The Exceptional Children (EC) Division of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has developed an LEA Self-Assessment as part of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) required by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). North Carolina’s State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) is to improve the graduation rate for students with disabilities. Factors that influence graduation rate include academic and behavioral issues and the need for better transition.

The purpose of the Self-Assessment is to help LEAs analyze and use data to make decisions for improving academic and behavioral supports as well as transition in their EC programs. LEAs develop improvement plans based on the results of their self-assessment.

Six ‘core elements’ comprise the self-assessment:

1. Policy Compliance and Monitoring
2. Fiscal Management
3. IEP Development and Implementation/IEP Outcomes
4. Problem-Solving for Improvement
5. Research-Based Instruction and Practices
6. Communication and Collaboration

Core elements are further broken down by ‘critical component.’ The LEA rates its current level of performance on each component as follows: 2=Expected, 1=Developmental, 0=Needs Improvement.

***Early Childhood Outcomes data can inform the LEA Self-Assessment, particularly in the core elements of (3) IEP Development, Implementation, and Outcomes, (4) Problem-Solving for Improvement, (5) Research-Based Instruction and Practices, and (6) Communication and Collaboration, as follows.***

**Core Element 3: IEP Development, Implementation, and Outcomes**

For this Core Element, the LEA considers the outcomes for students with disabilities in the LEA, and the process the LEA uses to support high fidelity implementation of IEPs. Preschool outcomes data can be particularly useful for Critical Component 3.1, as follows.

3.1 Data indicate that students with IEPs are making progress towards grade level standards in the general education curriculum

* ***NC’s early childhood standards (Foundations) are aligned with the early childhood outcomes measured for federal reporting purposes. Therefore, these data can be used as evidence that preschool children are progressing toward “age” level standards, versus the school age “grade” level standards.***

**Core Element 4: Problem-Solving for Improvement**

For this Core Element, the LEA considers how it collects and uses data to identify potential problems, work toward solutions, and continually improve outcomes for students. Preschool outcomes data can be particularly useful for Critical Components 4.1, 4.2, and 4.4, as follows.

* 1. LEA collects and analyzes data to problem-solve and develop improvement strategies for any

student not meeting IEP goals.

* ***Preschool outcomes data are based on a rating of child functioning in the areas of 1) emotional-social development, 2) acquisition and use of skills and knowledge, and 3) ability to get one’s own needs met. Comparison of the ratings over time shows the child’s developmental trajectory. These data can track children’s progress toward age-level functioning.***
  1. LEA collects and analyzes disaggregated data about groups of students with disabilities to

establish priorities for improvement.

* ***See child outcomes data display disaggregated by disability category.***
  1. LEA uses data analysis and identified priorities for decision-making and continuous improvement of LEA EC Program at least annually.
* ***Use preschool outcomes data to determine the need for more effective instructional practices to ensure that children change their developmental trajectories by the time they exit the preschool program.***

**Core Element 5: Research-Based Instruction and Practices**

For this Core Element, the LEA considers how it identifies, implements, and monitors research-based instruction and practices. When LEAs determine the need for better child outcomes based on preschool data, those data can further inform the focus of efforts to improve the use of research-based instruction and practices, as follows.

5.1 LEA has a clear data-driven procedure for identifying needed research-based initiatives,

practices, and/or instructional methods to ensure students’ mastery of the North Carolina

Standard Course of Study.

* ***Review of preschool outcomes data by developmental domain can identify the need for improvement in instructional practices as they relate to specific goals of Foundations in the areas of emotional and social development, health and physical development, language development and communication, and cognitive development.***

5.2 LEA develops effective implementation plans to support improved outcomes for SWD.

* ***Include implementation plan for improving instructional practices to result in better child outcomes.***

5.3 LEA purposefully carries out implementation plans, monitoring progress and making

adjustments to improve outcomes.

* ***Include information about how you are monitoring the progress of this effort.***

5.4 LEA implementation plan includes strategies that support improvement, sustainability, and

actively build capacity over time.

* ***Include strategies to sustain the use of improved instructional practices, such as coaching and professional learning communities.***

**Core Element 6: Communication and Collaboration**

For this Core Element, the LEA considers how it ensures effective communication (internally and externally as well as across all levels) and involves all stakeholders in meaningful ways. When preschool outcomes data are used to prioritize the need for improved instructional practices to ensure that children change their developmental trajectories, information about this improvement effort can apply to all of the critical components for this core element, as follows.

* 1. LEA has effective vertical and horizontal communication processes in place to support policy and practice.
  + ***Describe how preschool teachers communicate with administrators about their use of research-based practices for improving child outcomes.***
  1. LEA facilitates meaningful parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities (e.g., rights and procedural safeguards, specific disability information, instructional practices, etc.).
  + ***Describe how parents are part of a stakeholder group to discuss preschool child outcomes data and identify priorities for improvement.***
  1. LEA partners with community stakeholders (including preschool, mental health, etc.) to enhance service provision to students and families.
  + ***Describe how community partners are part of a stakeholder group to discuss child find and transition data and identify priorities for improvement.***
  1. LEA collaborates with SEA to support program and initiative improvement.
  + ***Describe support received from DPI’s Office of Early Learning, EC division, and the NC Early Learning Network to improve instructional practices for better child outcomes, including Foundations training resources and support for the implementation of Social-Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL).***
  + ***Describe support received from DPI’s Office of Early Learning, EC division, and the NC Early Learning Network for understanding of and ability to explain preschool child outcomes data***