

Each Child On Track

Year 3 (2024–25) Annual Evaluation Report

Evaluation of Ohio's State Systemic Improvement Plan

December 2025



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Improving Lives.

Executive Summary

Ohio's State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), Each Child On Track, aims to increase the percentage of students with disabilities who graduate with a regular diploma and decrease the percentage of students with disabilities who drop out of school. To achieve these goals, Each Child On Track builds the capacity of district and school personnel to identify high school students (including students with disabilities) who are at risk of not graduating and provide targeted supports in the areas of attendance, academics, and behavior. The American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) conducts the external evaluation of Each Child On Track. The external evaluation provides the Department of Education and Workforce (the Department) with (a) timely feedback to inform the continuous improvement of the initiative, and (b) information about the impact of the work.

Project Context and Features

Each Child On Track functions within Ohio's Statewide System of Support, which includes the Department and regional State Support Teams (SSTs). Each Child On Track is implemented by six Cohort 1 districts, 14 Cohort 2 districts, 15 Cohort 3 districts, and, beginning in September 2025, nine Cohort 4 districts. Additionally, staff from SST Implementation Teams representing 15 regions provide coaching to district and school personnel to support implementation of Each Child On Track.

Each Child On Track is led by staff from the Department's Office for Exceptional Children. Additionally, the Department's Design and Implementation Team provides guidance on Each Child On Track implementation and offers a forum for improving collaboration and alignment within the Department.

Methods

The external evaluation uses an ongoing, mixed-methods approach including surveys, interviews, and review of extant data. For this annual report, the AIR evaluation team conducted descriptive analyses of all quantitative data and used inductive coding to identify themes in qualitative data. This report focuses exclusively on data from districts and schools in Cohorts 1, 2, and 3 because Cohort 4 did not begin participating in Each Child On Track until after the end of the July 2024–June 2025 reporting period.

Key Findings

SST Capacity Building

- Participants indicated that Each Child On Track learning sessions were of high quality and useful. Most participants reported the sessions met the learning objectives and increased their knowledge.
- Cohort 1 SST Implementation Team members generally perceived their team's capacity in May 2025 as similar to their capacity in May 2024, while Cohort 2 SST Implementation Team members generally reported growth in their capacity between May 2024 and May 2025.
- Some areas of capacity remain limited in both cohorts (engaging external stakeholders) or in Cohort 2 in particular (planning for scaling). Some participants perceived a lack of needed expertise among SST Implementation Team members.
- Additionally, SST Implementation Team members perceived a need for support from the Department in several areas, including multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS); mathematics; and improving collaboration, engagement, and commitment.

District/School Capacity Building

- Districts and schools participating in Each Child On Track, with the support of the SST coaches, improved alignment of initiatives to support secondary, transition-aged students with disabilities through improved coordination and systems; improved staff mindsets, skills, and knowledge; and an increased use of a student-centered approach and focus on students with disabilities.
- Participants from districts and schools in Cohorts 1, 2, and 3 generally reported that their teams gained capacity while participating in Each Child On Track. Across cohorts, capacity survey respondents generally indicated that Each Child On Track increased their capacity to use early warning data to identify students in need of extra support. However, participants reported their teams' capacity as limited in a few areas, including coaching and engaging external stakeholders, and few reported that Each Child On Track increased their capacity to partner with families to promote student engagement. Respondents from Cohorts 1 and 3 in particular also reported limited capacity in training and planning for scaling Each Child On Track.
- Participants identified several areas in which they need support from the Department, including identifying and implementing interventions; data systems and data use; professional development (e.g., in strong Tier 1 instruction and use of interventions); and systems, communication, and organization (e.g., having clear communication processes and documented plans).

Implementation of Best Practices and Policies for Secondary, Transitioned-Aged Students With Disabilities

- District and school participants perceived that their teams have improved implementation of Each Child On Track, as measured by the [Expectation and Implementation Rubric](#).
- The rubric indicators that were commonly reported low across all three cohorts in May 2025 were student success plans, business advisory plans, and the use of a literacy intervention period.
- Across Cohorts 1–3, and consistent with the prior year, assigning interventions and monitoring student progress in interventions remain the greatest areas of need of the seven steps in the EWIMS process.

Implementation Barriers and Enablers

- Cohorts 1–3 all identified competing priorities in the district as among their top two challenging implementation barriers. A lack of decision rules for when a student should receive an intervention was Cohort 1’s most commonly cited challenge, and Cohorts 2 and 3 cited inconsistent monitoring of student progress in an intervention as among their top two greatest challenges.
- Across Cohorts 1–3, the most important enabler was access to quality student data. However, all four enablers were rated as moderately or very important by at least 80% of respondents from each cohort, demonstrating the high value placed on each factor.

Sustainability

- District and SST members discussed the fact that turnover is a challenge, as buy-in and commitment of leaders and staff is important for sustainability. SST participants reported that districts that have embedded Each Child On Track into systems, structures, and processes are more likely to sustain the work. SST Implementation Teams and district and school participants generally perceived that their capacity related to sustainability has improved over time but remains limited in some cohorts.

Impact on Attendance, Behavior, and Course Performance

- As with prior years, attendance was the indicator for which there was the highest percentage of students with disabilities who were off track. In Cohort 1, there has been a downward trend in the percentage of students with disabilities who were off track in attendance and course performance. In Cohort 2, there has been a downward trend in the percentage of students with disabilities who were off track in course performance and small changes in the other two indicators. In Cohort 3, during the 2024–25 school year, there was

a downward trend in percentage of students with disabilities who were off track in course performance and small changes in the other two indicators.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are intended to provide possible actions for the Design and Implementation Team to support ongoing improvement of Each Child On Track.

Continue to assist SST Implementation Team members with developing coaching skills to address barriers and promote systems change.

SST Implementation Team members cited engaging external stakeholders, planning for scaling, and planning for sustainability as areas where capacity remains limited, and some noted a lack of expertise among some SST Implementation Team members. Some SST Implementation Team members indicated a need for more support related to identifying effective interventions, best practices in the field, and ways to spend allocated funding, as well as improving collaboration, engagement, and commitment. In addition, district and school participants cited competing priorities, a lack of decision rules for when a student should receive an intervention, and inconsistent monitoring of student progress as key challenges. Teams also noted that they could use additional supports from the Department for identifying and implementing interventions, data systems and use, communication, and systems change. Given this feedback, the Department may consider providing resources to assist SSTs with coaching to promote systems change.

Provide guidance on selecting and implementing interventions and supports.

Data suggest that districts and schools struggle with implementation of interventions and supports. Guidance on selecting interventions, delivering interventions with fidelity, and monitoring student progress in interventions are continued areas of need, according to the Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System (EWIMS) fidelity survey. Some SST Implementation Team members indicated a need for more support specifically in the areas of MTSS and mathematics.

Provide guidance and resources to support family engagement.

A majority of SST members from both cohorts reported that their capacity related to partnering with families to promote student engagement was limited. Still, district and school participants offered some examples of ways in which they share information with, engage, and use feedback from families, with most of these examples focused on one-way sharing of information. Across cohorts, a majority of districts reported conducting a school climate survey in at least one of the past two years, but the share that included families ranged from 33% to 57%. Combined, this suggests that there is an opportunity to provide resources, training, and

supports for districts to move beyond one-way communication with families to more in-depth and meaningful engagement, incorporating family voices in decision making.

Continue to provide professional learning on intervention strategies, especially for mathematics and MTSS.

District and school participants highlighted identifying and implementing interventions as an area of continued need, and SST Implementation Team members highlighted mathematics and MTSS as areas of needed support. The Department may wish to offer additional professional learning on these topics in districts and provide supports to build mathematics and MTSS capacity among SSTs.

Continue to emphasize attendance and assist districts and schools in implementing attendance interventions and supports.

Attendance of students with disabilities remains a concern across cohorts and continues to be the indicator for which the highest percentage of students with disabilities are off track each quarter. The Department may wish to expand professional learning for SSTs and districts related to attendance interventions and supports, with an emphasis on supporting students with disabilities in particular.

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