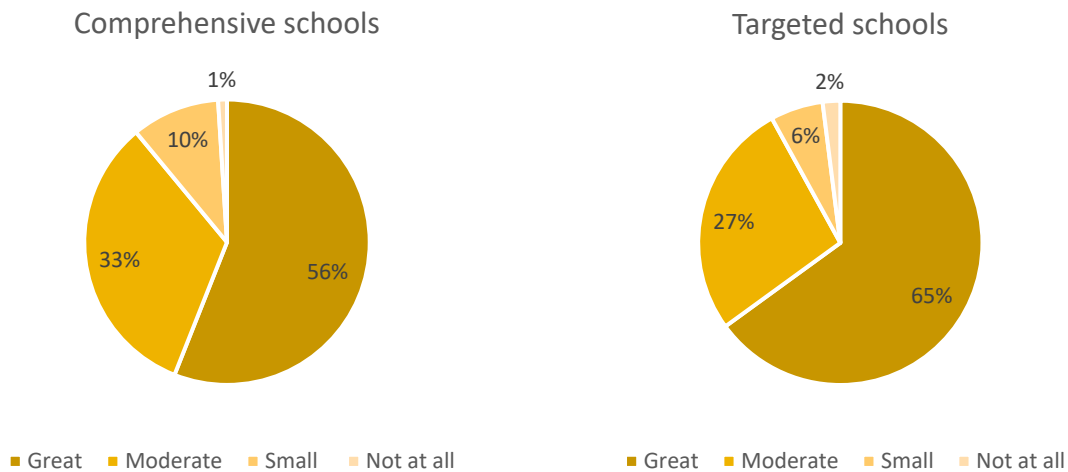
“We did not have the MAP data available, and teachers felt like the data we had was skewed due to the pandemic. Many teachers commented that it was hard to tell who was doing the work for students during remote learning and concerns about parents/older siblings doing the work/completing the assessments. We were not in school a full year, or even a full day all year, so it was hard to implement interventions as we would during a ‘normal’ year and day. It was also difficult to track interventions due to students who were remote or those that did not attend remotely (turned their camera off and did minimal work).”

“The uncertainty of being in-person or remote was challenging for staff and students. Assessments were inconsistently done because some students or staff members might

have been on quarantine while others were not. Students returning from remote did not show up to take the assessment, therefore data was inconsistent. Meetings were hit or miss depending on whether we were in-person or remote, quarantined, or sick. It was a difficult year for us all. We used the data we had but wondered if it was a good enough representation of our students.”

Shown in Figure 7, when administrators were asked to rate the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic impacted school improvement efforts, they reported a *great* impact at 56% in comprehensive schools and 65% in targeted schools.

FIGURE 7. EXTENT OF IMPACT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAD ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS



However, a smaller group of schools (33% comprehensive and 27% targeted), rated the impact as *moderate* and 11% or less felt the impact was *small* or negligible. Comments provided by administrators from these schools indicated that they were able to rapidly adjust and adapt to the changing conditions. Some added that the remote learning setting allowed their school to target smaller groups of students. Below are related comments.

“Our processes were developed with the pandemic in mind. We developed training and access to devices for instructors and students.”

“Our school focused on SIP goals accordingly. The impact of the Pandemic required flexibility, immediate change, increased focus, and implementation which interrupted traditional school operations and protocol (small extent).”

“We worked as a team to minimize the impact of COVID-19 to ensure as much stability as possible.”

“We were able to implement new practices with smaller groups of students due to students learning remotely. This helped with our work in climate and culture.”

D. Summary

The findings presented in this section provide mixed data on schools' capacity to effectively implement continuous improvement practices. On the one hand, many school administrators reported that their SLT utilized good practices during their meetings. For instance, the meetings were focused on school improvement, team members had a shared understanding of goals, and the team was able to complete work during the meetings. There was less agreement, however, on the teams' ability to develop action steps.

Moreover, ratings on the implementation of continuous improvement practices varied. Most problematic was that many SLTs struggled with practices related to the use of data. While CPS schools had more favorable reports of the SLTs' capacity and implementation of the continuous improvement practice, many schools fell short of demonstrating routine implementation of these practices.

Lastly, most schools, regardless of region and designation status, were not implementing evidence-based programs and interventions at levels that would likely translate to improved student outcomes. Undoubtedly, the extenuating circumstances presented by COVID-19 made it difficult for schools to gain momentum towards improvement but the deficits in schools' capacity to effectively implement the continuous improvement process was likely a larger contributor and one that transcends the impacts of the pandemic.



III. Support for School Improvement

IL-EMPOWER schools were eligible for support and guidance at levels dependent on their ESSA summative designation and location in the state. Specifically, all comprehensive schools were required to contract with an Approved Learning Partner. As of January 2021, comprehensive schools outside of CPS were also eligible to participate in professional learning from six PPs at no cost. Finally, schools located outside of CPS were assigned to an IL-EMPOWER Coordinator; however, schools in CPS did not have this resource.

In contrast, targeted schools were able to use funds to contract with an Approved LP, though this was not a requirement. ROS targeted schools had access to the IL-EMPOWER Coordinator only through the Help Hotline; however, CPS targeted schools did not have this resource.

This section of the report summarizes data on the types of supports, support frequency rates, and how school administrators' view the quality and effectiveness of those supports.

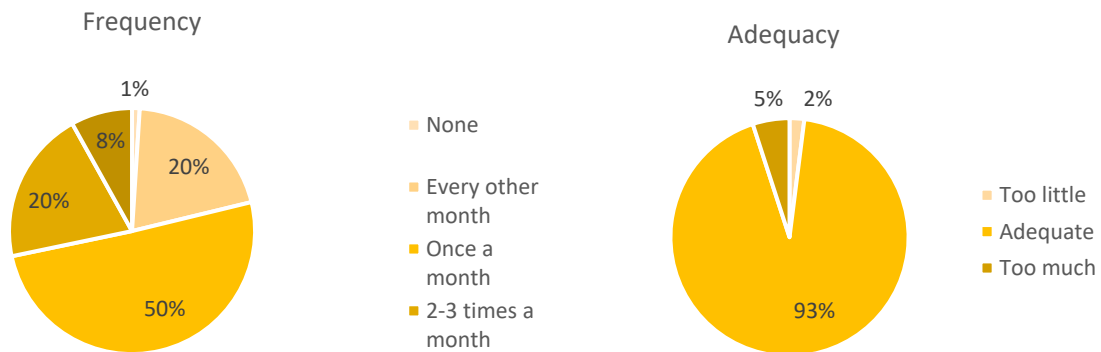
A. IL-EMPOWER Coordinators

During the 2020-21 school year, six IL-EMPOWER Coordinators were each assigned to 22 comprehensive ROS schools. They served as thought-partners to schools, providing guidance in the following areas:

- ◆ Data reviews with Approved LPs and the SLT
- ◆ Explaining IL-EMPOWER requirements, including permissible use of funds, explanation of school designation reports, and role of LPs
- ◆ School improvement planning

Coordinators communicated with schools monthly or more frequently, as reported on the annual program survey by school administrators (see Figure 8). To add, nearly all school administrators agreed that the frequency of communication was adequate.

FIGURE 8. FREQUENCY AND ADEQUACY OF COMMUNICATION



Likewise, school administrators positively reviewed the supports they received from the IL-EMPOWER Coordinator. Starting with Figure 9, most administrators (59%-72%) rated support from Coordinators as *very helpful*. Administrators also provided high ratings for the level of professionalism, attitude, and interactions IL-EMPOWER Coordinators had with the school and staff as depicted in Figure 10.

FIGURE 9. HELPFULNESS OF IL-EMPOWER COORDINATOR SUPPORTS

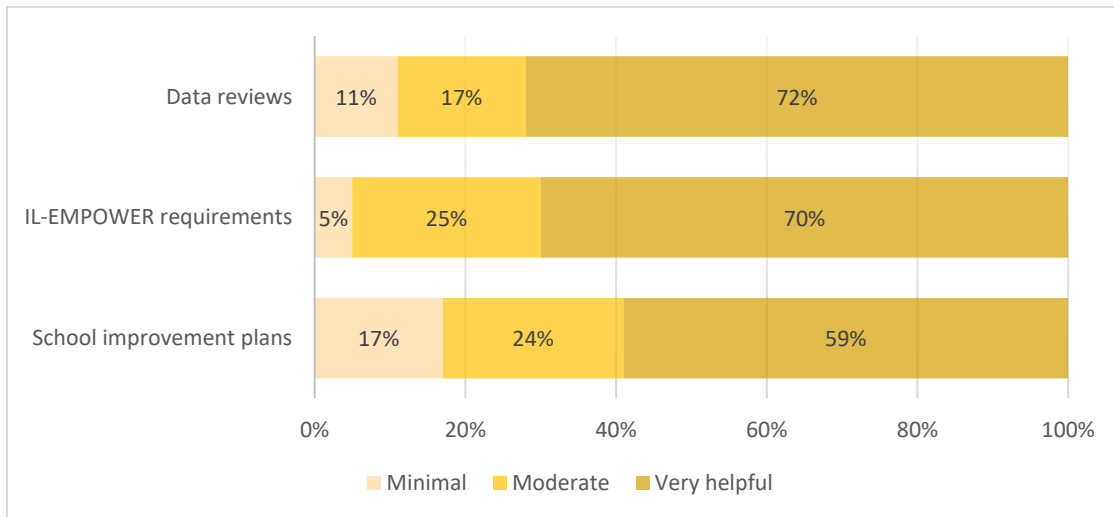
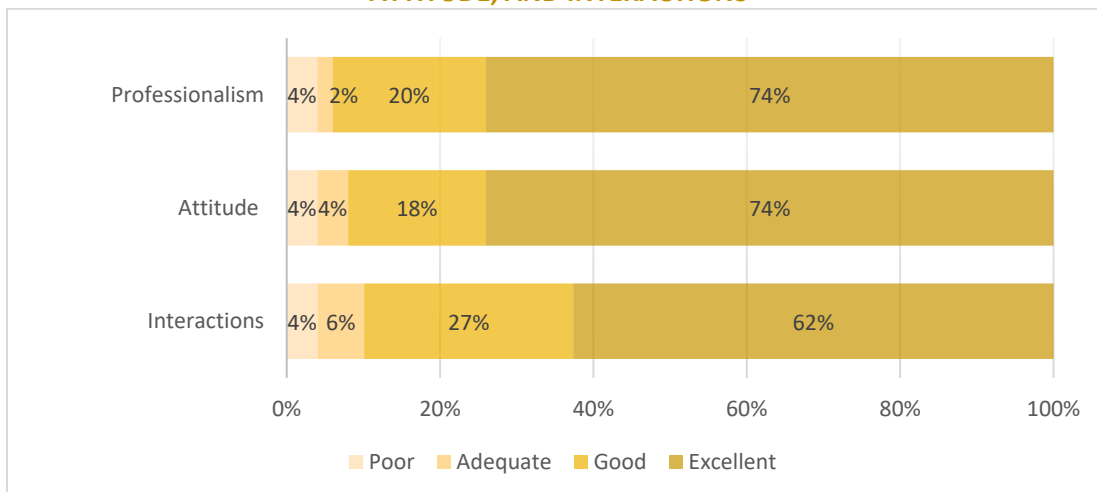


FIGURE 10. QUALITY OF IL-EMPOWER COORDINATOR'S PROFESSIONALISM, ATTITUDE, AND INTERACTIONS



B. Approved Learning Partners

Approved LPs were external organizations vetted by the state for having a specialty/expertise in systems improvement, teaching, or learning. Approved LPs supported schools with services such as coaching, professional learning, data analyses, system needs assessment, and school improvement planning. There were 56 Approved LPs for the 2020-21 school year. Table 3 lists the organizations, the number of participating comprehensive ROS

schools they supported,¹⁰ the total amount budgeted for that partner, and the percentage of the total budgeted funds that was spent in Fiscal Year 2020.¹¹

TABLE 3. APPROVED LEARNING PARTNERS: NUMER OF COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS, TOTAL \$ BUDGETED AND % SPENT

Learning Partners ¹²	# of schools	Total dollars budgeted ¹³	% budget spent
Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools*	44	\$1,140,000	78%
Urban Learning and Leadership Center, Inc.*	22	\$1,530,000	69%
American Institute of Research	17	\$767,619	100%
IL Multi-Tiered System of Supports Network	15	\$113,624	25%
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	10	\$685,401	48%
Consortium for Educational Change*	10	\$236,700	86%
EDDIRECTION	7	\$351,360	98%
ECRA Group, Inc.*	5	\$155,025	100%
Atlantic Research Partners	5	\$248,596	100%
SchoolWorks	4	not available	
AVID Center	3	not available	n/a
Silver Strong & Associates	3	\$119,000	103%
Roosevelt University*	3	\$162,866	98%
UMOJA Student Development Corporation	2	\$116,650	75%
District Management Group	2	\$87,500	100%
Envision Learning	2	not available	
Learning Sciences International, LLC	1	\$37,000	31%
Academy for Urban School Leadership	1	\$40,000	100%
Illinois Principals Association	1	\$5,400	100%
Imagine Learning	1	\$35,000	100%
Professional Development Plus	1	\$33,768	100%
People Education (dba Mastery Ed)	1	\$10,131	100%
Northeastern Illinois University	1	\$13,000	33%
Teach Plus	1	not available	
New Leaders, Inc.	1	not available	
Scholastic, Inc.	1	not available	
WestEd	1	not available	
UChicago Network for College Success	1	not available	
Achievement Network	0		
Branching Minds	0		
Cambridge Education	0		

¹⁰ Approved LPs weren't required to submit reports for targeted schools; therefore, they are not included.

¹¹ Data from FY18 and FY19 years were provided by ISBE and pulled from the original school contracts and/or budget spreadsheets. Human error, changes in contract amounts, and/or discrepancies between budgeted and actual amounts may have resulted in inaccurate reporting; therefore, data for these 2 years is excluded.

¹² (*) next to the Approved Learning Partner indicates that a higher number of schools selected the LP on the SIR than the number of LPs that submitted LPQPMR reports. These could include schools from CPS that were not required to complete the SIR.

¹³ Not available means that the Approved LP did not submit reports though school(s) selected the LP on the SIR.

Cavi Educational Services	0	
Cognia	0	
Committee for Children	0	
Educational Resource Strategies	0	
Equity Team, Inc.	0	
Erikson Institute	0	
FIRST Educational Resources, LLC	0	
Flippen Group	0	
Hanover Research Council, LLC	0	
Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation	0	
Illinois Association of School Administrators	0	
Illinois Resource Center	0	
Instruction Partners	0	
LEAP Innovations	0	
Mass Insight Education & Research	0	
National Board Professional Development School	0	
National Center on Education and Economy	0	
Pear School Solutions	0	
RespondAbility	0	
Talent Development Secondary	0	
University of Chicago STEM	0	
University of Chicago Impact	0	
UPD Consulting with Afton	0	
95 Percent Group, Inc.	0	
Wisconsin Center for Education Products	0	
ESTIMATED TOTAL	166	\$5,888,640

Data Sources: LPQPMR and SIR

Table 3 reveals several notable insights. First, 50% (28/56) of the Approved LPs had contracts with ROS comprehensive schools. This marks an increase from the last fiscal year when 39% of the Approved LPs had contracts with schools. Second, nearly half of the estimated total budgets for Approved LPs (\$2.6 million) went to two organizations, the IARSS and the Urban Learning and Leadership Center (ULLC). They also ranked highest in number of schools.

Figure 11 shows the distribution of Approved LPs across the six ROS geographic regions of the state, on the Regional Office Service Area map.¹⁴ Schools could contract with more than one LP; therefore, the number of LPs may exceed the total number of schools in each region.

¹⁴ Approved LPs that contracted with CPS schools are not included in the figure because accurate data were not available.

FIGURE 11. DISTRIBUTION OF APPROVED LEARNING PARTNERS¹⁵

Area 2 (21 schools)

- 10 schools: IARSS
- 9 schools: ULLC
- 5 schools: ECRA
- 3 schools: DMG
- 2 schools each: IL-MTSS Net., Roosevelt
- 1 school each: Atlantic, Northern Illinois, West Ed

Area 3 (34 schools)

- 14 schools: IARSS
- 7 schools: AIR
- 4 schools: IL-MTSS Net.
- 2 schools: Ed Direction, Houghton Mifflin
- 1 school each: Atlantic, Envision, Imagine, Scholastic, ULLC

Area 5 (19 schools)

- 10 schools: ULLC
- 6 schools: IL-MTSS Net.
- 4 schools: IARSS
- 2 schools: AIR
- 1 school: AUSL



Area 1 (17 schools)

- 3 schools each: CEC, Silver Assoc.
- 2 schools each: AIR, IARSS, UMOJA
- 1 school each: ECRA, PD Plus, People ED, Roosevelt, University of Chicago

Area 4 (25 schools)

- 13 schools: IARSS
- 8 schools: CEC, Houghton Mifflin
- 4 schools: School Works
- 2 schools each: Atlantic, AVID, IL-MTSS Net.
- 1 school each: Ed Direction, Envision, Learning Science, Roosevelt

Area 6 (14 schools)

- 6 schools: AIR
- 5 schools: Ed Direction
- 4 schools: IARSS
- 2 schools each: CEC, ULLC
- 1 school each: Atlantic, ECRA, IPA, IL-MTSS Network

Depicted in Figure 11, some Approved LPs were heavily concentrated in several regions of the state. For example, the IARSS was prevalent in Areas 2, 3, and 4 (10-14 schools). ULLC had nine schools in Area 2, all of which were from the same district. Finally, CEC and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt had eight schools in Area 4; all Houghton Mifflin schools were from the same district.

To evaluate the supports provided by Approved LPs, school administrators used the annual program school survey to rate their level of satisfaction with the Approved LPs' performance on several research-based indicators of effective support systems.¹⁶ The ratings were summarized across all Approved LPs and listed in Figure 12 for comprehensive schools and Figure 13 for

¹⁵ Source of data: LPQPMR and SIR

¹⁶ Boyle, Carlson Le Floch, Bowles Terriault, and Holzman. (2009). State Support for School Improvement: School-level Perceptions of Quality; Washington, D.C.: American Institutes of Research.

targeted schools.¹⁷ Appendix C provides ratings for each Approved LP. There were no significant differences between schools located in CPS compared to ROS; therefore, data is not disaggregated by region.

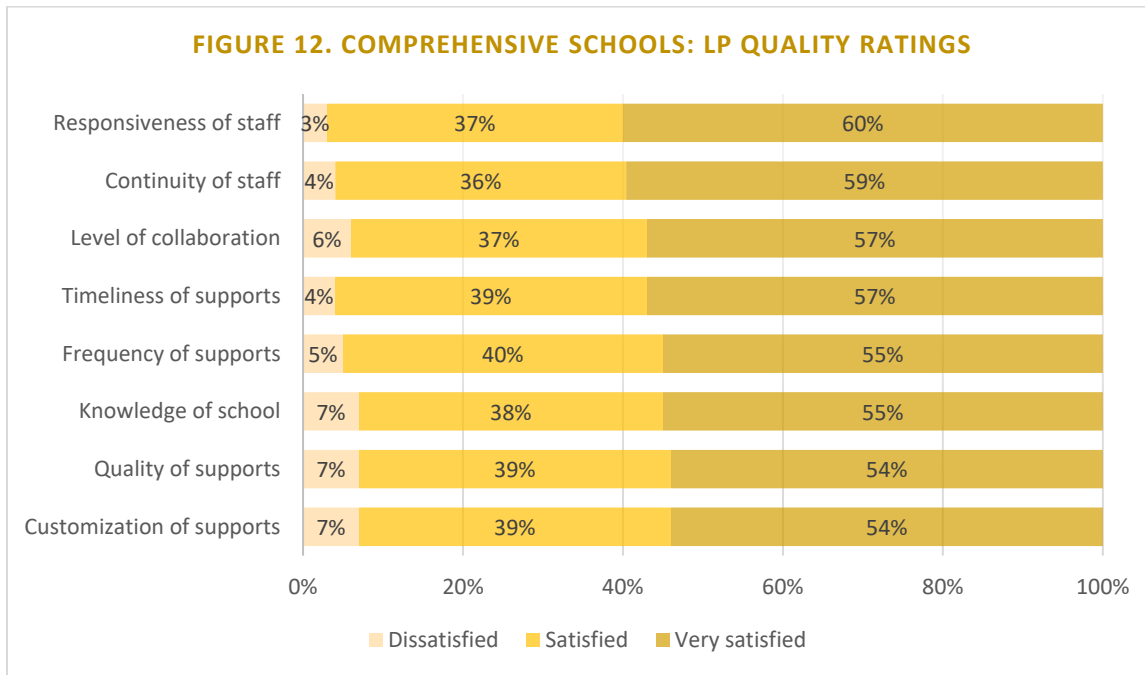
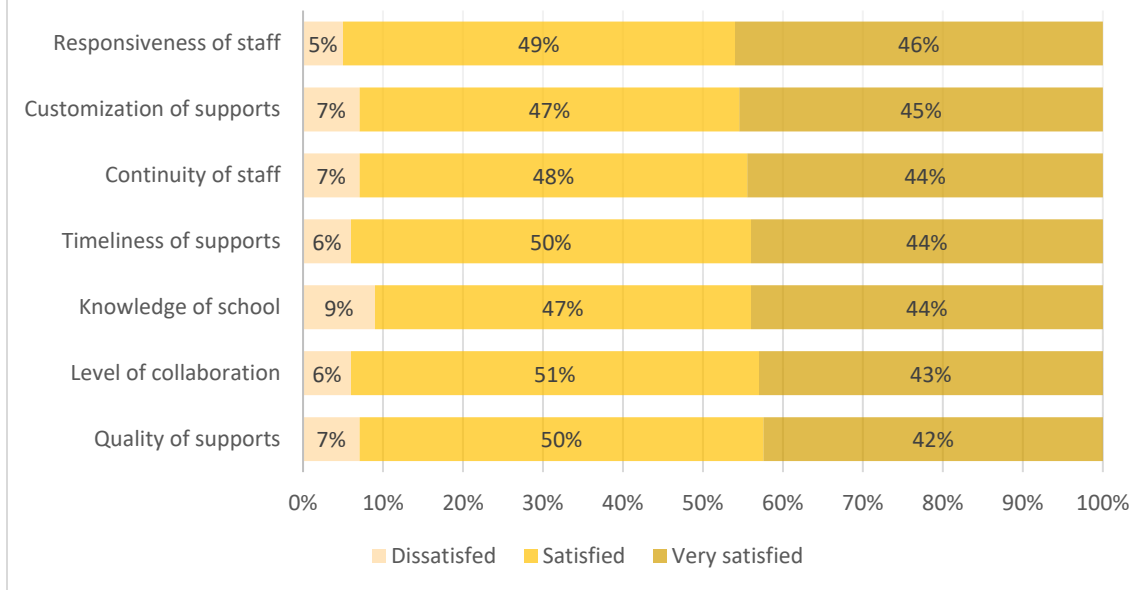


Figure 12 shows that the ratings from comprehensive schools were positive across all quality indicators. For example, 97% of school administrators were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the responsiveness of LP staff and 96% were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the continuity of staff. In fact, the percentage of school administrators that were *very satisfied* was over 50% on all indicators.

Targeted schools also showed positive ratings across all indicators, as seen in Figure 13; however, targeted schools were more evenly split between *satisfied* and *very satisfied* compared to comprehensive schools. For example, 46% of administrators were *very satisfied* with the responsiveness of staff and 49% were *satisfied*.

¹⁷ Differences in ratings provided by schools from CPS and ROS were not statistically significant; therefore, disaggregated data is not presented.

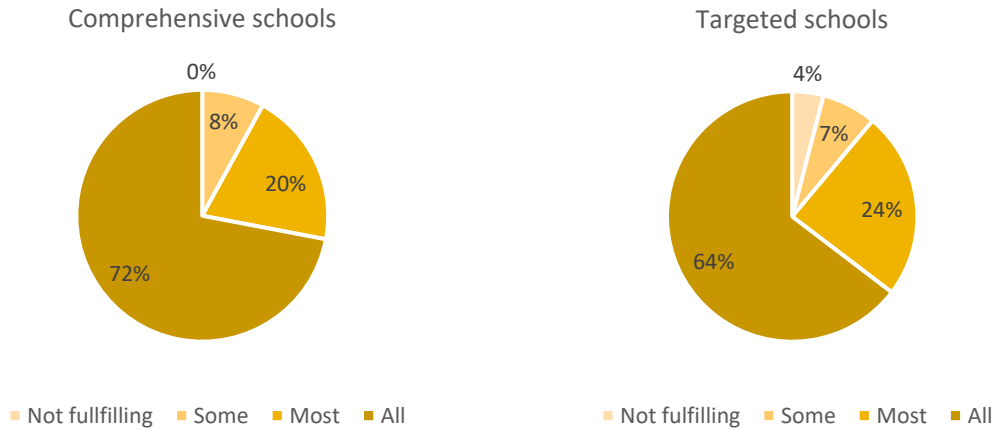
FIGURE 13. TARGETED SCHOOLS: LP QUALITY RATINGS



There were several statistically significant differences between the ratings provided by comprehensive and targeted schools including responsiveness of staff, continuity of staff, timeliness of supports, and level of collaboration. For these indicators, a higher percentage of comprehensive schools (between 57% and 60%) were *very satisfied* compared to targeted schools (between 44% and 46%). Additionally, there were several Approved LPs who received lower ratings from targeted schools on most indicators in comparison to comprehensive schools including the IL-MTSS Network, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and the IARSS. See [Appendix C](#) for individual ratings.

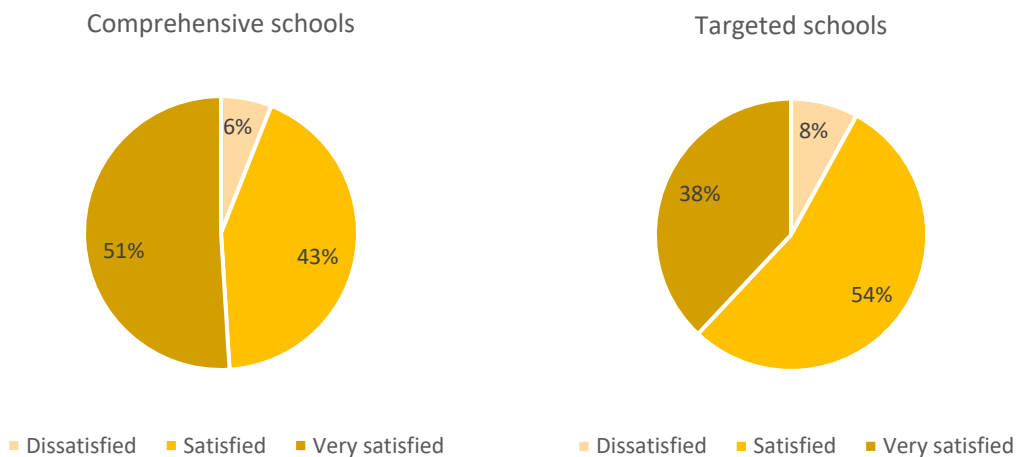
School administrators also rated the extent to which Approved LPs fulfilled the terms of their contracts. This data is summarized for each of the school groups (i.e., comprehensive and targeted) in [Figure 14](#). Overall, a majority of comprehensive and targeted schools reported that LPs fulfilled *all* terms of their contract. About one-fifth of comprehensive and targeted schools reported that *most* of the terms were fulfilled. Only 4% of targeted schools reported that the terms of their contract were *not fulfilled* by the Approved LP, though no comprehensive school reported the same. The difference between comprehensive and targeted school groups was not statistically significant.

FIGURE 14. EXTENT TO WHICH APPROVED LPS FULFILLED TERMS OF SCHOOL CONTRACT



Lastly, school administrators rated the extent to which their Approved LPs helped to address school improvement goals. Figure 15 summarizes this data based on the two school groups. Comprehensive schools reported that they were *very satisfied* at 51% and 43% were *satisfied* with the extent to which their partners helped to address improvement goals. Meanwhile, only 38% of administrators from targeted schools were *very satisfied* with LP supports for school improvement goals. A higher percent, i.e., 54%, were *satisfied* and 8% were *dissatisfied*. The differences between comprehensive and targeted schools were statistically significant. One plausible explanation for the difference between their ratings is that comprehensive schools most likely engaged in deeper supports with their Approved LP compared to targeted schools due to the program requirement to contract with an Approved LP.

FIGURE 15. SATISFACTION WITH APPROVED LEARNING PARTNER SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS



C. Primary Partners

In January 2021, ISBE contracted six organizations to serve as PPs (see **Box 3**). They provided professional learning opportunities at no cost to comprehensive ROS schools. The areas covered by the professional learning are listed below.

- ◆ Data-driven instruction and decision-making
- ◆ Instructional best practices
- ◆ Standards and assessment alignment
- ◆ Leadership coaching
- ◆ Improving school culture through social emotional learning & culturally responsive teaching standards

Box 3. Primary Partners

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)

Illinois Principals Association (IPA)

Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA)

Illinois Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Network

Lurie Children’s Hospital

Table 4 lists the PPs and the number of comprehensive schools that participated in professional learning from each partner.¹⁸ As seen in the table, the Illinois Principals Association had the highest number of schools, i.e., 21, followed by Lurie Children’s Hospital with 19 schools and IARSS with 18 schools. The total number of schools in the table is 85, however, the number of schools that worked with at least one PP was 71. This translates into 54% of comprehensive schools that participated in support from at least one PP.

TABLE 4. NUMBER OF SCHOOLS THAT PARTICIPATED IN PRIMARY PARTNERS

Primary Partners	# of schools ¹⁹
Illinois Principals Association	21
Lurie Children’s Hospital	19
Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools	18
Illinois Association of School Administrators	14
Illinois Multi-Tiered System of Supports Network	7
Illinois Resource Center	6

Unfortunately, the evaluation was unable to accurately assess the quality of services provided by PPs. This is because some schools also contracted with the organization as an Approved LPs, e.g., IARSS served as an Approved LP and PP. This created confusion on the annual program school survey and resulted in a larger number of schools providing feedback on PPs than the number that participated in supports. Consequently, the data was omitted from the analyses.

¹⁸ Data on school participation were compiled by ISBE and provided to the evaluator.

¹⁹ Schools could participate in more than 1 PP.

D. Districts

Finally, while districts did not have an explicit role in IL-EMPOWER aside from completing the Title I grant application, they played a role in school improvement planning in ways typical of district support. Many districts also supported schools in identifying Approved LPs. The evaluation assessed the provision of these supports on both the annual program school and district surveys. Specifically, school and district administrators were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements about district supports. This data is presented in [Table 5](#).

TABLE 5. DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Percent of schools (comprehensive and targeted) and districts reported to agree or strongly agree

The district...	Comprehensive school administrators	Targeted school administrators	District superintendent
Provided sufficient resources (e.g., funding, staffing, technology, etc.) to schools to implement the school improvement plan.	85%	90%	94%
Provided schools with sufficient authority to make decisions about staffing, scheduling, and resources to implement the school improvement plan.	89%	87%	93%
Assisted schools in the identification of gaps in student outcomes.	74%	75%	94%
Assisted in the development of the school improvement plan.	74%	74%	93%
Participated in the monitoring of progress made on school improvement goals.	75%	71%	93%
Provided guidance to schools in selecting Approved Learning Partner(s).	74%	64%	90%
Assisted schools in the identification of strategies and practices to address gaps and areas of need.	72%	70%	93%

As seen in the table above, most school and district administrators who responded to the survey agreed that the district provided sufficient support, though district administrators were more likely to agree than school administrators were. Still, most important to schools and school districts was providing sufficient resources and authority to schools to make decisions about staffing, scheduling, and resources to implement SIPs. In these two areas, between 85% and 90% of comprehensive and targeted schools and over 90% of districts agreed with these statements. They also agreed with statements regarding district support for the school improvement plan, including identifying gaps in student outcomes, developing the plan, and monitoring progress toward goals (i.e., between 71-75% agreement for schools and between 93-94% for districts).

Compared to comprehensive schools, fewer targeted schools reported that their district provided guidance selecting an Approved LP; however, targeted schools were less likely to work

with an Approved LP because it was not a program requirement. The same is true for district support in comprehensive schools when selecting a PP. In other words, the lower percentages might be indicative of schools not utilizing the supports of PPs, rather than experiencing a lack of support from the district.

E. Summary

Overall, this section offers a positive assessment of the supports provided to schools. For example, most school administrators from comprehensive ROS schools had constructive interactions with their IL-EMPOWER coordinator. School administrators from comprehensive and targeted groups were satisfied with the quality of supports from their Approved LPs, though comprehensive schools provided slightly higher ratings than targeted schools. Both groups reported that their Approved LPs fulfilled the terms of their contracts and helped to address school improvement goals. Over half of comprehensive ROS schools participated in supports from a PP. Finally, most schools and districts agreed that the district provided appropriate supports.



IV. Outcomes

Illinois' State Accountability Plan, in compliance with federal requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act, outlines a system for assessing school performance through the use of summative designation ratings (i.e., exemplary, commendable, targeted, and comprehensive)²⁰ that are based on multiple measures of school performance and growth.²¹ Schools that participate in IL-EMPOWER demonstrate success by making improvements on their student success indicator data and subsequently advancing their summative designation rating to a higher level.

This section of the report presents findings on schools' performance on summative designation ratings and student success indicators for the 2020-21 school year. Data from the 2018-19 school year are also provided as a point of comparison.²² Box 4 lists the student success indicator data that was included in the evaluation.²³

Equally important, this section summarizes data that addressed several questions central to the evaluation, including

- ◆ What is the relationship between the implementation of school improvement practices and student outcomes?
- ◆ How do Approved LPs contribute to meaningful changes in school improvement practices and the achievement of student outcomes?

The section concludes with school administrators' reflections on the success that their school experienced despite the challenges they faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Box 4. Student Success Indicator Data

- ◆ ELA proficiency rate (K-8 and HS)
- ◆ Math proficiency rate (K-8 and HS)
- ◆ ELA growth percentile (K-8)
- ◆ Math growth percentile (K-8)
- ◆ Chronic absenteeism (K-8 and HS)
- ◆ Climate survey student participation (K-8 and HS)
- ◆ 9th graders on track (HS)
- ◆ 4-year graduation rate (HS)
- ◆ 5-year graduation rate (HS)
- ◆ 6-year graduation rate (HS)

²⁰ [Summative Designations \(isbe.net\)](https://isbe.net/summative-designations)

²¹ Indicators are weighted and include ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELA and math growth, ELL progress to proficiency, science proficiency, chronic absenteeism, climate survey participation, composite graduation rate (4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rate), and 9th grade on-track.

²² 2019-20 data were unavailable due to the COVID-19 pandemic that led to statewide school closings in March 2020 and ultimately the cancellation of statewide assessment under ISBE's Executive Order [FAQ-4-1-20.pdf \(isbe.net\)](https://isbe.net/faq-4-1-20)

²³ The only indicators not available were science proficiency and EL proficiency. Illinois administered a new science assessment in 2021, but rates of participation were not high enough to conduct a standard-setting and are not comparable to 2018. EL proficiency was calculated as progress towards attaining language proficiency in 2018 and are not comparable to 2021 data, which was calculated as the percent proficient on the ACCESS test.

A. Change in Summative Designation Ratings

Summative designation ratings are calculated annually; however, the cancellation of state assessments in the spring of 2020 resulted in the rollover of ratings from 2019 to 2020. Furthermore, the Illinois State Board of Education was granted an accountability waiver on April 6, 2021²⁴ which allowed the state to maintain the same ratings for schools through the 2021-22 school year and to adjust their accountability system. This means that the summative designation ratings presented in this year’s report date back to 2019 and account for the first year of school improvement implementation under IL-EMPOWER for the 2018 cohort only.²⁵ Consequently, the summative ratings cannot be associated with other outcome data presented in this section.

Table 6 summarizes changes in schools’ summative designation rating from 2018 to 2019/2020. Starting with comprehensive schools in the middle column of the table, most (59%) did *not* change their rating one year into IL-EMPOWER. The remaining schools made improvements. For example, 17% improved to *targeted*, 23% to *commendable*, and one school improved to the highest rating, i.e., *exemplary*.

TABLE 6. COHORT 2018 CHANGE IN SUMMATIVE DESIGNATION
Percentage (n) of schools

2019/2020	2018 Comprehensive	2018 Targeted
Comprehensive	59% (108)	-
Targeted	17% (31)	43% (218)
Commendable	23% (41)	57% (291)
Exemplary	1% (1)	1% (3)

Alternatively, targeted schools fared better. For example, over half (58%) of the schools improved their rating to either *commendable* (57%) or *exemplary* (1%), as seen in the last column of the table. Otherwise, 43% of the schools kept the same rating, i.e., *targeted* from 2018 to 2019/2020.

Disaggregating the data by region (ROS and CPS) offered more optimism for ROS schools in particular. More specific, a higher percentage of comprehensive and targeted ROS schools improved their rating (50% of comprehensive and 64% of targeted), as seen in Table 7.

TABLE 7. COHORT 2018 CHANGE IN SUMMATIVE DESIGNATION BY REGION
Percent of schools (n) assigned each rating in 2019

Status in 2019/2020	CPS		ROS	
	Comprehensive	Targeted	Comprehensive	Targeted
Comprehensive	70% (62)	-	50% (46)	-
Targeted	14% (12)	57% (94)	20% (19)	36% (124)
Commendable	16% (14)	43% (72)	29% (27)	63% (219)
Exemplary	-	-	1% (1)	1% (3)

²⁴ [il-acct-waiver-response.pdf \(isbe.net\)](https://www.isbe.net/~/media/Files/Accountability/2021-Accountability-Report/IL-acct-waiver-response.pdf)

²⁵ The second cohort of schools (i.e., 2019) are not included in the summary because they were in their planning year and do not have another year for comparison.

Most notable are the schools that moved up to *commendable* or *exemplary* in both groups. Thirty percent (30%) of comprehensive and 64% of targeted schools were rated *commendable* or *exemplary* one year after implementing school improvement under IL-EMPOWER. More information about the success of school improvement in a sample of schools can be found in the case study report in [Appendix A](#).

On the other hand, 70% of CPS schools designated as comprehensive and 57% of schools designated as targeted in 2018 and did *not* change their rating one year after participating in IL-EMPOWER. Conversely, 43% of targeted schools and 16% of comprehensive schools moved up to *commendable*.

B. Performance on Student Success Indicators

[Tables 8](#) and [9](#) compare student success indicator data from 2021 with 2019, the latter of which is the most recently data available for comparison. [Table 8](#) provides a summary of data on K-8 schools (combined elementary and middle schools). [Table 9](#) includes data on high schools. The data in the tables are disaggregated by support status and region. See [Appendix D](#) for a summary of data disaggregated by student subgroups.

TABLE 8. 2019 AND 2021 STUDENT SUCCESS INDICATOR DATA
Comprehensive and Targeted ROS and CPS K-8 Schools
Mean percentage of students (except growth percentiles) and number of schools

	2019 % (n)		2021 % (n)		Change
Comprehensive: ROS schools					
English Language Arts proficiency	13%	(108)	12%	(88)	-1
English Language Arts growth percentile	43	(99)	43	(99)	0
Math proficiency	10%	(108)	8%	(88)	-2
Math growth percentile	40	(99)	40	(99)	0
Chronic absenteeism	34%	(105)	39%	(110)	+5
Climate Survey student participation	48%	(76)	70%	(111)	+22
Comprehensive: CPS schools					
English Language Arts proficiency	9%	(50)	5%	(50)	-4
English Language Arts growth percentile	38	(50)	38	(50)	0
Math proficiency	7%	(50)	2%	(50)	-5
Math growth percentile	43	(50)	43	(50)	0
Chronic absenteeism	24%	(50)	37%	(50)	+13
Climate Survey student participation	83%	(50)	61%	(50)	-22
Targeted: ROS schools					
English Language Arts proficiency	27%	(436)	19%	(398)	-8
English Language Arts growth percentile	49	(416)	49	(416)	0
Math proficiency	20%	(436)	14%	(398)	-6
Math growth percentile	47	(416)	47	(416)	0
Chronic absenteeism	18%	(448)	24%	(449)	+6
Climate Survey student participation	53%	(247)	72%	(449)	+19

	2019 % (n)		2021 % (n)		Change
Targeted: CPS schools					
English Language Arts proficiency	20%	(162)	11%	(162)	-9
English Language Arts growth percentile	41	(162)	41	(162)	0
Math proficiency	16%	(162)	7%	(161)	-9
Math growth percentile	46	(162)	46	(162)	0
Chronic absenteeism	17%	(162)	25%	(162)	+8
Climate Survey student participation	85%	(161)	61%	(162)	-24

The K-8 student success indicator data presented in [Table 8](#) shows a trend of decreased proficiency from 2019 to 2021 in both ELA and mathematics, coupled with an increase in chronic absenteeism across all K-8 school groups. Climate survey participation was mixed. Several notable contrasts are evident, however, when looking at the data by support level and region. First, targeted schools had larger decreases in ELA and math proficiency, ranging from 6-9 percentage points compared to comprehensive schools, the latter of which ranged from 1-5 percentage points. Still, targeted schools demonstrated higher proficiency overall compared to comprehensive schools. In 2021, for instance, 19% of students in ROS schools were proficient in ELA and 14% were proficient in math compared to 12% in ELA and 8% in math in comprehensive schools.

Second, CPS schools had lower proficiency rates compared to ROS schools in both the comprehensive and targeted groups. For example, only 5% of K-8 students from comprehensive CPS schools were proficient in ELA compared to 12% in ROS comprehensive schools. Additionally, only 5% of students from targeted CPS schools were proficient in math compared to 14% in targeted ROS schools.

Lastly, chronic absenteeism increased an average of 8 percentage points across all groups, however, the rates were higher in comprehensive schools compared to targeted. Specifically, between 37-39% of students were chronically absent in comprehensive schools, whereas 24-25% were chronically absent in targeted schools.

[Table 9](#) (following page) shows some improvements at the high school level. For example, graduation rates increased 2-3 percentage points in ROS schools and 2-5 points in CPS schools. Chronic absenteeism also dropped for both school groups. In comprehensive ROS schools, the rate decreased from 43% in 2018 to 36% in 2021. The decrease was more dramatic in comprehensive CPS schools, with a 16-percentage point decrease, that went from 78% in 2019 to 62% in 2021.

The ELA and math proficiency data, however, showed little or no change in comprehensive schools and pronounced declines in targeted schools. For example, ELA proficiency decreased 5-6 percentage points in ROS and CPS schools, respectively. Math proficiency decreased 2-4 points in ROS and CPS schools, respectively. This resulted in targeted and comprehensive schools in CPS having the same ELA proficiency rate in 2021 of 7%. Math proficiency rates were similar as well with 5% proficiency in comprehensive and 6% in targeted schools.

TABLE 9. 2019 AND 2021 STUDENT SUCCESS INDICATOR DATA
Comprehensive and Targeted ROS and CPS High Schools
Mean percentage of students and number of schools

	2019 % (n)	2021 % (n)	Change
Comprehensive: ROS schools			
English Language Arts proficiency	15% (14)	15% (13)	0
Math proficiency	9% (14)	10% (13)	+1
Chronic absenteeism	43% (14)	36% (14)	-7
9 th graders on track		68% (14)	
4-year graduation rate	74% (14)	77% (14)	+3
5-year graduation rate	78% (11)	80% (14)	+2
6-year graduation rate	76% (14)	78% (14)	+2
Comprehensive: CPS schools			
English Language Arts proficiency	7% (25)	7% (25)	0
Math proficiency	6% (25)	5% (25)	-1
Chronic absenteeism	78% (25)	62% (25)	-16
9 th graders on track		65% (23)	
4-year graduation rate	53% (25)	55% (25)	+2
5-year graduation rate	57% (25)	62% (25)	+5
6-year graduation rate	61% (25)	59% (25)	-2
Targeted: ROS schools			
English Language Arts proficiency	23% (17)	18% (16)	-5
Math proficiency	15% (17)	13% (16)	-2
Chronic absenteeism	38% (17)	35% (17)	-3
9 th graders on track		69% (17)	
4-year graduation rate	78% (17)	77% (17)	-1
5-year graduation rate	80% (17)	80% (17)	0
6-year graduation rate	82% (17)	82% (17)	0
Targeted: CPS schools			
English Language Arts proficiency	13% (5)	7% (5)	-6
Math proficiency	10% (5)	6% (5)	-4
Chronic absenteeism	53% (5)	54% (5)	1
9 th graders on track		70% (5)	
4-year graduation rate	80% (5)	84% (5)	+4
5-year graduation rate	81% (5)	87% (5)	+6
6-year graduation rate	84% (5)	85% (5)	+1

C. Impact of school improvement and Approved LP supports on student outcomes

The evaluation conducted a series of analyses to examine the relationships between school improvement implementation, Approved LP supports, and student outcomes. The purpose of the analyses was to identify factors that supported positive improvements and factors that might have hindered improvements. Box 5 describes the variables that were obtained from the annual program school survey and were included in the final analyses.²⁶

Box 5. Variables included in Outcome Analyses

Number of Approved Learning Partners (ranged from 0 to 3 per school)

SLT meeting practices: combined items on SLT meeting practices (Figure 2)

District support: combined items on district support of school improvement (Table 5)

Obstacles to data use: total number of obstacles

Continuous improvement practices: combined items on implementation (Table 3 & 4)

Effects of COVID-19: item on extent of COVID-19 on school improvement (Figure 7)

FIGURE 16. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

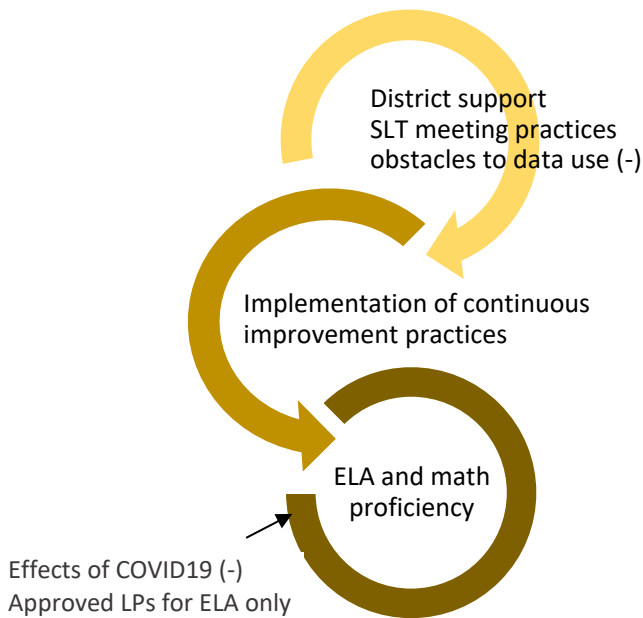


Figure 16 provides a graphic for the results of the analyses.²⁷ Starting at the top of the figure, the evaluation found that district support and SLTs' use of effective meeting practices were related to continuous improvement implementation. In other words, schools with supportive districts and effective SLT meeting practices also reported higher implementation of continuous improvement practices. Alternatively, schools with less supportive districts and fewer effective SLT meeting practices reported lower implementation of continuous improvement practices.

The top of the figures also shows that obstacles to data use had a negative impact

²⁶ The evaluation performed analyses using correlation and regression tests.

²⁷ The figure displays results from three regression models. The first included continuous improvement implementation as the dependent variable and district support, SLT meeting practices, data obstacles and number of LPs as independent variables. The model was significant ($p=.00$), $R^2=.30$. Number of LPs, however, was not a significant predictor. The second and third included ELA and math proficiency (separately) as dependent variables and independent variables included: continuous improvement implementation, number of LPs, effects of COVID-19, 2018 ELA/math proficiency, and percentage of low-income students. Both models were significant: ELA ($p=.00$), $R^2=.77$, Math ($p=.00$), $R^2=.72$.

on continuous improvement implementation. This means that schools with more obstacles to data use reported lower implementation of continuous improvement practices.

Moving down the figure to the second level, schools that reported higher implementation of continuous improvement practices also had higher ELA and math proficiency rates.²⁸ More specific, schools where SLTs were *routinely* implementing improvement practices—e.g., examining data, monitoring progress, developing action plans—also had a higher percentage of students who were deemed proficient on ELA and math assessments. Conversely, there were lower proficiency rates in schools where SLTs had lower implementation of practices related continuous improvement. This finding underscores the importance of ensuring that schools are effectively implementing continuous improvement practices outlined in IL-EMPOWER (i.e., Figure 1).

Another factor affecting proficiency rates was the COVID-19 pandemic. School administrators who reported that the COVID-19 pandemic hindered school improvement efforts also had fewer students who were deemed proficient on the ELA and math assessments.

Additional analyses²⁹ that examined the relationship between the number of Approved LPs and proficiency rates yielded a small, but significant effect for ELA only. As shown in Table 10, 16% of students were proficient in ELA in schools that contracted with two or more Approved LPs. Alternatively, schools that did not contract with any Approved LP had an average proficiency rate of 14%. This analysis considered schools’ prior ELA proficiency rate and percentage of low-income students.

TABLE 10. 2021 MEAN ELA PROFICIENCY RATE
Comparison between schools with 0 to 2+ Approved LPs

Number of Approved LPs	N schools	Mean ELA Proficiency
None	150	14%
1 Approved LP	180	15%
2 or more Approved LPs	43	16%

D. Perceived Successes

The final component of the outcome evaluation included information from school administrators on successes that their schools experienced this past year. Their comments centered on three main themes: (1) adaptability of their staff, (2) perseverance to implement the SIP to the best of their ability, and (3) success in building relationships and connecting with students and parents in ways they had not done prior to the pandemic. Below are supporting quotes from the administrators.

²⁸ None of the other student success indicators were significantly related to continuous improvement implementation.

²⁹ ANCOVA test included 2021 ELA proficiency rates as dependent variable and number of LPs as independent variable, along with 2018 ELA proficiency rate and percentage of low-income students. The number of LPs was statistically significant, $F(2,368) = 2.94, p = .05$.

“The staff has done an exceptional job of pivoting with our ever-changing learning environment. So many learning programs and platforms moved to an electronic format and were totally new to the teachers and students. The ability to adapt was impressive.”

“[We] continued with instruction and student learning during a pandemic when we didn't know what would happen day to day. [We] continued to love and support students during all the changes. Positive outcome-became closer as a staff. Learned online instruction. Communication became clearer and more concise. Celebrated daily. Learned the human teacher in the classroom is extremely valuable for learning. Family relationships became stronger.”

“We worked diligently as a team. Despite bumps in the road, as a team we persevered. We connected with students and their family for outreach and check-ins. Parent feedback and participation was good and we improved professional relationships.”

“We did an excellent job streamlining our efforts and laser-focusing on our 3 big rocks in our strategic plan this year, aligning and tracking our team's efforts toward milestones that lead to goals, resulting in end of year student achievement metrics being met. This year, we focused on strategic planning around measurable and transparent ‘big rocks.’ Our three big rocks involved change management when navigating remote learning, constructive environment focusing on student engagement, wellness, and attendance in the remote setting, and high performing team, focusing on supporting teacher development and utilization of new tools during remote learning.”

“We have prioritized professional development geared toward special education teachers. We have moved to 100% of special education teachers providing whole and small group instruction at the grade level for students. In some grades, we have seen special education students earn 70% or higher on grade level assessments that match those their general education peers take. Additionally, we have begun to analyze data on our target student groups (diverse learners and black males) to specifically track their progress on grade level standards and skills.”

E. Summary

Starting with the positive findings, the evaluation found that half or more of ROS schools improved their summative designation rating back in 2019. Interviews with school administrators from a sample of successful schools revealed several important actions that were instrumental to their schools' success (Appendix A). First, they conducted a robust needs assessment to identify strategies and systems that would support system-level school improvement and then engaged the entire school community in systems-level changes. They also focused on building a capacity for improvement with professional development, connecting efforts with other initiatives, and making systems changes that supported sustained efforts.

The student success indicator data also showed areas of progress. Most noteworthy is that high schools increased their graduation rates and decreased chronic absenteeism. The rest of the data, however, did not improve from 2019. Indeed, the trend across most schools was one of decreased proficiency coupled with increased chronic absenteeism. This relationship was more prominent in several student subgroups including Asian and Black/African American students (see [Appendix D](#)). Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic can be attributed to increased student absences, which also impacted student learning.

The larger decreases in ELA and math proficiency that were seen in the targeted and CPS schools are particularly concerning. These groups did not benefit from the same level of supports and resources as comprehensive schools under IL-EMPOWER. For example, they did not have a designated IL-EMPOWER Coordinator and many targeted schools did not contract with an Approved LP. To add, SLTs from most targeted schools were not routinely implementing continuous improvement practices and evidence-based practices. Finally, CPS schools did not reopen schools for in-person learning until March 1st, 2021.³⁰ All these factors could have contributed to lower performance.

Another important finding from this section is the model presented in [Figure 16](#) which demonstrates the significant relationships between school improvement and student outcomes. The model identified several key components that were directly and indirectly related to outcomes including district support of school improvement, use of effective SLT meeting practices, limited obstacles to using data, and routine implementation of continuous improvement practices.

The relationship between Approved LPs supports and outcomes was unclear. A small but significant effect was found when comparing schools that had an Approved LP and schools that did not. Moreover, schools that contracted with two or more Approved LPs had the highest percentage of students who were deemed proficient in ELA. Nevertheless, other variables pertaining to the Approved LPs, such as perceived quality of supports, were not related to outcomes. Further investigation is needed to better understand the ways in which Approved LP supports are impacting school and student outcomes.

³⁰ <https://www.cps.edu/school-reopening/updates-and-faq/community-updates/>



V. Conclusions and Recommendations

The 2020-21 school year marks the third year of Illinois' statewide system of support, IL-EMPOWER. During this school year, 886 schools participated in IL-EMPOWER (226 in comprehensive support and 660 in targeted). Comprehensive schools received support from their districts and external partners—Approved LPs and Primary Partners—and schools located in the ROS region received guidance from IL-EMPOWER coordinators. Targeted schools were supported by their district, with the option to contract with an Approved LP.

This report summarizes data on school improvement implementation, the supports provided to schools, and outcomes. The findings tell a story of tenacity and strain as schools grappled to make improvements during what is arguably the most challenging school year in recent history. That some schools were able to routinely implement effective practices and continue the work of school improvement is highly commendable; however, this was not the typical story.

To add, the levels of support provided to schools did not translate into adequate improvements on student success indicator data. There are several plausible explanations for the disconnect. One, it is possible that the supports were not provided at an adequate intensity level to be detected and associated with desired improvement results.³¹ Two, schools may not have effectively utilized supports in areas with the greatest need. Given the challenges schools faced when using and reviewing data, they may have failed to accurately identify priority areas, action steps or goals. A third explanation is that the supports and their potential impact were hindered by disruptions to school operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Disruptions included, but are not limited to, school closures that resulted in the use of remote or hybrid learning environments, gaps in student and teacher attendance from quarantine procedures, and difficulties delivering supports in remote setting. Further investigation into the supports is needed before the evaluation can make a determination on the effectiveness of Approved LPs.

After reviewing the data findings, we offer the following actionable recommendations on the improvement of the system design, implementation, and reporting.

Increase clarity and focus of supports on the improvement process. This will ensure that all schools receive support in critical areas, such as data use. Recent changes to IL-EMPOWER, which began in the 2021-22 school year, show change in this direction. For example, the state published several resources on the IL-EMPOWER website that clarify the school improvement process, the school improvement plan, and a “year in the life of IL-EMPOWER.”³² To add, IL-EMPOWER coordinators are implementing structured protocols during their monthly meetings with schools that focus on specific topics related to the continuous improvement process. In

³¹ The May Research Brief found no significant relationship between the amount of money contracted to Approved LPs, the number of hours of support, and outcomes.

³² See <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ILEmpower2-CS.aspx>

addition to these changes, the state could provide stronger program requirements to ensure that Approved LPs are focused on building school staff's capacity to implement the continuous improvement process.

Leverage the support of districts. Research shows that districts provide vital leadership, resources, and guidance to their schools outside of the statewide system of support. Findings from the current evaluation demonstrate the valuable role that districts play in supporting school improvement. The state should formalize the role of districts in IL-EMPOWER to ensure that they are involved in decision-making at the school level, particularly as it relates to outside supports and how those supports are used.

Increase the level of supports provided to targeted schools. Data on targeted schools showed deficiencies in their use of continuous improvement practices, implementation of evidence-based programs and interventions, and performance on student success indicators. For these reasons, the state should consider including targeted schools in the same level of supports as comprehensive schools.

Provide focused training on data analysis and decision-making. Schools reported lower levels of the implementation of practices involving data regarding continuous improvement efforts. We recommend that the state provide professional learning and support to all schools that participate in IL-EMPOWER. This could be offered in the form of statewide trainings.

Improve data reporting. One of the challenges faced during the evaluation was the inconsistency of data reporting. This was primarily evident in two areas: Primary Learning Partners supports and CPS schools. We recommend that the state include CPS in the SIR data system so that they can be included in all analyses. Regarding Primary Learning Partners, we recommend that the state clarify the supports provided by Primary LPs so that schools are accurately reporting the quality of supports. In addition to these two areas, we recommend that the state increase the monitoring of report submissions so that a full set of data is available for the evaluation.



Appendix A:

- **Evaluation Brief, January 2021**
- **Evaluation Brief, May 2021**
- **Case Study Report, 2021**

IL-EMPOWER is the statewide system of support for school improvement in Illinois. Its mission is to build the capacity of adults to support continuous improvement of school-wide systems in order to prepare students for post-secondary success. To achieve its mission, IL-EMPOWER provides a structure for aligning supports and resources to the needs of schools and utilizing an accountability system with early warning indicators to ensure that schools are positively improving student outcomes.

This evaluation brief summarizes feedback on supports from IL EMPOWER Coordinators and approved Learning Partners from schools with a comprehensive designation from the state. These are schools that received the ESSA designation of the lowest-performing 5% schools and are consequently eligible for IL EMPOWER supports, including additional funding, access to a state-designated IL EMPOWER Coordinator, and approved Learning Partner(s), the latter of which have a specialty in effective systems improvement, teaching, or learning practices. The findings were derived from an online survey that was emailed to administrators in December, 2020. **Table 1** provides information on the sample, includes the number and percentage of submissions, year of IL EMPOWER designation, and Regions from which the schools were located.

Table 1. Information on Survey Sample

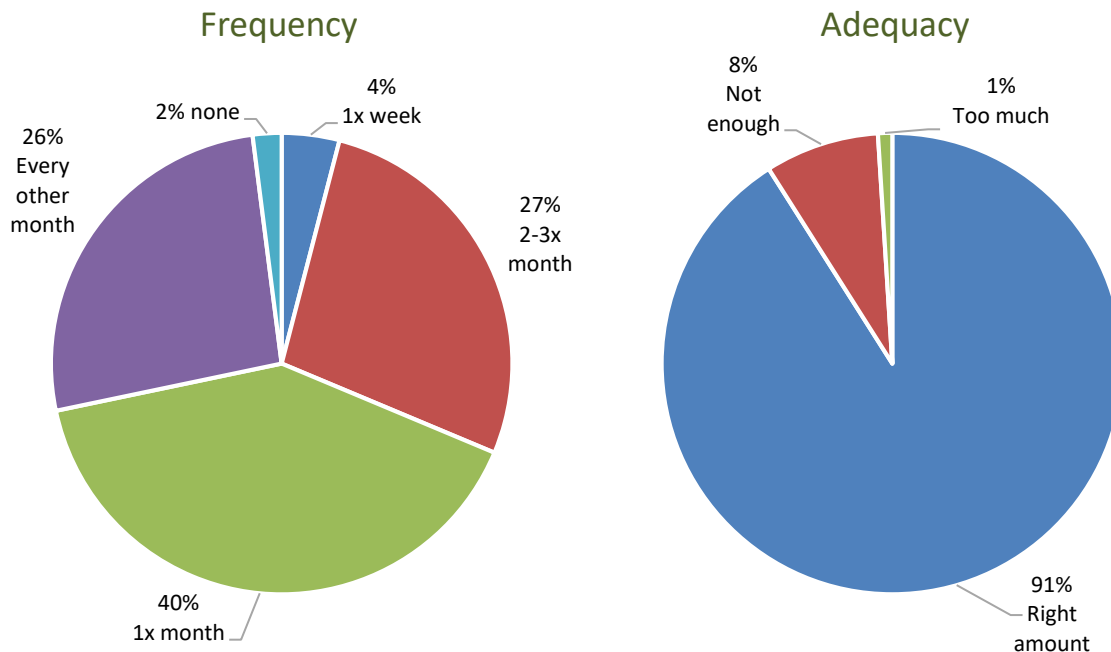
	Sample/Population	Percentage
Number of submissions ¹	92/133	69%
Designation year		
2018	62/94	66%
2019	30/39	77%
ROE/ISC Region		
1 (A, BB, BC)	8/12	67%
1C	3/6	50%
2	19/22	86%
3	21/34	62%
4	15/26	58%
5	16/19	84%
6	10/14	71%

¹ There were 3 partially completed surveys that were accepted in the sample.

IL EMPOWER Coordinators

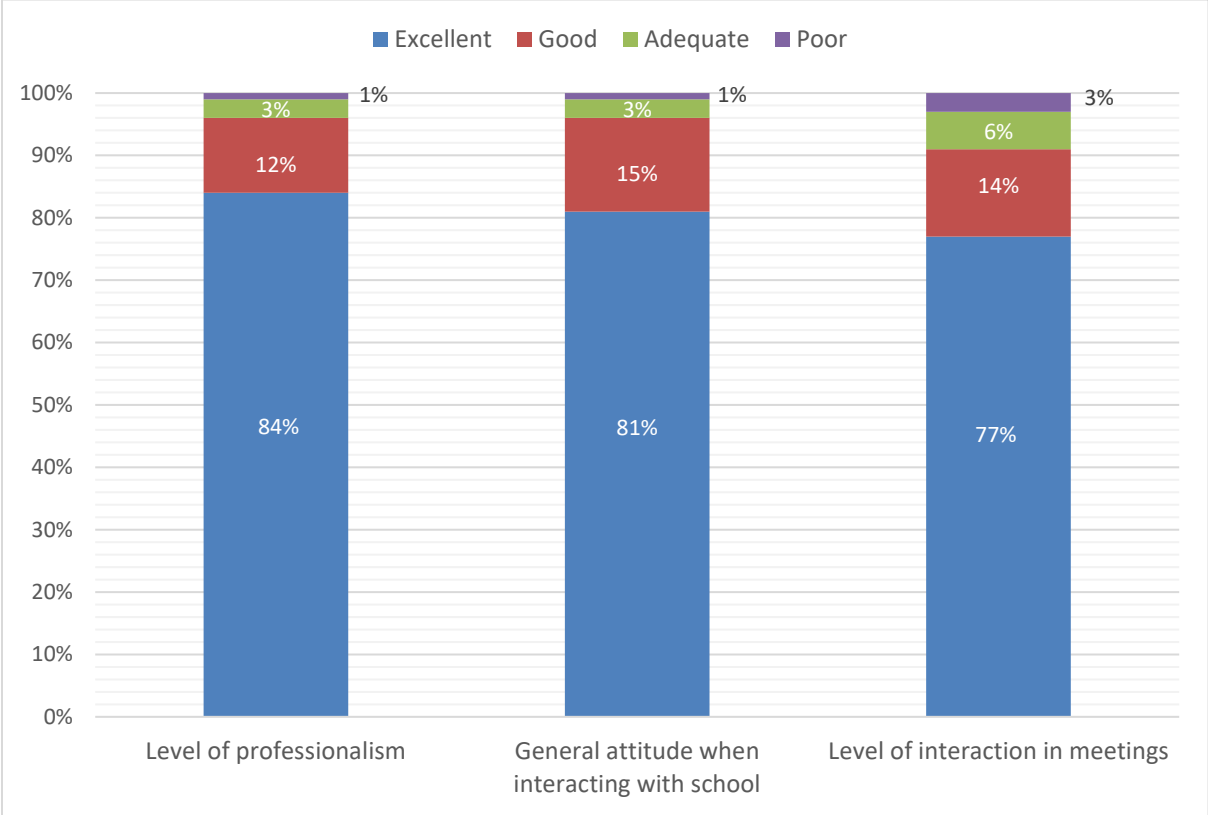
Key Finding: IL EMPOWER Coordinators are providing quality supports to schools. Evidence for this is demonstrated by schools' high ratings of communication, level of professionalism, and helpfulness of supports that were provided by the Coordinators.

Communication



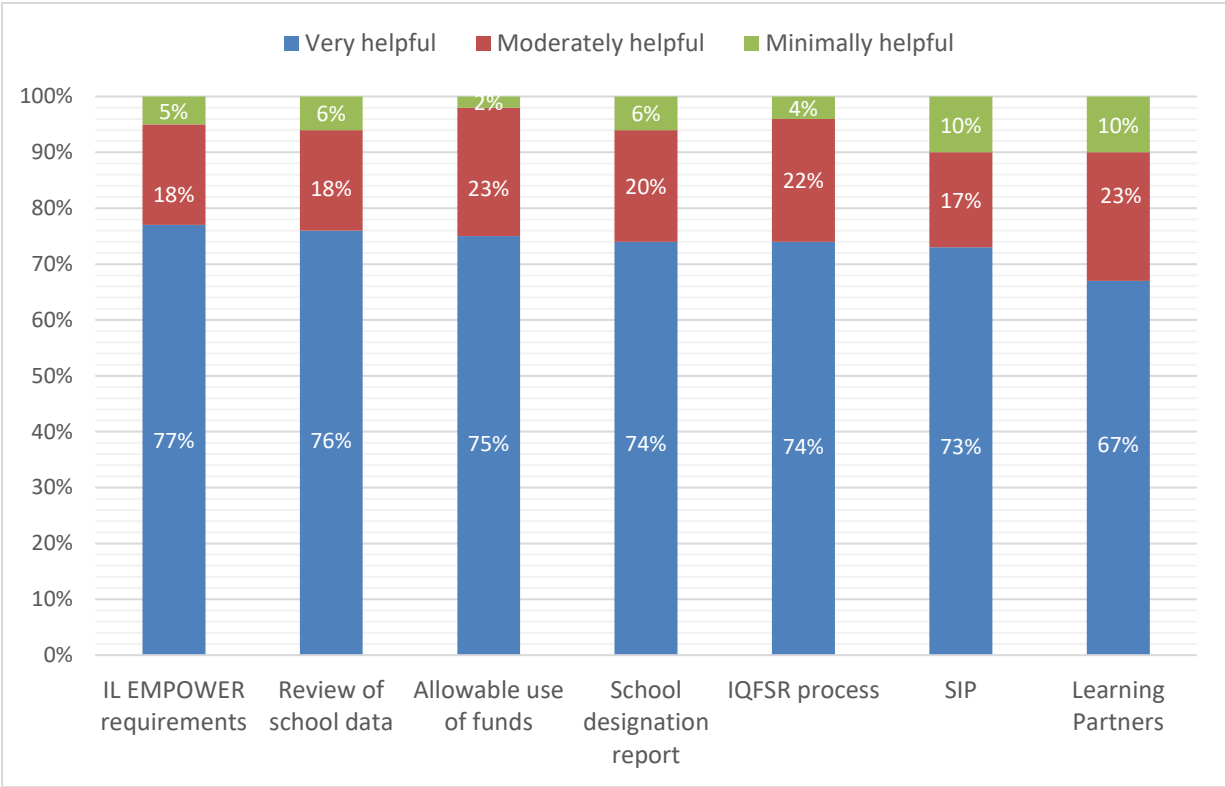
- IL EMPOWER Coordinators were in communication with 71% of schools at least once a month or more frequently. More specific, the **Frequency** chart on the left shows that 40% of schools were in communication once a month, 27% of schools were in communication two-three times a month and 4% of schools were in communication once a week.
- What's more, the **Adequacy** chart on the right shows that the vast majority of schools (91%) rated the frequency of communication as adequate, that is, the right amount.
- All of the schools that rated communication as *not* adequate reported the frequency as every other month or less. These schools would like more communication with IL EMPOWER Coordinators.
- Though not reported in the charts, it should be noted that 99% of the schools reported that the IL EMPOWER Coordinators responded to their requests within 24-48 hours.
- There was no relationship between Designation Year or Region of the state and school ratings.

Professionalism and Interactions with Schools



- Seen above, the majority of schools (77% to 84%) rated the IL EMPOWER Coordinators’ professionalism, attitude towards school, and level of interactions in meetings as *excellent*.
- There was a significant relationship between communication and schools’ perceptions of IL EMPOWER Coordinators’ professionalism and interactions. Specifically, schools that had more frequent and adequate communication with IL EMPOWER Coordinators were also likely to rate their level of professionalism and interactions with their school as high. This means that regular communication allowed schools to establish a stronger relationship with the IL EMPOWER Coordinator.
- There was no relationship between Designation Year or Region of the state and school ratings.

Helpfulness of Supports



- IL EMPOWER Coordinators provided support to schools in a variety of areas. They are listed below along with the percentage of schools that received support in the area.
 - ◆ IL EMPOWER requirements (91%)
 - ◆ Review of school data (82%)
 - ◆ Allowable use of funds for Title1 1003(a) and Titles I,II, and IV Part A (69%)
 - ◆ School designation report (89%)
 - ◆ The Illinois Quality Framework Supporting Rubric (IQFSR) process (88%)
 - ◆ School Improvement Plan (SIP) (92%)
 - ◆ Learning Partners (91%)

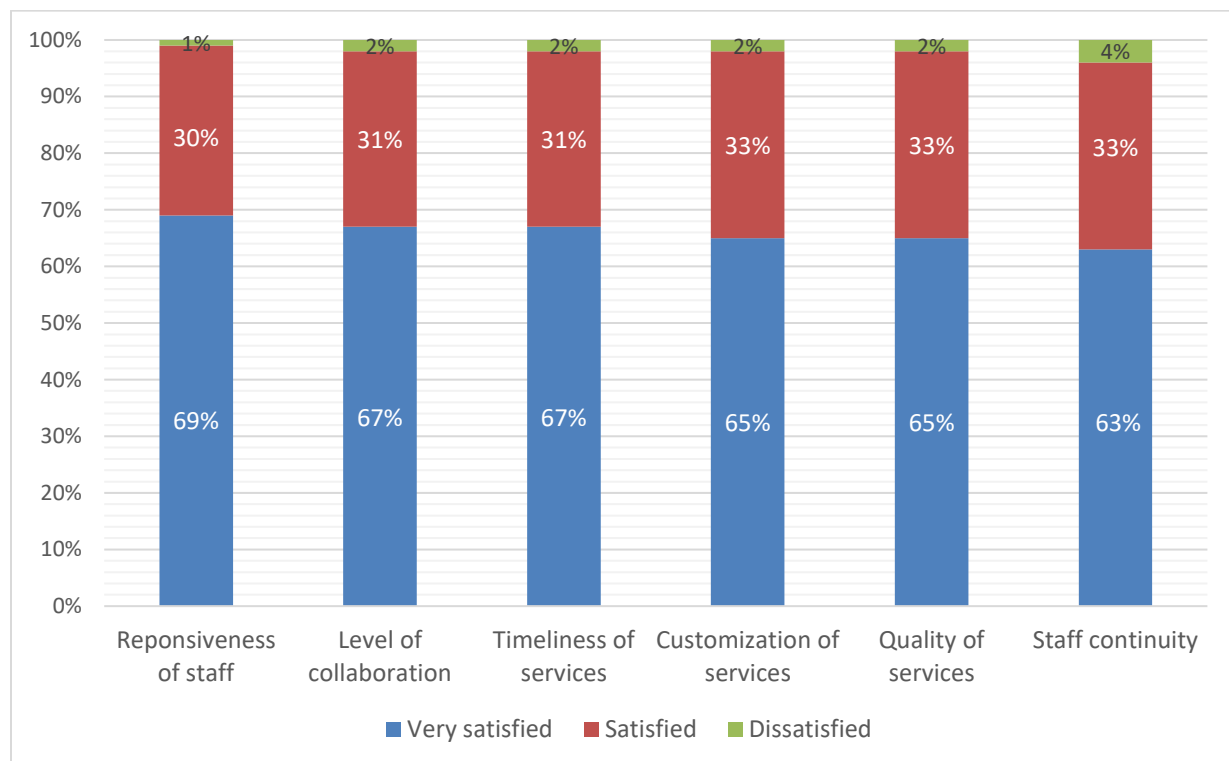
- As seen in the figure above, most schools rated the supports as *very helpful*. The average was 74% of schools across all areas. Following, an average of 20% of schools rated the supports as *moderately helpful* and only 6% of schools, on average, provided a low rating (i.e., minimally or not at all).

- There were no relationship between Designation Year or Region and supports provided or helpfulness ratings.

Approved Learning Partners

Key Finding: On a whole, approved Learning Partners are providing satisfactory supports to schools. Differences in satisfaction ratings, however, exist between LP entities with some rating higher than others. Moreover, it appears that some LPs are more effective than others in addressing school goals identified by the School Improvement Plan.

Satisfaction with Learning Partner Services

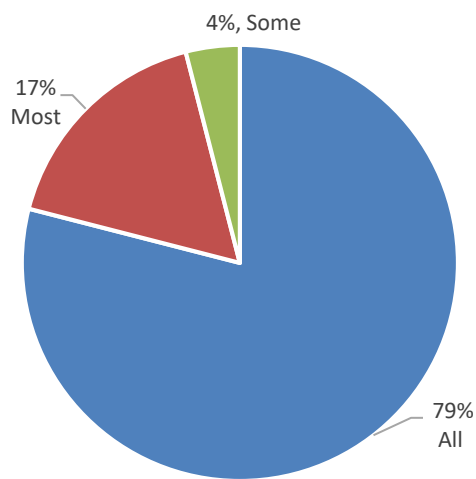


- As seen in figure above, nearly all of the schools were either *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with their Learning Partner(s) on select indicators of effective support systems.² Schools gave the highest marks to the 1) responsiveness of staff (69%), 2) level of collaboration with the school (67%), and 3) timeliness of supports and services (67%).
- There were differences in satisfaction ratings by Learning Partner. This data is provided on page 7.

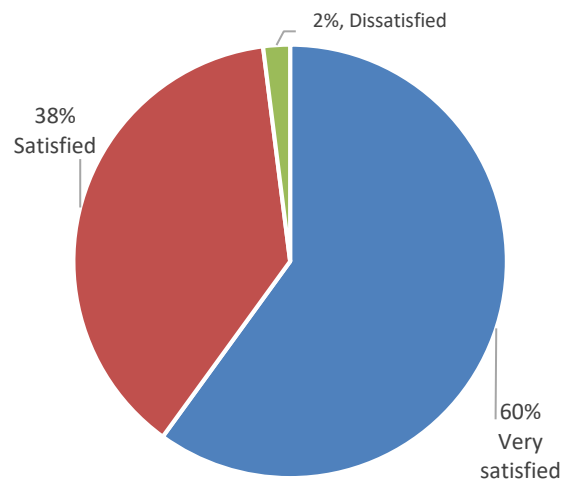
² Boyle, Carlson Le Floch, Bowles Terriault, and Holzman. (2009). State Support for School Improvement: School-level Perceptions of Quality; Washington, D.C.: American Institutes of Research.

Partnership Terms

Fulfilling Partnership Terms

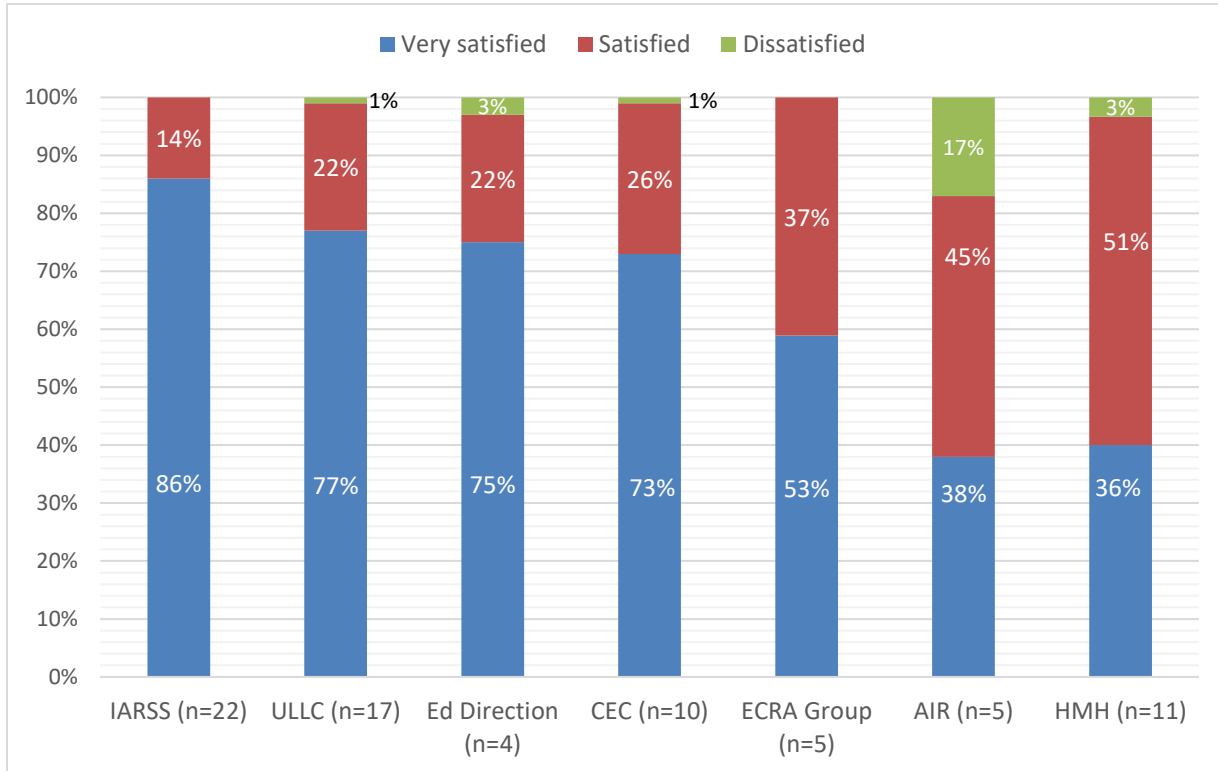


Helping address SIP goals



- Seen in the **Fulfilling Partnership Terms** chart on the left, most schools (i.e., 79%) reported that their approved Learning Partner(s) was fulfilling *all* of the agreed upon terms of the partnership to date. Another 17% of schools reported that their approved Learning Partner(s) was fulfilling *most* of the terms of the partnership. Only 4% of schools indicated that the LP was fulfilling *some* of the terms.
- Nevertheless, the **Helping address SIP goals** chart on the right shows that fewer schools (60%) were *very satisfied* with the extent to which their approved LP was helping them to address their School Improvement Plan goals. Taken together, these findings warrant further investigation into the ways that LPs are supporting schools and the extent to which these supports are addressing areas of greatest need.
- There were differences in ratings by Learning Partner. This data is provided on page 8.

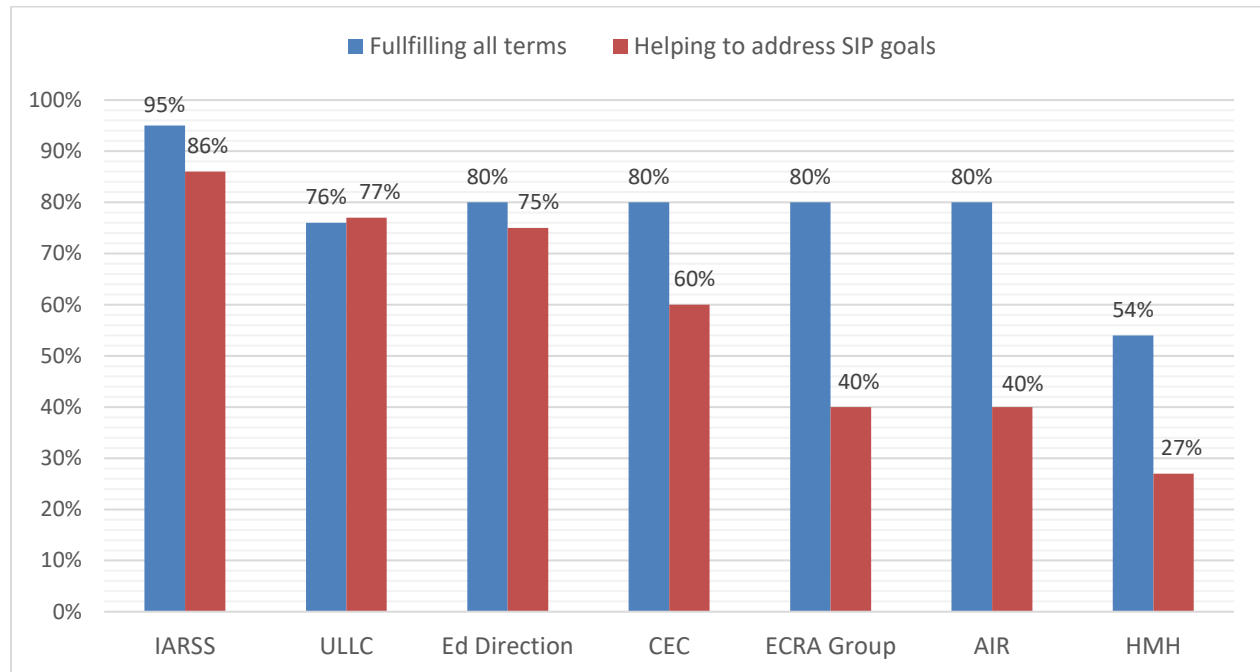
Satisfaction Ratings by Learning Partner



- The figure above lists each approved LP³ and their average satisfaction ratings across all of the indicators. **Appendix A** lists the individual quality indicator satisfaction ratings for each Learning Partner.
- Approved LPs with the highest *very satisfied* ratings included IARSS, Urban Learning and Leadership Center (ULLC), Ed Direction, and Consortium for Educational Change (CEC). ECRA Group had an average of 53% of schools that were *very satisfied*.
- Conversely, AIR and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) had relatively fewer schools that were *very satisfied* with the quality of supports.
- The sample sizes varied by approved Learning Partner and some LPs were represented by a low number of schools; therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution. Alternatively, we recommend additional data collection to investigate differences in quality as well as perceptions of quality from IL EMPOWER Coordinators.

³ LPs with ratings from fewer than 4 schools were not included in the table. These LPs included: Atlantic Research (1), Envision (1), IPA (1), Loving Guidance (1), Mastery Education (1), IL-MTSS (1), NIU STEAM (1), Ready Math (1), Roosevelt University (2), Scholastic, (3), Silver, Strong and Associates (2), Thoughtful Classroom (1), UMOJA (1), Imagine Learning (1)

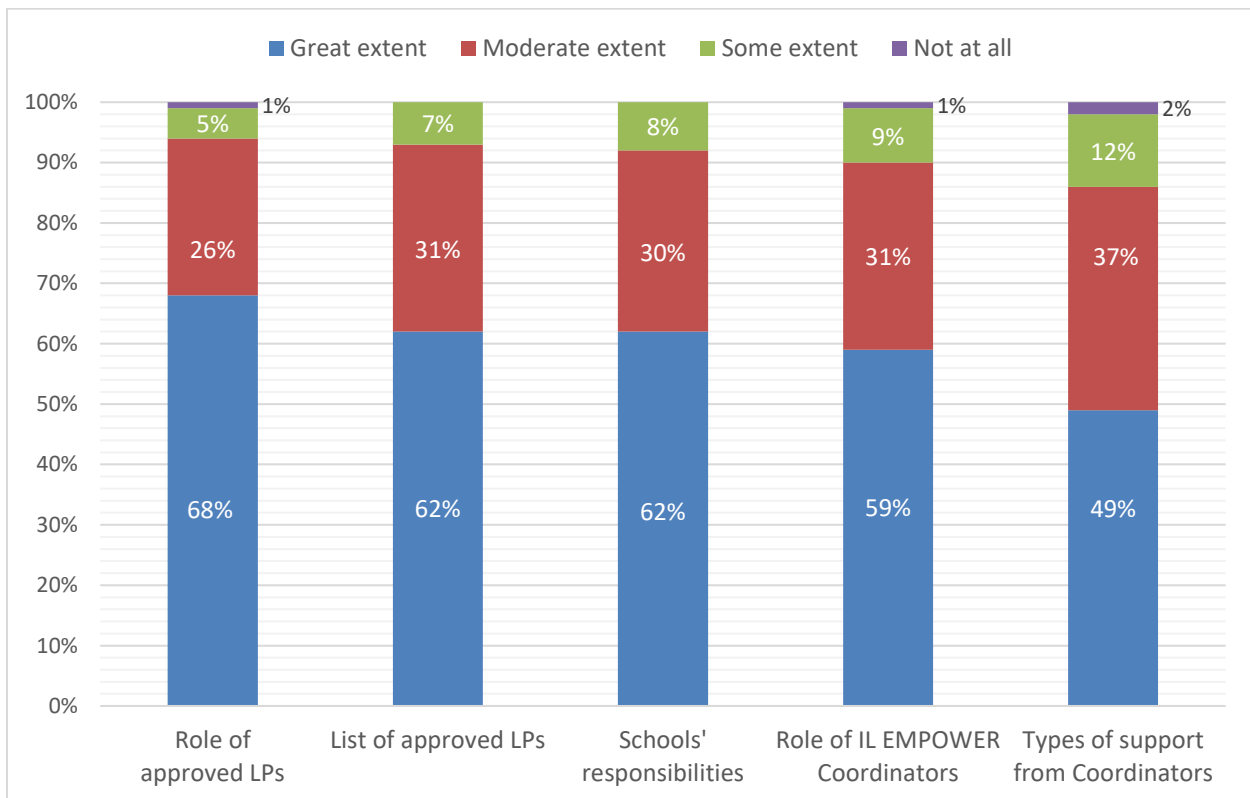
Partnership Terms by Learning Partner



- The figure above shows individual Learning Partner data on the percentage of schools indicating 1) *all* of the terms of the partnership are being fulfilled and 2) are *very satisfied* with the extent to which the LP is helping them to address their SIP goals.
- Some of the approved LPs have high marks on both indicators. They include IARSS, ULLC, and Ed Direction. Taken together, the data suggests that the terms of the partnership are aligned with schools' goals for improvement. It should be noted that CEC stands somewhere in the middle with 80% of schools indicating that all of the terms of the partnership are being fulfilled and 60% of schools reporting that CEC is helping to address goals.
- Conversely, several LP entities (i.e., ECRA Group and AIR) show high marks on fulfilling the terms of the partnership but low marks on helping schools address SIP goals. It is possible that while the partnership is providing supports to the school, these supports are not addressing areas of greatest need for schools.
- One LP, Harcourt Mifflin Houghton, received the lowest marks on both indicators. This LP also received the lowest marks on indicators of effective support systems (see page 7).
- The sample sizes varied by approved Learning Partner and some LPs were represented by a low number of schools; therefore, we caution against making firm conclusions about specific LPs. Alternatively, we recommend that this data be used to examine the communication provided to schools and approved Learning Partners regarding support and service expectations.

Schools' Understanding of IL EMPOWER

Key Finding: Schools reported varying levels of understanding of the roles of approved Learning Partners and IL EMPOWER Coordinators, as well as their responsibilities as participants of IL EMPOWER. Greater clarity could be provided to schools on the all of roles and supports.



- The figure above provides data on schools' ratings of the extent to which they understood IL EMPOWER supports and their responsibilities.
- Schools had the highest level of understanding of approved Learning Partners' role as an IL EMPOWER support (i.e., 68% reporting *great extent*). This was followed by their knowledge of the approved LPs that were available and their responsibilities as participants of IL EMPOWER. Lower on the list was schools' understanding of the supports that were available from the IL EMPOWER Coordinators (i.e., 49% great extent).
- Overall, the data suggests that schools could benefit from increased communication to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in IL EMPOWER. The percentage of schools reporting the highest level of understanding should be in the 75% to 80% range.

Appendix A: Ratings by Learning Partner

AIR (n=5)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
Customization of supports/services	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
Continuity of staff	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
Frequency of supports/services	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
Timeliness of supports/services	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	20% (1)	60% (3)	20% (1)
Level of collaboration	40% (2)	60% (3)	
Quality of services/supports	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	80% (4)	20% (1)	

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) (n=10)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	80% (8)	20% (2)	
Customization of supports/services	80% (8)	20% (2)	
Continuity of staff	80% (8)	10% (1)	10% (1)
Frequency of supports/services	60% (6)	40% (4)	
Timeliness of supports/services	70% (7)	30% (3)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	70% (7)	30% (3)	
Level of collaboration	70% (7)	30% (3)	
Quality of services/supports	70% (7)	30% (3)	
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	80% (8)	20% (2)	

ECRA Group (n=5)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	40% (2)	60% (3)	
Customization of supports/services	60% (3)	40% (2)	
Continuity of staff	40% (2)	60% (3)	
Frequency of supports/services	40% (2)	60% (3)	
Timeliness of supports/services	60% (3)	40% (2)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	60% (3)	40% (2)	
Level of collaboration	60% (3)	40% (2)	
Quality of services/supports	60% (3)	40% (2)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	40% (2)	60% (3)	
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	80% (4)	20% (1)	

Ed Direction (n=4)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	75% (3)	25% (1)	
Customization of supports/services	75% (3)	25% (1)	
Continuity of staff	75% (3)	25% (1)	
Frequency of supports/services	75% (3)	25% (1)	
Timeliness of supports/services	75% (3)	25% (1)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	75% (3)	25% (1)	
Level of collaboration	75% (3)	25% (1)	
Quality of services/supports	75% (3)	25% (1)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	75% (3)	25% (1)	
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	75% (3)	25% (1)	

Harcourt Mifflin Houghton (n=10)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	50% (5)	50% (5)	
Customization of supports/services	40% (4)	60% (6)	
Continuity of staff	20% (2)	70% (7)	10% (1)
Frequency of supports/services	30% (3)	70% (7)	
Timeliness of supports/services	40% (4)	50% (5)	10% (1)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	40% (4)	50% (5)	10% (1)
Level of collaboration	50% (5)	50% (5)	
Quality of services/supports	50% (5)	50% (5)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	30% (3)	70% (7)	
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	60% (6)	30% (3)	10% (1)

IARSS (n=22)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	91% (20)	9% (2)	
Customization of supports/services	86% (19)	14% (3)	
Continuity of staff	82% (18)	18% (4)	
Frequency of supports/services	91% (20)	9% (2)	
Timeliness of supports/services	91% (20)	9% (2)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	82% (18)	18% (4)	
Level of collaboration	91% (20)	9% (2)	
Quality of services/supports	77% (17)	23% (5)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	86% (19)	14% (3)	
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	96% (21)	4% (1)	

Urban Learning and Leadership Center (ULLC) (n=17)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	82% (14)	18% (3)	
Customization of supports/services	77% (13)	23% (4)	
Continuity of staff	77% (13)	23% (4)	
Frequency of supports/services	77% (13)	23% (4)	
Timeliness of supports/services	77% (13)	23% (4)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	76% (13)	18% (3)	6% (1)
Level of collaboration	77% (13)	23% (4)	
Quality of services/supports	77% (13)	23% (4)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	77% (13)	23% (4)	
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	76% (13)	18% (3)	6% (1)

IL-EMPOWER is the statewide system of support for school improvement in Illinois. Its mission is to build the capacity of educators to support continuous improvement of school-wide systems. Schools with the ESSA designation of lowest-performing 5%ⁱ are eligible for the following *comprehensive* supports under IL-EMPOWER.

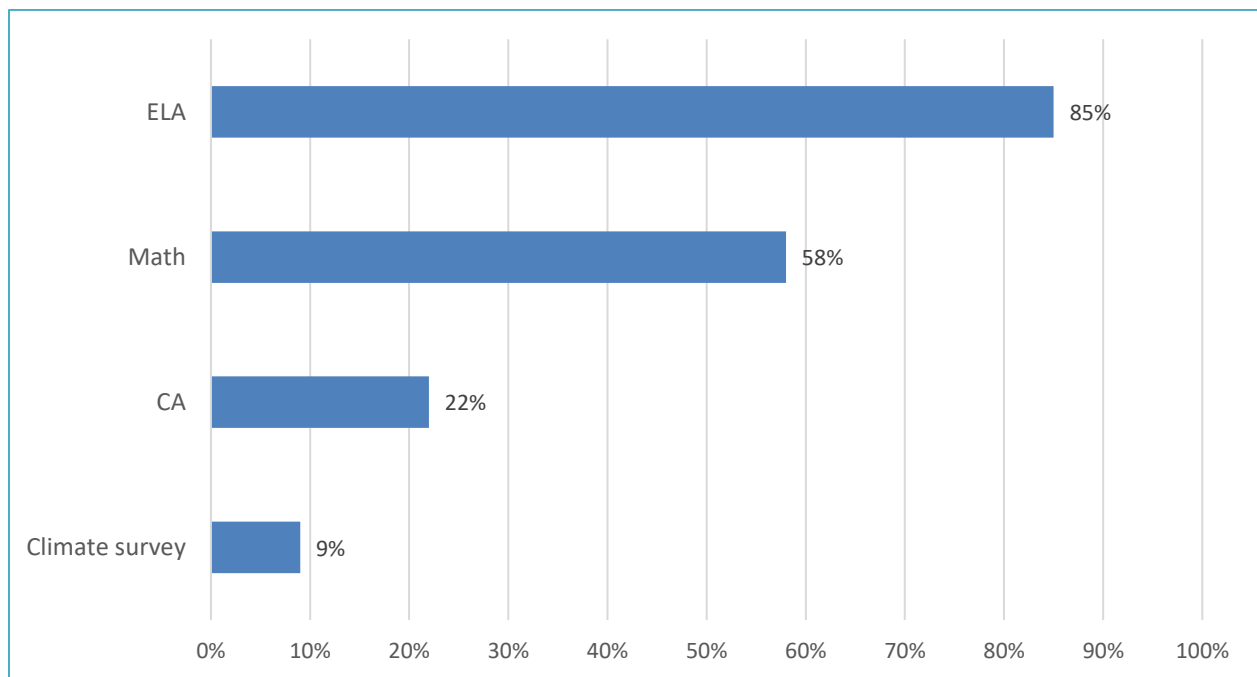
- ✎ Title I 1003(a) funding, as well as funding based on the state's equity formula that is weighted on student enrollment and level of district funding adequacy.
- ✎ Primary Learning Partners that provide professional learning supports in the areas of school culture, data driven instruction and decision making, instructional best practices and standards-based learning and assessment.ⁱⁱ
- ✎ Approved Learning Partners (LPs) that provide a variety of services such as professional development, coaching, data analyses, school improvement development, implementation, and monitoring, to support schools' improvement efforts. Schools could use Title I 1003(a) money to contract with one or more of the 54 state-vetted LPs.
- ✎ Assignment to a state-designated IL-EMPOWER Coordinator who provides guidance on the school improvement process, clarifies the participatory components of IL-EMPOWER, and facilitates quarterly meetings with LPs.
- ✎ School Improvement Planning (SIP) that includes a requirement to complete a system needs assessment using the Illinois Quality Framework Standard Rubric (IQFSR) and academic and school success quality data. The findings of the assessment are used to develop, implement, and monitor a 3-year School Improvement Plan (SIP).

This evaluation briefⁱⁱⁱ provides a summary of key findings related to comprehensive schools' implementation of school improvement plans and their progress toward meeting annual targets during the first two quarters of the 2021-2021 academic year. It also includes a summary of information provided by approved LPs during the same time, including the amount of money budgeted and invoiced for their services, as well as the number of service hours they provided to schools. The findings were derived from the 2020-2021 School Improvement Report (SIR) and Learning Partner Quarterly Monitoring Report.^{iv} These data reporting tools are housed in ISBE's I-WAS reporting system and are used to monitor schools' implementation of their SIPs and supports provided by approved LPs.

School Improvement Goals and Mid-Year Progress Toward Annual Targets

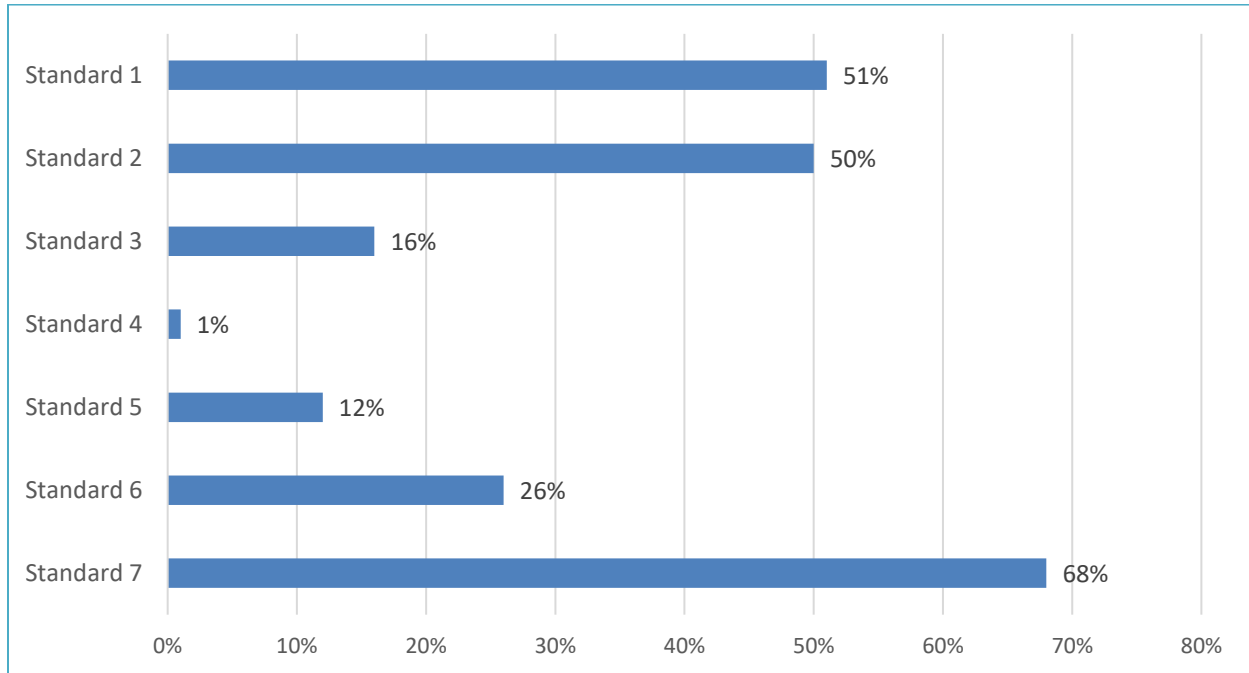
Summary: Most schools focused school improvement planning on improving ELA and math proficiency/growth, as well as adult practices linked to learning and instruction (Standard 7), continuous improvement (Standard 1), and culture and climate (Standard 2). By the end of the second quarter, nearly half of the schools reported little progress was made toward meeting annual targets for their academic goals. Conversely, a higher percentage of schools were showing progress toward meeting annual targets for adult practice-related goals. Schools that reported higher implementation of strategies identified to address goals also reported higher ratings on progress made toward meeting annual targets.

Goal Area: Student Academic and School Quality Indicators



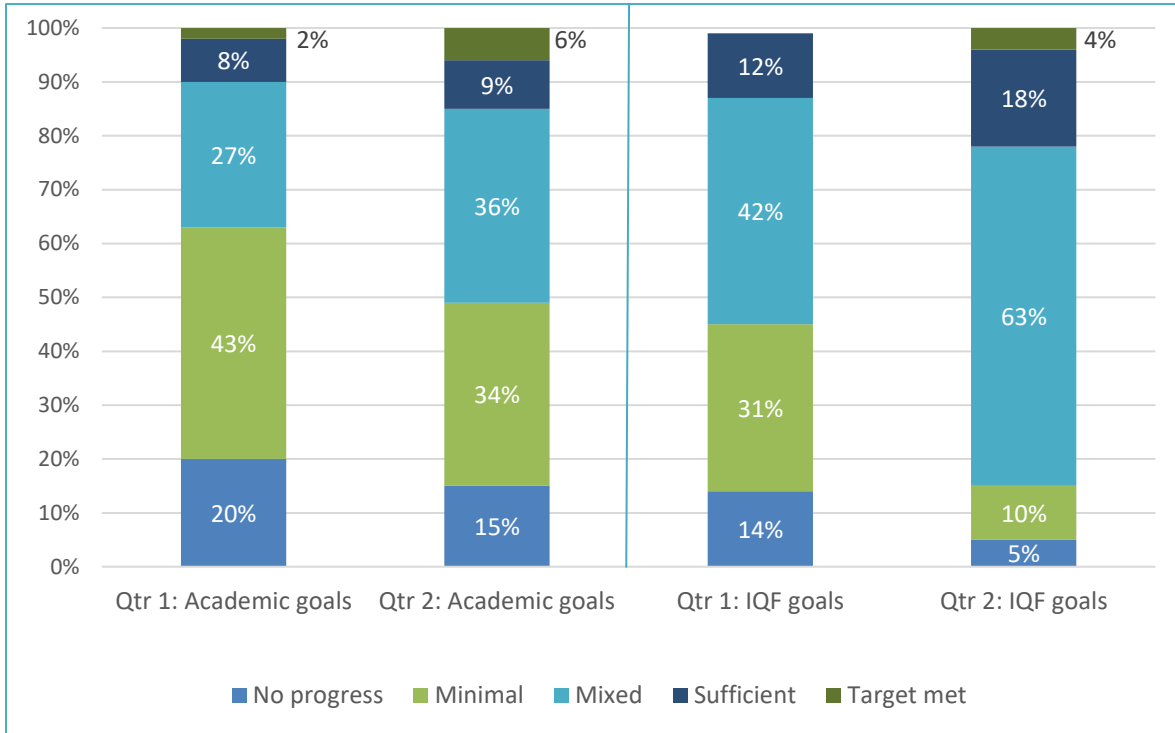
- Schools selected up to three goals focused on student academic and school quality indicator data on their school improvement plan.^v The indicator areas included: ELA proficiency/growth, math proficiency/growth, science proficiency, English Learner proficiency, High School graduation rate, chronic absenteeism, 9th graders on track to graduate rate, and climate survey (i.e., 5Essentials survey).
- As seen in the figure above, 85% of schools selected ELA proficiency/growth as a goal for improvement. This was followed by math (58%), chronic absenteeism (22%), and climate survey (9%).^{vi} Less than 5% of schools selected the remaining indicators: science proficiency, High School graduation, EL proficiency, or 9th grade on track, which are not shown in this figure.

Goal Area: Illinois Quality Framework Standards



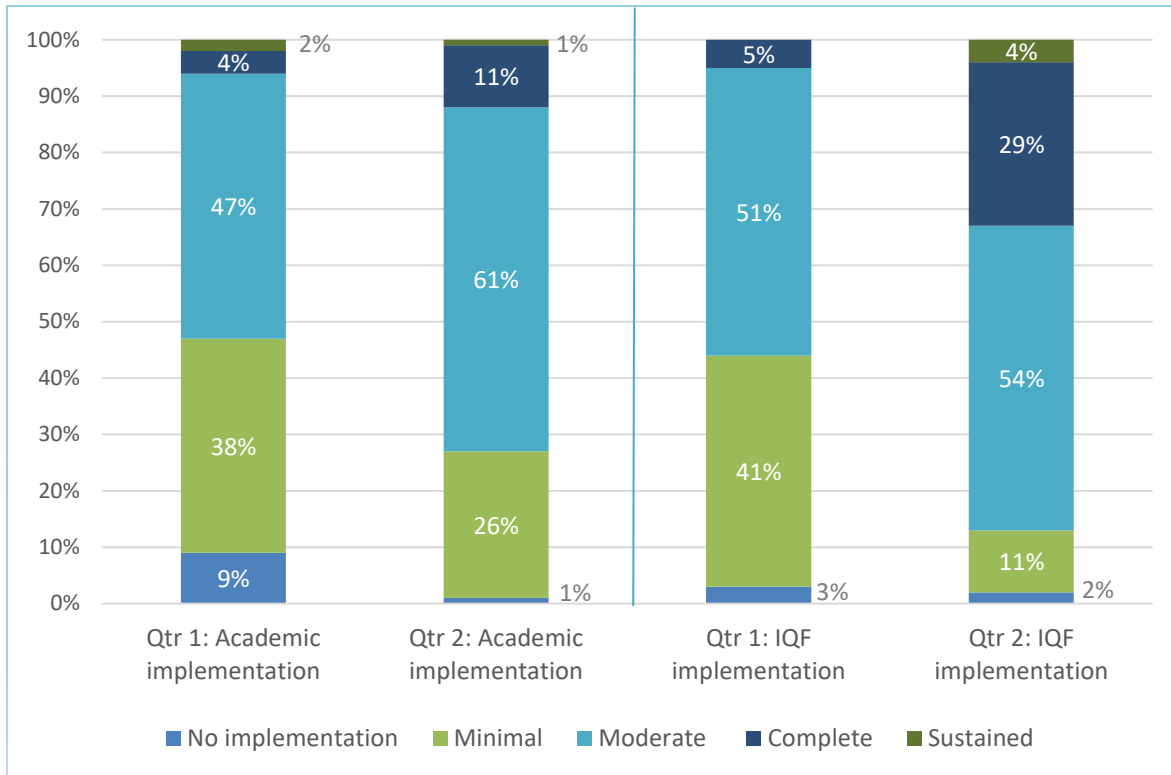
- Schools also selected Illinois Quality Framework (IQF) standards as areas of focus on their school improvement plans. Goals related to the IQF were intended to address changes and/or improvements in adult practices. For example, strategies identified by schools were primarily focused on improvements in adult practices in the following areas: 1) School Improvement Teams, 2) teacher participation in professional development, 3) delivery of instruction, 4) interventions, 5) school climate, and 6) educators' use of data.
- The figure above shows that 68% of schools identified goals related to Standard 7: Student and Learning Development. This was followed by Standard 1: Continuous Improvement and Standard 2: Culture and Climate at 51% and 50%, respectively. Just over one-quarter of schools (i.e., 26%) had goals related to Standard 6: Family and Community Engagement. Less than 20% of schools selected Standard 3: Shared Leadership (16%), Standard 4: Governance, Management and Operations (1%), and Standard 5: Educator and Employee Quality (12%) as areas of focus.

Midyear Progress toward Meeting Annual Targets



- Schools used a 5-point rubric that ranged from *no progress* to *target met* to rate their progress toward meeting annual targets on academic and IQF goals.^{vii}
- The left side of the figure summarizes progress data on **academic goals**. Here, most schools (i.e., 63%) reported *no* or *minimal* progress was made toward meeting annual targets during the first quarter. By the end of the second quarter, the percentage of schools that reported *no* or *minimal* progress decreased to 49%.
- For the remaining schools, 27% reported *mixed* progress during the first quarter, which increased to 36% during the second quarter. This means that sufficient growth was made for some of the targeted groups but not all (e.g., specific grades). Finally, there was a small percentage of schools that reported *sufficient* progress or *target met* both quarters, i.e., 10% in the first quarter and 15% in the second quarter.
- The right side of the figure summarizes progress data on **IQF goals**. Overall, schools fared better on IQF goals compared to academic goals. Specifically, the percentage of schools rating progress as *sufficient* or *target met* increased from 12% to 22% from first to second quarter. Conversely, the percentage of schools reporting *minimal* to *no* progress decreased from 45% in the first quarter to 15% in the second quarter.

Midyear Progress on Implementation



- Schools also rated their level of implementation of strategies/practices/programs related to academic and IQF goals using a 5-point rubric that ranged from *no* implementation to *sustained* levels of implementation.
- The figure above shows that during the first quarter 47% of schools rated academic-related implementation as *moderate* and 51% of schools rated IQF-related implementation as *moderate*. By second quarter, the percentage schools using the *moderate* category to describe levels of implementation increased to 61% and 54%, respectively.
- Additionally, there was an increase in the percentage of schools that rated implementation as *complete* from first to second quarter. More progress was made on implementation of IQF goals compared to academic goals.
- There was a significant correlation between schools' implementation and progress ratings (reported on page 4). Specifically, schools that reported higher levels of implementation also had higher ratings on progress made toward meeting annual goals.

Approved Learning Partner Services

Summary: Approved Learning Partners provided a variety of services to schools during the first two quarters of the school year. By the end of the second quarter, LPs had invoiced almost half of their budgeted amounts and provided an average of 33 hours of face-to-face support and 44 hours of virtual support to schools. While the review of data did not show a significant relationship between the portion of the budget expended, hours of support provided, and schools’ implementation and progress toward meeting annual targets, further analyses should be conducted at the end of the school year before making final conclusions about the impact of LP support on schools’ continuous improvement efforts.

Total Budgeted and Amounts Invoiced

	Mean	Range	
		Minimum	Maximum
Total budgeted for SY21	\$41,959.09	\$3,246.00	\$145,000.00
Amount invoiced for Quarter 1	\$8,084.83	\$0.00	\$42,500.00
Amount invoiced for Quarter 2	\$11,462.82	\$0.00	\$60,000.00
Combined amount for Quarters 1 and 2	\$19,547.65	\$0.00	\$80,000.00
Percentage of Total for Quarter 1 and 2	49%	0%	100%

- Approved Learning Partners reported the budgeted amount of their contracts for each school, as well as the amount that they invoiced during the first and second quarters. Shown in the table above, approved Learning Partners’ contracts with schools averaged at \$41,959.09 for the 2020-2021 school year. The contracts ranged from a low of \$3,246.00 to a high of \$145,000.00.
- Further examination of the budgeted amounts provided by LPs showed that Urban Learning and Leadership Center was represented in 12 out of the top 20 highest dollar contracts (~\$80,000 or more). Conversely, the lowest budgeted amounts were with ROEs from the IARSS (~10,000 or less).
- Also seen in the table, approved Learning Partners invoiced 49% of their budgets by the end of the second quarter. There were 8 schools where the LP did not report an invoiced amount during the first two quarters but provided services.
- There was no relationship between the amount of money budgeted or invoiced and schools’ levels of implementation and progress made toward meeting annual targets.

Hours of Service Provided

	Mean (range) Face-to-Face Hours	% of LPs not providing Face-to-Face	Mean (range) Virtual Hours	% of LPs not providing service
Average HOURS	32.56 (0-595)	66%	44.29 (0-360)	5%
Data analyses	10.67 (2-58)	87%	11.83 (1-49)	59%
System needs assessment	14.50 (2-58)	95%	12.75 (1-37)	93%
Development of SIP	5.50 (3-8)	93%	9.22 (1-30)	84%
Implementation of SIP	14.69 (2-63)	89%	10.76 (1-35)	72%
Monitoring/Evaluation of SIP	10.85 (1-58)	89%	11.53 (1-49)	58%
Professional learning	24.33 (1-65)	87%	24.00 (1-180)	43%
Coaching	37.07 (1-175)	77%	25.06 (1-180)	39%
Other	357.60 (1-595)	96%	3.44 (1-10)	93%

- The table above summarizes the average number of hours that approved Learning Partners provided services to schools during the first two quarters of the school year. It is divided into hours that LPs provided services face-to-face at the school and in a virtual setting. The table also includes the percentage of LPs that did not provide services in each category.
- Several conclusions can be made from the data presented in the table. One, LPs provided more hours of services in a virtual setting (average of 44.29 hours) than face-to-face (average of 32.56). Many schools were in a remote or hybrid learning schedule during the first half of the school year which would explain the use of virtual supports from LPs. Two, LPs provided the most hours of support in areas of professional learning and coaching, regardless of the setting.
- As would be expected, there was a significant correlation between the cumulative amount invoiced and the number of hours provided. In other words, Learning Partners that invoiced higher percentages of their budget in the first two quarters also provided more hours of support. There was no relationship, however, between the number of service provision hours and schools' progress ratings on academic and IQF goals.

Midyear Considerations

Measurement Incorporated offers the following suggestions after a review of the first and second quarter SIR and LPQMR datasets, most of which are intended to increase the rigor of the data and monitoring procedures.

- ∞ Ensure that schools are identifying SMART goals on their SIP. Our review of goals submitted by schools revealed that many did not adhere to SMART goal writing. For instance, schools reported vague goals that would make it difficult to measure and monitor improvement over time in a consistent fashion.
- ∞ Develop and implement a process for ensuring that schools and Learning Partners are submitting quarterly reports. Our sample included 108 out of 131 comprehensive schools that submitted/saved both quarter one and two reports. This means that there were 23 schools that did not submit reports. For the Learning Partners, there were 116 submissions for 97 schools. If each school is expected to partner with at least one LP then reports were missing for 34 schools. The expectation should be a 100% submission rate for both groups.
- ∞ Develop and implement a process for sharing the databases with the evaluator in a timely fashion. The evaluator made several requests spanning a 1 ½ month period before receiving the information needed for analyses.
- ∞ Consider providing training or a webinar to schools and Learning Partners to review instructions on how to complete the quarterly reports and address questions about data fields and requirements.

ⁱ This includes lowest performing 5% of eligible Title I schools, statewide, and high schools that have a graduation rate of 67% or less.

ⁱⁱ Illinois Association of Regional State Superintendents, Illinois Principal's Association, Illinois Association of School Administrators, Illinois Resource Center, IL-MTSS Network, Lurie Children's Hospital

ⁱⁱⁱ The evaluation is being conducted by Measurement Incorporated, an external evaluation company contracted by ISBE to conduct a three-year study of IL-EMPOWER.

^{iv} Quarter 1 and 2 SIR reports were submitted by 108 out of 131 schools. Seventy-six of the schools were in their second year of SIP implementation under IL-EMPOWER and twenty-seven were in their first year. LPQMR reports were submitted by 116 LPs representing 97 schools.

^v Illinois' ESSA plan includes student academic and school quality indicators that are used to describe how well an individual school is meeting the needs of students. A school's performance on the indicators determines their summative designation under the state's ESSA plan and subsequently, their eligibility for IL-EMPOWER.

^{vi} Schools selected up to 3 goals, therefore the percentages do not add up to 100.

^{vii} Schools also reported the mean percentage of progress made during each quarter (e.g., average proficiency rate on assessments related to their goal). Progress ratings were significantly related to the mean percentage of progress reported by schools from the first to second quarter. For example, schools that reported a higher level of progress (e.g., sufficient or target) also reported higher averages on the percentage of progress, whereas, schools that reported lower levels of progress also reported zero to low averages on the percentage of progress.

IL-EMPOWER Program Evaluation

2021 Principal Interviews

Submitted to
Illinois State Board of Education

September 8, 2021

By Tania Jarosewich, PhD



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In partnership with



IL-EMPOWER 2021 Principal Interviews

Project Goals

One component of the 2021 external evaluation of IL-EMPOWER was to conduct a set of case studies to examine leadership and instructional practices in schools that had significantly improved academic achievement during the 2018-2019 school year. The Measurement Incorporated (MI) evaluation team, in collaboration with the Illinois State Board of Education’s (ISBE) Center of System Support, developed four research questions that would be investigated through interviews with school leaders.

- **Research Question 1.** What was the impact on schools of having received a designation on planning and organizing instruction in the subsequent school year?
- **Research Question 2.** What programs, systems, and/or strategies did schools implement to address needs and monitor implementation?
- **Research Question 3.** How did the organization build capacity to enact change and sustain efforts? What impact did COVID restrictions have on these efforts?
- **Research Question 4.** What recommendations or advice can successful schools offer the IL-EMPOWER system about how best to support school-based improvement efforts in Illinois?

The goal of the case studies was to help inform ISBE about how school personnel respond to, and engage with, school change efforts and to serve as the starting point for the 2022 evaluation process.

School Selection

The MI evaluation team reviewed Illinois school assessment data to identify a set of schools that participated in the IL-EMPOWER statewide system of support and had moved from the “Targeted” or “Comprehensive” Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) designation during school year 2018 (SY18) to “Commendable” in school year 2019 (SY19). Due to COVID¹, 2019 spring assessment data is the most recent information available. The evaluation team identified a subset of schools with the highest percentage growth on mathematics and English language arts academic indicators, and further refined that list to a set of schools dispersed geographically around the state with a range of demographic and school characteristics (see Figure 1). Schools located relatively close geographically allowed for an alternate selection if one of the schools was unable or unwilling to participate.

Table 1 lists the schools invited to participate in the case study interview. Of these schools, Gordon Bush Elementary School and Sandoval Junior High School also participated in the previous statewide system of support process, Illinois State System of Support (IL SSOS), and could potentially provide information about

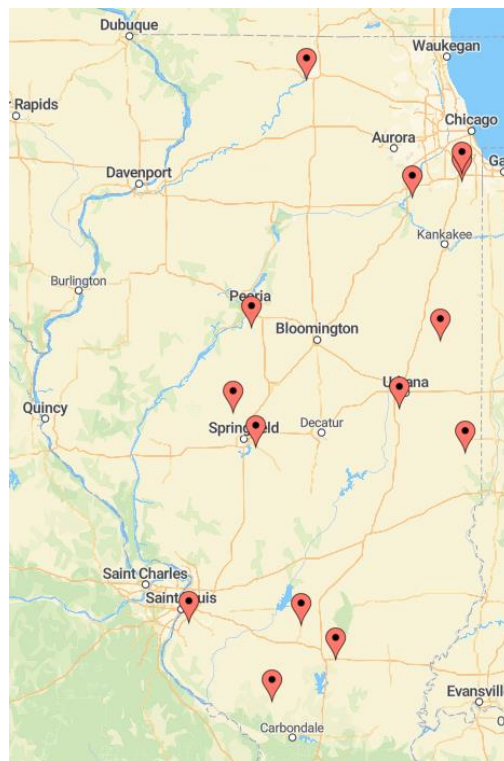


Figure 1. Geographic Dispersion of Potential Case Study Schools

¹ <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/state.aspx?source=trends&source2=iar&Stateid=IL>

the impact the types of support offered in both the IL SSOS and IL-EMPOWER systems.

Table 1. Potential Case Study Schools

Primary list					Participation
1.	Childs Elem School	Posen-Robbins ESD	Compreh	Commend	Yes
2.	Gordon Bush Elementary	East St Louis SD 189	Compreh	Commend	Yes
3.	Lincoln Elem School	East Peoria SD 86	Targeted	Commend	Yes
4.	Pinckneyville Elem School	Pinckneyville SD 50	Compreh	Exemplary	Yes
5.	Riverton Middle School	Riverton CUSD 14	Compreh	Commend	Yes
6.	Cassell Elem School	City of Chicago SD	Targeted	Commend	Declined
7.	Thomas Jefferson Elem	Joliet PSD 86	Targeted	Commend	No response
8.	West View Elem School	Rockford SD 205	Targeted	Commend	No response
Alternate list					
9.	Cissna Park Jr High School	Cissna Park CUSD 6	Targeted	Commend	No response
10.	Sandoval Jr High School	Sandoval CUSD 501	Compreh	Commend	No response

Project Timeline

The details of the interview process were finalized towards the end of the 2021 school year in late spring. This time of the year is, generally, hectic for principals, so the challenges of the 2020-2021 COVID learning year resulted in additional time constraints. Therefore, the process was planned to be as streamlined as possible, to decrease burden on schools but still collect the information needed to address the research questions.

- Finalize case study process: February 2021
- Select case study school sample: March 1, 2021 – March 15, 2021
- Send initial invitations and schedule interviews: March 15, 2021 – March 31, 2021
- Conduct interviews: April – May 30, 2021
- Create report draft, incorporate feedback, submit final report: July 2021

Invitation to Participate

ISBE staff sent an initial email to the principals of the potential case study schools to introduce the evaluation team and the goals of the case study process. The MI evaluation team sent follow up emails to provide additional details about the project and to schedule interviews. Each school received up to three emails. Administrators at five schools participated in an interview with one administrator declining to participate, and no response from four schools. The MI team was pleased that the five schools agreed to participate in the interviews and implemented an efficient and streamlined process to accommodate school schedules.

Interview Questions

Interviews with school administrators were conducted through a video conference call in Spring 2021. The following set of questions were used to guide the semi-structured interviews:

1. How did your school identify areas of focus for improvement in the 2018 school year? [SY18 was selected since that was the most recent year with full assessment data]
2. What programs, systems, strategies did you implement to address needs and monitor implementation?
3. Did a focus on or changes in any of the following areas impact outcomes?

- a. School Leadership
 - i. Change in leadership structure/governance/staffing
 - ii. Change in mindset/focus among school leaders (e.g., prioritizing social justice or multiculturalism)
 - iii. Professional development, learning conference, learning network
 - iv. Any other noteworthy changes to school leadership?
 - b. Teachers
 - i. Staffing changes in area of improvement (or other areas)
 - ii. Change in mindset/focus of teachers
 - iii. Professional development – more or different PD for teachers
 - iv. Any other noteworthy changes to teaching staff/training/support?
 - c. Parents/Community
 - i. New community-school partnerships? How did they come to be?
 - ii. Changes in engagement with parents and community (level of engagement, types of activities, etc.)
 - d. School Climate?
 - i. Noteworthy changes to school climate
 - ii. Major changes to disciplinary action/SEL?
4. Which/what combination were most important to success?
 - a. To what extent did targeted efforts and/or schoolwide efforts contribute to success?
 5. How did you build the capacity for new programs? (if not yet discussed)
 6. Progress during distance/hybrid COVID learning
 - a. To what extent were you able to continue successful interventions/systems during distance/hybrid learning?
 - b. Did you develop any new strategies that you found to be effective during this time?
 7. What resources were most helpful in implementing changes?
 8. How are you sustaining your efforts?
 9. What advice can you offer other IL-EMPOWER schools as they work to improve student outcomes? What supports do schools need most and how can IL-EMPOWER be more effective?

Results

Impact of IL-EMPOWER Designation

All five principals stated that receiving the designation of Comprehensive or Targeted School Improvement from ISBE was sobering. Only one of the five schools had previously been in this level of school improvement standing. However, administrators and school staff quickly understood the reasons for the designation.

All principals agreed that the designation focused attention on the need for school improvement and gave them the standing to make significant change. Having this designation allowed principals to move quicker to recommend changes and tackle more comprehensive reform than they could have otherwise undertaken. Even the principal in the school that had previously participated in IL SSOS used the opportunity of the designation to

“Our school is new on the list. It was shocking and devastating. We were a spotlight school in prior years, making progress for many of those years...It had an effect on staff morale.”

“We’re proud of our building and culture. We took offence at lowest designation. It bothered my teachers.”

engage the school in deeper reflection about student progress, instructional practices, and needed support to move student learning forward.

The IL-EMPOWER funded programs, professional learning, and support was critical for these five schools. All five principals stated that they could not have made significant progress without the additional funding that allowed them to provide the necessary technology, training, and instructional materials that had been lacking.

Of the five principals, three were new to their role at the time that the school was designated for IL-EMPOWER support and one became principal the year following the designation. Although several had worked in their school district prior to that year, none saw the designation as a threat or *refereundum* on their leadership capacity. This was important, as it allowed for clear-eyed reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional programs and strategies, staff capacity, and organizational structure of the school.

Systems and Strategies for School Improvement

School improvement, under IL-EMPOWER, involves an iterative process for continuous growth and development. As viewed in Figure 2, schools begin by engaging in a collaborative *data analysis* of their system, student academic and school success quality data, and local student data. They also participate in a *system needs assessment* that includes completion of the Illinois Quality Framework Supporting Rubric (IQFSR) to identify strengths and gaps in adult practices of their school system.

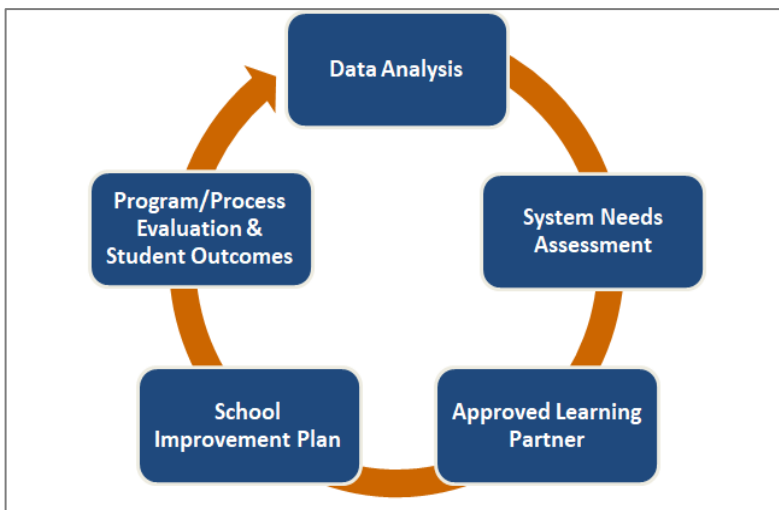


Figure 2. IL-EMPOWER School Improvement Process

Source: ISBE Webinar, January 2019

Based on their ESSA designation and eligibility for additional supports through IL-EMPOWER, schools' contract with an approved Learning Partner (LP)- a provider with expertise in systems improvement, teaching, or learning. Schools develop a School Improvement Plan (SIP) that addresses areas of concern identified through the analyses of student data and the needs assessment. Concomitantly, districts apply for additional federal funds through the Title I School Improvement—1003(a) Grant to fund the implementation of their SIP. Districts may also support schools throughout the needs assessment process. Finally, schools implement and monitor their improvement plans and analyze student outcomes. Not depicted in the figure, but also part of IL-EMPOWER, are state-designated School Support Managers (SSMs) who serve as thought-partners to schools that are designated as lowest-performing and located outside of Chicago Public Schools (CPS).

During the interviews, principals discussed the strategies that they employed to address school needs. **Table 2** lists the number of times that each of the IL School Improvement Standards was mentioned during the interviews to gauge the relative attention to each of the standards and steps of the continuous improvement process.

Table 2. Number of Codes for each Standard

	N	%
Standard 1. Continuous Improvement	48	26%
Step 1. Data analysis and Step 2. System needs assessment (N=13)		
Step 3. Approved learning partner (N=15)		
Step 4. School improvement plan (N=2)		
Step 5. Monitoring progress (N=18)		
Standard 2. Culture and Climate	12	6%
Standard 3. Shared Leadership Development	32	17%
Standard 4. Governance, Management, Operations	30	16%
Standard 5. Educator and Employee Quality	20	11%
Standard 6. Family and Community Engagement	13	7%
Standard 7. Student and Learning Development	31	16%

Standard 1: Continuous Improvement

Important to the IL-EMPOWER process is that schools have a clear understanding of student and staff needs and that the school develop a focused plan for improvement. During the interviews, principals discussed the process that they led in their schools to identify areas of need and plan for improvement. The discussion of data analysis was often embedded within the discussion of systems need assessment, with principals describing an iterative process that included identifying areas of focus, determining systems-level change and combinations of strategies, and engaging stakeholders in the improvement process. One principal advised about the importance of taking the time to work fully through the needs assessment process with school stakeholders to clearly understand how best to effect positive and productive change. One principal stated, *“I knew that teachers were ready when I got here because they were at their breaking point, we needed to do something...Going through the rubric, it took hours, we really did it and had conversations.”* These conversations helped staff to begin to look forward to solutions.

Several principals stated that they were generally aware of school needs, but the process of conducting a needs assessment was valuable nonetheless. One principal stated, that they had been *“hired with clear directives of things that needed to change”* and another that they *“already knew [the] weaknesses”* and both agreed that the assessment process aligned with initial ideas. A third stated that the *“needs assessment gave validity to what I knew.”* In all these cases, the needs assessment process helped principals to identify combinations of potential changes that could contribute to growth and give administrators and staff a clarity about where to focus efforts.

The needs assessment process helped principals identify strategies and systems that needed to be put in place to support system-level school improvement. One principal said, *“The district [had] recognized that instructional practices needed to change but not that there were underlying culture and climate things that were going on.”* The needs assessment process helped to uncover areas contributing to the low performance that might otherwise have been ignored.

When conducted properly with sufficient support from school and district administrators and engaging with a variety of stakeholders, the contribution of the varied perspectives helped schools to clearly understand the problems and to start building solutions. Principals stated that the input and engagement of district and school administrators and teachers was critical to the process. One principal stated that the structured process helped *“teachers feel vulnerable enough to express their needs.”* No principals mentioned that parents or students had been engaged in needs assessment, although the interview did not specifically ask about the engagement of these groups of stakeholders.

“We spent hours, weeks going through the rubric having honest conversations. We needed to talk and get a good sense of where we were at to move forward...The rubric seems overwhelming, but you just need to do it...You have to embrace it and good things can happen. And your students deserve that. I don’t know how to get people to understand that it’s not a hoop to jump through. It was to identify and bring things to light that you haven’t thought about before. Going through that rubric framed it in a different way.”

The third step of the continuous improvement process focuses on learning partners. Principals in one region were pleased with their regional school specialist and ROE staff, discussing the importance of having *“school support specialists with the content knowledge able to provide support”* and to *“navigate through data.”*

However, principals had mixed reviews about the utility of learning partners, particularly the availability of approved partners with the skills and an approach that was effective for them. One principal stated, *“The providers that the grant allows, I’ve not found helpful. The frustration is not letting us use providers that we know that we would like to use.”* This principal wanted to work with a partner who was not on the approved list, further stating, *“I wish they would not make you use their specific learning partners. That’s the biggest obstacle. Here’s the money, I know you need it, but you can only use it the way that I want you to use it.”* The principal also wished for a different IL-EMPOWER Coordinator, stating, *“This year, I haven’t gotten anything out of [the IL-EMPOWER Coordinator]. It’s been a waste of time to meet. [The previous person] helped push me and helped me push the staff. She laid it out very well for all of us. Didn’t beat around the bush. We miss her a lot.”*

Principals wished for more freedom to select partners and the way in which they would like to work with partners. One principal said that the district has *“scaled back on consultants”* to ensure that they are engaging only those who provide the focus in the area that is of immediate and critical need. Another wished for partners that work collaboratively, *“We know our schools. We don’t need them to come in and do something to us. Come hand to hand with us.”* Schools liked working with partners with whom they had a previous relationship, and partners who knew the context and community of the school. A number of the principals stated that they enjoyed working with other school district or ROE learning partners.

Principals did not discuss their school improvement plans in great detail. Two principals passively mentioned the plan, but more often discussed the other aspects of the continuous improvement process, such as progress monitoring. All five principals discussed the importance of frequent progress monitoring on specific metrics and data points. One noted, *“It’s been great to be able to say ‘look where we were last year and look where we*

are now'. It's been refreshing." From the interviews, it was clear that staff in these schools was using data more often and with greater facility to support requests for program change, sharing successes, and modifying instructional strategies.

In contrast to what is often heard about school assessment, principals were disappointed about the lack of large-scale assessment in Illinois due to COVID. One principal said, "*We're devastated not to have had testing in 2020.*" Principals were frustrated that they would not be able to assess student growth over the year. All were optimistic that their students made gains despite the challenges of COVID disruptions. Principals were glad to have progress monitoring data, and one principal discussed specifically gains on NWEA testing over the year, saying, "*We have seen huge gains, tons. We had seen gains and were anticipating growth.*"

Standard 2: Culture and Climate

All five principals discussed the importance of a positive school climate and culture, with one principal mentioning specifically the importance of "*relationships with students and adult social emotional support*" to sustain changes in instructional practices. Instead of beginning with a new curriculum or professional learning about instructional practices, one principal invested funds and attention on professional learning for staff about "*mindfulness, morning meetings, and building relationships with students ... we focused on changing adult mindset about taking care of themselves [and] how we speak with kids. It's made a huge change.*" Once the social emotional piece was in place, the second year of IL-EMPOWER implementation turned to reading and writing instructional practice.

Another principal attended to culture and climate by investing in informal learning that was exciting and interesting to teachers and students.

This principal said, "*I asked teachers what they were really interested in and tried to make it happen. [We created a] Lego wall and [other] fun elements. I loved going to the maker space and watching kids excited about doing activities.*"

"Our school climate is very positive. The custodian is just as important as me in that child's life. Our building is immaculate. If you're a good, custodian, aid, central office staff, you have a role in every kids' education. We all have our part. We all affect our kids' school careers."

Standard 3: Shared Leadership

All five principals were kind, thoughtful, and open about their strengths and weaknesses. All five subscribed to a shared leadership philosophy and described strategies that helped to bring together and empower teachers and staff to work together to achieve school goals. Principals mentioned school-level curriculum and instructional leadership teams that included administrators, teachers, staff, and instructional coaches that met regularly to review goals, share information, discuss strategies, and implement school reform efforts for a "*more solid and consistent*" school. One principal said, "*It's good to have [the leadership team] sitting around the table and thinking things through before we push it out and have staff buy in. ... it's the way to do things – my ego will not be too big that I won't listen.*"

One principal specifically discussed the value of listening to teacher input, which in the case of this school uncovered "*glaring points that we wanted to correct.*" Another described the efforts of a group of teachers who successfully advocated for change with the district curriculum team based on data that teachers had collected. Another principal described the advantage of working in a small school to involve all staff in

discussions and decisions, describing the philosophy as *“everybody on board and together. When we’re brainstorming, [we all bring] ideas to the table.”*

Despite success with strengthening shared leadership within schools, one principal commented about an ongoing challenge with a lack of shared leadership and authentic engagement with the school board. This situation was one that affected teacher morale and resulted in staff turnover. This example highlights the need for engagement across all levels in a school district. Even though this school was successful and made progress on IL-EMPOWER indicators, the principal noted that a better relationship with the school board would have added to the effectiveness of implementing changes.

Standard 4: Governance, Management, Operations

All five principals described a careful and measured approach to deciding how to use IL-EMPOWER funds, and took care not to purchase unnecessary materials or services. They carefully selected elements to meet school needs and build staff capacity to use the new tools. Principals described that they began with specific elements, and expanded efforts as staff experienced success with new strategies or methods. One of the principals new to the position quickly realized that a step-by-step, measured approach was the best way to proceed. This principal stated that at the start, there was a desire to *“fix everything. We came in as a leadership team and focused on everything, 7-8 goals, 3-4 consultants, and curriculum support... We got smarter in Year 2 and 3... The district did an evaluation on consultants and we scaled back and took a laser focus on consultants [so that staff] in the school [could] build capacity to do those things on their own.”* This school tightened its focus onto two core teams *“one instructional and one on culture.”*

Another topic the principals discussed related to governance, management, and operations was the financial outlay required to improve technology, hardware, professional learning, and technology integration. Principals made careful selections, choosing less expensive Chromebooks to be able to provide hardware to a greater number of students. One discussed the challenge of *“having 30 Chromebooks for 120 kids,”* which created barriers for students to access curriculum materials. Another school *“switched the computer lab to full Chromebooks. ... to make sure that everybody has Chrome tablets.”*

Technology integration was an important focus of IL-EMPOWER funds to ensure that staff and students were able to make the best use of new hardware. This focus on technology integration became very important during the distance and hybrid learning that occurred in the schools at the end of the 2019-2020 and during the 2020-2021 school years due to COVID. One principal said about technology enhancement and integration that the school is *“still working on that. [We] got approval for an instructional technology coach and put devices in all of our children’s hands before the pandemic.”*

Principals discussed the impact of staff turnover as both an opportunity and a *“challenge to improve.”* Staff retirements allowed principals to hire teachers trained in the most recent instructional strategies and who, generally, were more willing to experiment. One principal said, *“New staff don’t know anything other than workshop model. They say, ‘Well yea, that’s how you teach reading. What do you mean that you didn’t have differentiated groups?’”* Principals were pleased to hire staff whose instructional philosophy and approach aligned with the schools’ goals. However, principals also discussed how staff turnover was disruptive to students and the school community. The need to hire and support newly hired staff required a great deal of a principal’s attention.

Standard 5: Educator and Employee Quality

All five schools developed a robust system of professional learning to support newly hired teachers and veteran staff. Professional learning at three schools focused on helping teachers use the core literacy program to support student needs and decrease the need to purchase additional resources or supplies. Professional learning also helped support best instructional practices in learning centers, technology integration, and social emotional curricula and practice.

“We have good teachers who care about kids and were doing what they thought was best but didn’t have the tools.”

One principal hired a consultant and another an instructional coach to support teachers. Additional staff to support professional learning and coaching were particularly important when schools started to make many changes. Teacher professional development is discussed later, in the “Building Capacity to Enact Change and Sustain Efforts” section.

Standard 6: Family and Community Engagement

All principals discussed efforts to improve communication with families, support family needs, and increase family comfort and familiarity with the school environment. Schools tried a variety of ways to communicate with parents, including going out into the community to share messages, taking food and clothing to families, using technology (e.g., Class Dojo), and inviting families to school for events. The schools used parent liaisons and community partners to connect with families. Schools also asked families to help identify their needs and develop solutions rather than assuming that the schools’ solutions would be useful.

“It’s hard to get parents to come into the school so we come to them. We work with community partners and we go to the neighborhoods. We had a meet and greet. It was informal - parents could come to talk to us, meet new staff, see who’s coming back. We shared data, we shared food. Hope we can get back to things like that after COVID.”

Two principals mentioned that they began to monitor attendance more closely after the IL-EMPOWER designation, reaching out to families to ask about reasons for student absences, alerting parents, making calls, and keeping parents engaged. One principal said that the *“Principal and superintendent, we go pick up kids. Why are you still in your pajamas? We pick them up and bring them to school.”*

Another principal said, *“There are lots of things that contribute to why kids are not here. We created wraparound support for families.”*

“We need to hear from our families what they want instead of us sitting in an office making decisions for them. We complain that we don’t see certain families. And we think we know answers. How about we ask people what we can do to help/change this.”

Two principals mentioned specifically the importance of student and family feedback on the Five Essentials survey (i.e., the criteria of 25% participation among parents). Principals had not previously attended to this indicator,

not having “*communicated with parents or cared about that survey.*” The impetus from IL-EMPOWER seems to have significantly impacted robust and authentic engagement with families.

Standard 7: Student and Learning Development

All five principals took seriously their role as instructional leaders. They knew exactly which core programs their teachers were using, were aware of alignment across grades and whether that alignment needed to be strengthened, and what intervention programs were in place for students who needed additional support. Several principals noted that their school had no core curriculum at the start of the grant period; teachers were using their own materials or those that did not align across grades or with grade-level standards. Three principals adopted new core curriculum programs to meet school needs.

Other areas of improvement in student and learning development included strengthening learning centers, improving instructional strategies for writing, supporting differentiated instruction, and supporting problem solving skills. Two principals mentioned moving to mathematics instruction after literacy instruction was strengthened. Two discussed intervention programs and out-of-school or afterschool programs to help address gaps in learning.

Several administrators discussed the importance of maximizing learning time and instructional efficiency. One such strategy was the work of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and behavior teams to decrease time out of classrooms and suspensions.

Building Capacity to Enact Change and Sustain Efforts

Three general themes emerged in the discussion about building capacity and sustaining change: professional development and support, connecting efforts with other initiatives, and making systems changes that will support sustained efforts.

Professional Development

Principals emphasized the importance of building staff capacity and a structure that would help support new ways of working together. One principal said, “*I won’t be here forever. What structures have I put in place for the work to continue when I’m not here? It’s building capacity in my staff. It’s not me leading it, it’s the staff.*”

All five principals discussed the high level of teacher commitment to students. One principal said of staff, “*They are willing to work hard and have genuine care for kids in our community...Many a day when I get here at 6:30am, teachers are already here. It’s an outstanding staff...they believe in what they do. They love kids.*” Principals discussed the importance of supporting teachers’ professional learning and building capacity with a robust system of professional learning to “*stabilize people’s skills.*” One specific strategy for teacher learning was teacher leaders guiding peer-to-peer professional learning, conducting walkthroughs, and providing constructive feedback and support to peers.

One principal discussed the importance of the IL-EMPOWER School Support Manager in helping to build school and teacher capacity. This required that the principal understands their own skills and limitations and have a strong trust in the specialist. The principal said, “*I understand when I’m done. Next year, we’re bringing outside people to work with us. I’ve observed some teacher going back to old habits that we’ve had before.*” The principal has looked forward to determine whether different types of consulting and support will be required in later years to scaffold movement improvement.

Principals balanced the engagement of consultants with building staff capacity and skills. One principal stated that she uses the idea of “*strategic reduction,*” which is reducing the need for outside help by building internal

capacity. The principal is thoughtful about how many consultants to engage with, is clear about the role consultants will play, and mindful of a timeline for how long they will work in the school. The principal *“made tough decisions about when to stop working with a consultant because staff had built capacity...[It is] thinking about sustainability as your work.”*

This focus on building capacity was mentioned by another principal, who discussed the importance to *“prioritize funds that would best benefit [our school], rather than throwing money at providers. We’re not spending it on somebody else’s. We had to push back a lot. initially IL-EMPOWER was really pushing for partners. We said, we don’t need somebody else.”*

Connecting with Other Efforts to Support Sustainability

Two principals discussed the importance of connecting different initiatives in their schools in order to take advantage of all of the available resources to support student progress. One principal described the value of having built relationships with a local foundation and county department of health to connect with families and provide out-of-school learning opportunities. This work, funded by the foundation, provided additional staff as well as methods to address student educational needs. A second principal discussed using funds from another school improvement grant to hire a family engagement specialist who has supported school efforts to increase family engagement, including family participation in the “5 Essentials Survey.”

Systems-Level Change

The final strategy to sustaining change mentioned by all five principals, focused on systems-level changes. Principals identified district-level support as important to implementing some initiatives and sustaining others. One principal said, *“[Central office] supported me and were a partner at the table. They were a part of the conversation. Building leadership [is effective]...when you have [the district and] teachers on board.”*

One principal discussed the impact of a district-wide attendance effort, the “Strive for 95” campaign, which included a district attendance team, district and school incentives, and support for families. District engagement enhanced the message and emphasized its importance to students and families. It also took advantage of existing district infrastructure and efficiency.

Another valuable district-level effort that supported school improvement was the assistance of district staff in analyzing and using assessment data. One district implemented a dashboard system across all schools, and an assessment specialist helped schools utilize the district tool and data to make decisions. The support of the assessment specialist and a curated tool were useful. The principal said, *“That extra layer helps tremendously.”*

In a number of these project schools, the school led the district in making improvements. *“Some things that happened at the school level, the district took the school’s lead. Family engagement started at [this school] and pretty quickly turned that around in the district.”* This work across the district increased the chances that the efforts would be sustained.

Impact of COVID Restrictions on Improvement Efforts

The five schools in the study seemed to have weathered the challenges and difficulties of COVID restrictions fairly well. The fact that these principals were able to make the time to participate in the evaluation study was a testament to the level of stability that they achieved for their school.

The resilience, flexibility, and attention to detail of these principals is evident in the way that they addressed the COVID learning year. One principal described that the year started off with *“jumping in there. Not having an actual plan, thinking on our feet. We knew that we had to provide instruction no matter how it looked. I’m*

proud to say that my teachers took the bulls by the horn and ran with it.” This principal said that the school community discussed how learning should look and teachers took the initiative to structure learning opportunities for their students. The principal continued, “We’ve continued operations as usual. You wouldn’t have thought that we were in a pandemic – we tackled everything head on. [It’s a] testament, parents calling and telling us how wonderful it went. Bringing back students, some were hesitant but seeing how it looked, more wanted to come back. Scholars come first. [We] center everything around that.” Another principal described a similar situation, “This school year, we were only remote two weeks. We still had morning meetings every morning with all students. Even students who are on remote learning have morning meeting time. I was very pleased with that. Even though in-person is not sitting together on a rug, we still have things going on.”

Another principal described the hard work that the principal and teachers put into welcoming students back to school and in-person learning: *“Every day, since day one...People wanted to work this year and that’s what we’ve done.”* The principal further stated that IL-EMPOWER efforts, particularly the culture change that had happened in the school prior to the 2020-2021 school year, supported the school’s ability to provide a robust learning experience during COVID. Part of the success was the principal’s commitment to personally informing families about health matters and being open to communication from families and staff. *“A lot of [principals] would not make personal calls. I believe in standing in front of the people...They see me, they can approach me, my door always open, people can come talk to me at any time.”*

Similarly, another principal discussed how the professional learning system created prior to COVID was quickly adapted as staff *“learn[ed] how to do things virtually. [Professional learning] had to [be] bite-sized. [It became] a true model of PD. Teachers signed up for specific strategies, skills, and facilitators that they wanted to see more of. They could bounce in and out of PD”* to select experiences that would best meet their needs.

Another principal discussed successes with family engagement and family support. This principal expressed gratitude about the program that a local foundation had started in partnership with the county health department the year prior to the COVID pandemic. This existing partnership offered a foundation from which to engage with families. *“It was a lifesaver. We started with them knocking on doors to get people food and internet access. [We had] a full-time social worker in my sister school who works with us and our families and a liaison to other community agencies.”* Through the partnership, the school better understood family transportation and child care needs. The community work had led to the school creating a way to hold meetings (e.g., Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings) through Google Meet before the pandemic hit, which led to seamless use of the system during COVID. Although these processes were not a direct outcome of the IL-EMPOWER grant, this principal stated that by ensuring that all school efforts and programs are aligned, her school was able to make greater progress during COVID. This principal said that the school also had success with continuing monthly PTA meetings, drive-up school activities, and district initiatives.

A specific challenge during COVID learning that one principal mentioned, was maintaining attendance and student interest. This principal said, *“[We had a] hard time to get kids to come in. Virtual kids were not coming in. We had about 55 quarantined kids at any given time. We won’t get the 90% attendance threshold.”*

Even so, all five of these principals focused on the positive changes or at least the adequate adaptations that their schools had made to meet student and family needs during the COVID pandemic. Although each expressed disappointment that the learning environment was less robust and that attendance was not as strong as typical, they each identified, unprompted, success that they had experienced. Perhaps this problem-solving attitude and reflection on success were one of the reasons for their success.

Recommendations for IL-EMPOWER Support

When asked about recommendations, one principal offered suggestions for schools participating in IL-EMPOWER school improvement efforts. This principal recommended that other principals take seriously the needs assessment process and bring together a strong team to work through needs assessment and planning. This principal recommended, *“You have to embrace it and from it, good things can happen. And your students deserve that. I don’t know how to get people to understand that it’s not a hoop to jump through. It is to identify and bring things to light that you haven’t thought about before. Going through that rubric framed [our work] in a different way.”* This principal further recommended that principals approach the reporting requirements equally as seriously, *“We’re entering our data and I know that some people are entering random numbers. But if you use the process the way that it is intended, you can move your school forward. Going through the process, [helped us create an] authentic SIP plan.”*

Several principals noted that the IQFSR is not particularly helpful for monitoring change and assessing improvement, stating that the way in which data are reported in IQFSR do not focus on the areas that are the areas of challenge for schools. They encouraged ISBE to review the instrument and process to make improvements that could better support schools in their change efforts.

The final set of recommendations for ISBE was to encourage greater flexibility for schools to select learning partners and support specialists who had the skills that could target their needs. One principal described the potential of IL-EMPOWER support to help accelerate improvement because consultants *“can see the bigger picture and the process of how we are trying to sustain. EMPOWER work has helped to see big picture.”* Another advised that ISBE *“assign school support specialists with the content knowledge able to provide support.”* Another principal discussed the importance of having a partner in collaboration rather than an expert to come in and lead change, stating that after a robust needs analysis, schools should have *“Confidence about what you need and knowing administrators, teachers, parents, and children. Nobody knows them better than us.”* Several principals mentioned that over the years they had built strong relationships with staff in their Regional Office of Education (ROE) who were familiar with their schools and their staff and who in previous years had effectively guided school efforts.

Summary

The interviews provided insights into the workings of five schools that had effectively managed a school improvement process. All five principals who participated in the interviews were thoughtful, open, and clear-eyed about the difficulties encountered when trying to change a system. They all took the work seriously, conducting a robust needs assessment and engaging the entire school community in systems-level change and improvement. Principals included district staff in the change efforts to help build systems and generate district-level support for sustainable efforts. The schools focused on all of the steps of the school improvement process and appreciated the funding to implement change as well as being able to select IL-EMPOWER learning partners who were skilled, thoughtful, collaborative. The result of the change efforts in these five schools can help other administrators understand the value of fully engaging in the IL-EMPOWER process.

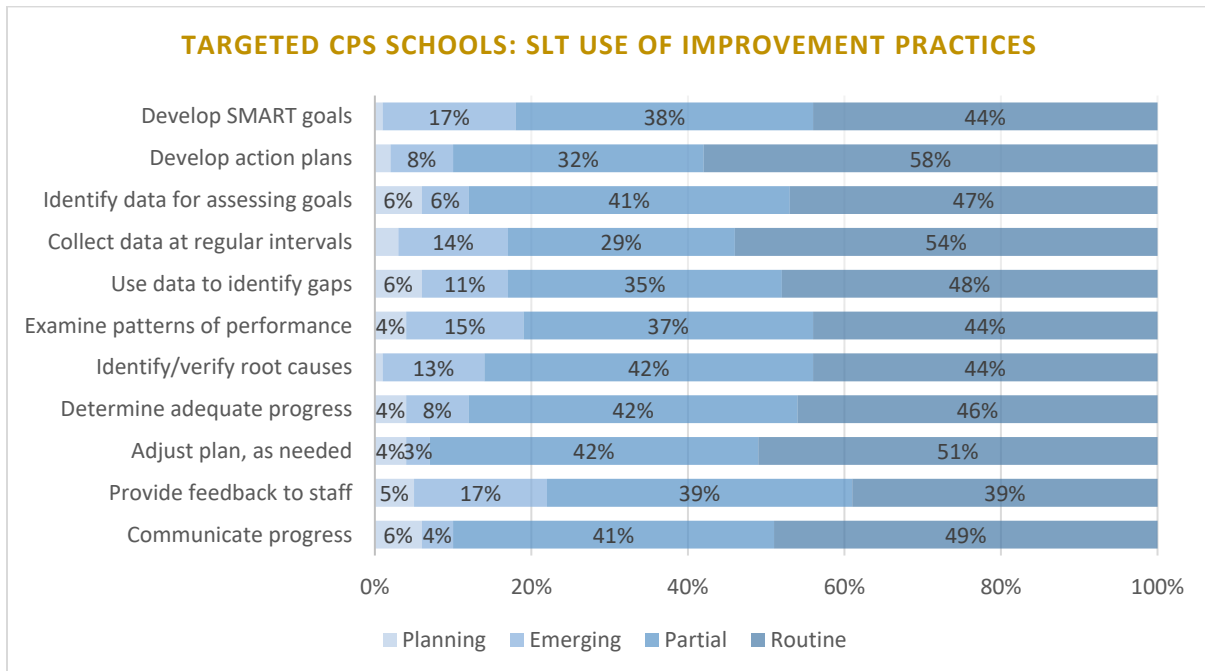
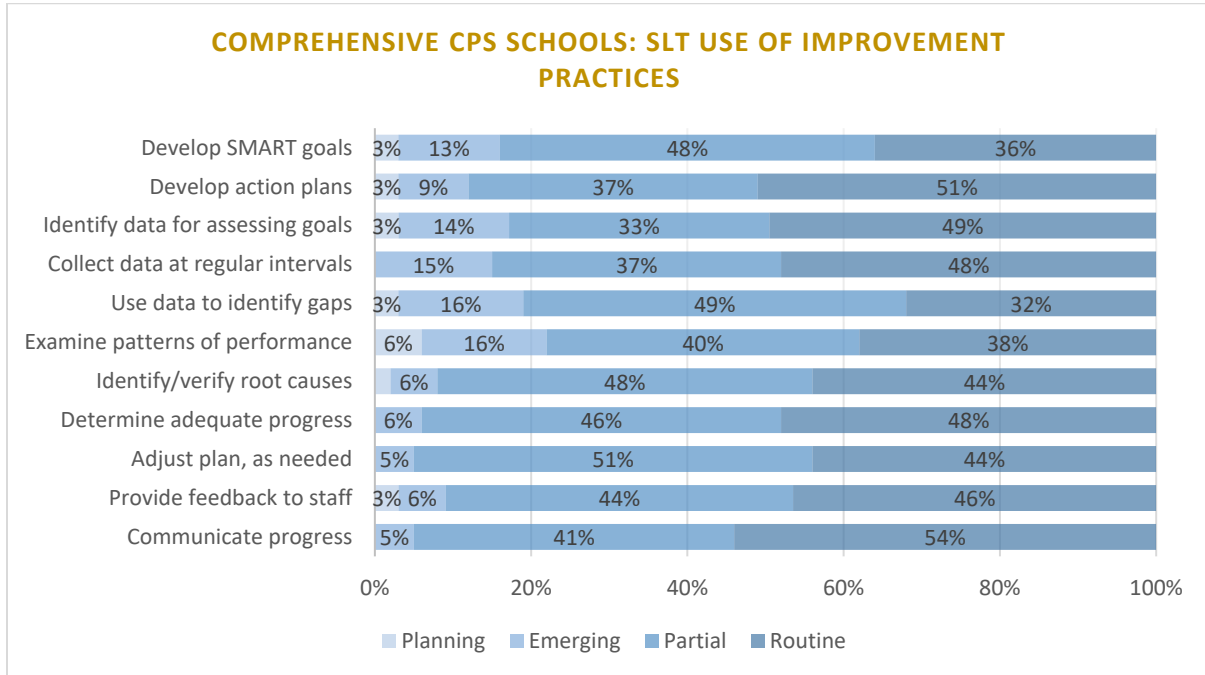


Appendix B:

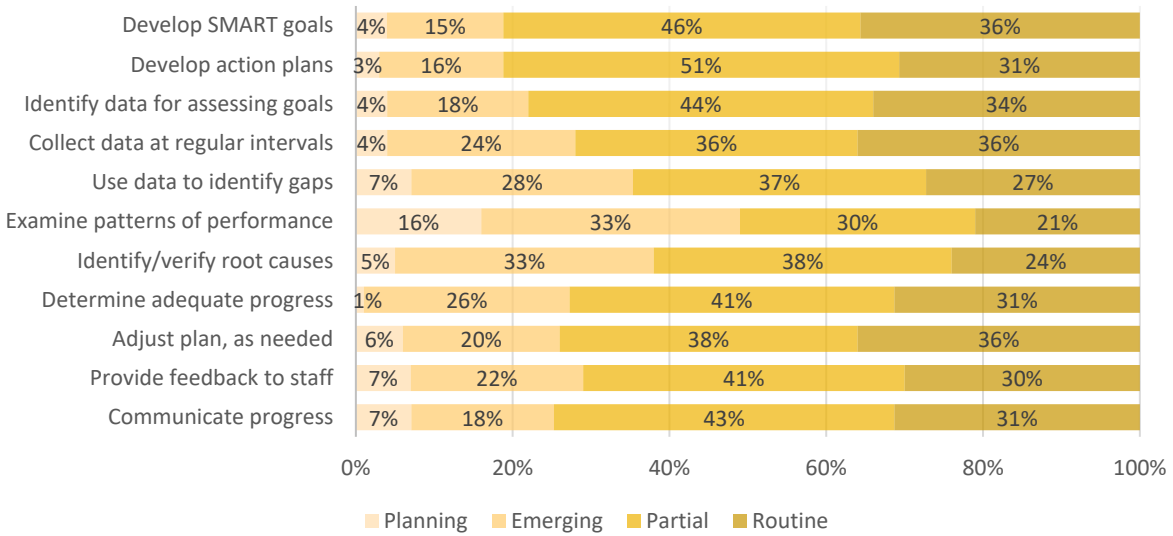
Disaggregated Data on Schools' Implementation of Improvement Practices and Evidence-based Practices

Appendix B. Disaggregated Data on Schools' Implementation of Improvement Practices and Evidence-based Practices

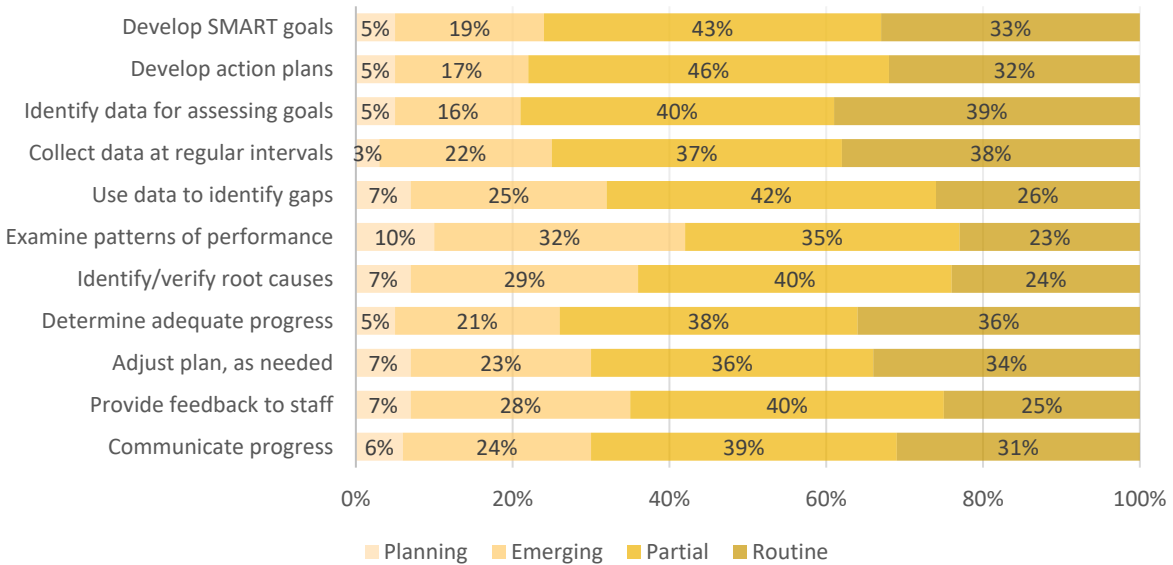
1. Implementation of Continuous Improvement Practices by Region (CPS and ROS) and School Group (comprehensive and targeted)



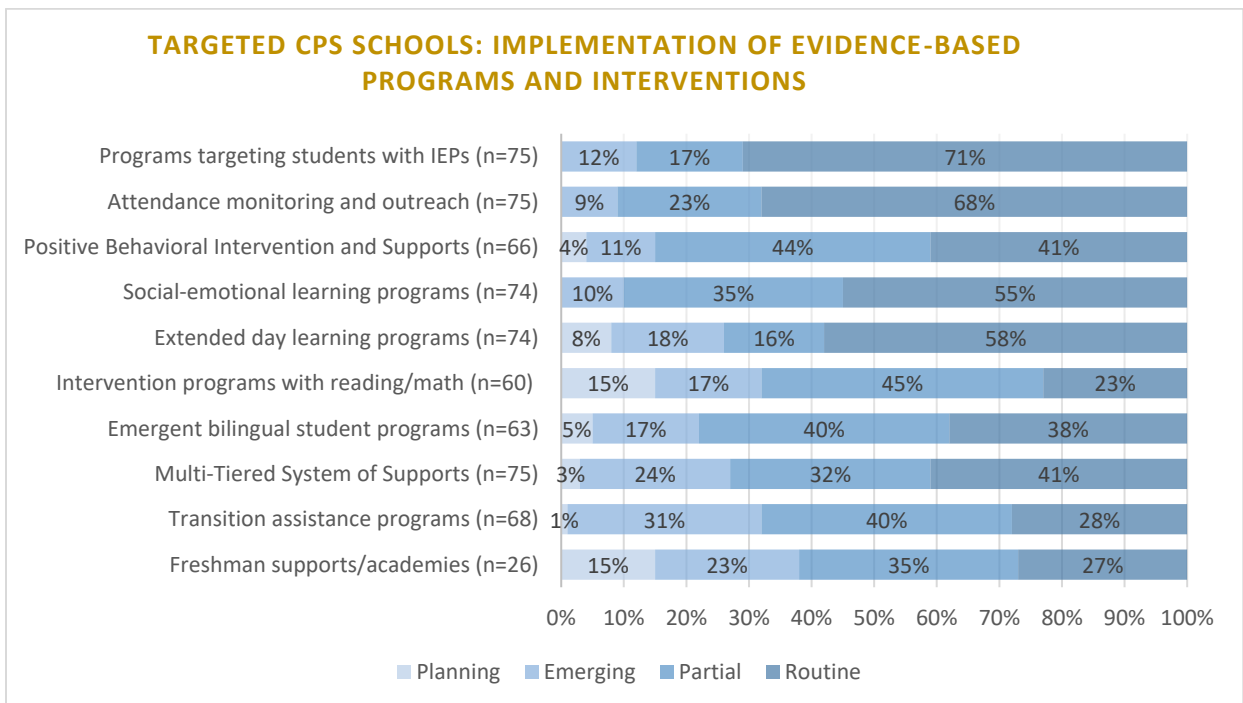
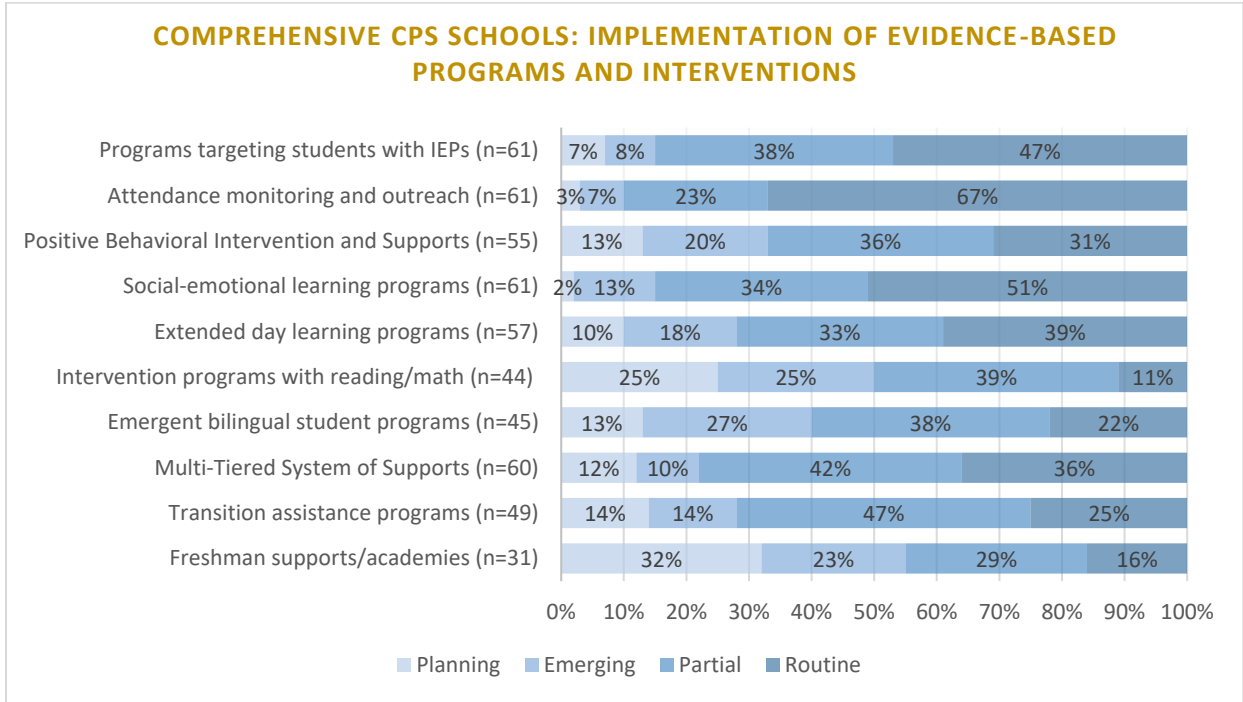
COMPREHENSIVE ROS SCHOOLS: SLT USE OF IMPROVEMENT PRACTICES



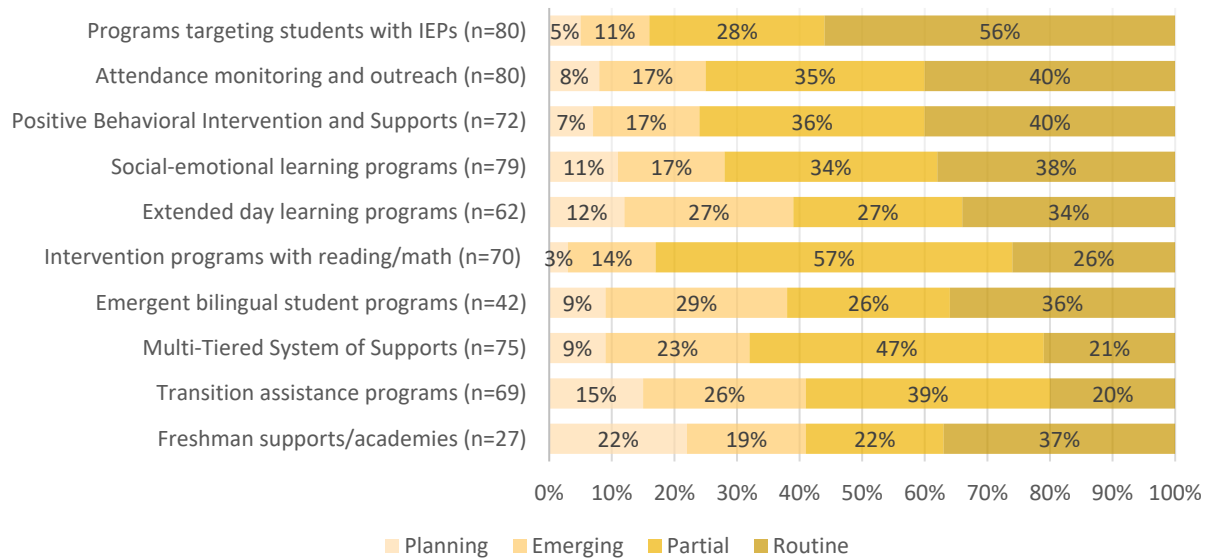
TARGETED ROS SCHOOLS: SLT USE OF IMPROVEMENT PRACTICES



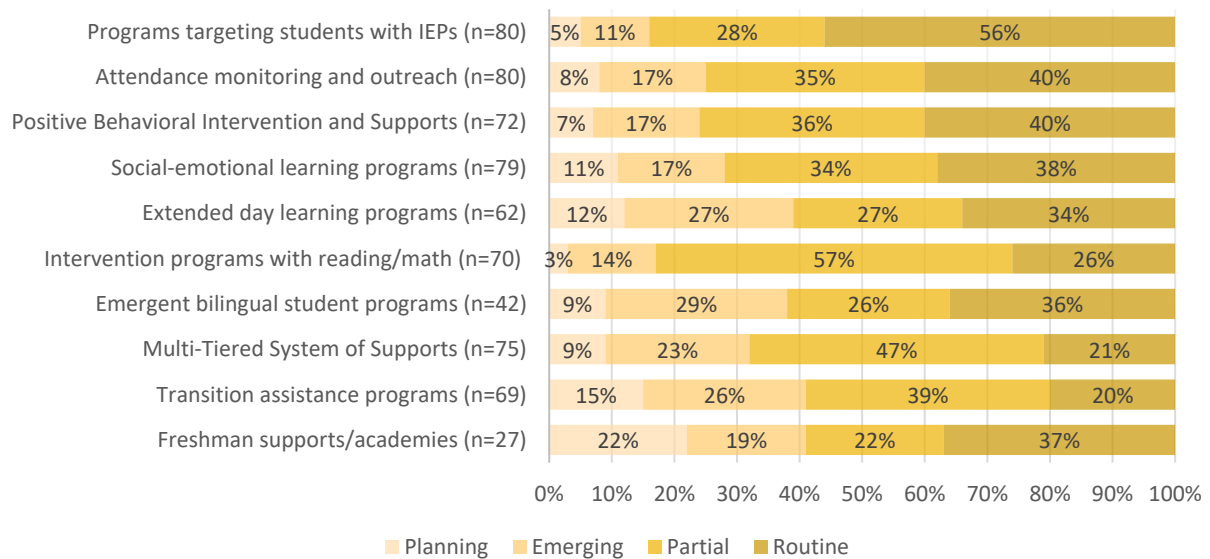
2. Implementation of Evidence-based Programs and Interventions by Region (CPS and ROS) and School Group (comprehensive and targeted)



COMPREHENSIVE ROS SCHOOLS: IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS



TARGETED ROS SCHOOLS: IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS





Appendix C:

Ratings by Approved Learning Partner

Appendix C. Ratings by Approved Learning Partner

Academy for Urban School Leadership (n=7)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
Responsiveness of staff	86% (6)	14% (1)	0% (0)	
Customization of supports/services	100% (7)	0% (0)	0% (0)	
Continuity of staff	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)	
Frequency of supports/services	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)	
Timeliness of supports/services	86% (6)	14% (1)	0% (0)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)	
Level of collaboration	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)	
Quality of services/supports	86% (6)	14% (1)	0% (0)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)	
	All	Most	Some	
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)	

AdvancED (n=1)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
Responsiveness of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	
Customization of supports/services	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)	
Continuity of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	
Frequency of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	
Timeliness of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	
Level of collaboration	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	
Quality of services/supports	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)	
	All	Most	Some	
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	

American Institute of Research (n=28)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
Responsiveness of staff	50% (14)	43% (12)	7% (2)	
Customization of supports/services	46% (13)	46% (13)	7% (2)	
Continuity of staff	50% (14)	43% (12)	7% (2)	
Frequency of supports/services	46% (13)	46% (13)	7% (2)	
Timeliness of supports/services	48% (13)	44% (12)	7% (2)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	46% (13)	46% (13)	7% (2)	
Level of collaboration	50% (14)	43% (12)	7% (2)	
Quality of services/supports	43% (12)	46% (13)	11% (3)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	41% (11)	56% (15)	4% (1)	
	All	Most	Some	None
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	71% (20)	18% (5)	7% (2)	4% (1)

Atlantic Research Partners (n=2)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)

AVID Center (n=6)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	50% (3)	33% (2)	17% (1)
Customization of supports/services	50% (3)	33% (2)	17% (1)
Continuity of staff	50% (3)	33% (2)	17% (1)
Frequency of supports/services	33% (2)	50% (3)	17% (1)
Timeliness of supports/services	33% (2)	50% (3)	17% (1)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	33% (2)	50% (3)	17% (1)
Level of collaboration	33% (2)	50% (3)	17% (1)
Quality of services/supports	33% (2)	50% (3)	17% (1)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	33% (2)	50% (3)	17% (1)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	50% (3)	17% (1)	33% (2)

Cambridge Education (n=1)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	--	--	--
Quality of services/supports	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Cognia, Inc. (n=3)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	33% (1)	67% (2)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	33% (1)	67% (2)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Consortium for Educational Change (n=8)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	63% (5)	38% (3)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	50% (4)	38% (3)	13% (1)
Level of collaboration	50% (4)	38% (3)	13% (1)
Quality of services/supports	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	38% (3)	50% (4)	13% (1)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	63% (5)	25% (2)	13% (1)

ECRA Group, Inc. (n=12)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
Responsiveness of staff	33% (4)	67% (8)	0% (0)	
Customization of supports/services	33% (4)	58% (7)	8% (1)	
Continuity of staff	33% (4)	50% (6)	16% (2)	
Frequency of supports/services	36% (4)	55% (6)	9% (1)	
Timeliness of supports/services	33% (4)	58% (7)	8% (1)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	33% (4)	58% (7)	8% (1)	
Level of collaboration	33% (4)	58% (7)	8% (1)	
Quality of services/supports	33% (4)	58% (7)	8% (1)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	33% (4)	50% (6)	16% (2)	
	All	Most	Some	None
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	58% (7)	17% (2)	17% (2)	8% (1)

EDDirection (n=8)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	71% (5)	14% (1)	14% (1)
Level of collaboration	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	71% (5)	14% (1)	14% (1)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (8)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Envision Learning (n=4)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Flippen Group (n=2)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	50% (1)	0% (0)	50% (1)
Continuity of staff	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	50% (1)	0% (0)	50% (1)

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (n=8)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
Responsiveness of staff	38% (3)	63% (5)	0% (0)	
Customization of supports/services	25% (2)	38% (3)	38% (3)	
Continuity of staff	25% (2)	38% (3)	38% (3)	
Frequency of supports/services	25% (2)	75% (6)	0% (0)	
Timeliness of supports/services	25% (2)	75% (6)	0% (0)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	25% (2)	25% (2)	50% (4)	
Level of collaboration	25% (2)	75% (6)	0% (0)	
Quality of services/supports	25% (2)	38% (3)	38% (3)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	25% (2)	50% (4)	25% (2)	
	All	Most	Some	
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)	

IL Multi-Tiered System of Supports Network (n=14)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
Responsiveness of staff	36% (5)	50% (7)	14% (2)	
Customization of supports/services	43% (6)	36% (5)	21% (3)	
Continuity of staff	43% (6)	43% (6)	14% (2)	
Frequency of supports/services	43% (6)	43% (6)	14% (2)	
Timeliness of supports/services	36% (5)	50% (7)	14% (2)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	36% (5)	36% (5)	28% (4)	
Level of collaboration	43% (6)	43% (6)	14% (2)	
Quality of services/supports	43% (6)	36% (5)	21% (3)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	43% (6)	36% (5)	21% (3)	
	All	Most	Some	None
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	36% (5)	21% (3)	36% (5)	7% (1)

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (incl. local ROE/ISC) (n=59)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
Responsiveness of staff	53% (31)	42% (25)	5% (3)	
Customization of supports/services	55% (32)	40% (23)	5% (3)	
Continuity of staff	53% (31)	41% (24)	7% (4)	
Frequency of supports/services	54% (32)	39% (23)	7% (4)	
Timeliness of supports/services	53% (31)	39% (23)	8% (5)	
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	47% (28)	44% (26)	8% (5)	
Level of collaboration	53% (31)	42% (25)	5% (3)	
Quality of services/supports	53% (31)	40% (23)	7% (4)	
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	48% (28)	45% (26)	7% (4)	
	All	Most	Some	None
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	69% (41)	22% (13)	3% (2)	5% (3)

Illinois Association of School Administrators (n=3)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)

Illinois Principals Association (n=14)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	43% (6)	57% (8)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	43% (6)	57% (8)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	50% (7)	50% (7)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	54% (7)	46% (6)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	50% (7)	50% (7)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	50% (7)	50% (7)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	50% (7)	50% (7)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	43% (6)	57% (8)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	36% (5)	64% (9)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	71% (10)	29% (4)	0% (0)

Imagine Learning (n=3)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
Customization of supports/services	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
Continuity of staff	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
Frequency of supports/services	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
Timeliness of supports/services	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
Level of collaboration	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
Quality of services/supports	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	67% (2)	0% (0)	33% (1)

Instruction Partners (n=1)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Midwest PBIS (n=4)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (4)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	0% (0)	100% (4)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	0% (0)	100% (4)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	0% (0)	100% (4)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)

New Leaders, Inc. (n=4)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	25% (1)	75% (3)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)

Northeastern Illinois University (n=1)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Peoples Education (n=1)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)
Continuity of staff	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)
Timeliness of supports/services	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)
Quality of services/supports	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)

Professional Development Plus (n=8)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	63% (5)	38% (3)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	50% (4)	50% (4)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	71% (5)	29% (2)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	63% (5)	38% (3)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	57% (4)	43% (3)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	63% (5)	38% (3)	0% (0)

RespondAbility (n=1)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)

Roosevelt University (n=4)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	50% (2)	50% (2)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	50% (2)	50% (2)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	50% (2)	50% (2)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	75% (3)	0% (0)	25% (1)
Timeliness of supports/services	50% (2)	50% (2)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	75% (3)	25% (1)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	75% (3)	0% (0)	25% (1)
Quality of services/supports	50% (2)	25% (1)	25% (1)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	50% (2)	25% (1)	25% (1)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	75% (3)	0% (0)	25% (1)

Scholastic, Inc. (n=9)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	56% (5)	44% (4)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	56% (5)	44% (4)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	56% (5)	44% (4)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	56% (5)	44% (4)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	44% (4)	56% (5)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	44% (4)	56% (5)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	44% (4)	56% (5)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	33% (3)	67% (6)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	33% (3)	67% (6)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	67% (6)	33% (3)	0% (0)

SchoolWorks (n=2)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Silver, Strong & Associates (n=2)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	50% (1)	0% (0)	50% (1)
Quality of services/supports	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	50% (1)	50% (1)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	50% (1)	0% (0)	50% (1)

Teach Plus (n=1)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)

UChicago Network for College Success (n=2)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	100% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	100% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)

UMOJA Student Development Corporation (n=14)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	64% (9)	36% (5)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	43% (6)	57% (8)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	50% (7)	50% (7)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	50% (7)	50% (7)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	50% (7)	50% (7)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	43% (6)	57% (8)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	50% (7)	50% (7)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	43% (6)	57% (8)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	36% (5)	64% (9)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	71% (10)	21% (3)	7% (1)

Urban Learning and Leadership Center, Inc. (n=17)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	76% (13)	24% (4)	0% (0)
Customization of supports/services	59% (10)	41% (7)	0% (0)
Continuity of staff	76% (13)	24% (4)	0% (0)
Frequency of supports/services	59% (10)	41% (7)	0% (0)
Timeliness of supports/services	71% (12)	29% (5)	0% (0)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	71% (12)	29% (5)	0% (0)
Level of collaboration	65% (11)	35% (6)	0% (0)
Quality of services/supports	65% (11)	35% (6)	0% (0)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	63% (10)	38% (6)	0% (0)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	75% (12)	19% (3)	6% (1)

Chicago Public Schools (n=19)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Responsiveness of staff	47% (9)	42% (8)	11% (2)
Customization of supports/services	47% (9)	42% (8)	11% (2)
Continuity of staff	42% (8)	47% (9)	11% (2)
Frequency of supports/services	42% (8)	47% (9)	11% (2)
Timeliness of supports/services	42% (8)	47% (9)	11% (2)
LP staff's knowledge of programs and initiatives	42% (8)	47% (9)	11% (2)
Level of collaboration	37% (7)	53% (10)	11% (2)
Quality of services/supports	37% (7)	53% (10)	11% (2)
Extent to which the LP is helping school address SIP goals	32% (6)	58% (11)	11% (2)
	All	Most	Some
Fulfilling the terms of the partnership	65% (13)	25% (5)	10% (2)



Appendix D:

**Disaggregated Data on Student Success Indicator data:
Comparison between 2019 and 2021 outcomes**

Appendix D. Disaggregated Data on Student Success Indicator data: Comparison between 2019 and 2021 outcomes

TABLE 1. COMPREHENSIVE ROS K-8 SCHOOLS

	2019		2021		Change
	% (n schools)		% (n schools)		
English Language Arts Proficiency					
White	18%	(86)	16%	(71)	-2
Black	7%	(73)	3%	(54)	-4
Hispanic	14%	(40)	10%	(35)	-4
Asian	40%	(5)	32%	(5)	-8
Two or more races	10%	(46)	7%	(32)	-3
English Limited	5%	(29)	2%	(23)	-3
Students with disabilities	3%	(98)	2%	(74)	-1
Students from low-income	11%	(108)	8%	(88)	-3
Math Proficiency					
White	13%	(86)	12%	(69)	-1
Black	4%	(73)	1%	(54)	-3
Hispanic	8%	(40)	3%	(35)	-5
Asian	27%	(5)	24%	(5)	-3
Two or more races	7%	(46)	3%	(30)	-4
English Limited	3%	(28)	1%	(23)	-2
Students with disabilities	3%	(98)	2%	(74)	-1
Students from low-income	7%	(108)	5%	(88)	-2
ELA Growth percentile					
White	43	(75)	43	(75)	0
Black	42	(65)	42	(65)	0
Hispanic	45	(36)	45	(36)	0
Asian	52	(5)	52	(5)	0
Two or more races	44	(35)	44	(35)	0
English Limited	44	(23)	44	(23)	0
Students with disabilities	38	(83)	38	(83)	0
Students from low-income	44	(23)	42	(99)	-2
Math Growth percentile					
White	41	(74)	41	(74)	0
Black	38	(65)	38	(65)	0
Hispanic	44	(35)	44	(35)	0
Asian	56	(5)	56	(5)	0
Two or more races	40	(36)	40	(36)	0
English Limited	43	(23)	43	(23)	0
Students with disabilities	38	(83)	38	(83)	0
Students from low-income	39	(99)	39	(99)	0
Chronic Absenteeism					
White	29%	(84)	31%	(96)	+2
Black	44%	(76)	55%	(76)	+11
Hispanic	36%	(50)	39%	(55)	+3
Asian	10%	(6)	35%	(6)	+25

Two or more races	41%	(50)	50%	(64)	+9
English Limited	30%	(34)	36%	(36)	+6
Students with disabilities	41%	(99)	43%	(104)	+2
Students from low-income	37%	(105)	43%	(110)	+6

TABLE 2. COMPREHENSIVE K-8 CPS SCHOOLS

	2019		2021		Change
	% (n schools)		% (n schools)		
English Language Arts Proficiency					
White	28%	(5)	60%	(1)	+32 ¹
Black	8%	(49)	4%	(45)	-4
Hispanic	10%	(17)	7%	(10)	-3
Asian	-		-		
Two or more races	0%	(1)	-		
English Limited	6%	(11)	1%	(7)	-5
Students with disabilities	5%	(50)	2%	(39)	-3
Students from low-income	9%	(50)	4%	(50)	-5
Math Proficiency					
White	21%	(4)	46%	(1)	+25 ²
Black	6%	(49)	1%	(46)	-5
Hispanic	9%	(16)	4%	(10)	-5
Asian	-		-		
Two or more races	0%	(1)	-		
English Limited	5%	(11)	0%	(7)	-5
Students with disabilities	4%	(50)	1%	(37)	-3
Students from low-income	7%	(50)	2%	(50)	-5
ELA Growth percentile					
White	25	(1)	25	(1)	0
Black	38	(48)	38	(48)	0
Hispanic	40	(13)	40	(13)	0
Asian	-		-		
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	38	(10)	38	(10)	0
Students with disabilities	36	(50)	36	(50)	0
Students from low-income	38	(50)	38	(50)	0
Math Growth percentile					
White	55	(2)	55	(2)	0
Black	42	(48)	42	(48)	0
Hispanic	45	(13)	45	(13)	0
Asian	-		-		
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	42	(10)	42	(10)	0

¹ The one school in 2021 with matched data from 2018 had a gain of 10 percentage points. The percent of proficient white students in 2018 was 50%.

² The one school in 2021 with matched data from 2018 had a gain of 21 percentage points. The percent of proficient white students in 2018 was 25%. This is the same school with large gains in ELA proficiency.

Students with disabilities	39	(50)	39	(50)	0
Students from low-income	42	(50)	42	(50)	0
Chronic Absenteeism					
White	11%	(4)	13%	(4)	+2
Black	26%	(49)	38%	(49)	+12
Hispanic	23%	(20)	29%	(23)	+6
Asian	18%	(1)	-		
Two or more races	24%	(1)	33%	(1)	+9
English Limited	15%	(12)	26%	(16)	+11
Students with disabilities	30%	(50)	38%	(50)	+8
Students from low-income	24%	(50)	38%	(50)	+14

TABLE 3. TARGETED ROS K-8 SCHOOLS

	2019		2021		Change
	% (n schools)		% (n schools)		
English Language Arts Proficiency					
White	33%	(397)	25%	(350)	-8
Black	15%	(301)	9%	(235)	-6
Hispanic	23%	(316)	15%	(289)	-8
Asian	54%	(101)	44%	(65)	-10
Two or more races	27%	(269)	19%	(187)	-8
English Limited	7%	(248)	3%	(211)	-4
Students with disabilities	7%	(432)	5%	(384)	-2
Students from low-income	20%	(434)	12%	(398)	-8
Math Proficiency					
White	27%	(397)	20%	(348)	-7
Black	8%	(302)	4%	(234)	-4
Hispanic	16%	(316)	9%	(288)	-7
Asian	48%	(101)	41%	(65)	-7
Two or more races	19%	(269)	12%	(187)	-7
English Limited	7%	(248)	3%	(212)	-4
Students with disabilities	6%	(432)	4%	(386)	-2
Students from low-income	13%	(434)	8%	(398)	-5
ELA Growth percentile					
White	50	(368)	50	(368)	0
Black	45	(277)	45	(277)	0
Hispanic	49	(294)	49	(294)	0
Asian	54	(80)	54	(80)	0
Two or more races	47	(226)	47	(226)	0
English Limited	48	(224)	48	(224)	0
Students with disabilities	42	(411)	42	(411)	0
Students from low-income	48	(414)	48	(414)	0
Math Growth percentile					
White	48	(369)	48	(369)	0
Black	43	(276)	43	(276)	0
Hispanic	47	(294)	47	(294)	0

Asian	54	(81)	54	(81)	0
Two or more races	46	(226)	46	(226)	0
English Limited	46	(228)	46	(228)	0
Students with disabilities	43	(411)	43	(411)	0
Students from low-income	46	(414)	46	(414)	0
Chronic Absenteeism					
White	17%	(408)	19%	(413)	+2
Black	27%	(310)	39%	(316)	+12
Hispanic	18%	(335)	26%	(364)	+8
Asian	8%	(114)	11%	(116)	+3
Two or more races	22%	(300)	29%	(315)	+7
English Limited	16%	(265)	25%	(282)	+9
Students with disabilities	27%	(447)	31%	(448)	+4
Students from low-income	23%	(446)	31%	(449)	+8

TABLE 4. TARGETED K-8 CPS SCHOOLS

	2019		2021		Change
	% (n schools)		% (n schools)		
English Language Arts Proficiency					
White	36%	(53)	30%	(35)	-6
Black	15%	(128)	7%	(103)	-8
Hispanic	22%	(128)	13%	(113)	-9
Asian	51%	(27)	39%	(17)	-12
Two or more races	54%	(12)	42%	(10)	-12
English Limited	10%	(114)	3%	(98)	-7
Students with disabilities	8%	(162)	5%	(145)	-3
Students from low-income	18%	(162)	10%	(161)	-8
Math Proficiency					
White	33%	(53)	28%	(34)	-5
Black	10%	(128)	3%	(103)	-7
Hispanic	19%	(128)	9%	(111)	-10
Asian	50%	(28)	41%	(17)	-9
Two or more races	47%	(12)	41%	(10)	-6
English Limited	11%	(114)	3%	(96)	-8
Students with disabilities	7%	(162)	4%	(143)	-3
Students from low-income	15%	(162)	6%	(133)	-9
ELA Growth percentile					
White	42	(45)	42	(45)	0
Black	39	(117)	39	(117)	0
Hispanic	42	(118)	42	(118)	0
Asian	48	(21)	48	(21)	0
Two or more races	48	(8)	48	(8)	0
English Limited	40	(112)	40	(112)	0
Students with disabilities	38	(162)	38	(162)	0
Students from low-income	41	(162)	41	(162)	0

Math Growth percentile					
White	49	(46)	49	(46)	0
Black	44	(117)	44	(117)	0
Hispanic	47	(118)	47	(118)	0
Asian	57	(20)	57	(20)	0
Two or more races	51	(8)	51	(8)	0
English Limited	46	(112)	46	(112)	0
Students with disabilities	41	(162)	41	(162)	0
Students from low-income	46	(162)	46	(162)	0
Chronic Absenteeism					
White	15%	(53)	15%	(56)	0
Black	22%	(135)	33%	(139)	+11
Hispanic	16%	(132)	21%	(138)	+5
Asian	10%	(29)	6%	(29)	-4
Two or more races	15%	(14)	15%	(23)	0
English Limited	14%	(116)	19%	(120)	+5
Students with disabilities	24%	(162)	29%	(162)	+5
Students from low-income	18%	(162)	26%	(162)	+8

TABLE 5. COMPREHENSIVE: ROS HIGH SCHOOLS

	2019		2021		Change
	% (n schools)		% (n schools)		
English Language Arts Proficiency					
White	23%	(10)	22%	(11)	-1
Black	5%	(10)	6%	(9)	+1
Hispanic	10%	(6)	12%	(6)	+2
Asian	53%	(2)	53%	(2)	0
Two or more races	18%	(5)	20%	(4)	+2
English Limited	1%	(5)	1%	(4)	0
Students with disabilities	5%	(13)	5%	(10)	0
Students from low-income	10%	(14)	10%	(13)	0
Math Proficiency					
White	15%	(10)	14%	(11)	-1
Black	2%	(10)	2%	(9)	0
Hispanic	6%	(6)	6%	(6)	0
Asian	53%	(2)	53%	(2)	0
Two or more races	14%	(5)	14%	(4)	0
English Limited	0%	(5)	<1%	(4)	
Students with disabilities	2%	(13)	4%	(10)	+2
Students from low-income	5%	(14)	5%	(13)	0
9th Grade on Track					
White	79%	(10)	78%	(11)	-1
Black	59%	(9)	59%	(9)	0
Hispanic	66%	(6)	71%	(7)	+5
Asian	97%	(2)	96%	(2)	-1
Two or more races	54%	(5)	67%	(5)	+13

English Limited	66%	(5)	59%	(5)	-7
Students with disabilities	52%	(8)	57%	(8)	+5
Students from low-income	71%	(13)	63%	(12)	-8
4-year Graduation Rate					
White	76%	(11)	73%	(11)	-3
Black	64%	(9)	66%	(9)	+2
Hispanic	66%	(6)	74%	(7)	+8
Asian	87%	(2)	81%	(2)	-6
Two or more races	62%	(5)	57%	(5)	-5
English Limited	57%	(7)	66%	(7)	+9
Students with disabilities	53%	(8)	60%	(9)	+7
Students from low-income	74%	(13)	72%	(14)	-2
5-year Graduation rate					
White	77%	(11)	82%	(10)	+5
Black	70%	(9)	70%	(9)	0
Hispanic	71%	(7)	76%	(7)	+5
Asian	74%	(2)	92%	(2)	+18
Two or more races	64%	(5)	73%	(5)	+9
English Limited	62%	(7)	73%	(7)	+11
Students with disabilities	63%	(9)	62%	(8)	-1
Students from low-income	75%	(13)	76%	(13)	+1
6-year Graduation rate					
White	74%	(11)	78%	(11)	+4
Black	72%	(10)	70%	(9)	-2
Hispanic	69%	(6)	71%	(6)	+2
Asian	92%	(2)	95%	(2)	+3
Two or more races	68%	(4)	63%	(5)	-5
English Limited	66%	(6)	65%	(7)	-1
Students with disabilities	57%	(8)	65%	(8)	+8
Students from low-income	70%	(13)	79%	(13)	+9
Chronic Absenteeism					
White	43%	(12)	35%	(12)	-8
Black	58%	(10)	49%	(10)	-9
Hispanic	54%	(8)	45%	(8)	-9
Asian	7%	(2)	23%	(2)	+16
Two or more races	58%	(8)	57%	(8)	-1
English Limited	56%	(7)	44%	(7)	-12
Students with disabilities	48%	(14)	39%	(14)	-9
Students from low-income	48%	(14)	41%	(14)	-7

TABLE 6. COMPREHENSIVE CPS HIGH SCHOOLS

	2019		2021		Change
	% (n schools)		% (n schools)		
English Language Arts Proficiency					
White	22%	(2)	25%	(2)	+3
Black	7%	(24)	6%	(23)	-1
Hispanic	12%	(15)	12%	(15)	0
Asian	6%	(2)	16%	(1)	+10
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	2%	(11)	<1%	(10)	-1
Students with disabilities	8%	(24)	6%	(22)	-2
Students from low-income	7%	(25)	7%	(24)	0
Math Proficiency					
White	19%	(2)	37%	(2)	+18
Black	5%	(24)	4%	(23)	-1
Hispanic	11%	(15)	9%	(15)	-2
Asian	26%	(2)	35%	(1)	+9
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	1%	(11)	1%	(10)	0
Students with disabilities	4%	(24)	5%	(22)	+1
Students from low-income	6%	(25)	5%	(24)	-1
9th Grade on Track					
White	82%	(2)	80%	(2)	-2
Black	75%	(22)	63%	(21)	-12
Hispanic	79%	(14)	69%	(14)	-10
Asian	94%	(2)	54%	(2)	-40
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	81%	(12)	68%	(12)	-13
Students with disabilities	77%	(23)	67%	(23)	-10
Students from low-income	77%	(23)	65%	(23)	-12
4-year Graduation Rate					
White	41%	(3)	41%	(3)	0
Black	53%	(24)	54%	(24)	+1
Hispanic	58%	(15)	60%	(16)	+2
Asian	59%	(2)	84%	(2)	+25
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	48%	(13)	53%	(11)	-5
Students with disabilities	45%	(23)	48%	(24)	+3
Students from low-income	54%	(25)	57%	(25)	+3
5-year Graduation rate					
White	40%	(3)	51%	(3)	+11
Black	57%	(24)	63%	(23)	-6
Hispanic	60%	(16)	64%	(16)	+4
Asian	75%	(2)	77%	(2)	+2
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	54%	(12)	56%	(13)	+2
Students with disabilities	45%	(23)	56%	(24)	+11

Students from low-income	58%	(25)	64%	(25)	+6
6-year Graduation rate					
White	63%	(3)	48%	(3)	-15
Black	60%	(24)	58%	(24)	-2
Hispanic	67%	(15)	64%	(15)	-3
Asian	81%	(2)	73%	(2)	-8
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	62%	(13)	57%	(13)	-5
Students with disabilities	55%	(23)	56%	(24)	+1
Students from low-income	62%	(25)	61%	(25)	-1
Chronic Absenteeism					
White	64%	(7)	52%	(10)	-12
Black	83%	(25)	64%	(25)	-19
Hispanic	70%	(18)	56%	(21)	-14
Asian	31%	(3)	37%	(4)	+6
Two or more races	-		61%	(1)	
English Limited	55%	(14)	47%	(14)	-8
Students with disabilities	68%	(25)	55%	(25)	-13
Students from low-income	78%	(25)	64%	(25)	-14

TABLE 7. TARGETED ROS HIGH SCHOOLS

	2019		2021		Change
	% (n schools)		% (n schools)		
English Language Arts Proficiency					
White	32%	(15)	23%	(15)	-9
Black	7%	(11)	5%	(10)	-2
Hispanic	14%	(9)	12%	(8)	-2
Asian	42%	(3)	29%	(3)	-13
Two or more races	19%	(8)	19%	(7)	0
English Limited	<1%	(6)	1%	(6)	
Students with disabilities	6%	(16)	5%	(15)	-1
Students from low-income	17%	(16)	12%	(16)	-5
Math Proficiency					
White	21%	(15)	17%	(15)	-4
Black	3%	(11)	4%	(10)	+1
Hispanic	10%	(9)	9%	(8)	-1
Asian	53%	(3)	29%	(3)	-24
Two or more races	13%	(8)	12%	(7)	-1
English Limited	1%	(6)	<1%	(6)	
Students with disabilities	3%	(16)	3%	(15)	0
Students from low-income	9%	(16)	8%	(16)	-1
9th Grade on Track					
White	84%	(15)	75%	(16)	-9
Black	61%	(11)	51%	(11)	-10
Hispanic	70%	(8)	65%	(8)	-5
Asian	87%	(3)	87%	(3)	0

Two or more races	68%	(8)	61%	(8)	-7
English Limited	60%	(7)	61%	(7)	+1
Students with disabilities	59%	(12)	54%	(12)	-5
Students from low-income	73%	(16)	61%	(16)	-12
4-year Graduation Rate					
White	77%	(16)	78%	(16)	+1
Black	71%	(11)	64%	(11)	-7
Hispanic	73%	(8)	71%	(9)	-2
Asian	82%	(3)	96%	(3)	+14
Two or more races	74%	(8)	67%	(8)	-7
English Limited	62%	(7)	62%	(7)	0
Students with disabilities	56%	(11)	63%	(14)	-7
Students from low-income	73%	(16)	73%	(17)	0
5-year Graduation rate					
White	82%	(16)	82%	(16)	0
Black	72%	(10)	70%	(11)	-2
Hispanic	73%	(7)	79%	(8)	+5
Asian	90%	(3)	94%	(3)	+4
Two or more races	69%	(8)	67%	(8)	-2
English Limited	63%	(6)	69%	(7)	+6
Students with disabilities	66%	(11)	67%	(12)	+1
Students from low-income	75%	(17)	78%	(17)	+1
6-year Graduation rate					
White	85%	(17)	80%	(16)	-5
Black	70%	(10)	77%	(11)	+7
Hispanic	83%	(8)	79%	(8)	-4
Asian	90%	(3)	84%	(3)	-6
Two or more races	76%	(8)	78%	(8)	+2
English Limited	68%	(6)	71%	(7)	+3
Students with disabilities	68%	(12)	70%	(12)	+2
Students from low-income	73%	(17)	78%	(16)	+5
Chronic Absenteeism					
White	33%	(16)	30%	(16)	-3
Black	63%	(11)	51%	(11)	-12
Hispanic	40%	(10)	39%	(10)	-1
Asian	21%	(7)	14%	(9)	-7
Two or more races	54%	(9)	43%	(11)	-11
English Limited	42%	(8)	38%	(8)	-4
Students with disabilities	46%	(17)	43%	(17)	-3
Students from low-income	48%	(17)	42%	(17)	-5

TABLE 7. TARGETED CPS HIGH SCHOOLS

	2019		2021		Change
	% (n schools)		% (n schools)		
English Language Arts Proficiency					
White	26%	(3)	30%	(3)	+4
Black	9%	(5)	3%	(5)	-6
Hispanic	15%	(4)	9%	(4)	-8
Asian	8%	(1)	38%	(1)	+30
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	4%	(3)	0%	(3)	-4
Students with disabilities	7%	(5)	6%	(5)	-1
Students from low-income	12%	(5)	6%	(5)	-6
Math Proficiency					
White	26%	(3)	31%	(3)	+5
Black	4%	(5)	2%	(5)	-2
Hispanic	12%	(4)	6%	(4)	-6
Asian	49%	(1)	61%	(1)	+12
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	2%	(3)	3%	(3)	+1
Students with disabilities	3%	(5)	4%	(5)	+1
Students from low-income	9%	(5)	5%	(5)	-4
9th Grade on Track					
White	84%	(3)	82%	(3)	-2
Black	79%	(5)	66%	(5)	-13
Hispanic	81%	(4)	70%	(4)	-9
Asian	92%	(1)	87%	(1)	-5
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	75%	(3)	64%	(3)	-11
Students with disabilities	75%	(5)	71%	(5)	-4
Students from low-income	81%	(5)	69%	(5)	-12
4-year Graduation Rate					
White	64%	(3)	71%	(3)	-7
Black	83%	(5)	88%	(5)	+5
Hispanic	78%	(4)	82%	(4)	+4
Asian	79%	(1)	64%	(1)	-15
Two or more races	-		31%	(1)	
English Limited	68%	(3)	63%	(3)	-5
Students with disabilities	74%	(5)	76%	(5)	+2
Students from low-income	80%	(5)	86%	(5)	+6
5-year Graduation rate					
White	65%	(4)	84%	(3)	+19
Black	85%	(5)	91%	(5)	+6
Hispanic	80%	(4)	85%	(4)	+5
Asian	92%	(1)	87%	(1)	-5
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	65%	(3)	79%	(3)	+14
Students with disabilities	75%	(4)	85%	(5)	+10

Students from low-income	82%	(5)	89%	(5)	+7
6-year Graduation rate					
White	71%	(3)	65%	(3)	-6
Black	87%	(5)	84%	(5)	-3
Hispanic	83%	(4)	82%	(4)	-1
Asian	94%	(2)	86%	(1)	-8
Two or more races	-		-		
English Limited	67%	(3)	71%	(3)	+4
Students with disabilities	69%	(4)	81%	(5)	+12
Students from low-income	86%	(5)	83%	(5)	-3
Chronic Absenteeism					
White	51%	(4)	35%	(4)	-16
Black	56%	(5)	63%	(5)	+7
Hispanic	52%	(4)	54%	(5)	+2
Asian	38%	(3)	21%	(3)	-17
Two or more races	47%	(2)	34%	(2)	-13
English Limited	52%	(4)	53%	(4)	+1
Students with disabilities	55%	(5)	55%	(5)	0
Students from low-income	54%	(5)	56%	(5)	+2



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